School Fees Policy

Rationale/Purpose

As a systemic Catholic Education Office school, Merici College derives income from three major sources:
1. Commonwealth Government
2. ACT Government
3. School fees from parents

These three revenue streams combined provide the basis of funding for your daughter’s education. School fees are reviewed annually based on the required operating budget in consultation with the College Board and the Catholic Education Office (CEO) to ensure they are consistent with budgetary requirements and parental expectations.

Forms available at http://tinyurl.com/jvg7lvd

Enrolment Form
Direct Debit (DDR) Request
Credit Card (BPOINT) Authorisation Form
School Fee Concession Application
Split Billing Form
Details of Older Siblings at other CEO Secondary Schools

Definitions

- **Canberra Catholic Schools Building Fund (CCSBF) Contribution:** Collected by the Diocesan school attended by the oldest child
- **Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn:** abbreviated to (CEO)
- **General Fee:** Covers costs associated with general resources (e.g. school magazine, calendar, excursions $25 or less, subject and school consumables), and facilities such as information technology support, Information Centre physical and online resources, homework hub, sustainability initiatives, digital training programs, fitness centre upkeep, transportation to school carnivals and small excursions, counselling services, and to support costs with the College’s ongoing building and renovation program.
- **Parent Levy:** Amount collected on behalf of the parents in place of fundraising to support initiatives in the College.
- **Resource Fee – All Subjects:** Covers purchase of new textbooks and maintenance of existing texts that are loaned to students.
- **School Tuition Fee:** Fees set by the CEO and collected by the College to support the curriculum, pay teachers’ salaries and to pay the CEO Levy which administers Catholic Education in the Archdiocese.
- **Y11 Conference & Y12 Retreat:** Charges for these activities are included in school fees.
- **Y12 School Fees:** Total annual fees are billed in 3 parts rather than 4 over Terms 1, 2 and 3 only.
PERIODIC PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES

The College encourages parents and caregivers to pay College fees through an authorised periodic payment. There are two ways of making an authorised periodic payment:

1. Direct debit by the Catholic Development Fund from your bank account on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly basis into the account for Merici College.
2. Credit card payment initiated by Merici College through our Bpoint account either monthly or twice monthly (except during January), that is 11 monthly payments or 22 twice monthly payments per year.

If you have difficulty with this requirement, you may contact the Business Manager or Fees Liaison Officer to discuss an alternative arrangement.

FAMILY DISCOUNTS ON SCHOOL TUITION FEES

Family discounts on the tuition fee component of school fees apply automatically if you have more than one daughter at Merici. Provided you inform us, discounts will also apply to Merici students if you have older students at St. Francis Xavier College, St. Clare's College, St Mary MacKillop College or St John Paul College. There is at present no discount for students outside the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CEO) system (i.e. Daramalan, St. Edmund's and Marist).

Tuition fee discount arrangements are as follows:

- The full fee is payable for the eldest child.
- 20% discount for the second child attending a CEO secondary school.
- 50% discount for the third child attending a CEO secondary school.
- 100% discount for the fourth child or subsequent children attending either a CEO Archdiocesan primary or secondary school.
- Parents who have students in both a CEO secondary school and a CEO primary school please note that a 20% tuition fee discount applies to the first child fee at the CEO primary school where there is a sibling in a CEO Secondary school. Parents please advise your primary school if your children are in this situation.

There are no discounts on other fees or levies.

FULL FEE PAYING OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Merici College welcomes international students however it does not have the capacity to subsidise students with visa conditions making them Full Fee Paying Overseas Students. Parents and caregivers remain responsible for advising the College of a change in visa status. This also applies to students who become Full Fee Paying Overseas Students after initial enrolment with the College.

WITHDRAWAL OR EXTENDED ABSENCE

Students leaving the school during the term

Persons responsible for paying school fees will be liable for school fees up until the end of term and they are to be paid before the student leaves the school. Should payment in full not be possible at the time of leaving, an arrangement for payment will need to be made with the Business Manager or Fees Liaison Officer. Year 12 students leaving the College at the end of Term 2 who obtain sufficient points to gain their Year 12 certificate are still liable for the remainder of annual school fees usually levied in Term 3 as the fees relate fully to the Year 12 package.

Students who are absent for part of a term or for a complete term

Persons responsible for paying school fees will be liable for school fees for terms (while the student is officially enrolled) and they are to be paid by the due date. Should payment in full not be possible by the due date, an arrangement for payment will need to be made with the Business Manager or Fees Liaison Officer.

SCHOOL FEES AND INTERSTATE/OVERSEAS EXCURSIONS

The College reserves the right to deny participation in optional programmes e.g. overseas language trips, expressive arts excursions, sports competitions, that incur user-pay charges should the school fees account be in arrears.
NON PAYMENT OF FEES
The College policy is to send out reminder letters. Failure to act on these letters will result in the overdue account being referred to the Fees Review Committee for a decision on next steps. Matters may as a last resort, be referred to a collection agency. The College may add $50 per term for overdue fees.

DEFAULTS WITH ELECTRONIC FUNDS PAYMENT
A letter is sent to families in the event that there are insufficient funds to meet a scheduled payment. In the case of repeated defaults your arrangement will be cancelled and an administrative charge of $50.00 may be added.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES
If you are currently experiencing financial difficulties, please approach the school before the fees are due and ask to discuss the matter with the Business Manager or the Fees Liaison Officer. Our ethos is to work in partnership with families for early, just and equitable variations in payments.

ACT Government Secondary Bursary Scheme
The Secondary Bursary Scheme can provide some financial assistance to low income earners in the ACT with dependant full-time students in Years 7-10. Application is direct to the ACT Department of Education and Training. Application Forms are available from the College, Centrelink Regional Offices and The Smith Family ‘Learning for Life’ Co-ordinator.

SCHOOL FEE CONCESSIONS
Merici College strongly encourages families who are financially disadvantaged to seek enrolment. In consultation with the College Board, the College will consider applications by families for support under a School Fees Concession Arrangement. The application will be subject to criteria including level of income. Concessions will be a proportion of the full fees per year based on guidelines agreed by the CEO.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All matters related to school fee concessions/reductions or inability to pay are treated confidentially.

SPLIT BILLING
Split billing is available where two or more people living in separate households are responsible for payment of school fees for a student.

Split billing does NOT avoid joint and several liability for payment of school fees but acts as a way of providing administrative assistance to the separate households. Our enrolment form requires that current court orders, if they exist, need to be provided to the College.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE
The Canberra Goulburn Diocese has taken out a school insurance cover for the whole Diocese. The insurance cover will protect you from some of the financial burdens of children’s accidents. The cover is School Activities Cover from Catholic Church Insurances Limited (CCI). Your child will only be covered under the policy whilst the school maintains its current policy. The policy also covers school fees up to $15,000 in the case of accidental death of the person or both people who pay the fees. Should you have any queries or would like assistance please ring CCI on 1300 138 498.

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