



# School Fees Policy

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## 1. Purpose

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) is committed to ensuring a quality Catholic education is affordable and accessible for all families.

Approximately 80 percent of the funding for Catholic systemic schools comes from Commonwealth and State funding, with the remaining funds from tuition fees and other charges.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure fair and equitable school fee assistance and collection processes across all schools in the Diocese of Parramatta.

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## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to Parents/Carers with children enrolled in CSPD schools and parents/carers seeking an enrolment for their child in a CSPD school.

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## 3. Principles

- 3.1 Parents/Carers who are able to pay school fees are expected to pay them in accordance with the Enrolment Contract. It is acknowledged that families' situations can change and that this can have an impact on their capacity to pay in accordance with the Policy.
  - 3.2 This Policy will be applied in a way that is just, consistent, respectful, compassionate and transparent.
  - 3.3 CSPD will **not** deny a student access to a Catholic education in a CSPD school due to genuine financial hardship.
  - 3.4 The confidentiality of Parents'/Carers' personal information is paramount and CSPD's Privacy Policy applies.
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## 4. The enrolment contract

When Parents/Carers enrol their child in a CSPD school, they enter into an Enrolment Contract with Catholic schools Parramatta Diocese. The Enrolment Contract is created when each step below is finalised:

- 4.1 Parents/carers complete an application for enrolment and provide all necessary documentation in support of the application. All parts of the form are signed by the parents/carers who are responsible for engaging in the enrolment of their child/children; and
  - 4.2 The school Principal makes an assessment of the application and sends an offer of enrolment to Parents/Carers; and
  - 4.3 Parents/Carers sign the Enrolment Acceptance Agreement which is attached to the Letter of Offer; and
  - 4.4 Parents/Carers pay the Enrolment deposit.  
*Note: The enrolment deposit is credited to the first instalment charged.*
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## 5. Responsibility for paying fees

- 5.1 The Parents/Carers signing the *Enrolment Application* and *Acceptance Form* are, under law, jointly and severally liable for any debt incurred whilst the student is enrolled at the school.
  - 5.2 As the obligation to pay school fees is joint and several, CSPD has a legal right to commence proceedings for recovery of outstanding school fees against either both the signatories of the contract or individually at its discretion.
  - 5.3 Family law orders about child support apply to the individuals named in the orders and not to CSPD and therefore, do not compel CSPD to change its contract with Parents/Carers. In these cases, payment of fees will still be required. Child support payments from one parent to another generally do not impact the obligation of either parent/carer to pay school fees where both are parties to the Enrolment Contract. For more information, contact the CSPD Community Liaison team at [cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au).
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## 6. Terminating an enrolment contract

- 6.1 Terminating an Enrolment Contract does **not** absolve Parents/Carers of their respective liability for any unpaid school fees.
- 6.2 An enrolment can only be terminated by the person or persons who signed the Enrolment Contract. One (1) party of joint signatories cannot by themselves terminate the enrolment liability. CSPD, at its discretion, may waive the enrolment liability on compassionate grounds.

- 6.3 Enrolment Contracts for students being educated within the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese may be terminated when:
- a. **Both** parties agree to one (1) of the parties being able to terminate the original enrolment contract by completing and signing a *Variation of Enrolment Agreement* or providing written consent. It is not sufficient for one of the parties to advise the School or CSPD that the other party consents to the variation of enrolment. Direct consent/correspondence from each signatory to the original enrolment contract is required.
 

Both parties remain liable for fees incurred during the term of the original enrolment. Where one (1) party does not consent to the removal of the other party's liability, both parties remain liable for all outstanding and for all school fees going forward.
  - b. A Parent/Carer does **not** want his/her child educated in a CSPD school (ie. the child is withdrawn from a CSPD school). The outstanding fees will remain payable.
  - c. CSPD has determined it is in the best interests of the child and the school community for the child to be excluded permanently from the school and the CSPD system of schools. The student's Parents/Carers will be consulted in this process. Any decision to exclude a child permanently from CSPD schools will be made in accordance with the CSPD [Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion Procedure](#). When CSPD determines that a student needs to be transferred to another CSPD school as per the procedures, parents remain liable for any outstanding school fees at the original school.
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## 7. School fees payable

- 7.1 Parents/Carers who have the capacity to pay fees and who are not in genuine financial hardship are expected to pay them.
  - 7.2 All school fees are expected to be paid within 30 days of the invoice/statement date unless a payment arrangement is agreed to by the school, in writing, prior to the initial payment due date.
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## 8. Legal Action

