



# SCHOOL FEE POLICY

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## Introduction

Villanova College is an independent Catholic College for boys in Years 5 to 12 “striving for excellence in boys’ education as an Augustinian community one in mind and heart on the way towards God”. The College teaches the Augustinian values of truth, love and community.

Villanova College aims to provide a quality and accessible Catholic education to as many boys as possible. The fees and levies are charged to supplement government funding. The College sets the fees at a level that enables the provision of excellence in teaching and learning and ensures the effective functioning of the College. It is vital that fees are paid on time to ensure the continued efficient financial management of the College.

Guided by its vision and mission, the College draws on its Augustinian commitment to justice for families in determining the annual financial arrangements related to student enrolment. Parents have a reciprocal obligation to pay full school fees on time. Compassion and support extended to families in need are integral parts of the Augustinian ethos of the College.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework of principles for the collection of School Fees at Villanova College.

Fees, terms and conditions of this policy may be subject to change at the discretion of Villanova College, without notice.

## Policy

School fees, charges and discounts are determined by the Villanova College Board on the recommendation of the Finance Advisory Committee following consideration of budgetary forecasts.

The College is committed to exploring all responsible means of setting school fees each year, in order to maintain equity and accessibility, while at the same time continuing to meet its financial obligations and ensure its economic sustainability.

## Principles

### Confidentiality

In any matters related to school fees, every effort will be made to safeguard the dignity of each family and to ensure the confidentiality of each situation.

### Joint and Several Liability

Parents or Carers who are party to an Enrolment Agreement with Villanova College are jointly and severally liable for the payment of a student’s school fees at the College and any other costs associated with the student’s enrolment at the College. Each signing party to the student Enrolment Agreement accepts full financial responsibility and is personally liable for the full amount owed to the College. The College may at its absolute discretion elect to pursue any signatory for the full amount owed.

Child Support arrangements and Family Law Court Orders are agreements between parents/carers and do not overwrite Joint and Several Liability or impose obligations on the College in relation to invoicing. Villanova College reserves the right to not act on such documents in relation to school fees.

## **Extra Curricular School Activities**

Parents may not be permitted to enrol their son(s) in the optional, extra-curricular paid College activities unless the agreed school fees are up to date. This includes the following:

### **Tours and Camps**

Where school fees remain in arrears and a FACTS payment arrangement has not been established and maintained, the student will be ineligible to participate in voluntary school tours.

### **Instrumental Music Program**

To be eligible for enrolment in the College's Instrumental Music Program, school fees and all instrumental music fee charges, need to be up to date. Where school fees remain in arrears, and a FACTS arrangement has not been established and maintained, a student may be ineligible to enrol in private music lessons.

### **Parent Lounge Events**

Students may not be eligible to participate in paid events / activities listed on Parent Lounge if their school fee account is not up to date and a FACTS payment arrangement has not been established and maintained. This includes Sport Squads, Sports Training Programs & Events, Senior Formal, Semi Formal, Graduation Dinner, and the Senior Banquet.

## **Financial Assistance**

If a family is experiencing financial hardship then an extension of time and affordable payment arrangement, or a concession on school fees may be available for eligible applicants. Families are encouraged to engage with the College early and seek out help before the status of the account escalates. In case of brothers, hardship concession is applied after the sibling discount is offered. Parents applying for financial assistance will need to complete a financial assessment and submit all supporting documentation listed on the application form to the Business Manager. If a hardship concession is granted, parents must enter into a FACTS payment plan with the College to pay the remaining balance of the fees over the agreed time.

An annual payment discount is not applicable when a hardship concession has been granted.

Students receiving a hardship concession on school fees may ordinarily not be eligible to participate in any charged voluntary co-curricular activities, such as tours and private music lessons, subject to the Principal's discretion. The Principal will take into account the specific circumstances of the individual student and their family.

Hardship Concessions on school fees are only applicable for one school year and families are required to re-apply for any further concession on fees in future years.

## **Withdrawal of Enrolment**

In accordance with the Enrolment Agreement, parents wishing to withdraw their son's enrolment are required to provide written notice to the Principal by no later than the first day of the term at the end of which it is intended he should leave, or if it is intended he should leave during the term, by no later than the first day of the preceding term. Parents failing to comply with this requirement will pay or forfeit (as the case may be) to the College one term's school fees in lieu of notice.

If a student is to be withdrawn from the College all fees must be paid in full on or before the student's last day of attendance. Upon receipt of written Notice of Withdrawal and prior to the student's last day of attendance, the College will calculate fees due and inform the Parents.

