

# Stuartholme School Fees Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide information regarding the payment of fees at Stuartholme School.	
<b>Scope:</b>	<p>School Board members, relevant staff, parents/guardians (current and future), hirers of school facilities.</p> <p>This policy covers all fees and charges, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition and Boarding Fees</li> <li>• Incidental Charges (e.g. library, school shop, taxis, boarding recreation)</li> <li>• Any other charge applied against a debtor statement</li> <li>• Any charge applied against a non-student debtor invoice (such as a hire fee).</li> </ul>	
<b>Status:</b>	Final	<b>Supersedes:</b> All previous Fee Policies
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Board Chair	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> October 2017
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) debt collection guidelines for collectors and creditors</li> <li>• Enrolment Policy</li> <li>• Other related policies</li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Every three years	<b>Next Review Date:</b> October 2020
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	School Governing Body	

### Policy Statement

Stuartholme School (**School**) is a Catholic Independent girl's day and boarding school conducted by the Society of the Sacred Heart. It is a Company limited by guarantee governed by a Board of Directors.

The School aims to:

- develop and promote the Stuartholme family in the Sacred Heart tradition as a contemporary Catholic learning community;
- develop and deliver a curriculum that responds effectively to the individual needs of students, while challenging them to strive to achieve their personal best; and
- educate young women for critical discernment of heart and mind.

The School is guided by its mission, values and ethos in determining financial arrangements related to student enrolment. Compassion and support extended to families in need are integral parts of the ethos of the School. The School is committed to exploring all reasonable means of containing fees, levies and charges on parents/guardians, so as to maintain its inclusivity and diversity, while continuing to meet its financial obligations and ensure its financial sustainability.

The quality education provided by the School is dependent upon the payment of fees that are essential to supplement government funding.

The School acknowledges the commitment made by many parents/guardians who have chosen to send their children to the School. The School Board sets the fees at a level that enables the provision of excellence in teaching and learning and ensures the effective functioning of the School. The major part of the annual budget is allocated to the payment of salaries to teachers and staff at the School. In addition, the School must budget for ongoing maintenance, repayment of capital loans, refurbishment and new building projects.

As the majority of the School's annual recurrent income (65%) is derived from fees, it is vital that fees are paid on time to ensure the continued efficient financial management of the School. The various fee payment options to assist families in meeting this requirement are set out below.

### Tuition & Boarding Fees

Fee Schedules are reviewed and approved annually by the Board, and published in advance of the forthcoming calendar year. Fees may be subject to change, without notice, as a result of changes to Australian legislation and/or regulations.

Fee inclusions are listed in detail on our website at [www.stuartholme.com](http://www.stuartholme.com).

A student that commences during the Term will be charged pro-rata of the full Term's Fees.

Temporary boarding is available if there is room in the boarding house, please note we have a minimum of four weeks.

### Fees and Bonds relating to Enrolment

Please refer to the Enrolment Policy.

### Concessions & Discounts

The School is pleased to offer concessions/discounts on fees in some circumstances.

#### Sibling Discount

In the case of two or more Sisters attending the School at the same time, a discount of 10% off tuition fees applies automatically to the younger sister. A discount of 25% is applied automatically for subsequent siblings. No concession is provided on boarding fees for new boarders starting in 2018 and beyond. Please note that Incidental Charges are not included in the tuition or boarding fees and will still need to be paid as and when they fall due.

#### Bursary

In circumstances of financial hardship, it is important that the School is advised immediately so that compassionate considerations can occur. Parents/guardians requiring financial assistance will be required to complete a financial assessment together with supporting documentation in order that their application may be fairly assessed. The Principal and the Commercial Director may negotiate terms for payments where it is considered in the interests of both parties.

#### Fees in Advance Discount

If a full year's tuition fee and/or boarding fee is paid in advance by no later than 4:00pm the second Friday in December, a discount of 2.5% will apply. Please note that Incidental Charges are not included in the fees will still need to be paid as and when they fall due.

#### Fees in Advance Beyond One Year

If parents/guardians wish to pay tuition and/or boarding fees for a time period greater than one year, please contact the School Accountant for a specific quotation.

If there are multiple concessions, the concessions are applied in the following order:

1. Sibling Discount,
2. Bursary or Scholarship on the net balance, then
3. Fees in Advance Discount on the net balance.

### Fee Payment Options

The parents/guardians of a student are jointly and individually responsible for payment of tuition fees and any other costs associated with the student's enrolment at the School in one of the following ways:

- online payment via the school website or parent portal;
- BPAY,
- direct debit – can be setup by completing the form our website. Please note that a dishonour fee of \$1.10 will be charged in the case of a dishonoured payment;
- direct deposit; or
- credit cards – MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Diners Club. Please note that a merchant fee surcharge of 1% will apply to all fee transactions paid by credit card.

The School will not be involved in any family matters. In the case of all families, including divorced or separated families, debtor accounts cannot be split and any shared payment arrangements must be managed between the parents/guardians without the school's involvement.

### Billing Cycle

School Fee statements will normally be issued 4 weeks prior to the commencement of each Term and will be due and payable by 4:00pm on the due date shown on the Fee Statement. All accounts are required to have a zero balance at the end of each school year. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that contact details and associated bank account/credit card details are current.

Parents/guardians who are unable to pay by the due date are to promptly contact the Accounts Receivable Officer [receivables@stuartholme.com](mailto:receivables@stuartholme.com) to arrange a suitable payment plan via direct debit.

