

**FEE POLICY and PROCEDURES****Contents**

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<b>Updated/ratified</b>	19/8/2016
<b>Review</b>	19/8/2019
<b>Group responsible for Review</b>	Finance Group, Business Manager

**1) POLICY**

- a) To collect full student fees from our parents/guardians or persons responsible for payment of fees (herein called Debtors). This policy is designed to maximise opportunities for payment and to minimise the need to refer overdue accounts to legal recovery.
- b) To follow the procedures set out below in a fair and equitable manner. Our aim is to apply a level of flexibility in keeping with Mumbulla School's long history of goodwill in all relationships.
- c) To provide Fee Relief to families who are experiencing temporary hardship.

**2) FEES CALCULATION**

- a) Fees are reviewed and set annually by the Board of Directors at the end of the school year when preparing the budget for the next year. If there is a subsequent increase in fees during the school year at least one term's notice will be given.
- b) Fees will cover the cost of operating the school, having taken taking into consideration the number of enrolments and the estimated amount of government grants to be received in the following school year.
- c) The current fee schedule for each class level with be posted on the school website, published in the School Handbook and available in the Front office. Fee schedules will be updated as soon as possible to be available for new and prospective parents via the website and the handbook.

### **3) GUIDELINES FOR FEE COLLECTION**

- a) The payment of student fees on time is a basic obligation of Debtors and agreed to in the Enrolment Contract and Fee Contract. These contracts are provided to parents/guardians prior to enrolment and it is a condition that they be completed before enrolment is accepted.
- b) The school will:
  - i. endeavour to keep student fees as low as possible;
  - ii. maintain a high level of expectation around the payment of fees in accordance to an agreed Payment Plan Schedule.
  - iii. encourage timely and open communication between families and school administration regarding any issues impacting on fee payments;
  - iv. maximise opportunities for payment by various methods.
  - v. support families experiencing financial hardship through the process of fee collection;
  - vi. endeavour to minimise the cost burden to the rest of our community in the management of debtors;
  - vii. minimise the need to refer overdue accounts to legal recovery;
  - viii. maintain confidentiality;
  - ix. respect the dignity and sensitivity of families throughout the process of fee collection.
- c) The Business Manager, on behalf of the Board of Directors, will manage and approve matters relating to fee collection.

### **4) PROCEDURE FOR FEE COLLECTION**

- a) New enrolments:
  - i. cannot be confirmed until all registration fees have been paid.
  - ii. will receive, in their enrolment package, the fee contract and fee schedule for the current year. Prior to enrolment interview, a signed fee contract signed by both parents/guardians or person responsible for payments of fees, must be received by the school.
  - iii. will meet with the Business Manager where ability to pay fees are questionable. The Business Manager will review possible future enrolments with the Enrolment Officer prior to being submitted to College of Teachers. (Refer to Enrolment Policy). If there is an outstanding debt to the school enrolment may be refused.
- b) At the start of the school year, a yearly invoice and statement will be issued to all debtors based on approved fees (tuition and levies) for the year. A Payment Plan Schedule (PPS) will be sent out with this invoice and statement indicating all payment options. Debtors must complete the PPS and indicate their nominated method of payment and return the form to the School within seven days after receipt.
- c) There are 4 ways to pay fees:
  - i. Fortnightly or monthly direct debit. Direct debit forms will be available in the Front Office and **must be signed and returned each year** to the School for this arrangement to be implemented. Once the forms are completed, the School deducts the agreed amount from your account until a new payment plan is established. (Preferred method)
  - ii. Annually or by term (due by end of Week 3) at the Front Office by EFTPOS, direct deposit, credit card, cash or cheque.

- iii. Fortnightly via a regular direct deposit that the Debtor sets up via their own online banking system.
- iv. Fortnightly via Centrelink – the Debtor will need to complete forms with Centrelink for them to be able to process the payment to the School.
- d) At the commencement of each subsequent term a statement will be provided to debtors.
- e) The following fee collection schedule will generally be followed for Term 1 and subsequent terms:

**WEEK 1** - Payment is due and payable in full or a completed and signed PPS has been returned to the office within 7 days of receipt. (Term1).

**WEEK 3** - If payment has not been received, nor a signed PPS put into place by the end of Term 1 Week 3, the following will take place:

- i. An overdue statement with a warning of a \$25 administration charge will be sent out to individual debtors; and/or
- ii. a general notice will be placed in the Bulletin advising of overdue fees with a warning of a \$25 administration charge.

**WEEK 4** - Where no payment or other arrangement approved by the Business Manager has been received by the end of Week 4, a \$25 administration charge will be applied to overdue account. If an extension for payment of fees is requested, it can be approved by the Business Manager, or delegate, without any additional fees.

