



16 July, 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Each year the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has to review and adjust the fees for students in our diocesan schools for the coming year. By far the greater part of our schools' funding now comes from State and Federal government funding, but the commitment and continuing financial contribution of parents and parish communities is still essential to fill the gap between the funds provided by government and the actual cost of running our schools. This letter is to inform you of the fee arrangements for 2016. The following rates and discounts have been reviewed by the Catholic Schools Council, the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations and the Diocesan Finance Council. Upon the advice of those bodies, they have been approved by Bishop Wright.

1. Family Model for Diocesan Tuition Fees

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is very conscious of the financial challenges facing parents. In 2013 a new approach was taken to easing the burden for families with more than one child in diocesan schools. Broadly, the change was to apply the discount to each school child in the family, whether they attended the same diocesan school or not. For example, a family with one secondary and two primary school children in diocesan schools now receives a 20% discount on the secondary school fees and on the primary school fees of both the younger children. Previously, this family might only have received a discount on the second child in the primary school. The discount rates are set out below.

2. Diocesan Tuition Fees 2016

In 2016 the Diocesan Tuition Fees, full rate, will be:

Kinder to Year 6	\$ 1,152	(increase of \$45 p.a. or \$0.87 per calendar week from 2015)
Years 7 to 10	\$ 1,587	(increase of \$63 p.a. or \$1.21 per calendar week from 2015)
Years 11 to 12	\$ 2,427	(increase of \$84 p.a. or \$1.62 per calendar week from 2015)

In 2016, the Family discount on Diocesan Tuition Fees, full rate, will be:

1 child family	0% - full rate to be applied
2 child family	10% - each child
3 child family	20% - each child
4 child family	40% - each child
5+ child family	50% - each child

3. The Diocesan Family & School Building Levy (DF&SBL)

The DF&SBL is a diocesan levy, charged to the oldest child for each family. The DF&SBL assists in financing capital works in existing schools, the acquisition of land and the development of new schools. Historically and for a considerable period, our schools were built and maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people of the diocese through their parishes. Part of the DF&SBL, therefore, now helps support the diocese in its pastoral ministries, including various Pastoral Workers, the Refugee and Aboriginal ministries, the Hospital Apostolate, and Seasons for Growth, the change, loss and grief program.

The DF&SBL rate for 2016 will be \$672 per family. This amounts to an increase of \$33 p.a. or \$0.63 per calendar week per family. The DF&SBL rate is reviewed, recommended and approved in the same manner as mentioned earlier for the Tuition Fees and Discounts.

4. Special Fee Reductions

To assist families with limited financial resources, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland- Newcastle offer a lower tuition fee to 'means tested' low income families such as Health Care and Pension Card holders. This rate is 50% of the Diocesan Tuition Fee full rate for each child. This discount applies only to the Tuition Fee, not to the DF&SBL or special purpose fees charged by the school itself.

Please note, however, that it is our policy that financial hardship should not prevent a child from attending a Catholic School and no child will be denied a Catholic Education because of a family's genuine inability to pay the required school fees. This does not apply only to the eligible Health Care/Pension Card holders mentioned above. Any family experiencing financial difficulties is entitled to fee assistance. The Principal of the school can be contacted to discuss such situations.

Together with parents, clergy and school staff, we are committed to offering the children and young people in this diocese, schools in which their faith can be nurtured in outstanding learning environments. We seek to assist young people to realise their full human potential, spiritual, intellectual, physical and social. We value the opportunity to work in partnership with you to that end, and thank you for your continuing support of Catholic Education in this Diocese.

Yours sincerely



Most Reverend William Wright
BISHOP OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE



Ray Collins
DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS