



# SCHOOL FEES COLLECTION POLICY

## OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS SCHOOL, HENDRA

Updated October 2015

### Introduction

*To administer with compassion while striving for justice and equity for all in the partnership of Catholic education*

Fees and levies at OLHC are used to provide a higher quality of education and allow for the provision of:

- Teacher support, administrative support and ground staff.
- Essential resources, facilities and equipment
- Maintain buildings, grounds and equipment.
- Service recurrent expenses.
- Address the shortfall and bridge the gap between what the government pays per student in a Catholic school compared to the payment made by government to state schools.

### Aims

- To ensure that all parents and guardians are well informed about expectations in regard to fee payment and collection procedures.
- To ensure all members of the school community are treated with fairness, compassion and justice in the process of payment and collection of fees.
- To ensure fee collection rates enable the ongoing provision of quality Catholic education for all students.

Continuing enrolment at OLHC is conditional upon the payment of school fees and levies or, should the need arise, the participation in a process to determine a level of concession.

Fees are set and advised annually by the school. It is expected that school fees charged will be paid by the due date.

### Procedure

#### **Issuing of Accounts**

1. Accounts for fees and levies are forwarded to parents within the first two weeks of each term. Fees and levies are separately identified on the account.
2. The fee account shows a due date for payment of the fees. The due date is within 30 days from the date of issue.
3. Discounts apply for families with more than one child and for those who pay the full year's fees with the first term statement.

#### **Reminder Notices**

3. On expiry of the due date, an 'Account Rendered – Reminder Notice' is sent, giving families fourteen days to pay.

4. If a suitable response is not received within fourteen days, the principal or a designated person i.e. administration officer, contacts the family. The object of the phone call/contact is:

[a] To collect fees in full or in instalments; or

[b] To establish the capacity to pay; or

[c] To establish the inability of the family to pay fees/genuine financial hardship and hence establish the amount of concession to fees applicable.

If there are no extenuating circumstances, the principal or designated person may warn the family that the collection process will begin.

Where language and ethnic circumstances warrant, contact through a liaison person will occur.

5. If suitable arrangements are unable to be made following the sending out of a reminder notice and personal contact, the principal or designated person may send out a Final Notice giving a further 2 weeks to pay.

### **Collection Agency**

6. If, after two weeks from sending the Final Notice letter no satisfactory arrangements have been reached and there appears to be no other workable solution, then the account may be sent to a collection agency.

7. If parents object to the process, the Principal refers them to the Area Supervisor.

### **Court Action**

1. It is accepted that by initiating these procedures, on rare occasions it may be necessary for the school to proceed to further action. Such occasions occur when there is clear evidence of ability to pay.

To proceed to court action, authorisation is obtained from the Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services (BCEO).

### **Concessions**

1. The [Henderson Poverty Lines](#) are used as a guide for assessing eligibility for fee concessions.

### **Additional Points to note**

1. The principal or designated person documents all communications with families - phone calls, interviews, correspondence

2. The principal places a general note in the newsletter at an appropriate time about the volume of outstanding fees and the requirement to pass bad debts onto the collection agency.

3. When parents apply for enrolment of children for whom they have not paid school fees at a previous systemic school, the enrolment is not confirmed until the debt is paid or waived on

the previous principal's advice. Arrangements for payment of future fees are then put in place before proceeding with the enrolment.