



TASMANIAN
CATHOLIC
education commission

POLICY (TACTICAL) SCHOOL FEES ASSISTANCE

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Enrolment for Catholic Schools

SCHOOL FEES ASSISTANCE POLICY

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Enrolment for Catholic Schools

RATIONALE

Catholic social teaching and tradition echo the Gospel imperative of a 'preferential option for the poor' and the Catholic school sector's practice has been to find a place for families who support its ethos but are unable to participate in a Catholic school community without financial assistance.

...the Church earnestly entreats pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfil their function in a continually more perfect way, and especially in caring for the needs of those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of the assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of Faith.

*Paul VI, Declaration on Christian Education,
Gravissimum Educationis (October 28, 1965)*

Financial assistance is a tangible way for the Catholic school sector to provide opportunities for the financially less fortunate families within our community to enrol their child at a Catholic school. No child should be denied a Catholic education because of the cost of fees. In accordance with the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission *Vision and Mission Statement* (2006) this policy endeavours to:

- *respond to human need with compassion, fairness and justice that respects the dignity of all, and*
- *actively engage with and support the marginalised and disenfranchised within our community and the wider society.*

POLICY

The objective of this policy is to provide access to Catholic education to those families whose children are eligible for enrolment¹ but who are unable to enrol because of financial hardship.

DEFINITIONS

School Fee Discounts Available to all families with three or more children in a Catholic School.

School Fee Assistance Available to families with significant financial needs who would otherwise be unable to afford to send their children to a Catholic school.

PRINCIPLES

1. Catholic schools are accessible to all families willing to support the Catholic ethos regardless of their personal, financial and pastoral circumstances.
2. No family who supports the Catholic ethos should be denied a place at a Catholic school because of an inability to afford full fees.
3. Each school Principal in collaboration with that school's Board using the general guidelines outlined in this policy is responsible for identifying and supporting those families who may need assistance.
4. The provision of school fees assistance should be at the discretion of the Principal based on a pastoral interview and a completed fees assistance application form.
5. Allowance should be made in a school's budget for fee discounts and fee reductions.

PROCEDURES / GUIDELINES / REQUIREMENTS

¹ See TCEC Enrolment Policy and individual school enrolment policies

1. Principals are encouraged to use the application procedures prepared by the TCEC from time to time to promote equitable and fair treatment within the Tasmanian Catholic education sector.
2. There are two forms of fee assistance for families in need:
 - Fee discounts for families with 3 or more children in Catholic schools.
 - Fee reductions for families in financial hardship.
3. A family is eligible for School Fee Assistance regardless of whether all children attend the one Tasmanian Catholic school or different Tasmanian Catholic schools.
4. Recommended minimum fee discounts which should be offered are as follows:
 - Three children – 10% for each child in a Tasmanian Catholic school.
 - Four children – 20% for each child in a Tasmanian Catholic school.
 - Five or more children – 30% for each child in a Tasmanian Catholic school.
5. The fee discount application process² provides a family with three or more children with an opportunity to apply for a fee discount that should be granted without the need for any further enquiry.
6. Families who wish to pay full fees without applying for the discount may do so by not making an application for a discount thereby enabling those fees to be used to support the whole school community.
7. School Principals provide fee reductions for children in need based on negotiation with parents or caregivers and at the discretion of each principal.³
8. The funds required to assist families will continue to be sourced from school budgets.
9. The role of the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission is to:

² See appendix 1 for recommended application form:

Fees Discount Scheme

³ See appendix 2 for recommended application form:

Application for Fees Assistance

- develop guidelines and procedures for assessing financial need and providing assistance for families in need,
- promote uniformity and transparency in the application of those guidelines and procedures to ensure those in greatest need obtain assistance,
- have the joint responsibility, in association with the Executive Director of Catholic Education and the Principals of Catholic schools, to inform the community that Catholic schools provide assistance to families who experience hardship especially in the payment of fees for their children,
- work with the TCEO's Media/Promotions Officer in collaboration with the Principals of Catholic schools to publicise and promote the availability of a Catholic education to all students regardless of their means, and
- review and modify those guidelines and procedures from time to time.

