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ST STANISLAUS' COLLEGE BATHURST

Fees Management Policy & Procedures

Intended Audience: College Employees, College Community

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Responsibility for Policy Implementation	College Accountant
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Document Control

Version	Approved/Endorsed By	Approved/Endorsed Date
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2 – Draft Policy	Finance, Audit & Risk Committee	October 2022
3 – Draft Policy	Governance Committee	November 2022
4 – Final Policy	Board of Directors	December 2022

1. Introduction

St Stanislaus' College Bathurst is a day and boarding school for boys in Years 7 to 12. The College seeks to proclaim the gospel in the spirit of St Vincent de Paul through the formation of our students and all associated with the school in a welcoming, caring environment where all our students are supported and challenged to do their best.

It is in this spirit that this policy document has been developed and is underpinned by the below College values.



1.1 Policy Statement

St Stanislaus' College is partially funded by government, both State and Federal however, school fees, paid by parents/carers, are essential to help meet the gap between government funding and the cost of providing quality educational outcomes and learning experiences for students.

The College sets the level of school fees to be charged on an annual basis and these are approved by the College Board of Directors. In determining the amount of school fees to be charged, the financial commitment of our families in sending their son(s) to the College is foremost in deliberations. It is always our intent to minimise the burden on families and ensure timely communication in relation to school fees.

1.2 Policy Principles and Purpose

This policy is intended to provide comprehensive, transparent and accessible information regarding the management of school fees to all stakeholders of St Stanislaus' College. These stakeholders include families, both current and prospective and College staff.

The following are key principles relating to the management of school fees:

- To give a practical response to Vincentian principles that underpin the College;
- In line with the Vincentian principles of the College, this policy recognises that, in certain circumstances, some families will not be able to fully meet their fees commitments and will be offered every reasonable assistance to ensure that their son is not denied a Vincentian education because of this;
- To give centrality to the principles of equity, justice and respect for all families within the College community;
- To provide greater consistency and transparency in relation to the setting and collection of school fees;
- To maintain high standards of ethical and financial practice; and

- To identify and ensure appropriate levels of privacy and confidentiality underpin fees management at the College.

The College encourages families to make contact at any time to discuss their individual circumstances regarding fees payments.

This policy also outlines the expectation of the College that families will honour their financial commitment to pay fees.

1.4 Policy Scope

This policy applies to past, current and prospective families, and College staff.

1.5 Related Policies

- *Enrolment Policy and Procedures*
- *Suspension and Termination of Enrolment Policy and Procedures*

2. Policy Procedures

2.1 School Fees Management

Management of school fees involves a number of different activities including invoicing, receipting and the granting of fees assistance to eligible families.

2.2 Invoicing of School Fees

The following provides an explanation of the different types of school fees invoiced and the purpose for which they are used:

SCHOOL FEE INFORMATION
TUITION FEES
Tuition fees are set each year by the College and approved by the Board of Directors. This fee is to assist with the provision of operating costs, equipment, resources, payment of salaries and on costs. Charged per student with sibling discounts applied.
CAPITAL FEE
The Capital Fee is set each year by the College and approved by the Board of Directors. The income from the levy contributes to the capital and maintenance costs of the College buildings and infrastructure. The levy is compulsory and is charged per family.
OTHER LEVIES
Other levies are charged in recognition of materials and other items consumed on a per-student basis throughout the year. This includes items such as supplies for applied subjects, technology subscriptions, stationery, school sporting subscriptions.
EXCURSIONS AND SUNDRIES
Fees charged to attend school arranged excursions as well as travel to and from sporting events (eg: rugby bus travel). Sundry expenses incurred by the College passed onto families (eg: sporting jerseys).
BOARDING FEES
Charged to boarding families and contributes to the costs of boarding at the College. Also includes a boarders activity fee paid once per term.
ENROLMENT APPLICATION FEE
The Enrolment Application Fee is payable upon lodgement of an Enrolment Application. The fee is non-refundable and non-transferable. This fee assists in the administrative costs associated with the enrolment process.

2.3 Communication to parents/carers regarding school fee invoicing

At the point of enrolment and prior to commencing school, it is compulsory that all families complete a School Fee Agreement Form (Appendix A). This form indicates how school fees will be paid and is critical in enabling the College to manage the collection of school fees in a just and equitable way.

