



St Brigid's School

Policy Document

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FEE POLICY

1. Introduction

St Brigid's Fee Policy is in accordance with the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) Fee Policy dated 2020.

The education of students is a joint responsibility between school and parents of St Brigid's School.

Tuition fees are an essential part of the school's income. All Catholic schools receive Australian and State Government funding to cover the cost of teachers' salaries. The income from Tuition Fees pays for the operation of the school. For example, loan payments for capital development, non-teaching salaries, curriculum resources and professional learning, electricity, water, rates, CESA (Catholic Education South Australia) (Catholic Education South Australia) levies and charges.

Families, in part, fulfil their responsibility through the payment of tuition fees and other costs associated with their child's education.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to set out St Brigid's Schools' principles in relation to all activities associated with charging and payment of tuition fees, granting remissions, and providing financially disadvantaged families with low-income fees.

3. Scope

The Fee Policy applies to the charging and payment of tuition fee and low-income fee, granting of remissions and discounts on behalf of the school.

4. Risk Management

- The school will ensure that appropriate practices and procedures of internal control and risk management are in place for its fee remission activities including risk identification, assessment, and implementation of controls.
- The Principal, will be responsible for ensuring appropriate practices and procedures for internal controls and risk management are adhered to.

5. Principles

St Brigid's School Board is guided by the following principles:

- annual school fees are a main source of income available to meet the school's operating costs each year
- where families have the capacity to pay fees, then in the matter of fairness, that those who can afford to pay do so
- fees are set at a level to maintain quality education for all students whilst having consideration for the financial capacity of the community
- tuition fees are reviewed each year and adjusted yearly to avoid steep increases
- low-income fee is set for those families who are eligible for the Government administered School Card scheme
- parents seeking enrolment for their child will be fully informed of the school's expectation regarding the payment of tuition fees which is outlined on the *Acceptance of Enrolment Offer* those parents sign when accepting a place for their child at the school
- upon a student's enrolment, schools agree to provide educational services for which parents/guardians accept the responsibility for payment of fees in a timely manner
- it is the responsibility of the School Board to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to enable the collection of school fees.

Professional Integrity, Accountability and Probity

- School personnel engaged in charging of fees or granting remission or discounts will at all times undertake their duties fully within the ethos and the mission of St Brigid's School and its policies.
- School personnel engaged in charging of fees or granting remission or discounts will work with parents/guardians in a just, respectful, compassionate, transparent, and considered manner in the process for setting and collecting fees
- All processes relating to school tuition fees will be open, fair, and transparent.
- School personnel will not use or disclose information that confers unfair disadvantage or financial benefit or detriment on a parent.
- When undertaking charging fees or providing remissions or discounts, school personnel will not engage in any private business or professional activity that would create conflict between personal interest and the interest of the school.
- The school will ensure that appropriate practices and procedures of internal control are implemented and monitored for its fee charging activities. All fee charging or remission activities will leave an audit trail for monitoring and reporting purposes. Compliance with the Fee Charging/Remission Procedures may be subject to audit reviews.

Delegated Authority

- Principal and Bursar to process all applications for Fee Remission in a confidential and private manner.

6. Tuition Fees

St Brigid's School has 2 tuition fee types for families:

- 1) Full Tuition Fee
- 2) Low Income Tuition Fee

Tuition fees support the operating/costs of the school not met by Australian and State Government funding received.

- Current Tuition Fees
- Tuition Fees are reviewed each year and adjusted at the discretion of the School Board.
- Tuition Fees will not be reduced by any other amount apart from Sibling discount unless a Remission has been approved.
- An early payment discount will be determined by the School Board each year.
- Parents will be notified of following year's tuition fees prior to the completion of the current school year.
- Tuition Fees will be charged on an annual basis. Payments are required by the due dates as notified in communications.
- Students starting at later dates during the year will have their fees applied at a rate determined by the length of stay.
- Students who take leave during the year will not receive a discount or credit for time not at school.
- Families who are leaving the school must give one Term's notice, failure to do so will incur a Term fees penalty.
- No fee reduction will be given for family grievances.

