School Fee Collection Procedures

1. Purpose

These procedures outline the process for the collection of school fees for students at Our Lady of Fatima School. As part of Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA), Our Lady of Fatima School aims to be an accessible and affordable choice for families. The collection of school fees must be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice and there is recognition of the Church's preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged.

SOURCES OF AUTHORITY	
CECWA Policy	Stewardship Policy
Executive Directive	School Fees

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all prospective and existing families within the Our Lady of Fatima School community. Under no circumstances can a child enrolled in a school be refused on-going enrolment because their parents have not paid fees.

3. Procedures

Fee Communication

- School fees and charges are published to the school community before the end of the previous school year.
- Fees and charges and all available discounts, including CECWA's Concession Card Discount Scheme, must be clearly advertised and easily accessible. This includes school websites and newsletters.
- The principal must update the school community with any changes to school fees and charges in a timely manner.
- At the time of enrolment, parents and/or guardians will be directed to the website for the school's current fees and charges schedule.
- Acknowledgment of the fee collection procedures must be on the application for Enrolment form which must be signed by the parents or guardian. In the case of a sole custodial parent, one signature will suffice.
- The following information must be available to parents relating to the school's fee procedures:
    a. a recognition of Catholic social teaching.
    b. details of school fees as well as information relating to the discounts and fee concessions defined in this Directive and a timeline for the payment of accounts.
    c. a process for confirming the method of payment and the provision of other special concessions.

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d. the school's fee collection process following non-payment, up to and including decision.
e. information regarding access to government assistance.

2. A full statement of fees payable for the year must be provided to parents at the start of the school year and periodic statements per term follow.

Fee Setting

1. The Catholic Education Commission of WA will determine the School fee and percentage school fee change for each school and communicate this on an annual basis.
2. Schools may charge an application fee for enrolment. Application fees must not exceed1% of the school annual tuition fee. Application fees are non-refundable, and this must be communicated to parents.
3. Enrolment deposits must not exceed 25% of the annual tuition fee and must be applied to the parent's fee account in the first semester of the child's commencement at the school. Enrolment deposits for students who do not commence at the school are generally not refundable but may be refunded at the discretion of the Principal.
4. Annual school fees must be endorsed by the School Advisory Council during the annual budget process.

Fee Discounts

- The following school fee discounts and concessions are offered at Our Lady of Fatima School:
  - Family discount for siblings.
  - Multiple school family discount for siblings, including Seton Catholic College.
  - Health Care Card tuition fee discount.
  - Special concessions and other discounts.
- Our Lady of Fatima School requests that families with a current concession card provide a copy to the school at the beginning of the school year.
- The Principal should request financial information from parents/guardians to support applications for fee concessions or any other concessions.
- Families with limited capacity to pay fees have the ability to request a fee concession. Requests for fee concessions shall be treated with dignity, fairness and compassion. Government assistance may be available by contacting Centrelink or going to https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/starting-primary-school?context=60077.
- Family discount for siblings:
  - Families with siblings enrolled in Kindergarten to Year Six at Our Lady of Fatima School are entitled to a family discount as determined by the Principal:

2nd child enrolled	20% of that child's tuition fees
3rd child enrolled	40% of that child's tuition fees
4th child enrolled and beyond	100% of that child's tuition fees

  - Parents who receive the Health Care Card Tuition Fee discount are eligible for family discounts for siblings.

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- Multiple school family discount for siblings:
    - Consideration will be given to family fee discounts in situations where families have children enrolled in more than one Catholic school.
- Health Care Card tuition fee discount:
    - The Health Care Card Discount Scheme provides an automatic fee concession for the holders of eligible means tested family concession cards. This discount applies across all year levels, from Kindergarten to Year 12. It is shown each year on the fee schedule.
    - The Principal may add additional charges for holders of eligible means tested family concession cards. These may be levied on a user-pays basis and could include charges associated with camps and other activities where there are direct and additional costs associated with such activities.
- Special concessions and other discounts:
    - The Principal may receive requests for special fee concessions and discounts from parents due to a variety of circumstances.
    - The Principal may determine an appropriate fee concession after considering the parent's financial capacity to pay, the school's financial position and the approved budget for special fee considerations.

Fee Collection

- In all correspondence from Our Lady of Fatima School, families are reminded to get in touch with the Principal if they are experiencing financial hardship.
- In Term 1, school fees for Our Lady of Fatima School are invoiced and emailed out to all families with a payment option form. A SEQTA email is also sent out advising that fee statements have been emailed and a notice is put in the school newsletter.
- Families at Our Lady of Fatima School are provided multiple payment methods (cash, credit card, direct debit, BPay), as well as multiple payment options (weekly, fortnightly, monthly, in full or other options by arrangement, such as by term or semester).
- Direct debit/credit options start around the first week of March and all accounts are asked to be finalised by 31 October of each year, unless an arrangement has been made with the Finance Officer or Principal.
- Each term, fee statements are emailed out to all families. Families can request a copy of their statement at any time throughout the year.
- Families who have not made a commitment to the school by starting to pay their school fees in Term 1 will be followed up with an email from the Finance Officer. If no response is received, a follow up phone call is made. Depending on the outcome of this conversation, the Principal may phone or request to meet with the parents/guardians to discuss any financial difficulties and advise how the school can assist.
- Families who have missed payments on their school fees are followed up by the Finance Officer as required. Comprehensive documentation is kept for each attempt to resolve the problem of

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overdue fees. Our Lady of Fatima School ensures that the recovery of school fees is approached pastorally and sensitively.

- The following actions are taken when collecting overdue fees, in accordance with the CEWA Executive Direction on fees (available on our school website):
    - A written communication is sent to the parents/guardians, bring to their attention the overdue balance.
    - Should there be no response within 14 days, the school will contact the parent/guardian(s) by phone to discuss the overdue fees and payment options.
    - If an arrangement to discuss the overdue fees cannot be made, or no action results after another 14 days, a formal registered letter from the Principal will be sent to remind parents/guardians of their financial obligations. This letter will include an invitation to discuss the patter with the school and a specified timeframe for a response.
    - Should there be no response or action within 14 days of the letter, the Principal will send a formal registered letter with a final notice. The letter should seek payment and outline the possible outcomes if payment is not received within the specified timeframe. This could include legal action.
    - Should there be no response or action within 14 days of the letter, the Principal may engage the services of a debt collection agency or a solicitor to recover overdue fees and any additional costs.
    - If the debt collection agent is not successful in contacting the parents/guardians or in establishing a debt repayment plan, the Principal may consider initiating court proceedings through a General Procedure Claim to obtain judgement. Refer to How to Commence a General Procedure Claim. Before this is done, the Principal will inform in writing the Executive Director of CEWA.
    - Before any enforcement proceedings are taken, the Principal must obtain written approval from the Executive Director of CEWA.

Authorised by	Jacinta Petersen	Signature	
		Date	3 March 2022
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