



POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT - FEES PAYMENT

1. Annual fees

It is the policy of Our Lady of Lourdes School to charge fees to parents on an annual basis at the beginning of each school year. Ad hoc or interim fees may also be charged where determined to be appropriate.

2. Authority

Final authority in relation to school fees (including payment and collection) lies with the Parish Priest. Subject to his overriding directions:

- The School Education Board, advised by the Principal, will determine fees and policies regarding payment and collection.
- The Principal will implement the school's policies, in consultation with the Board where he or she considers it necessary and appropriate.

3. Normal process

Fees and Levies for a year will normally be determined in the fourth term of the preceding year, and will not be altered during the year for which they apply except for extreme circumstances. The Board will write to the parent body advising the following year's fees.

As far as is practical:

- fee structures will include all costs and charges necessary to cover student subjects for the year;
- the school will avoid or minimise additional compulsory costs, excursions etc, which were not included in the original fee structure –

but certain charges are added to fees during the year: eg School Camps, Swim Squad. These costs may be incurred by parents of children in various year levels. These activities may not be arranged/finalised before the current year's fees are determined and therefore cannot be included in School Fee billing.

4. Payment of School Fees

How to pay

Our Lady of Lourdes offers several options for paying fees, eg:

- Direct debit – set up by CDF (Catholic Development Fund – School financial institution) paid weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly. Application forms are available from the school office.
- Credit card, Internet Banking, Cash and Cheque.

When to pay

Fees must be paid:

- in full at the commencement of the school year; or
- in three instalments, payable March/June/September; or
- by monthly, fortnightly or weekly instalments; or
- in accordance with a payment plan by special arrangement with the Principal (In every instance a genuine attempt will be made to arrange an affordable, regular payment plan for fees) –

but in any case, all outstanding fees must be paid in full by the end of Term Three.

Fee statements

A fee statement will be issued around the beginning of the school year.

Outstanding accounts will be issued with fee statements in Term Two & Term Three.

5. **Non-Payment of School Fees**

If payment of fees is overdue, then the following procedure will be taken:

- If no payments have been made within the first term of the school year the School Bursar will request immediate payment in accordance with this policy or an applicable payment plan.
- Where the school then considers that no reasonable attempt has been made to pay in accordance with this policy or an applicable payment plan, the Principal will make contact to arrange a commitment to pay outstanding fees and arrange terms in order to repay the outstanding debt. A letter is sent confirming the outcome of the discussion.
- If no payments are received the case is referred to the Parish Priest for further action. The accumulated debt will be discussed between the Parish Priest and the Principal and the possibility of legal action investigated. Should this course of action be taken the Parish Priest will write a letter indicating the action to be taken should no payment be made within the time specified. If there is no response to the Parish Priest's letter the Director of Catholic Education Melbourne will be informed and permission will be sought to follow the matter legally. Each case will be handled on an individual basis.

Review of payment plans

People who undertake a payment plan due to hardship will have their commitment to pay reviewed annually.

Parents who have any concerns regarding payment of school fees or charges are encouraged to discuss these at any time with the Principal. Where appropriate, you will be able to make alternative arrangements to pay the fees. It is not helpful to ignore notices or requests for payment.

Rebates, discounts and write-offs

Only in extreme financial hardship can fees or levies be rebated.

The Principal in consultation with the Parish Priest is the only person who can discount fees or levies.

Write Offs, for Extreme Financial Hardship of families are authorised by the Parish Priest in his discretion at the end of the School Year.

6. **Students Commencing during the School Year**

Students commencing at OLOL during the School year will be required to pay fees *pro rata* from when they start. They will be charged the full term fees even though they may commence school mid term.

Please note that Computer Levies, Maintenance Levies and Book List charges are charged in full, and not *pro rata*.

All levies and charges for Camps and Excursions yet to be undertaken will be fully charged.

7. **Refund of Fees to Exiting Students**

If a student exits the school before the end of the school year, all fees have been paid in full and a partial refund is desired, then the following guidelines will apply:

- For *pro rating* purposes, one quarter of the annual fee is attributed to each school term.
- An application for a partial refund must be made at least one month before the student exits.
- No refund is available in respect of:
 - any term that the student completes or commences;
 - Computer Levies, Maintenance Levies and Book List charges;
 - terms missed for holiday purposes.
- Subject to the above, a *pro rata* refund for terms that the student has not completed or commenced will be made.
- Children who withdraw from and re-enter the school in the same year will be charged the whole year's school fees. For example, If the family withdraw in term two and return in term four, they will be required to pay the whole year's fees.