



**St Joseph's School**  
PORT LINCOLN  
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# St Joseph's School

## Fee Policy



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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the position of St Joseph's School and Preschool, Port Lincoln on school fees.

## Scope of Policy

This policy complements the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) Fee Policy and applies to St Joseph's School & Preschool, Port Lincoln.

This Policy accompanies the SACCS Fee Procedures which provides the framework for St Joseph's School & Preschool, Port Lincoln.

## Policy

### Introduction

St Joseph's School, Port Lincoln is a Preschool to Year 12 Catholic co-educational Boarding School, serving the educational needs of families in Port Lincoln and the Eyre Peninsula of South Australia in the tradition of Saint Mary MacKillop and St Joseph, where faith, hope and love are the hallmarks of learning.

The Fee Policy exists to ensure fair and equitable school fee setting and collection processes apply to all families enrolled at St Joseph's School.

The fees set by St Joseph's School represent their commitment to provide access to high quality education, whilst ensuring that a family's financial circumstances are not a barrier.

Upon enrolling their child at St Joseph's School, parents/guardians enter a partnership with the school to engage, encourage, and support their child's education.

The partnership extends to families acting in good faith and spirit to fulfil their financial obligations to the school through their adherence to the agreed fee arrangement.

### Context

As with all Catholic Schools in South Australia, St Joseph's School is funded in a way that requires the setting of fees.

The Australian Government determines and allocates a Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) for each student attending a school in Australia that is made up of a base allocation and loadings.

For St Joseph's School, the Australian Government discounts the base amount of funding (SRS) by the anticipated capacity of their school community to financially contribute towards the school's operating costs. This is called the 'capacity to contribute' (CTC) assessment.

In 2020 the Australian Government introduced a new method for calculating a school community's CTC based on a Direct Measure of Income (DMI) of parents and guardians of students at a school.

The DMI is based on the median income of parents and or guardians as determined through the linkage of personal income data and residential address data collected through the Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP). The median family income of each school is converted to an annual DMI score, which is used to create the CTC score of the school.

Consequently, St Joseph's School cannot operate solely based on Government funding. The school is dependent upon income from school fees to provide learning programs, services and building programs that enable students to grow as thriving people, capable learners, and leaders.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The School Board has the responsibility to:

- I. Approve the annual budget of the school, including the setting and collection of fees
- II. Ensure that the school's fee and debtor management processes are consistent with the SACCS Fee Policy and the associated Fee Procedures of the Catholic Education Office
- III. Exercise oversight through its Finance Committee of the fees processes, including processes for the collection of outstanding fees and review of its debtor situation with respect to fees, and
- IV. Establish a clear understanding of who has responsibility for following through fee collection and for the granting of fee remissions.

Principals have the responsibility to:

- I. Ensure that interactions of school personal with parents/guardians with regards to fees and debt are consistent with the Catholic ethos and the Guiding Principles of the SACCS Fee Policy
- II. Manage the school's fees and debt management processes thoroughly and appropriately
- III. Ensure that the school's fee and debtor management processes are in accordance with the Fee Procedures of the Catholic Education Office and exercised in a just and respectful manner.

Business Managers / Finance Officers have the responsibility to:

- I. Ensure that the processes and procedures for the administration of fees and debt at the school level are in accordance with SACCS Fee Policy and the Fee Procedures of the Catholic Education Office

- II. Ensure that interactions of school personnel with parents/guardians with regards to fees and debt are consistent with the Catholic ethos and the Guiding Principles of the SACCS Fee Policy, and
- III. Give appropriate advice to the Principal and School Board about matters relating to fees setting, appropriate fee levels for families and fee collection.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to the rest of the school community to:

- I. Pay their fees as determined by the school's fee schedule and any arrangements they enter into with the school about the arrangements for their fee payment
- II. Be honest in their dealings with the school, and
- III. Respect the circumstances of other parents/guardians in the school community.

## Fee Structure

### School Fee

St Joseph's School will review annually the fee and notify families prior to the commencement of the next school year. The school fee will be charged at the beginning of each school year. The collection of school fees is used to support the operational costs of the school and to continue providing outstanding educational outcomes, facilities, and technology for students. The fee includes the provision of ICT devices and some programmed activities.

### Enrolment Fee

A non-refundable enrolment fee of \$100 is payable upon receipt of your acceptance form. This fee covers the enrolment administration costs.

