

# Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School Fees and Charges Policy



Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and where the teachers are outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

## 1. Delegation to Set and Vary Fees

- 1.1 The Principal has delegated power to set and vary fees of Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School.

## 2. Setting School Fees, Levies and Ad Hoc

- 2.1 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School's procedure for setting school fees, levies and ad hoc charges recognises the significant contribution that Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School makes to the cost of education through the generation of private income that includes the payment of fees by families.
- 2.2 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School sets and varies fees, levies and ad hoc according to criteria that represent a thorough and transparent assessment of the internal and external factors influencing costs and the families' ability to pay.
- 2.3 FFPOS are not funded by Australian or State recurrent grant funding. FFPOS student fees should set at local student fees, plus Australian and State government funding amounts and other overhead cost relating to FFPOS.
- 2.4 Fees for FFPOS must not be subsidised by recurrent grant or private income received for/from local students.
- 2.5 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School fees and levies are accessible in a variety of ways, including the School website at [www.gsmelbournesth.catholic.edu.au](http://www.gsmelbournesth.catholic.edu.au)
- 2.6 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School communication/strategy plan makes provision for the development and review of strategies for the dissemination of information about its fees and levies. The School issues a **SCHEDULE OF FEES** annually in late Term 4 and a letter setting out fees and levies. The communication is also posted in the school newsletter.

## 3. Advice to Families, Invoicing and Collection of Fees and Levies

- 3.1 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School invoicing cycle and invoicing throughout the school year is as follows: At commencement of year offering annual, triannual and monthly payment options or as agreed with the School and invoiced according to payment option selected by parent/ carer.
- 3.2 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School is responsible for its own debt collection throughout the school year.
- 3.3 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School will make every effort to help families understand their obligation to pay fees and levies.
- 3.4 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School will discuss payment of school fees and levies, and establish a payment method with families at the time of student enrolment.
- 3.5 The preferred method of payment is direct debit, established as part of student enrolment prior to commencing at the school.
- 3.6 Recovery of unpaid fees, particularly if recovery involves legal action, will be approached humanely and sensitively to protect the student as much as possible from the public embarrassment that could arise.

- 3.7 All collection approaches to families will be based on appropriate pastoral procedures.
- 3.8 A judgment by the Principal as to whether families are unable to pay because of their financial situation will err on the side of leniency.

**REFER TO ADDENDUM TO FEES AND CHARGES POLICY**

#### **4. Fee Remissions and Concessions**

- 4.1 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School will provide fee remissions/concessions to families in need, including students who hold an HCC.
- 4.2 The MACS Board has delegated the power to provide fee remissions and/or concessions (as applicable) to the Principal of Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School .
- 4.3 Refer to the Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School Primary School Concessional School Fees Policy for further information.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Setting and Varying Schools Fees, levies and ad hoc charges**

- 1.1 School fees and levies will be reviewed and set annually, in sufficient time to advise School families of the following year's fees and levies
- 1.2 When setting School fees and levies, the Principal will consider recurrent fees and levies to assist in meeting the operating expenses of the School, and capital fees to assist in the purchase of assets and/or repayment of loans for capital purposes.
- 1.3 Where the school accepts enrolment of FFPOS, separate fees and levies will be set for FFPOS.

#### **2. Billing Fees, Levies and Fee Concessions/Remissions**

- 2.1 Fee and levy billing and application of fee concessions/remissions are processed wholly within the School's accounting system, in accordance with the School's billing cycle. The School has one billing cycle of annual fees with payment options available to be nominated annual, triannual and monthly or as arranged with approval.
- 2.2 Fees and levies are billed in full for all students, with any fee concessions or remissions applied to the full fee or levy charged.
- 2.3 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School follows the procedures detailed in the Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School Primary School Concessional Fee Policy to determine appropriate fee concessions or remissions.

#### **3. Collection of Fees, Levies and Ad Hoc Charges**

- 3.1 The Principal of Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School will establish a payment method with families at the time of student enrolment.
- 3.2 The preferred method of payment of school fees, levies and charges is direct debit, established at the time of student enrolment.
- 3.3 Where payment is made in cash, or on request, the School will issue a School accounting system generated receipt.
- 3.4 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School will issue periodic statements (at least once per term) to families, to assist with fee collection.
- 3.5 If a family fails to keep up with their payment commitment, the Principal will bring the matter to their attention promptly and seek resolution. Debt recovery process may need to be initiated, including follow up phone calls, letters and formal debt recovery.
- 3.6 Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School will follow up debt recovery in a sensitive, discreet and confidential manner. Parents/guardians will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal.
- 3.7 Whilst no child will be denied access to a Catholic education due to genuine financial hardship, when families decide on a Catholic school for their children they knowingly take on additional financial responsibilities associated with school fees, which must be honoured in accordance with normal commercial practices.