REFERENCES

Nil

FORMS

Nil

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 Letter to Parents / Caregivers about Fees Discount Scheme in Tasmanian Catholic Schools / Colleges

APPENDIX 2 Application for Fees Assistance

SIGNED:



TCEC Chairperson

DATE:

19.07.06

Approved by:	TCEC
Issuing Group:	Policy & Executive Support Services
Implementation Date:	1 January 2007
Supersedes Policy Dated:	New Policy
Revision Date:	2011
TCEO Contact Officer:	Manager: Policy & Secondary Curriculum

APPENDIX 1

(School Letterhead)

LETTER TO PARENTS / CAREGIVERS ABOUT FEES DISCOUNT SCHEME IN TASMANIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS / COLLEGES

Date:

Dear Parent / Caregiver

Families with three (3) or more children in Catholic schools are eligible for a fee discount. To assist us in calculating the fee discount would you please complete the form below and return it to the school office by Failure to return the form will result in full fees being charged.

In fact, you may wish to pay full fees and donate the discount to our fees account which assists other families who struggle financially to access Catholic education.

FEE DISCOUNT INFORMATION

STUDENT'S NAME: _____
First Name *Surname*

To whom should the account be sent? Father Mother Both Caregiver
Please tick (✓) appropriate box/es

NAME: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS: _____
_____ Postcode: _____

Please list children at other Catholic schools in 20 Include brothers and sisters attending this school.

NAME	SCHOOL	GRADE

I / we wish to claim the fees discount.

I / we wish to donate the fees discount to the school fee's account to support families in need.
Please tick (✓) one box only

NAMES: _____

SIGNATURES: _____

DATES: _____

Fee discounts apply in all Tasmanian Catholic schools and colleges

3 children in Catholic schools 10% for each child
4 children in Catholic schools 20% for each child
5 or more children in Catholic schools 30% for each child

APPENDIX 2

(School Letterhead)

APPLICATION FOR FEES ASSISTANCE

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ Postcode: _____

1ST PARENT/CAREGIVER: Occupation: _____ Income/wage: \$ _____

2ND PARENT/CAREGIVER: Occupation: _____ Income/wage: \$ _____

CENTRELINK BENEFIT (Please refer to reverse side of this form): _____

COMBINED GROSS FAMILY INCOME: \$ _____

Do you qualify for STAS (Student Assistance Scheme)? YES NO

Do you have a Health Care Card? YES NO

Number of school age children in your care? _____

Number of children of pre-school age children in your care? _____

Child's Name	Age	School	Fees paid by you now	Other assistance provided

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOUR APPLICATION IS APPROVED YOUR REDUCED FEES ARE TO BE PAID IN THE MONTH THEY FALL DUE FOR PAYMENT.

If you are already on reduced fees can you afford to increase your present fee? YES NO

STATE FEE YOU ARE ABLE TO PAY (PER MONTH): \$ _____

SIGNATURES: _____
Parents / Caregivers

DATES: _____

Please fill in details overleaf. When you have completed the application, please arrange an appointment with the Principal or the Business Manager (Phone:).

PLEASE NOTE

A new application must be made each year. Please return this form to the school as soon as possible.

PLEASE COMPLETE

As appropriate

Age Pension	\$	Disability Support Pension	\$
Partner Allowance	\$	Sickness Allowance	\$
Parenting Payment	\$	Special Benefit	\$
Wife Pension	\$	Youth Allowance	\$
Family Tax Benefit	\$	Any other Pensions or benefits (e.g. Newstart Allowance) Please name:	\$
Austudy / Abstudy	\$		

Details of major expenses that affect your ability to pay school fees – eg mortgage, car loan, etc.

Are there any other reasons why you feel special consideration should be given in your case – e.g. sickness, unemployment, etc.

Office use only

Comments: _____
