



# ST JAMES SCHOOL

1 King Edward Terrace  
Jamestown SA 5491  
Telephone: 08 86641120  
Fax: 08 86641089  
Email: info@stjames.catholic.edu.au

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## School Fees Policy

### RATIONALE

St James School is a Catholic Primary School serving the education needs of students from Reception to Year 7. It is situated in Jamestown in the Mid North of South Australia.

As with all Catholic Schools, St James School receives some Australian and State Government funding. However, in order to meet its requirements the school is also dependent upon income from school fees for the provision of educational facilities and resources, payment of day to day operational works and capital works in order to be able to provide a contemporary education for our students. The following policy provides the guidelines for the setting, collection and remission of these fees:

### AIM

St James School will set fees at a level to maintain quality education for the students whilst at the same time 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 systematic 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 are 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 James School.

The Principal and Bursar oversee the collection of fees and reviews outstanding fees on an ongoing basis and reports to the School Board Finance subcommittee Board the status of fee collection. Please note that all family identities remain confidential at all times.

### PREAMBLE

St James School operates within the guidelines set by the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) for the maintenance of private income.

Extract from the SACCS Annual Guidelines 2006:

*"As a guide to School Boards in their deliberations on school fee structures... the following information has been prepared in consultation with the Resource Operations Team of the Catholic Education Office.*

***It is the policy of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools that no child be denied a Catholic Education because of a parent's demonstrated inability to pay fees subject to the school's enrolment policy and that of SACCS.***

***Nevertheless those who are able to pay should be required to do so.***

*Families who qualify for support under the S.A. Government School Card Scheme must not be required to pay full fees. However, in most instances such families are expected to make some fee contribution."*

School fees and charges are set in light of:

- The School's Five Year Financial Plan (which has been prepared in consultation with the Finance Team of the Catholic Education Office)
- The School's Socio-economic rating
- The Annual Guidelines set by the CEO

## ST JAMES SCHOOL FEE STRUCTURE

St James School will set an annual fee each year comprising a Resource Fee, Tuition Fee and a Building Levy and Diocesan Pastoral Formation Fund.

**The Resource Fee** is a 'one off' annual fee applied to each student and is used to help fund all classroom and curriculum support materials required by the teaching staff and students. Items covered by this charge include stationery, art, craft, photocopying and computer print-outs. This fee is issued for each student.

It includes:

- Stationery (Student Book Pack)
- RE Materials
- PE materials
- Library Books
- Art & Craft Materials
- Teaching Aids
- Printed Learning Material
- Computer/Technology
- Student Accident Insurance

**TO ENABLE THE SCHOOL TO COVER BEGINNING OF YEAR COSTS, THE RESOURCE FEE IS TO BE PAID BY THE END OF TERM 1 OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

**The Building Levy** is applied to families who are not part of the Parish Planned Giving program, a proportion of which is made available to the school each year to assist with the payment of existing capital works loans as well as the cost of the ongoing refurbishment of the school's facilities.

The **Diocesan Pastoral Formation Fund** has been implemented to fund the training of people who will exercise pastoral care in our school and parish communities. The fee is per student, to be paid yearly, and will not be applied to those who qualify for School Card.

**Tuition Fees** are payable to support the day to day operational costs of the school not met by the Australian and State Government funding received by the school. They are applied on a schedule for:

- 1 child
- 2 children (discounted)
- 3 children (discounted)

## SCHEDULE OF FEES

Each year a draft fee schedule is prepared by the School Principal and School Bursar which is presented to the School Board for its approval and ratification.

The approved full fee schedule will be issued to each family at the start of the year along with the Term 1 fee statement.

On application for enrolment, parents/caregivers will be provided with a schedule of fees and a summary of 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

Tuition fee reduction is available to families with two or more children attending school.

## SCHOOL CARD

The State Government offers assistance for families via the School Card Assistance Scheme and families on low incomes are encouraged to apply. It is important that parents/caregivers work with the school to complete the necessary documentation as there are administrative cut-off dates (determined by the Department of Education and Children Services) that apply each term, and need to be complied with in order to receive funds for each eligible child.

Families eligible and approved for School Card will automatically receive a 40% reduction in their Tuition Fees.

## FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

As St James School the education of the child/children always comes first therefore, families that are experiencing financial hardship, are encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal to discuss assistance by way of a reduction in school fees or making the payment of school fees by special arrangement e.g. weekly, monthly, *Centre Pay (direct debits from benefit payments) etc.*

All such discussions will be treated with the strictest of confidence. Non-payment of reduced tuition fees is treated as an overdue account

Any reduction in tuition fees will be considered with due consideration to 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 tuition fees for the current year only, after which time they would need to continue to meet with the Principal on an annual basis to discuss their financial circumstances and continued assistance.

Likewise, it will be seen as the family's responsibility to immediately advise the Principal if their financial position improves and normal fee charges can be resumed or applied.

Families are encouraged to:

- Make an appointment and meet with the Principal if they have difficulty in paying fees so that the necessary steps for fee reduction can be discussed.
- Apply to the School Bursar / Finance Officer to pay by instalments if this payment is easier. Payment by instalments can include direct debt or Centre link deductions and payment schedules can be arranged.

## FEE COLLECTION TIMELINES

**Term 1 - Week 2:** A fee statement will be issued to all families. If payment not possible this total amount will be distributed to families as accounts in Terms 2 and 3.

**Term 2 - Week 2:** Account sent out for outstanding fees.

**Term 3 - Week 2:** Final Account sent out for outstanding fees.

### Please Note

**No invoices, for full year students, will be rendered in Term 4 as the annual fees are apportioned over three terms\*. Some accounts may be distributed in Term 4 for new families.**

### **\* Annual fees are apportioned over three terms**

**Families may negotiate with the Principal to have fees apportioned over the four school terms if regular fortnightly direct debits are set up. The total of school fees is apportioned across the school terms and a direct debit amount is set and agreed upon between the Principal and the family.**

Where any payments of fees and educational costs are not received within the required 30 days a reminder account will be forwarded with a friendly overdue reminder requesting monies within 14 days. (Families are reminded to promptly contact the school if there are any difficulties).

If no payment, or an alternative arrangement established with the Principal, is forthcoming within 14 days a second reminder account together with a letter from the Principal, on behalf of the School Board, will be forwarded advising that full payment will be expected as soon as possible or immediate contact with the Principal in regards to this matter.

If no response is made within 7 days, personal contact will be made by a letter of varying degree from the Principal and or School Board Chairperson. Failure to respond to this within 7 days will result in an interview or further action being taken.

## PAYMENT OF FEES

St James School supports the concepts of equitable financial responsibility on all members of its community and part payments of fees by the due date or by way of regular payments is part of the process.

To achieve this goal, the school encourages regular communication between all parties in relation to the payment of fees.

Accounts can be paid by cash, cheque, direct bank deposit or Centrelink deductions. All fees to be paid within 30 days of invoice date. Negotiated payment is discussed with the Principal if the child/children commence during the school year.