### **OTHER ENROLMENT AND FEE INFORMATION**

#### **CHANGE TO ENROLMENT STATUS**

The following conditions apply when a change to the Student's enrolment status occurs:

### **Transfer/ Withdrawal of Student During the Year**

We appreciate that changing family circumstances will sometimes require that a student transfer to another school.

It is a condition of enrolment that a minimum of 10 weeks' notice, in writing addressed directly to the Principal, is required to advise the School that a student is exiting.

Fees will be payable for the whole of the term in which the enrolment is terminated, except in cases where the Principal determines that required notice (10 weeks) is given or that required notice (10 weeks) was impractical. You will not be reimbursed for fees charged annually i.e. education and book levies, literacy and numeracy, and digital technology. Any outstanding fees owing up until the departure date must be discharged. The school is entitled to offset fee amounts in credit where the required notice (10 weeks) has not been provided.

### **Delayed or Later Commencement of School Year**

The same fee structure set out in the **SCHEDULE OF FEES** will be applied to students starting after the commencement of the school year. For students commencing later in the year, some fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis backdated to the beginning of the term in accordance with the **SCHEDULE OF FEES**, except items charged annually.

### **Absence from school**

Fee reduction will not be provided for student absence from School.

### **Absence through illness**

If a student is absent through illness and medical evidence, there will be no reduction in fees. Every effort will be made to remain in close contact with the family and to arrange home study for the student where possible.

### **Long term absence (Holding Deposit)**

For students who will be absent for a term or, two consecutive terms or more, with an expected year of return, a place will be held over for a holding deposit equivalent to one term of annual fees for the year level to which the student returns (charged at current rates with an adjustment charge to apply upon re-entry). The deposit will be credited against school fees due on commencement (re-entry). The holding deposit is not refundable should the student not return to the School, with exceptional circumstances considered by the Principal.

### **Deferment of Enrolment (Holding Deposit)**

Deferment of enrolment is not considered prior to a student commencing at Galilee.

## **PARENTAL LIABILITY FOR FEES**

At the time of acceptance of enrolment, a student's parent/s or guardian/s sign the Enrolment Form that incorporates obligations and agreements about the payment of fees. Each signatory to the enrolment form, and/or subsequent re-enrolment form, will be solely AND jointly responsible for the timely payment of fees. Please refer to Enrolment and Exit Policy and your Enrolment Application Form.

## **FEE CONCESSION AND FEE PAYMENT PLAN**

### **FEE CONCESSION**

An Application for Fee Concession can be made under the School's Fee Concession Procedure.

An application for fee concession should be made as early as possible in the billing cycle before the end of Term One or immediately after a change in financial circumstances that may entitle the family to a fee concession.

Fee concessions are means tested in line with Federal Government Poverty Guidelines. The assessment process takes into consideration all parental/guardian income (including wages, Youth Allowance, all other Centrelink and Child Support payments), as well as housing costs (including rent or mortgage/rates).

An application for fee concession is valid only for the current school year. If concessions are required beyond the current year, a new application must be submitted at the commencement of the school year to enable a current assessment of the family's financial situation.

### **Fee Concession Procedure**

1. Parents/guardians wishing to apply for fee concession should complete the **Application for Fee Concession Form** and is obtainable from the School Office.
2. Parents/guardians requesting concessions must provide evidence of net income (including Centrelink and Child Support payments) and housing costs. Pay slips and Centrelink statements are acceptable evidence of income, and rental receipts or bank statements and rate notices are acceptable as evidence of housing costs.
3. Where satisfactory documentary evidence of income and housing costs is provided and there is evidence of an applicable government social security concession card, a fee concession may be granted without the need for an
4. At the request of either the Principal and/or the parent/guardian, an interview may take place. At this interview, the parent/guardian may present the Principal with other information and evidence that helps to explain their financial status and their ability to meet their commitment to the payment of fees. No allowance is made for repayments or costs associated with non-essential living items including but not limited to holiday houses, luxury cars, investment houses, renovations, swimming pools, travel and the like.
5. The application and/or interview process is aimed at determining a just and equitable fee that is within the parent's/guardian's ability to pay.
6. The outcome of the application and/or interview process will be confirmed in writing to the parent/guardian.
7. Where a fee concession is granted, it is essential that this commitment is honoured by the parent/guardian in full and on time.
8. In the event of non-payment or default of a fee concession by the due date, the Non-Payment of Fees clause in this Policy will apply.