The College will issue families with school fee information annually which sets out all fees and charges that may be invoiced. School fee invoices will be issued at the commencement of each term with sundry billing issued at the end of Term 4 each year. Invoices are payable 14 days after they are issued.

2.4 Calculation of fees in the case of early withdrawal or late entry

For students leaving or enrolling throughout the year, a school fee method of calculation and invoicing process will be applied. This invoicing is based on pro-rata principles where possible, however where students have accessed activities, received resources (eg: books and equipment), parents/carers will need to pay these fees in full. Additionally, the cost of any outstanding resources not returned to the College by the leaving date will be invoiced and payment in full is required.

If a student is withdrawn from the College, a full term's notice must be given in writing to the Head of College.

2.5 Family Commitment

When families decide on a Catholic education for their son they knowingly take on additional financial responsibilities associated with school fees, which must be honoured in accordance with normal commercial practices. This is subject to fees assistance as outlined in Section 10 of this policy.

2.6 Privacy and Confidentiality

The Head of College is required to ensure that all personnel involved in school fee management maintains strict confidentiality and respect for the financial circumstances, dignity and privacy of families at the College. On a day to day basis, this responsibility is delegated to the College Accountant.

Generally, the members of College staff accessing information regarding fees management is the College Accountant and Finance Assistant(s).

The College will endeavour to ensure that students do not have an awareness of their parent/carers financial situation. For this reason, all follow-up letters or correspondence will be sent directly to parents/carers via email and post.

2.7 Receipting of School Fees

School fees are generally due 14 days after invoicing, however the College offers a variety of methods of payment and sequences to provide families with flexibility to meet their commitments. These include:

Method	Frequency
BPay, Electronic Funds Transfer	Weekly, fortnightly, monthly, term

To facilitate this flexibility parents/carers must complete a School Fee Agreement Form to advise the College of their intended payment option. These forms will be made available at the commencement of enrolment or upon request.

2.8 Sibling Discounts

The College provides a reduction in tuition fees if parents enrol more than one son at the College. Discounts are currently as follows:

TUITION FEE COMPONENT	
One Son	No Discount
Second Son	10% Discount
Third Son	20% Discount
Fourth and subsequent Sons	30% Discount

2.9 Joint and Several Liability

When parents/carers enrol their son(s) at the College they enter into an obligation to pay all school fees and charges. They acknowledge this by signing the Enrolment Application. In other words, the parties that have signed the Enrolment Application form have committed to payment and responsibility for fees in a joint and several arrangement.

Put simply, joint and several liability means that each party to the enrolment application (ie: each person who has signed the enrolment application) is individually responsible for payment of all school fees and charges regardless of actual fee payer arrangements.

It should be noted that Child Support Agreements and Family Law Court Orders are agreements between parents/carers and do not impose obligations on schools in relation to invoicing nor do they negate Joint and Several Liability, therefore the College will not act on such documents in relation to school fees.

The College offers splitting of fee accounts. Families who require this option, must contact the College Accountant and request in writing this arrangement. The splitting of fee accounts does not negate the joint and several liability of each parent.

2.10 Fees Assistance – Families in Genuine Financial Hardship

In keeping with the Vincentian principles of the College and the Gospel imperative of a 'preferential option for the poor', the practice of the College has always been to reasonably support families encountering financial hardship. In these circumstances, the College expects that eligible families seek such support and subsequently engage in such agreements in good faith. This means:

- families acknowledge the importance of school fees as a means to providing opportunity, facilities and resources for **all** students;
- families will **respond** to communication from the College that seeks to determine:
 - their need for financial support;
 - the extent of financial support; and
 - the capacity of families to make some agreed contribution towards school fees;
- families are open, honest and transparent in their communication; and
- families are faithful to agreed payment plans of support.