**WEEK 5** – Where no payment or other arrangement approved by the Business Manager has been received by the end of Week 5, the Business Manager, or delegate, will phone or email the debtor to discuss the overdue amount. The following items may be discussed:

- i. Agreement to pay in full within seven days or the immediate implementation of a payment plan via a PPS.
- ii. If it is apparent that debtors are experiencing temporary financial difficulty, the Business Manager will discuss fee management options and may suggest the Debtor apply for fee relief to assist with the regular payments.
- iii. The Business Manager may request the Communication Manager to contact them for an appointment.

**WEEK 6** - Where no payment or other arrangement approved by the Business Manager has been received by the end of Week 6 the debtor matter will be reviewed by the Management Team and then referred to the Finance Group.

**WEEK 7** – The Finance Group will meet to determine options for recommendation to the Board of Directors. These may include:

- i. Recommendation for fee relief based on a completed Fee Relief application in conjunction with the establishment of a PPS.
- ii. A letter sent to the Debtor from the Business Manger advising that if no payment is received within 7 days, the account will be recommended to a Debt Collection Agency. Additional collection/recovery costs will be added to the debt already outstanding.
- iii. Review of enrolment of Debtors current enrolled student/s and/or future students registered for enrolment.
- iv. Direct referral to debt collector. Additional collection/recovery costs will be added to the debt already outstanding.

**Week 8** - The Board of Directors will review and approve each recommendation prior to implementation by the Business Manager. If recommendation is approved by the Board, the Business Manager will contact the debtor in writing with the subsequent outcome.

**Week 9 /10** - If no written agreement for payment deferral is in place, any fees outstanding at the close of business on the last day of term may attract an additional \$50 late fee.

- f) Request for extension of fee payment after end of school year.
  - i. An extension for payment of fees can be approved by the Business Manager, or their delegate, without additional fees and a new PPS signed. Unless a new PPS has been entered into, any default on an extension to pay or on the PPS may result in the outstanding balance being referred for debt collection.
  - ii. Overdue fees may be referred for debt collection 7 days after the last day of school and additional collection/recovery costs will be added to the debt already outstanding.
- g) The school reserves the right to terminate enrolment if fees are not paid in accordance with the conditions of enrolment.

## 5. GUIDELINES FOR FEE RELIEF

- a) Debtors may, at times, experience temporary financial hardship making the payment of fees difficult. Options for debtors experiencing temporary financial hardship include, but are not necessarily limited to:
  - i. an extension of time to pay beyond the current school term/year;
  - ii. an extension of time to pay after the student has left the school – usually a maximum of 6 months, but longer arrangements can be made at the Business Manager’s discretion;
  - iii. a modified PPS;
  - iv. an offer of Fee Relief.
- b) Fee Relief Guidelines: Debtors may apply to the Board of Directors via the Finance Group for fee relief. A provision of an amount up to 4% of student tuition fees is budgeted annually. Any variation to this must be agreed to by the Board of Directors. The following are guidelines for setting, recommending, determining and approving fee relief.
  - i. Fee relief is predominantly for assisting families who are experiencing temporary financial hardship (ie; sudden non-voluntary loss of job, family medical emergency, family crisis). Fees are still payable, however the fee relief granted reduces the regular payment amount thereby assisting families to make their committed payments as per the PPS.
  - ii. Fee relief is not available in the first two years of a family’s enrolment, except where the Board deems there to be exceptional circumstances.
  - iii. Fee relief is usually granted for two consecutive terms. A further application is required for continued relief.
  - iv. The normal amount of fee relief granted is no more than 50% of tuition.
  - v. The Business Manager will keep accurate records to maintain the percentage of fee relief budgeted for the year and the actual amount granted
  - ii. A debtor seeking fee relief must complete and submit a Fee Relief Application to the Business Manager.
  - iii. All applications for fee relief will be reviewed by the Finance Group at their next scheduled meeting. All information contained within the application remains confidential. If deemed within

the criteria, the application will be recommended to the Board of Directors at their next scheduled meeting. The debtor's identity is not revealed to the Board of Directors allowing confidentiality and privacy to remain intact.

- iv. The Business Manager will inform the applicant of the outcome in writing and provide the debtor with a new PPS. The new PPS must be completed and returned within 7 days for the fee relief to remain valid.
- v. If the new PPS is not implemented, and continuously held to, or no communication with the Business Manager is received, the amount of fee relief can be reversed; fee relief may be deemed void and the entire debt becomes payable immediately.
- vi. Debtors who receive fee relief must communicate any change in financial circumstances to the Business Manager so that the PPS can be reviewed if financial circumstances improve (eg. Debtor obtains employment).

## **6. HOLDING FEES**

- a) Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child/ren temporarily but would like to hold their child's place in that class must discuss this with their class teacher and obtain College of Teachers' approval.
- b) An Extended Leave Application Form for absences over two weeks is required if a place is to be held for a child. This form can be obtained from the Front Office or downloaded from the website.
- c) The place must be secured by payment in advance of all fees payable for the period of absence, or in accordance with the PPS. If the child/ren are absent for one full term or longer and the debtor requests a reduction in that term's tuition fees, an application in writing must be received at least four weeks prior to departure.
- d) Following consultation with the Management Team, it is at the discretion of the Business Manager to grant a partial deduction of tuition fees for that term or period of absence.

