



Mater Dei Primary School Ashgrove West

SCHOOL FEE COLLECTION AND PAYMENT PROTOCOLS

Rationale:

This document outlines the procedures at Mater Dei School regarding the collection and remission of school fees and is written in accordance with the Brisbane Catholic Education Guidelines and Policy Statement: *Financial Accessibility of Catholic Education Schools (Sept 2008)*.

School administration is responsible for financial management that reflects the intent and strategic directions of the School. School administration is responsible for planning and implementing a responsible school budget to fully resource the educational needs of the children.

This protocol is based on the premise that when parents make the decision to send their child to a Catholic school they also take on the responsibility to contribute financially to their child's education. The school, therefore, holds an expectation that all parents will commit themselves to sharing the financial needs of the school by way of meeting school fee accounts and contributing to the financial welfare for capital development.

The school also upholds, however, that no child will be excluded from Mater Dei on the grounds of genuine inability of their family to pay fee. Balancing the needs and financial commitments of the school with the social justice principles of access and equity for all is our priority.

The school determines fees in accordance with the recommendations of Brisbane Catholic education and in consultation with the Parish Finance Committee to ensure that financial commitments and operating costs are met.

Principles:

- The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity, justice and diligence.
- The Principal in consultation with the BCE Support Accountants shall ensure that school fees are set at a level that is affordable to the community.
- Requests for assistance shall be treated with dignity, fairness, compassion and confidentiality

- In justice to families who pay their schools fees regularly and on time the School will thoroughly follow-up on all overdue school fee accounts.
- Parents/ caregivers who are unable to pay by the due date have an obligation to contact the School to make alternative arrangements.

Procedures:

Accounts

School fees are emailed to families from [PASW Finance@bne.catholic.edu.au](mailto:PASW_Finance@bne.catholic.edu.au) usually by the second or third week of each term.

Payment is required by the due date which is always shown on the fee statement.

Once the due date has passed the following procedures apply:

1. A general reminder is emailed giving parents 7 days to attend to payment.
2. If 7 days have passed and there has been no contact with school, the parents receive a letter/email from the Principal requiring them to pay immediately or to contact the Principal on the next working day.
3. If contact is made, the Principal is then to arrange for appointments to occur at the earliest possible time. If no payment is received or contact made, the Principal immediately contacts the family.

Should an account remain unpaid the school may reluctantly engage the services of a professional debt collection agency. Once accounts have been handed to the debt collection agency the matter effectively passes out of the school's control. Your credit rating may also be affected.

A fee of \$11.00 will be charged for all dishonoured direct debit and credit card payments. All collection fees for accounts in arrears will be passed onto the families concerned.

Payment Difficulties – Fee Concession

Families need to contact the school if they are experiencing difficulty which could affect the payment of fees by the due date.

Families with limited capacity to pay school fees have an entitlement to apply for a concession on School Tuition Fees. Concession applications are accepted at the commencement of each year or when hardship occurs. Concessions are not ongoing and applications must be resubmitted at the commencement of each new school year.

Families seeking an extension of time or concession are required to apply for this using the "Application for Concession on Fees" obtainable from the Parent Portal and submit this form to the school office along with supporting documentation. These documents can be sent in an envelope marked "Private" and addressed to the Principal. A follow up appointment with the Principal is needed to discuss options. All correspondence and discussions are held in strictest confidence.

The Principal may grant a concession where he/she is satisfied with the documentary evidence provided.

Concessions or extensions will be based on short term financial hardship such as illness/accident resulting in loss of income, loss of job or other significant event resulting in loss of income. No allowance is made for repayments on such items as holiday house, investment homes, pools, etc.

Once a concession is granted, it is essential that this commitment be honoured in full and on time. Families are required to inform the school if a change to the financial situation takes place i.e. recommencement of employment.

All concession fees will be paid through Direct Debit or as agreed upon with the Principal

Credits/Discounts

For new enrolments, an enrolment fee of \$300 is charged upon Confirmation of Enrolment. This fee is non-refundable if you do not attend Mater Dei. The amount of \$200 is deducted from the first fee issues once your child commences at Mater Dei School.