For the purpose of determining eligibility for fees assistance under these circumstances, the definition of genuine financial hardship has been determined as:

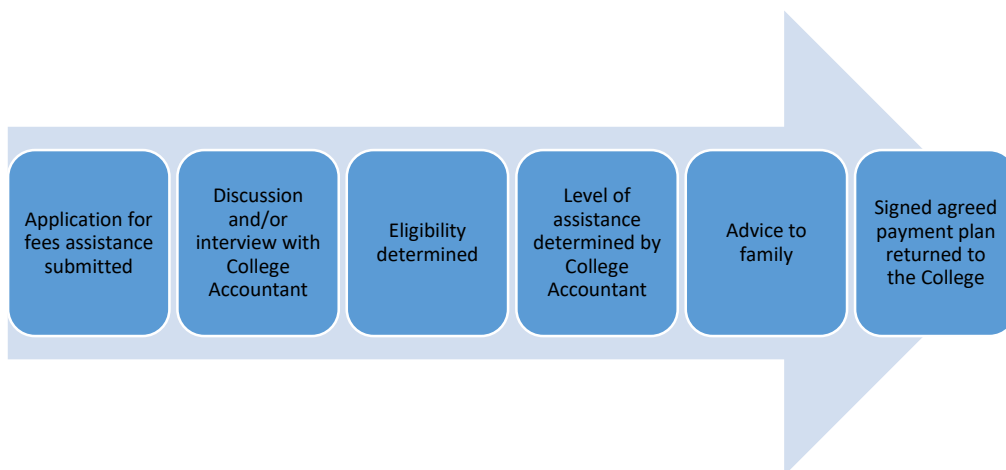
*A situation where a family is unable because of illness, unemployment or other reasonable cause, to discharge their financial obligations to pay full school fees, rather than an unwillingness to do so.
Financial hardship can be of limited or long term duration.*

If a family indicates that they will have difficulty with payment at the time of enrolment or at any time during their son(s) enrolment, the College welcomes the completion of a Fees Assistance Application. These are available from the College. Fee Assistance is means tested and parents/carers will be required to provide a detailed statement of their financial position. On submission of an application,

with the required documented supporting evidence, a discussion and/or appointment will be made with the College Accountant in the first instance.

The family will be advised of the decision and informed in writing within two weeks of the receipt of the completed Fees Assistance application by the College Accountant. Assistance granted will be subject to an annual review of the parents/carers financial situation, including resubmission of all financial information.

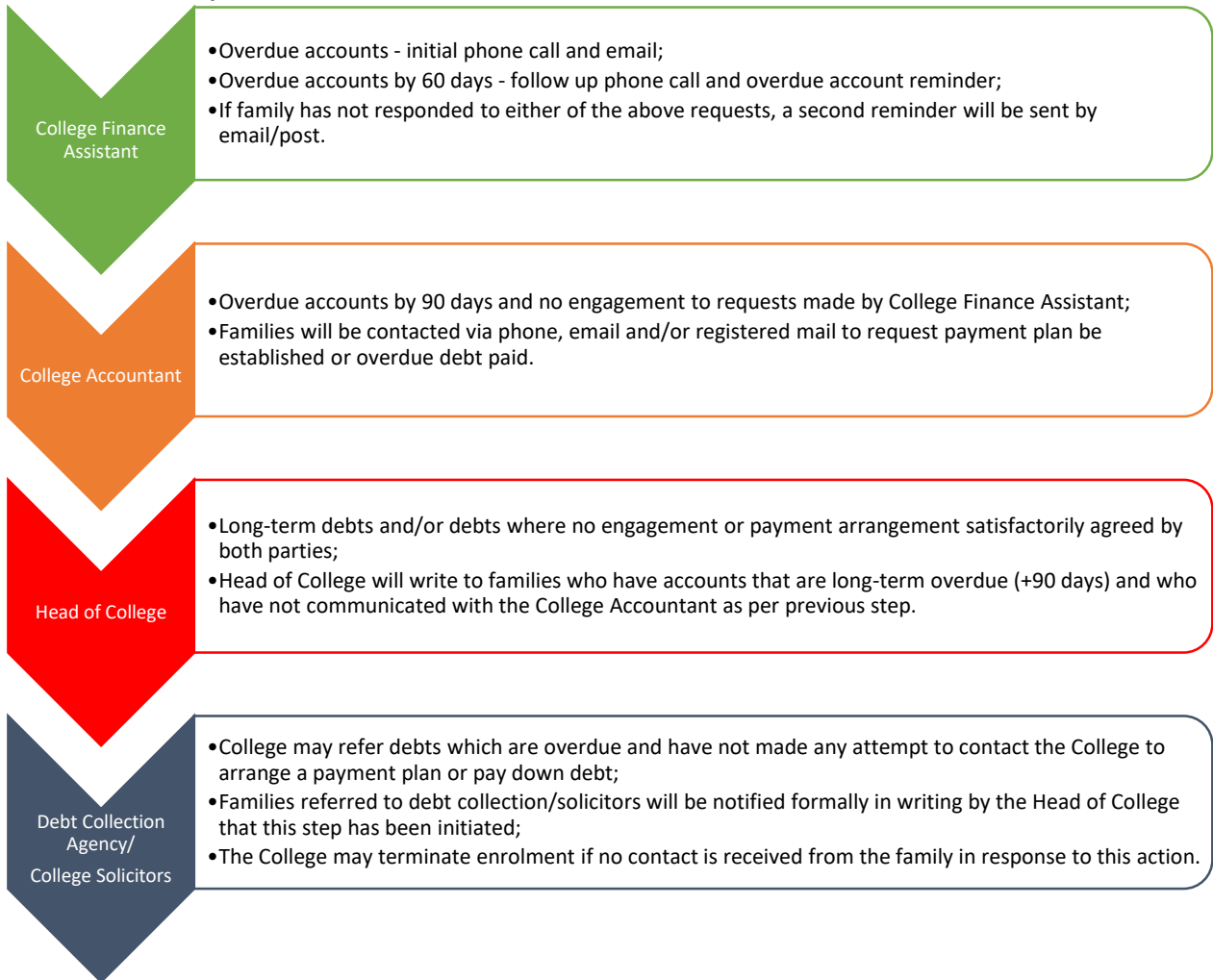
The Head of College retains the right to revoke fees assistance at any time during the period of enrolment.