### Parents and Guardians with Students in Year 12

As is customary in schools, parents/guardians of Year 12 students will need to have paid all tuition, boarding and other Incidental Charges by the end of Term 3. In your daughter's final year, parents/guardians will be billed only three times in equal amounts for tuition, and boarding (if applicable), in advance of Term 1, Term 2 and Term 3. A final statement will be issued at the end of Term 4 for any Incidental Charges.

### Reminder Policy

The following reminders are standard procedure in the School:

- 3 days prior to due date – SMS reminder;
- 1 week post due date – Email reminder with duplicate statement; and
- 1 week+ post due date – Follow up email and/or call from the School's Finance team.

### Late Payment

The School supports equitable principles regarding the payment of school fees. It is a condition of acceptance of each child into the School that parents/guardians meet their obligation to pay school fees on time. Students will not be enrolled in optional co-curricular or other school related programs such as overseas exchanges and excursions unless fee accounts are current or a direct debit is in place.

If school fees and additional Incidental Charges are 10 weeks or more in arrears, a late payment administration fee of \$150 will apply each Term. No late payment administration fee will be charged if a direct debit is in place and there has been no more than one dishonour per year.

In fairness to families who pay their School fees regularly and on time, the School will follow-up all overdue school fee accounts. If fees are overdue, the following collection process will commence:

- First day of Term: Fees due.
- Week 2 of Term (1 week late): Email reminder with duplicate statement.
- Week 3 of Term (2 weeks late): Follow up email and/or call from the School's Finance team.
- Week 5 of Term (4 weeks late): Letter emailed with request to meet with the Fees Administrator and/or the Commercial Director to resolve the matter.

If a resolution cannot be achieved before the end of Term, the outstanding and overdue account will be passed over to the School's collection agency for full debt collection/recovery. On each occasion the School has cause to issue a notice, e.g. Letter of Demand, concerning outstanding fees, an administrative charge of \$50 will be applied. Any recovery costs incurred by the School (including but not limited to demand letters/skip/trace and solicitors' involvements) will be added to the amount outstanding.

Parents/guardians of International Students should note that if fee statements are not paid by the last date of demand, the Department of Immigration will be notified by the School. This could result in the cancellation of the student's visa.

### **Suspension**

Once the debt is in a 'full debt collection' category and parents/guardians do not make contact or do not commence payment of fee, the student(s) may be suspended by the Principal until such time as arrangements are made for the fees to be paid.

### **Termination**

The School reserves the right to terminate the student's enrolment if fees are unpaid or collection process result in a lack of participation from the parents/guardians to honour the outstanding fees.

### **Boarding Fee Payment Policy**

No student will be permitted to commence a new term whilst all or part of the previous term's fees remain unpaid unless special arrangements are set in place and are maintained. Arrangements are subject to regular review. The School also reserves the right to withhold student report cards and/or statements of reference if accounts remain overdue at the end of the term.

### **Withdrawal / Transfer / Payment**

Parents/guardians wishing to withdraw their daughter's enrolment prior to her completion of Year 12 are reminded that one term's written notice is required.

Failure to provide one term's written notice to the Principal will result in the payment or forfeiture (as the case may be) to the School of one Term's tuition fees and the Confirmation of Enrolment Bond.

Please note:

The School reserves the right, when necessary, to withdraw enrolment from a student when:

- fees are outstanding at the end of the school year;
- evidence of inability to pay fees is received by the School e.g. bankruptcy;
- agreed commitments for the payment of School Fees have consistently not been met; and
- there is on-going discourtesy in relation to the payment of fees and refusal to agree upon a sustainable payment plan via direct debit.

### **Voluntary Contributions to the Building Fund and Foundation**

The facilities of the School exist due to the generous support given by many families and individuals since its foundation in 1920. Each generation of the School invests in expanding and improving the facilities for their own benefit and that of the next generation.

Like all schools, our facilities must be constantly maintained and developed to meet the changing educational needs of our students. The School's borrowing program ensures that both current and future generations contribute equitably to capital works.

Parents/guardians are invited to support the School Building Maintenance Fund which addresses building repairs and maintenance programs at the School. This voluntary Fund will appear on the fee account each term and is fully tax-deductible.

The Stuartholme School Foundation supports future capital works at the School. The Master Plan is available on the School website. This voluntary Fund will also appear on the fee account each term and is fully tax-deductible.

### Scholarship Fund

Families are also asked to consider making a voluntary contribution to the Scholarship Fund. This fund allows students whose families cannot otherwise afford an education at Stuartholme School to attend the School.

### Tax Deductibility

The School Building Fund, Foundation and the Scholarship Fund are endorsed as deductible gift recipients (DGR) under Subdivision 30-BA of the *Income Tax Assessment Act* (ITAA) 1997. Contributions to one or all three funds are fully tax deductible.

### Definitions

- **Incidental Charges** refer to any fees or charges not included in School Fees. For example, health centre, boarding recreation activities, school uniforms, taxis, IT/Laptop damage outside of insurance, lost or damaged library books
- **International Students** means student who is not entitled to reside permanently in Australia but who may be enrolled at a school in Australia under certain circumstances.
- **Parents/guardian** means the persons who at law has responsibility for the long term care, welfare and development of the student; or the day to day care, welfare and development of the student and includes include legal guardians who have applied to have a student placed on the Enrolment Register or enrolled at the School and, where the student has only one parent, means that parent. ).
- **School Fees** refers to all tuition fees and any other charges in relation to activities associated with the student's attendance at the School.
- **Sisters** is in relation to this Policy means two or more girls enrolled at the School (with at least one biological or adoptive parent in common) irrespective of their place of resident.

***The School reserves the right to update and change the School Fee Policy and at such times this will be communicated to the parents/guardians.***