It is appreciated that changing family circumstances will sometimes require that a student transfers to another school. Fees will be payable for the whole of the month in which the enrolment is terminated, except in cases where fair notice is given or where it is deemed that fair notice was impractical.

School Camps:

Children from Years 4-6 participate in our camping program. Costs incurred for these activities will be included with the relevant term's fees account. For the Year 6 excursion to Canberra costs will be spread out over a number of terms to make payment more affordable for families.

Voluntary Parish Contribution

The Parish Finance Committee has requested the collection of a \$10 per term Voluntary Parish Contribution for those families not already contributing to the Planned Giving Program in the Parish. Mater Dei is a Parish Primary School and we are supported in our work by the personnel and resources of the Parish. This is a voluntary contribution. All funds contributed will be forwarded to the parish. This contribution is not tax deductible.

Library Fund Donation

The Library Fund is a donation suggested to each family. The funds collected through this process are used to meet the costs of current and future resources in the Mater Dei Library. The Library Fund is registered with the Australian Tax Office thus allowing parents to access the tax advantage. Please contact the Office if you would like to donate to this fund.

Building Fund Donation

The Building Fund is a donation suggested to each family. The funds collected through this process help to enhance our capital development program. The School Building Fund is registered with the Australian Tax Office thus allowing parents to access the tax advantage. As we plan for future building upgrades, the Building Fund is an enormous support to providing first class facilities in which students can learn and play. Please contact the Office if you would like to donate to this fund.

PAYMENT METHODS

Payment by BPay or DIRECT DEBIT REQUEST are the preferred method of payments. The appropriate Forms for Direct Debit are available on the Parent Portal. ***Forms need to be completed and returned to School Office at the beginning of each year.***

SCHOOL FEES BY DIRECT DEBIT REQUEST

Direct Debit/Credit Card Authority allows the Archdiocesan Development Fund (ADF) to deduct from your account an agreed amount weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly, on behalf of Mater Dei School, to cover any or all of the School Fees mentioned in this documentation. If you use direct debit as your method of payment it is important that you read the Service Agreement on the reverse of the Direct Debit Form.

BENEFITS

- Transmission occurs automatically each month
- Transmission is secure – no cash changes hands
- The process of counting and banking funds is greatly reduced, assisting the school's administration
- This is a **FREE** service
- The ADF guarantees complete confidentiality on behalf of Mater Dei School.

CONSIDERATIONS

- The rejection of a direct debit by your bank due to insufficient funds in the nominated account incurs charges to your account from your bank. These charges are completely outside the control of the ADF or Mater Dei School. In addition, the ADF will charge the school a rejection fee for every direct debit that is rejected due to insufficient funds being available in the family's nominated bank account. The School will in turn pass on to the family the cost of rejection, namely \$11.00.
- You will need to contact your bank or financial institution to establish if your account is suitable for direct debiting to occur. Credit card and passbook accounts cannot be used for direct debits.
- Because school fees will change from year to year, a new Direct Debit Request Form will need to be provided each year.
- Direct Debit arrangements do not necessarily take into consideration the costs of camps so families will need to make arrangements with the school to cover the costs of these activities.

HOW TO BECOME A DIRECT DEBIT USER

- Complete the Direct Debit Request Forms available on the Parent Portal
- **Return the completed form to the school office in a timely manner.**

School fees can also be paid by the following methods:

BPay

Families can contact their participating financial institution to make a payment from their cheque or savings account. The schools Biller Code and individual Reference Number is printed on the school fees invoice. Payment can be made by telephone or internet transfer using these reference numbers.

Credit Card and EFTPOS

Credit card payments can be made by completing the return section of the school fees notice or at the school office. Eftpos from cheque or savings accounts can also be made at the school office.

Cheques/Cash

Cheques made payable to Mater Dei School can be returned to the school office with the tear off section of the fees notice. Cash payments can be handed directly to office staff and a cash receipt will be issued.