7. Discounts and Remissions

Sibling Discounts

Sibling discounts are available to families with two or more children attending the school on the following basis:

- Sibling discounts apply to Tuition Fees.
- Sibling discounts will be applied at a rate based on the School Board's discretion.
- Sibling discounts are reviewed each year and adjusted at the discretion of the School Board.
- Sibling Discount Rates

Low Income Tuition Fees

Low-income Tuition Fees are offered to families who are approved for school card under the School Card Assistance Scheme, this is a State Government administered scheme.

- St Brigid's School will provide families with the low-income Tuition Fees if they are approved for School Card.
- School Card applications are available from the Front Office. For details, please contact the Finance Officer.
- School Card must be applied for every year.
- School Card is approved by the Department of Education.

Family School Fee Support

If parents/guardians are experiencing genuine financial difficulty, it is their responsibility to meet or discuss with the principal/delegate for consideration of alternative financial arrangements. Any such arrangements shall be formally communicated by the school, be subject to periodic review, and may have terms and conditions applied.

St Brigid's School can provide support to families experiencing difficulties in the following ways:

- 1) Deferred payment during the period of financial or hardship difficulty.
- 2) Reduced Payment Schedule during the period of financial or hardship difficulty.
- 3) Remission of Tuition Fees

Remission Process

Approved Remission Discounts

- Remissions must be processed by the Principal and Bursar in a confidential and private environment and formally approved by the School Finance Committee.
- Remission will be applied based on family income levels, including government assistance and any other relevant financial circumstances.
- Bursar and/or Principal (subject to approval) to determine the remission amount.
- Parents must enter a payment schedule that sees the balance owing after remission cleared by the required school deadlines.
- Failure to adhere to these guidelines will mean the remission will be reversed.
- Remission discounts will be applied subject to Principal approval.

Payment Options

St Brigid's School requires families to enter payment plans that ensure school fees are fully paid by the completion of each school year.

Current Payment Plans available are:

- Fortnightly (18)
- Monthly (8)
- Weekly (40)

Any variation to the above needs to be communicated and authorised by the Bursar for approval.

St Brigid's offers the following payment options:

- Direct Debit System – Direct payment via savings a/c
- Credit Card System – Direct payment via credit cards
- EFTPOS – Either savings accounts and credit cards
- B-Pay – payment details are listed on family statements
- Centrelink deductions
- Cash over the counter

Payment times at school are as follows (unless special arrangements have been made):

- Monday – Friday | 8.30am to 3.00pm

Debt Management

- Debt Management with regards outstanding fees, should be based on positive and respectful relationships between schools and families.
- The school recognises that there are diverse needs within our community. Financial hardship can occur through unforeseen circumstances. When faced with payment difficulties, parents are encouraged to negotiate early with the Bursar or Principal to avoid misunderstanding and hardship in the collection of Tuition Fees.
- Parents will be encouraged to meet all fee requirements within pre-determined deadlines.
- Statements will be sent on a regular basis.
- Where the payment of Tuition Fees is not made the following will apply dependent upon being a current or leaving family

- If an outstanding fee account is not resolved following the school's engagement with the parent/guardian, the school may undertake debt collection procedures.

Current School Family Debt Management Process

- Following the non-payment by a family by the required deadline, a statement and reminder text/phone call with a 14-day deadline.
- Further non-payment will enact the following Debt Collection Process:

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| Letter 1 | Following the non-payment after a statement and reminder text/phone call with a 14-day deadline, contact will be made via letter requesting a payment plan. This will have a 14-day time limit. |
| Letter 2 | Follow up letter requesting urgent payment of school fees. This will have a 14-day time limit. |
| Letter 3 | Final letter of demand requesting payment within 14 days or debt will be passed to a debt collection agency. |
| Debt Collector | Account passed onto Debt Collection, where all costs associated are paid by the family. |

Leaving School Family

- Following the non-payment by a leaving family by the required deadline a statement and reminder text/phone call with a 14-day deadline

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| Letter 1 | Following the non-payment after a statement and reminder text/phone call, contact will be made via a letter requesting full payment or payment plan. This will have a 14day time limit. |
| Letter 2 | Final follow-up letter requesting payment within 7 days or debt will be passed to a debt collection agency. |
| Debt Collector | Account passed onto Debt Collection, where all costs associated are paid by the family. |

