

Catholic primary schools are now accepting applications for admission to Kindergarten in 2018. You are kindly requested to complete the accompanying application form for the enrolment of your son or daughter and return it **within a week** of receiving it. Enrolments remain open at most Catholic primary and secondary schools, however some schools have reached their full capacity for enrolments and have formed waiting lists. Parents considering a Catholic school for their children are invited to contact the school of interest to them as soon as possible to enquire about enrolment procedures. Increasingly, schools are finding difficulty in accepting all requests for enrolment, therefore early return of your application is important. If limits on class sizes have to be imposed, **late applications may, unfortunately, have to be added to the waiting list or declined.**

Completed applications are considered carefully and you will be informed as quickly as possible regarding acceptance.

Catholic schools offer a unique educational experience which forms the child as a person of integrity, compassion, faith and wisdom. Catholic schools also work closely with their local parish to enhance in students a capacity to make sense of their world, to make judgements and to recognise the uniqueness of others within a faith community. Above all, they offer a comprehensive religious education program. Catholic schools don't just teach religious studies, they seek to develop spirit, mind, body and character and cultivate Gospel values that support lives filled with joy, endeavour and hope in the future.

SCHOOL FEES

Catholic schools are typically seen as great value for money. Catholic schools do more with less whilst still providing high-quality education supported by quality facilities and learning environments. Each school year the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, through its agency the Catholic Schools Office, reviews 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 Commonwealth government grants, 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.

School fees in the diocese are made up of a number of charges

1. Diocesan tuition fees
2. Individual school resource and service fees
3. Diocesan Family School Building Levy (DFSBL)

Diocesan tuition fees

These are set each year by the Bishop. In 2017 the full rate diocesan tuition fees are:

- Kinder to Year 6 \$ 1,206
- Years 7 to 10 \$ 1,662
- Years 11 to 12 \$ 2,502

In 2017, the family discount on full rate diocesan tuition fees are:

- 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

Individual school resource and service fees

These are fees set by individual schools and can cover a range of costs including the supply of resources such as texts, school supplies, exercise books, subject levies, technology, excursion costs etc. The cost and nature of the fees can vary between schools and they will be set out in the parent handbook provided by the school and itemised in the school fee account from the school.

Diocesan Family School Building Levy (DFSBL)

The DFSBL is charged to the oldest child for each family. The levy is pooled to contribute towards past, present and future costs for building projects across all existing and for new Catholic schools, and the acquisition of land for school purposes.

The DFSBL rate for 2017 will be \$600 per family. The DFSBL rate is reviewed, recommended and approved in the same manner as mentioned earlier for the tuition fees and discounts.

Diocesan pastoral contribution

From 2017 a voluntary contribution of \$150 per family (\$50 per term) is being sought as a diocesan pastoral contribution. Funds support the ongoing pastoral works of the diocese which include, amongst many initiatives:

- The diocesan pastoral ministries office and the activities of its many advisory councils - the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Adult Faith Formation Council, the Liturgy Council, the Ecumenical and Interfaith Council, the Social Justice Council and the Diocesan Council of Ministry with Young People.
- The provision of chaplains ministering in the following areas – Newcastle University, Newcastle Port, Prisons, Hospitals and Catholic Care Social Services.
- Family Community Faith Coordinators who work to reach out to and connect families with their local parish and school.
- Pastoral Coordinators who work in those parishes without a resident Parish Priest.

Enrolment Fee

This fee is payable upon confirmation of enrolment. This fee is generally non-refundable and is payable before the student commences school. The enrolment fee covers all administrative work involved in processing the application.

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 diocesan tuition fee, not to the DFSBL or other resource and service fees charged by each individual school.

It is the policy of the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocese that financial hardship should not prevent any 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. Any family experiencing financial difficulties is entitled to fee assistance; your local school Principal will be able to discuss this with you.

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

Payment Methods

Various options are available for payment of fees. These include periodic payments, BPAY, direct debit and credit card. Parents wishing to pay by periodic instalments are requested to nominate their payment method on the 1st account sent home at the beginning of the year.

All fees must be paid in full by the commencement of Term 4.

Billing Cycle

School fees are billed over the first three terms of the school year. However, you may prefer to pay yearly. Other schedules of payment can be negotiated with the school principal or school finance officer.