Where school fee accounts remain unpaid and no prior arrangement or contact has been made with the School or the CPSD School Fee Liaison Unit, or arrangements previously made are subsequently not adhered to, CSPD may choose to commence

legal action to recover outstanding monies. *CSPD will only begin legal action when all other reasonable avenues to resolve the debt have been exhausted.*

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## 9. Fee support for families in financial hardship

### 9.1 Equity and Catholic Ethos

- a. Families in genuine financial hardship situations will be supported in a dignified, respectful and confidential manner. This support will also take into account cultural sensitivities when they are known. This includes making a determination about what reasonable contribution the signatory/ies to the enrolment contract can make toward their child's education.
- b. Requests for fee support should be made through the school in the first instance.
- c. Assessment of eligibility for fee support may be reviewed at the request of a Parent/Carer or a school. A review may not result in a change to the original assessment outcome.

### 9.2 Bishop Manning Support Fund (BMSF)

- a. *The Bishop Manning Support Fund (BMSF)* provides full or part bursaries to assist families in need who desire a Catholic school education for their child/ren, but for whom the cost is out of reach.
- b. The BMSF applies to new enrolments (enrolling in the following year) to a school within the Diocese of Parramatta. You can learn more about the BMSF [here](#).

### 9.3 Byallawa Co-Contribution Fund

- a. Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families will be considered for school fee co-contribution under the BYALLAWA Co-contribution Fund. Eligibility criteria for BYALLAWA is available [here](#).
- b. The BYALLAWA scheme offered for a student in a systemic Catholic Primary school will be continued in a systemic Catholic Secondary school, unless family financial circumstances change.

### 9.4 Families Eligible for Centrelink support

- a. Families who are eligible for Centrelink support may be considered for a concession on school fees. Eligibility criteria for this support is available by contacting the School Fee Liaison team via

[cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au). Parents are required to provide a Centrelink Consent form to CSPD.

- b. Parents/Carers who meet the criteria will be granted a concession on fees for the current year only unless they have also completed an Application for School Fee Assistance. Families who are eligible for this concession, and have provided an application with supporting documentation, qualify for two (2) years of financial assistance.

#### 9.5 Alternative to Centrelink Customer Consent Form process

*Parents/Carers can also make an application for School Fee Assistance that does not involve completion of a Centrelink Customer Consent form. For more information about this, contact the CSPD School Fee Liaison Team at [cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au).*

#### 9.6 Other Types of Fee Relief

There may be other circumstances where families may be eligible for partial or full fee concessions for a period of time. Parents/Carers are asked to contact their school for more information or contact the School Fees Liaison Team at [cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au).

#### 9.7 Assessment of Families With Children in More than one (1) School

Where a Parent/Carer with children in more than one (1) CSPD school approaches more than one (1) school for assistance, a system approach to the assessment will be taken to ensure a consistent outcome in the shortest possible time.

#### 9.8 Annual Review of Fee Support

- a. Families who apply for a concession on school fees must complete a financial review within the 12 months anniversary of the previous concession. In some cases, where an initial assessment of eligibility for fee support establishes that the family's capacity to pay is unlikely to change, the following year's fees may also be waived.
  - b. Where families have qualified for part concession, the remaining amount required to be paid in instalments must be paid in full prior to the next review, unless there are other circumstances that make this unreasonable.
  - c. A family may be refused further assistance if they refuse to pay the amount agreed to as a condition of the part concession granted.
  - d. Fee concessions will not extend beyond the anniversary date without completing the financial review.
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## 10. Supporting families with children and young people in out-of-home care

Families who are supporting children through out-of-home care will be assessed for school fee concessions in the same way as any family that is experiencing financial difficulty. In pursuing its Policy, CSPD may in some cases waive school fees for students in out-of-home care on compassionate grounds.

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## 11. 10-week notice period - withdrawal of student's enrolment

- 11.1 The Parent/Carer must give the school at least one (1) school term's written notice of their intention to withdraw the child's enrolment at the school. This does **not** apply if the child is leaving the school because they have completed Year 6 or Year 12 at the school.
  - 11.2 Enrolment signatories must pay one (1) school term's fees if they do **not** give the school the above written notice at least one (1) school term before the child's withdrawal.
  - 11.3 One (1) school term means 10 school weeks.
  - 11.4 One exception to the notice period is that notice in writing will be accepted at any time during Term 4 in relation to the following year's enrolment. That is, the notice period of one (1) school term will be waived in this circumstance.
  - 11.5 Student transfers from one (1) school to another within the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese system of schools does **not** incur additional fees.
  - 11.6 There are some other circumstances that would warrant a waiving of the notice period. To find out more about what these circumstances are, contact the CSPD School Fee Liaison Team at [cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au).
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## 12. Further information

For more information on this Policy, contact CSPD on (02) 9840 5600 or via email at [cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au).

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