When the account has been paid in advance and an appropriate notice has been received, a pro rata refund of paid fees will be made.



## Review

This policy is to be reviewed after 3 years or earlier to take account of any changes to relevant legislation or regulations, changes to the College's operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing environment.

# SCHOOL FEE PROCEDURES

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## Implementation

### (1) Issue of School Fee Accounts

School fees are billed annually through FACTS at the start of the school year, with any additional charges invoiced throughout the year. For students who commences during the year, fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis.

#### Payment Methods

##### FACTS

Villanova College has partnered with FACTS, an external provider, to manage school fees payments. Enrolment in a FACTS payment plan is compulsory at Villanova College. FACTS offers payment via bank account or credit card (surcharges apply). Payment plans are available from February to November, with options for weekly, fortnightly, monthly, term, or annual payments. Annual payment discount is offered when full annual school fees and compulsory charges are paid by the specified date in February.

More information about the FACTS system is available at [www.FACTSmgt.com.au](http://www.FACTSmgt.com.au).

##### Edstart

For extended payment options, Edstart allows payment of school fees across the full school year in weekly, fortnightly, or monthly instalments. Another option is to reduce the repayment amount by extending the repayment plan for up to 5 years after your son/s graduates. More information is available at <https://edstart.com.au/vnc>.

### (2) Sibling Discount

Sibling discounts are credited for families with two or more brothers enrolled at the College simultaneously. In case of multiple discounts, they are applied in the following order:

1. Sibling discount;
2. Annual payment discount.

### (3) Overdue Accounts

In justice to families who pay their full school fees regularly and on time, all accounts will be monitored and pursued by the College in accordance with this Policy. Parents and Carers are responsible for ensuring the account is up to date and notifying the College if their circumstances change, which respect the principle of reciprocal obligation. In circumstances where school fees cannot be settled in full by the end of the school year, the Business Manager must be contacted in order to obtain approval for an extension of time.

An account is considered overdue if a payment has defaulted or if the payment plan does not allow for school fees to be fully paid by the end of Term 4. If no prior arrangement has been made with the Business



Manager, the College will contact the parents/carers via email and phone. Parents/carers may request an interview with the Business Manager or the Principal to discuss their financial situation.

If school fees remain outstanding with no response from the email and phone contact, a letter from the Principal will be sent requesting payment and/ or an interview. Failure to make payment or respond will result in the account being forwarded to the College's nominated debt collection agency.

#### **(4) Use of nominated Debt Collection Agency**

If the College cannot resolve outstanding school fee accounts, the Principal or their delegate will instruct to refer the outstanding balance to the nominated debt collection agency. The procedures undertaken to recover the amounts owing may include taking legal action. Any costs associated with the collection of fees using debt collection agency will be added to the account.

#### **(5) Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment**

The College may, at its absolute discretion, suspend or terminate a student's enrolment where:

- (a) outstanding school fee amounts are owing to the College, and
- (b) where satisfactory commitment to and fulfilment of an agreed payment arrangement has not been made.

This decision to terminate enrolment rests with the Principal. In such cases, the College will pursue legal action to recover outstanding school fees, along with any legal costs incurred in the collection process.

The rights and remedies of the College in this regard will not be prejudiced or affected by any time or other indulgence granted to the signatories of the student Enrolment Agreement.

#### **(6) Courses Additional to College Curriculum and Allied Health Therapy**

Speech and Occupational Therapy, as well as Courses additional to the College curriculum, may be accessed through external organisations with the College's permission. If a student participates in such programs, the associated costs are in addition to school fees and are the responsibility of the student's parents. Payment for the course or therapy sessions must be made prior to enrolment or accessing services.

### **Definitions**

The terms defined in this clause have the following meaning in this policy unless the context indicates otherwise:

**Brothers** means two or more boys enrolled at the College at the same time, with at least one biological or adoptive parent in common, irrespective of their place of residence.

**Parent** means the parent, guardian or carer of a student including a prospective parent.

**Principal** means the Principal or the nominee of the Principal.

**School Fees** means all compulsory charges listed on the Fee Schedule. This includes school fees and any other charges in relation to activities associated with the student's attendance at the College. It includes any fees and charges required to be paid prior to a student's commencement at the College.

**Student** means a prospective or current student of the College.

**Enrolment Agreement** is the legally binding agreement between the College and parents or carers who are a party to the agreement. It is signed on acceptance of enrolment at the College.