

# 8.01A

## MERCY EDUCATION LTD POLICY 8.01A SETTING SCHOOL FEES AT MERCY COLLEGES

### Rationale:

Mercy Colleges provide a comprehensive curriculum, experienced and dedicated staff and modern resources and facilities to meet the educational needs of their clientele. To support the provision of outstanding educational *Service* to their communities, the Colleges governed by Mercy Education Ltd set an appropriate fee level for their individual situations. *Justice* to all requires that fee levels be equitable, while in the tradition of Mercy *Compassion* is shown to those in need.

### Definition:

School fees are the amounts charged by Colleges to families to contribute to the education of their children. They include tuition charges, levies and contributions to building funds.

Parent includes all other forms of legal guardianship as well.

### Policy Statement:

- A01 To ensure the financial viability of each of the Mercy Colleges, all parents are required to actively support the school financially by the payment of school fees.
- A02 Payment of fees by parents who are in a position to do so enables Colleges to offer financial assistance and concessions to those families not in a position to contribute their full share. As such, all school fee setting should include suitable provision for financial assistance to those who would not otherwise be able to attend the College.
- A03 The setting of fee levels is the responsibility of each individual College and should reflect the required level of finance to maintain excellence in education as well as the socio-economic status of the school community. Fee levels should reflect responsible financial management informed by the values of *justice*, fairness and *compassion*.

- A04 Fee structures and billing procedures should be kept as simple and streamlined as possible. Each Mercy College shall have a clear, written fee schedule which includes fee structures, billing procedures and collection guidelines.
- A05 Special consideration should be given to the difficulties faced by families trying to provide Catholic education for multiple children, and a suitable family discount should be provided where multiple children from the same family are attending the College.
- A06 Colleges should provide a range of payment options for parents to pay fees. These alternatives should include the option to pay via an instalment plan. Colleges may also choose to offer a small discount to encourage early payment of fees.
- A07 In accordance with the Catholic Church's preferential option for the poor, no baptised Catholic is to be excluded from enrolment on grounds of incapacity to pay.
- A08 Financial assistance through fee concession should be provided to needy families and those experiencing difficult circumstances. Policies and practices for such assistance should be transparent and communicated appropriately to all families.
- A09 Requests for fee relief shall be treated in a spirit of *justice*, *dignity*, *compassion* and confidentiality. Ultimately the Principal of the College approves any recommendation for concession and fee relief.
- A10 Where families are receiving financial assistance through fee concession, the access of students to optional school programs (such as instrumental music lessons, school formals, overseas or interstate travel programs) which do not form part of the core school curriculum is determined according to the local policy of the College.
- A11 As a general principle, staff employed at Mercy Colleges shall access school charges and discounts at the same rates as the rest of the school community. Exceptions shall require the authorisation of the Board.
- A12 School fees will be approved annually by the Board of Mercy Education.
- A13 Each College's policies and procedures in regard to school fees and other charges are to be consistent with the relevant Catholic Education Office's policies in this matter.

**Associated Procedures:**

Procedure 8.01B: Setting School Fees at Mercy Colleges  
SACSS Fees Policy: 2006

**Related Documents:**

Policy 8.02A: Collection of Outstanding Fees at Mercy Colleges  
Procedure 8.02B: Collection of Outstanding Fees at Mercy Colleges  
Catholic Education Office Melbourne: School Fees Policy  
Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: School Fees Setting and  
Collection Policy

**Review History**

Approved May 2014  
Revised November 2015

**Next Review**

2017