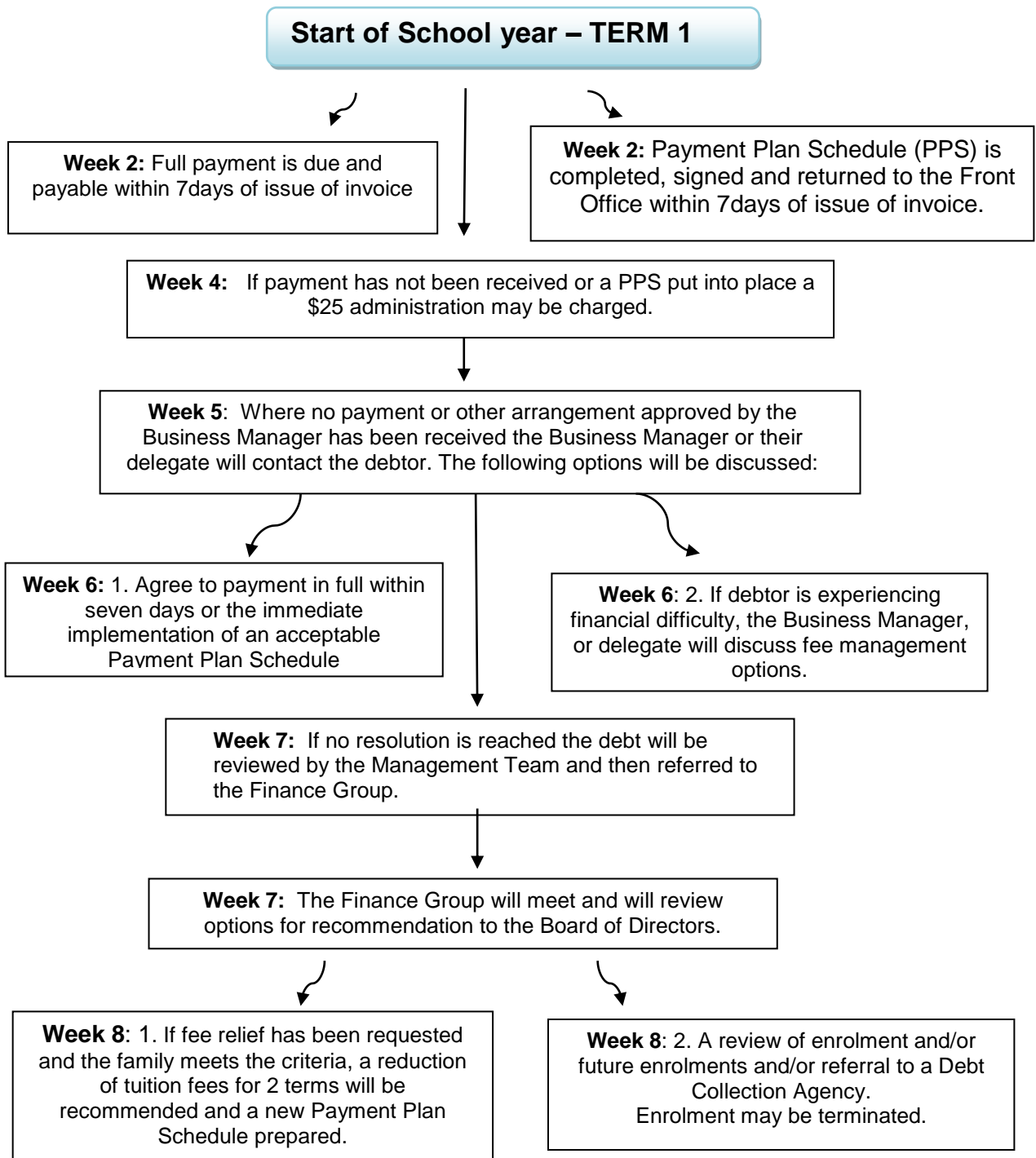
## **7. WITHDRAWAL OF A CHILD**

The following applies to Parents/Guardians who intend to withdraw their child/ren from the School.

- a) Completion of a Withdrawal Form by Week 5 of the term previous to withdrawal.
- b) If a child is withdrawn during the first five weeks of a term, the whole of that term's fees (tuition and levies) remain due and payable.
- c) If the debtor wishes to end the enrolment, and prior notice is not given by Week 5, full term fees are payable for the term the child is being withdrawn. Such payment is to cover any loss the school may incur or suffer as a result of withdrawal of a child without notice.
- d) If a child is re-enrolled, then a new Registration fee will be required at that time to cover administration costs.

8. Attachment A:

**Fees Collection Flow Chart**



**Attachment B:  
Fees Collection Flow Chart for all Terms**

**Fees Collection Flow Chart**