### Boarding Fee

The boarding fee will be reviewed annually, and families notified prior to the commencement of the next school year. The boarding fee covers the cost of accommodation, food, group study periods with a qualified supervisor, laundry service, daily pod cleaning, and boarder activities.

### Junior Joey's

A \$200 non refundable fee is payable in advance and includes the cost of a Junior Joey's T-shirt.



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## Preschool Fee

The Preschool fee will be reviewed annually, and families notified prior to the commencement of the next school year. The collection of Preschool fees is used to financially support the operational costs of the Pre-School and educational outcomes for pre-school students.

The Preschool fee will be charged a term in advance and are not applicable for additional discounts or remissions. This charge must be paid before the commencement of the invoiced term charge, unless an approved agreement is in place.

An administrative late pick-up fee will apply for every 15 minutes a student is not collected at the conclusion of the day. St Joseph's School will invoice the family, and this must be paid within 7 days.

## Extended Absence from School

The school does not hold student enrolments at a discounted fee when students are away for an extended period of time. Families may wish to pay fees at the normal rates to ensure their child remains enrolled at the school, for the duration they are away. Otherwise, families will need to unenrol their child and lodge an application to re-enrol when they return to school and a place will not be guaranteed.

## VET Fee

VET fees are in addition to tuition fees and families are responsible for payment prior to commencement of courses to confirm the enrolment. In most cases, families will be invoiced directly by the course provider but if they cannot invoice the family, St Joseph's School will invoice the family, and this must be paid within 7 days. VET fees are set by the registered training organisation. Some VET courses also incur additional incidental fees like travel and uniform.

On successful completion of the VET course, St Joseph's School will reimburse family accounts with 50% of VET fees, up to a maximum of \$500 per completed course, per year. The VET subsidy will not apply for short or taster courses.

School fees are not discounted according to how many school-based subjects a student pursues because of Vocational Education and Training.

## Schedule of Fees

The Finance Committee will oversee all matters relating to the setting of fees, remissions and collections. This Committee will consist of the Principal, Business Manager and not more than two elected members of the School Board. One such elected member will chair the meetings.

Once the Finance Committee sets the school fees, they will be approved by the School Board and notification will be given to parents / caregivers before the end of the school year.



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On application for enrolment, parents / caregivers will be provided with the annual 'Schedule of Fees'. Prospective parents / caregivers will also be informed that on enrolment of their child, they accept the responsibility for the payment of fees and other costs associated with the education of their children. 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 given to families with two or more children attending the school (as outlined in the 'Schedule of Fees').

### School Card

The Department for Education offers income-based remissions, commonly referred to as School Card remissions. St Joseph's School supports this scheme and encourages families on low incomes to link their eligibility to the Department for Education's School Card scheme. 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 for Education) that apply each term and need to be complied with in order to be eligible.

Families who qualify for support under the Department of Education School Card scheme are not required to pay full fees at St Joseph's School.

Families eligible and approved for School Card scheme will automatically receive a rebate on the tuition fee component as determined by the School Board.

### Financial Hardship

Where families are suffering financial hardship, they are encouraged to seek assistance. This requires completion of a 'Financial Assistance Application' form, accompanied by a letter outlining the reasons for the application. All applications are treated as confidential.

Families are encouraged to:

- Complete and submit a 'Financial Assistance Application' form with accompanying letter.
- Apply for a negotiated payment plan, to pay by instalments if this option is easier. Payment by instalments can include direct debit or Centrelink deductions and other payment schedules can be arranged.
- Make an appointment to meet with the Business Manager / Principal if they have difficulty in paying fees or meeting their negotiated payment plan.



Any reduction in tuition fees will be considered in terms of the financial needs of the family and in support of the School Board's responsibility to ensure all families make a genuine contribution to paying fees. Failure to adhere to a revised negotiated payment plan will ensure the account is treated as overdue.

Families granted a reduction of tuition fees are for the current year only. Future financial assistance must be reapplied for each year where financial circumstances have not improved.

## Scholarships

St Joseph's School offers scholarships for full or partial remission of tuition fees for new students who would benefit from and contribute to Catholic education in our community.

Scholarships may be awarded to young people whose family would otherwise find it difficult to meet the cost of school fees, and who show a commitment to academic achievement, service, and leadership in the tradition of St Joseph and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Unless specified an annual review process will be conducted to ensure the student continues to fulfill their commitment to academic achievement, scholarship criteria and contribute to the Catholic education community.

Scholarships will be awarded based on a range of criteria, which consider the merit and need of eligible students.

