

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

FEE POLICY



St Francis *of* Assisi
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

St Francis of Assisi School aims to support families in the education of their children especially in the area of faith education. Upon enrolment, parents enter into a partnership with the school to encourage and support their child's education. Catholic schools have a reciprocal responsibility to the well-being of the family that they are enrolling.

CONTEXT

In order to meet its requirements, the school charges fees and the following policy provides the guidelines for the setting, collection and remission of these fees.

As with all Catholic Schools, St Francis of Assisi receives some Australian and State Government funding. This funding is determined in a way that requires the setting of fees. These fees provide for learning programs, services and building programs that enable students to grow as thriving people, capable learners and leaders. The fees are determined and managed in a manner that considers the context of the school and the circumstances of families.

To allow the school to operate effectively and equitably, parents/guardians have the responsibility to meet their fee obligations.

AIM

St Francis of Assisi School will set fees at a level to maintain quality education for the students whilst having consideration for the financial capacity of the community we serve. The School Board will ensure that the financial responsibilities of all families are met as to their agreed obligations by having a systemic and identifiable procedure for the imposition and collection of fees thus ensuring the financial well-being of the school.

It is the responsibility of the School Board to ensure all reasonable steps be taken to enable the collection of school fees. Parents/Caregivers make a commitment to pay school fees when they sign the Enrolment form, prior to their child commencing at St Francis of Assisi School.

The Finance Sub-committee of the School Board has oversight of the collection of fees and will review outstanding fees on an ongoing basis. This committee reports to the Board the status of fee collection. Please note that all family details remain confidential at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools that a family's financial circumstances should not be a barrier to a student accessing a Catholic education. Where families do have the capacity to pay fees, then it is a matter of fairness that those who can afford to pay do so.

Upon a student's enrolment, schools agree to provide educational services for which parents/guardians accept the responsibility for the payment of fees in a timely manner.

FEES

An enrolment fee of \$ 55.00 is to be paid on submission of the School Enrolment Application.

The Finance Committee will annually oversee all matters relating to the setting of fees, remissions and collections. The Finance Committee will consist of the Principal, Finance Officer and nominated member(s) of the School Board.

Once the Finance Committee sets the school fees, the School Board will approve them and notification will be given to parents/caregivers before the end of the school year.

On application for enrolment, parents/caregivers will be provided with the schedule of fees and the School's Fee Policy. Parents/caregivers make a commitment to pay school fees when they sign the Application for Enrolment Form for our school.

FAMILY DISCOUNTS

A discount is given to families with more than one child attending St Francis of Assisi School.

SCHOOL CARD REMISSION

St Francis of Assisi School will also support families eligible for School Card by providing a 40% remission on the Tuition Fee. This discount is applied to the school account on receipt of the Government approval listing.

If you are a Family on a low income, you are encouraged to apply for these remissions under the School Card Scheme, each year.

School Card can be applied for online via <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-and-learning/financial-help-scholarships-and-grants/school-card-scheme> or a form can be obtained from the School Administration office.

If completing a hard copy form please provide a copy of their Centrelink Card to avoid delays in acceptance.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

If parents/guardians are experiencing genuine financial difficulty, it is their responsibility to complete a remission application and meet with the Business Manager / Principal 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. Any requests for fee assistance are treated as confidential.

Any reduction in tuition fees will be considered in terms of the financial needs of the family and of the School Board's responsibility to families who are making the effort to pay regular fees.

Families are granted a reduction of fees for the current year only, after which time they would need to reapply in future years if their financial circumstances have not improved.

Likewise, it will be seen as the family's responsibility to make good all or part of any reductions if their financial position improves.

Families are encouraged to:

1. Make an appointment and meet with the Finance Officer if they have any difficulty in paying fees so that the necessary steps for fee reduction can be discussed.
2. Apply to the School Finance Officer to pay by instalments if this payment is easier. Payment by instalment can include direct debit or Centrelink deductions and payment schedules can be arranged.

PAYMENT OF FEES

All families are required to set up a formally documented payment plan each school year, with the preferred method of payment being direct debit from a nominated bank account or credit card.

The following methods of payment are available for payment: -

1. Cash
2. Credit Card
3. Direct Debit from bank accounts
4. Centre Pay – direct debits from Centrelink payments
5. BPay – ensuring payments are finalised in line with the billing requirements
6. Fat Zebra – direct debit against a credit card
7. QKR –App.

PAYMENT TIMELINES

Fees: Fees amounts for the following year will be made available in November each year.

At this time, a payment plan will be required from each family before the end of the current school year.

A Schedule will be made available, outlining the due dates for the various methods of payment.

In general:

1. Payment by instalments – 4 payments (Specified due dates.)
2. Bank account direct debits and Fat Zebra direct debits from a credit card deduction –as per the schedule
3. Centrepay – in line with benefits
4. Other arrangements can be arranged upon requests

If you wish to change the nominated payment plan during the year this must be done in writing and with formal approval from the school Finance team.

DEBT COLLECTION:

All discussion / correspondence regarding debt management about outstanding fees will be based on the positive and respectful relationships between school and families.

The School may take appropriate actions to ensure a parent/guardian's fee obligations are met, including, but not limited to, restricting a student's participation in extra-curricular activities where a significant amount of school fees is outstanding.

Where outstanding fees are owing and no explanation or agreed payment terms are reached and adhered to, the school may seek a review of the ongoing enrolment of the student at the school.

Debt collection at St Francis of Assisi School will be in line with the CESA Fee Procedures.

Students on extended leave from school:

As the Fees for education are calculated as an annual fee, there is no fee reduction for students who are away from school and have not terminated their contract with the school.

Notice of Withdrawal

Families are required to give one (1) term's notice in writing to the Principal when withdrawing their child from the school. Should this notice not be given, one terms fees will be added to the final account, after any adjustments.

As the Application for Enrolment and Acceptance of Offer are legal documents, the school requires, written notification of students leaving the school, and advice as to the school the students(s) will be attending.

Account Adjustments:

Families who terminate their contract, with the school during the school year and have provided the required notice are entitled to a refund of any Fees over and above those required to educate their child for the number of weeks that they have been enrolled at the school.

Families who start at St Francis of Assisi during the school year will be charged for the weeks they will be educated at the school and any additional fees such as camp, if that occurs after they have started.

Policy Ratified by the St Francis of Assisi School Board 26th November 2021.