

FEE POLICY and PROCEDURES**Contents**

1. Policy
2. Fees Calculation
3. Guidelines for Fee Collection
4. Procedure for Fee Collection
5. Guidelines for Fee Relief
6. Holding Fees
7. Withdrawal of a Child

Attachments

- A: Fees Collection Flow Chart Start of Year
 B: Fees Collection Flow Chart – Each Term

Updated/ratified	16/6/2016
Review	02/08/2021
Group responsible for Review	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 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 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 will be posted on the school website and available in hardcopy in the Front office. Fee schedules will be updated as soon as possible to be available for new and prospective parents via the website.

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 (PPS).
 - 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, or delegate, where ability to pay fees are questionable. The Business Manager will review possible future enrolments with the Enrolment Officer prior to being submitted to the Education Manager and/or 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 PPS will be sent out with this invoice and a 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 of receipt.
- c) There are 4 ways to pay fees:
- i. Fortnightly or monthly direct debit. Direct debit forms are 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 school 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, a general notice will be placed in the following week's Bulletin.

WEEK 4 A general notice will be placed in the Bulletin advising of overdue fees with a warning of a \$25 administration charge. At the end of the week, an overdue statement with a warning of a \$25 administration charge will be sent out to individual debtors.

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 beginning of Week 5, a \$25 administration charge will be applied to overdue accounts.

WEEK 6 – Where no payment or other arrangement approved by the Business Manager has been received by the beginning of Week 6, 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, or delegate, 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 Education Manager to contact the Debtor for an appointment.

WEEK 7 - Where no payment or other arrangement approved by the Business Manager has been received by the beginning of Week 7, the debtor matter will be brought as information to the Management Team and then referred to the Finance Group.

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 Debtor's 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. Once a recommendation is approved by the Board, the Business Manager will contact the debtor in writing with the outcome.

- 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 agreed to, 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 financial hardship making the payment of fees difficult. Options for debtors experiencing 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 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 to meet 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 7days 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 may 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).
- c. Fee relief may be requested by the EM/BM in exceptional circumstances whereby they hold additional information regarding a family whose circumstances do not meet the fee relief criteria as stated in 5(b)i of this policy. Such cases would be presented to the Finance Group for consideration and a recommendation taken to the Board of Directors. If granted, the amount would be included in the 4% tuition fees budgeted.