St Joseph's School offers scholarships in the following areas:

- Middle School Scholarships
- Senior Years Scholarships
- St Joseph the Worker Scholarship
- Boarding Scholarship

Scholarships will only be awarded to students whose school fees have been paid in full for all prior year obligations. Unless otherwise discussed and an individual arrangement has been entered into with the school.

The school reserves the right to retract scholarships if the scholarship recipient's family account has an outstanding balance at the end of the school year. Reasonable effort will be made to discuss the financial situation of the recipient and the school may reinstate the scholarship under an agreed arrangement.

For further information in regard to scholarship criteria and application process, please refer to our school's website.

### Open Access College

If the school offers a subject but it is not viable to run the subject due to the lack of enrolments, students will be given the option to study via Open Access College (OAC), and the school will cover all costs as regular school fees. If the student enrolls at OAC and chooses to not finish the course, the school reserves the right to charge any withdrawal fees.

Students may wish to study a subject that is not offered by the school and have the option to study via OAC. There are extra costs to study via OAC, and should a student opt to do so, these costs will be covered by the family and no discount to school fees will be given.

Students who study externally continue to receive encouragement, help, and support by pastoral care and subject teachers, plus the school endeavours to make timetable adjustments which may benefit the student. More detail is provided about OAC during Subject Counselling sessions.

### Payment of School and Boarding Fees

St Joseph's School supports the concept of equitable financial responsibility for 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.

Direct debit is our preferred fee payment option; however, accounts can also be paid by internet transfer, cash, EFTPOS, cheque, credit card and salary or Centrelink deductions. Families are encouraged to make regular payments through direct debits to assist them in meeting their commitments.

Direct debits may be established for payment by either:

- Full payment due 28th February (qualify for the 5% tuition fee discount – full fee-paying families only).
- Part payments with frequency options of weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly, with the full cost paid by the end of the school year.
- Part payments with frequency options of weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly that are continuous. Continuous payment plans are at the discretion of the school.

Family accounts will be billed as per the Enrolment form. By signing the enrolment form a contract is entered whereby parents / caregivers accept joint and several liability for payment of all school fees, regardless of any subsequent changes in the family situation.

The splitting of accounts for separated families is not an option. In these cases, the school expects the enrolling parents / caregivers to work out payment arrangements between themselves, to ensure that all fees are still paid on time.

If required, separate copies of accounts can be provided to both enrolling parents / caregivers.

### Payment of Preschool Fees

St Joseph's Pre-School supports the concept of equitable financial responsibility for all members of its community and payment of fees by the due date or by way of approved regular payments.

Direct debt is our preferred fee payment option; however, accounts can also be paid by internet transfer, cash, EFTPOS, and cheque.

Payments will be accepted at the school front office or the pre-school reception.

### Fee Account and Payment Timelines

#### Statement of Fee Accounts (including boarding fee if applicable)

- Term 1 – The annual statement of account for fees (including boarding fee if applicable) will be distributed to families by week 2 of Term 1.
- By Week 2 of Terms 2, 3 & 4 – statements of account will be issued as a reminder and confirmation of payments received.

#### Payment Timelines of Fees (including boarding fee if applicable)

- By the end of February, if fees have not been paid in full, all outstanding amounts must be placed on a direct debit arrangement. The school has discretion to enter into separate individual arrangements as required, based on family circumstances. Families need to ensure they contact the school if there are any difficulties in meeting the agreed repayments, before the payment is declined.
- Where payment has not been made, or an alternative arrangement has not been established with the Business Manager / Principal / School Finance Officer, the missed payment will be brought to the attention of the debtor. And there is an expectation the payment will be paid as soon as possible.
- Any ongoing payment issues, which may include but not limited to missed payments, irregular payments or not entering into a payment arrangement with the school, will result in further action. The school's leadership or finance team will organise a meeting and/or call with the debtor to discuss their situation.



- Should the above approach not result in a satisfactory arrangement between the debtor and the school, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor seeking payment and outlining possible consequences if payment or communication is not received. Such action may include referral to an external debt collection agency or court action.
- Arrangements for payment of fees by families who leave the school community during the school year must be discussed with the Principal / Business Manager with the understanding that for fee reimbursement, notice of one term is required. If reasonable notice is not given without a valid reason, then an exit fee will apply.

#### Statement of Preschool Fee Accounts

- By Week 2 of Terms 4, 1, 2 & 3 – The term statement of account for fees will be distributed to families.
- By Week 8 of each term – if full payment has not been made, statement of account will be issued as a reminder.