2.11 Collection of Unpaid School Fees

Collection is the action of collecting unpaid monies. It takes place to secure payment from families who are legally bound to pay school fees. If families have the capacity to meet their commitments and fail to do so, debt collection processes will result. This escalation may result in the account being referred to a Debt Collection Agency or the College Solicitors. The College will consider each family account on a case by case basis and in accordance with the documented fees collection process as outlined below.

3. Overdue or Unpaid Fees Collection Process



4. Appendices

Appendix A – School Fee Agreement Form



ST STANISLAUS' COLLEGE

SCHOOL FEE AGREEMENT FORM

In accordance with the St Stanislaus' College Fees Management Policy and Enrolment Policy, this School Fee Agreement is reached between St Stanislaus' College and the parents/carers of:

FAMILY NAME: _____

SON(S) NAME(S): _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT (please tick in either Section A or B)

Please indicate in the following table the method of payment that you will utilise to pay your school fees and charges accounts.

I/we will make full payment by term of each invoice within 14 days of the invoice date by:		
A	Direct Credit <input type="checkbox"/>	BPAY <input type="checkbox"/>
OR		
I/we wish to pay fees periodically as follows and understand that invoices will be issued each term		
B	Direct Debit	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Fortnightly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
	BPAY	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Fortnightly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly

SCHOOL FEE ACCOUNT BILLING

The following should be noted by parents/carers in relation to account billing:

- Accounts will be addressed to all parties who have signed the enrolment application.
- Accounts will be emailed unless a mailed copy is requested.

AGREEMENT

- I/We acknowledge as parents/carers that we are jointly and severally responsible for the payment of school fees in full and/or in accordance with arrangements made.
- I/We understand that school fees accounts will be issued each term and sundry accounts issued twice per term.
- I/We agree to meet my commitment by the payment method indicated on this Agreement.
- I/We understand that any costs associated with the collection of outstanding school fees will be further invoiced to the school fee account and payment will be required.
- I/We acknowledge that personal information and details of outstanding school fees may be disclosed to outside agencies for debt collection activities should I/we default in payment.
- I/We undertake to contact the school to make amendments should circumstances change that may result in differences to this agreement including but not limited to sibling enrolment, change of bank accounts, change of payment method, etc.

Parent/Carer Name: _____ Signature: _____

Parent/Carer Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email address for accounts: _____

Date: _____