6) HOLDING FEES

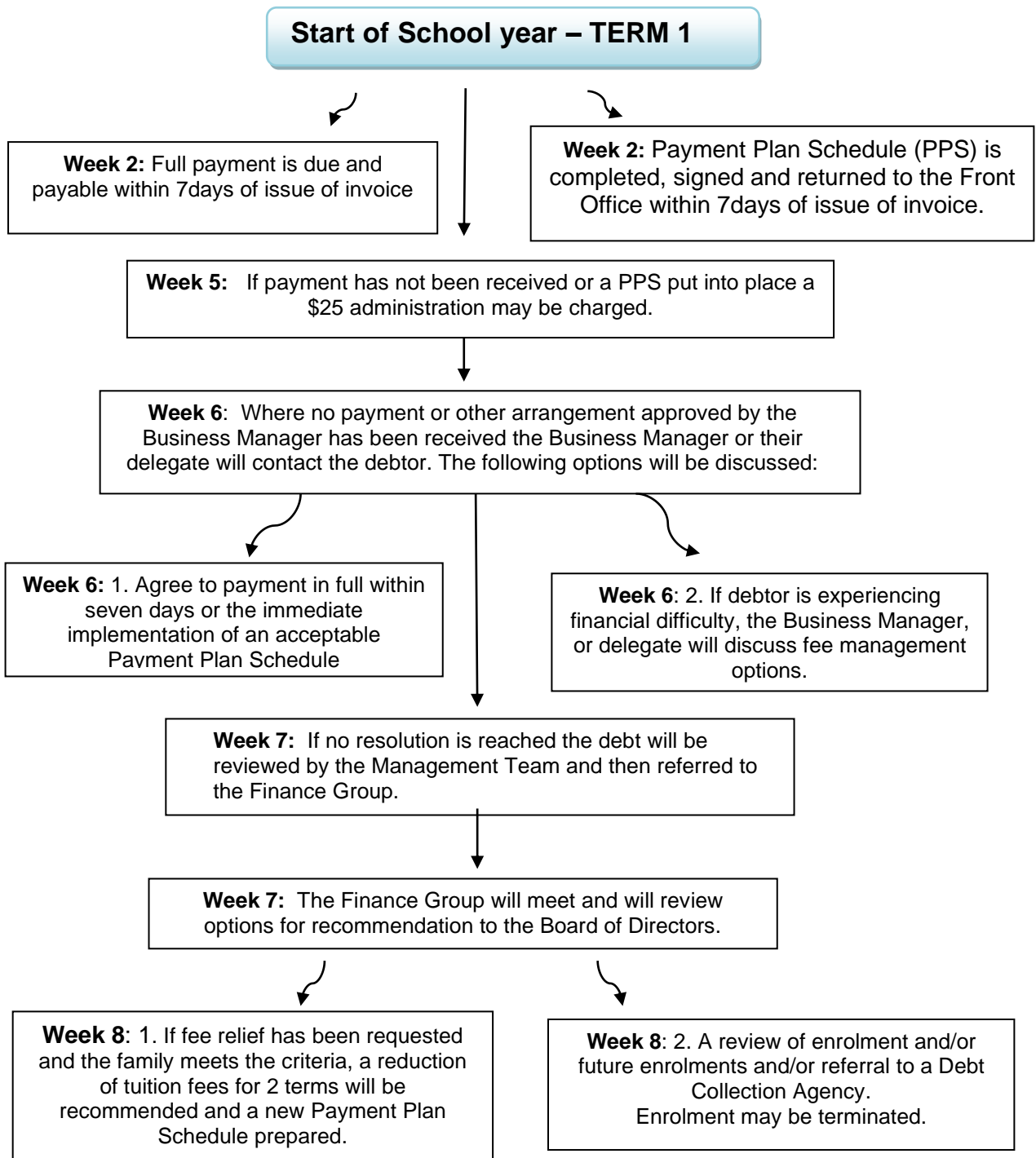
- a. Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child/ren temporarily but would like to hold their child's place in that class must discuss this with their class teacher and obtain Education Manager's approval.
- b. An Extended Leave Application Form for planned absences during term time is required. This form can be obtained from the Front Office or downloaded from the website.
- c. If an absence is for a term or more and a place is to be held for a child then that must be secured by payment, in advance, of all fees payable for the period of absence, or in accordance with the PPS. The debtor may request a reduction in that term's tuition fees, an application in writing to the Business Manager 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

- a) If parents/carers withdraw their child/ren from the School they must complete a Withdrawal Form. The School requires both the parents/carers who are signatories on the Enrolment Application Form-Enrolment Contract to sign the Withdrawal Form before it can be accepted.
- b) If a student is withdrawn during the first five weeks of a term, the whole of that term's fees (tuition and levies) remains due and payable.
- c) A Withdrawal Form must be received by Week 5 of the current term or parents/guardians will also be charged the full fees for the next term. Such payment is to cover any loss the school may incur as a result of withdrawal of a student without appropriate notice.
- d) If parents/carers withdraw their child/ren from the School and later request that their child is re-enrolled at the school, the child may only be re-enrolled subject to the school's Enrolment Policy and Procedures, which include consideration of class availability and the completion of the Enrolment Application Form-Enrolment Contract and Fee Contract. In such cases, a Registration Fee of \$100 will be charged upon re-entering even if the family has other children enrolled at the School.

2) Attachment A:

Fees Collection Flow Chart



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

Fees Collection Flow Chart