#### Payment Timelines of Preschool Fees

- In advance, by the end of Terms 4, 1, 2 & 3 – unless an alternative payment option has been arranged and approved.
- Where payment has not been made, a second reminder account together with a letter will be sent by post or email stating that full payment will be expected within 14 days.
- If no response, contact will be made by the Director of Pre-School / Business Manager or their representative. Failure to respond within 7 days will result in further action being taken.

#### Debt Collection Agency

Where fees remain outstanding with no agreed arrangement for payment, the account may be passed to an external debt collection agency, who may if directed:

- refer to solicitors.
- take Court action to recover the fees, where deemed appropriate.

The debt collection agency may be engaged after a formal letter has been sent to the debtor and no agreeable outcome has been arranged, and communication with the finance team has ceased with the debtor.

Parents are advised that any costs incurred in the use of the debt collection agency, including legal fees, will be billed to their account. Once the collection agency has been engaged, parents are required to work through the agency for settlement of their account.

In the context of our Josephite charism, we recognise the significance of this action which will be taken when all other avenues have been exhausted.



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## Definitions

The School	St Joseph's School & Preschool, Port Lincoln
SJS	St Joseph's School
SACCS	The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools
CESA	Catholic Education South Australia
CEO	Catholic Education Office
SRS	Schooling Resource Standard
CTC	Capacity to Contribute
DMI	Direct Measure Index
MADIP	Multi-Agency Data Integration Project
DoE	Department of Education
OAC	Open Access College



## Appendices

### Appendix A: Invoicing Fees for Students commencing part way through the year.

#### Invoicing Fees

All families will be charged fees as per the fee schedule set for that school year. One account is generated at the beginning of the school year to cover the full year's fees unless the student starts part way through the year.

If a student commences at St Joseph's School part way through the year the following will apply:

- If a student starts school before Week 5 of Term 1, the full year's fees will be charged as normal.
- If a student starts school between Week 5 and the end of Term 1, 90% of the fees will be charged.
- If a student starts school in Term 2, 75% of the fees will be charged.
- If a student starts school in Term 3, 50% of the fees will be charged.
- If a student starts school in Term 4, 25% of the fees will be charged.

#### Invoicing Boarding Fees

If a student attends the Boarding House the family will be invoiced for the boarding fee in full at the beginning of the school year unless the student joins the Boarding House part way through the year.

If a student joins St Joseph's School Boarding House part way through the year the following will apply:

- If a student joins the Boarding House before Week 5 of Term 1, the full year's boarding fees will be charged as normal.
- If a student joins the Boarding House between Week 5 and the end of Term 1, 90% of the boarding fees will be charged.
- If a student joins the Boarding House in Term 2, 75% of the fees will be charged.
- If a student joins the Boarding House in Term 3, 50% of the fees will be charged.
- If a student joins the Boarding House in Term 4, 25% of the fees will be charged.



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## Appendix B: Refunding Fees for Students leaving part way through the year.

A full term's notice is required if a student is leaving the school. If a full term's notice is not provided, the school has the right to charge the family an additional term's fee.

### Refunding Tuition Fees

If a student leaves St Joseph's School part way through the year the following will apply:

- If a student leaves school before Week 5 of Term 1, a 90% refund of the fees will be given.
- If a student leaves school between Week 5 of Term 1 and the end of Term 1, a 75% refund of the fees will be given.
- If a student leaves school in Term 2, a 50% refund of fees will be given.
- If a student leaves school in Term 3, a 25% refund of fees will be given.
- If a student leaves school in Term 4, no refund of fees will be given, and the full year's fees will be payable.

### Refunding Boarding Fees

If a student leaves St Joseph's School Boarding House part way through the year the following will apply:

- If a student leaves the Boarding House before Week 5 of Term 1, a 90% refund of the boarding fees will be given.
- If a student leaves the Boarding House between Week 5 of Term 1 and the end of Term 1, a 75% refund of boarding fees will be given.
- If a student leaves the Boarding House Term 2, a 50% refund of boarding fees will be given.
- If a student leaves the Boarding House Term 3, a 25% refund of boarding fees will be given.
- If a student leaves the Boarding House in Term 4, no refund of boarding fees will be given, and the full year's fees will be payable.

### Refunding Pre-School Fees

If a student is leaving St Joseph's Pre-School part way through the term/year, no refund will be given on invoiced charges.