### **FEE PAYMENT PLAN**

We are aware that, from time to time, some families find themselves in financial difficulty or hardship. With this in mind, our intent is that no student will be excluded from our school due to a **genuine** inability to pay full or even part fees. This requires a parental obligation to notify the school at the earliest time once such circumstances arise.

Fee payment plans may be considered in cases where a family's financial circumstances have subsequently changed for a period of time due to hardship or difficulties in such a way as to make fee adjustments necessary. Adjustments may include by deferment, reduced progress payments, and/or by agreed arrangement of terms.

An Application for Fee Payment Plan can be made under the School's Fee Payment Plan Procedure. Should a family on a fee payment plan continue with long term ongoing hardship or difficulty, they may seek to, at the relevant time, complete an **Application for Fee Concession Form** under the Fee Concession Procedure, for fee concession assessment.

### **Fee Payment Plan Procedure**

1. Parents/guardians wishing to apply for fee concession should complete the **Application for Fee Payment Plan Form** obtainable from the School Office. Any application should be received by the Principal 7 days before the next fee payment is due as per the payment option the family has selected.
2. Parents/guardians requesting fee payment plan must provide evidence of financial hardship and difficulty including **bank and employment details** of both parents/ guardians to support the application and **your financial obligations to Galilee**.
3. At the request of either the Principal or the parent/guardian, an interview may take place. At this interview, the parent/guardian may present the Principal with other information and evidence that helps to explain their financial status and their ability to meet their commitment to the payment of fees. No allowance is made for repayments or costs associated with non-essential living items such as travel, renovations, holiday houses, luxury cars, investment houses, pools and the like.
4. The application and/or interview process is aimed at determining a just and equitable fee payment plan that is within the parent's/guardian's ability to pay.
5. Where satisfactory documentary evidence of financial hardship or difficulty is provided, a fee payment plan may be offered to the family and the outcome of the application and/or interview process will be confirmed in writing to the parent/guardian.
6. Once a fee payment plan is approved, it is essential that this commitment is honoured by the parent/guardian in full and on time.
7. In the event of non-payment or breach of a fee payment plan, the Non-Payment of Fees clause in this Policy will apply.

#### **PARENT OBLIGATION TO NOTIFY OF CHANGE IN IMPROVED FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

In the event of any change of financial circumstances that do not entitle the family to a concession fee or fee payment plan that has been approved and agreed to by the school, the family is required to immediately notify the School. In the absence of continuing supporting evidence or circumstances for fee concession and/or fee payment plan, the school will cancel the concession fee and/ or fee payment plan from continuing and apply the appropriate full fee structure from the relevant date onwards.

A failure to advise the School of a change of financial circumstances in this regard, may lead the school, to terminate/ withdraw the enrolment for breach of enrolment by not meeting fee liability obligations and/ or the School is entitled to seek repayment of concession fee or fee payment plan amounts that were not entitled to be afforded to the parents/guardians.

#### **LATE FEES**

Fees are strictly due and payable by the annually published dates. Where fee accounts are in arrears, a student will not be permitted to undertake co-curricular activities. The Principal reserves the right to refuse to allow a student to either commence a new term or to remain at the School while any fees or charges remain unpaid (outside of any approved arrangement).

Parents/ guardians including those with fee concession and fee payment plans, who fail to contact the School when fee instalments fall due will incur a late fee at the end of the cycle for missed payments. The late fee will be added to the account and is payable within 30 days from date of issue.

| <b>LATE FEE CHARGE</b>                           |
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| \$200 for triannual instalments (every 3 months) |
| \$100 for monthly instalments                    |
| \$50 for fortnightly instalments                 |

## **NON-PAYMENT OF FEES**

### **Fees in arrears**

New enrolments will not be accepted from families who have fees in arrears and who have not entered into an arrangement with the Principal.

To avoid this outcome, families are urged to consult with the Principal as soon as possible and in advance of due dates for payments.

### **Debt collection/ Legal action**

Where parents/guardians fail to pay their fees account, do not respond to reminder notices and do not contact the school to make alternative arrangements, the school, albeit reluctantly, will engage the services of the school's professional debt collection agency which may involve the instigation of legal action.

The matter then effectively passes out of the school's control and all negotiations for payment must then be made with the debt collection agency. The parent's/guardian's credit rating may also be affected and listed as a default account with Veda Advantage, the largest credit reference agency in Australia.

Any fees incurred by the school in collecting outstanding fees (including fees for dishonoured cheques or debt collection services) will be passed on to the parent/guardian concerned as may be permitted by law.

### **Withdrawal of enrolment by school**

The School may and/or will advise the family that the student/s enrolment may and/or will be withdrawn with an effective date on the basis of non-payment of fees being a breach of enrolment (in the absence of approved arrangement).