



Fee Policy

Introduction

At Rossbourne School we are committed to providing a high quality and holistic education to all enrolled students. Fees are a critical form of revenue for the school and prompt payment of all fees is the responsibility of all parents/guardians of Rossbourne students. The fees and levies collected at Rossbourne are essential in providing a high quality education for students, and are used for the following purposes:

- provide resources, materials, facilities and equipment
- provide teaching, administrative and ground staff
- maintain buildings, grounds and other facilities.

The annual fee is inclusive of sundry charges, school camps and school section excursions and the majority of internal electives. External electives (ie. TAFE courses) and special courses (ie. Duke of Edinburgh, Outdoor Education) will not be included in the annual fee, and if selected by students will be individually charged.

Fees do not include public transport on excursions – all students are required to have their own MYKI Card.

This school fee policy aims to:

- outline to families the expectations, responsibilities and arrangements for the collection of school fees
- support families experiencing changed and difficult financial circumstances to maintain their child's/children's enrolment at the school.

Information about our school fees is provided in the following ways:

- on the school website
- at enrolment interviews
- during Term 4, the following year's fees are advised in writing to all enrolled families
- on request.

Payment of Fees

The acceptance by parents/guardian of a position at Rossbourne assumes the ability to pay fees in full by the due date.

The parents/guardian, if more than one, are jointly and severally liable for the payment of all fees and charges invoiced by the School in relation to a student's enrolment.

This joint and several liability will continue regardless of any changes to the relationship between the parents, any court order as between the parents, or any child support or other arrangement between the parents regarding payment of fees.

Various payment options are available, with the school's preference being Electronic Fund Transfer, credit card or cheque payments.

School Fee Billing

1. An account of full fees and other charges will be issued by the school in February, May and August. The account will be payable within 14 days of the date of issue.
2. Reminder notices will be sent to parents/guardians with an outstanding account past the due date of the relevant account. Outstanding accounts are those that are not fully paid, or where Direct Debit or credit card arrangements do not fully cover the fees.
3. Any arrangements to vary the conditions for payment must be made through the Principal.
4. Should the account remain outstanding, the school will contact the parent/carer to organise a meeting with the Principal, at a mutually agreeable time. The meeting will include a discussion of the issues surrounding fee payment and to reach an agreement on payment conditions. The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing to the parent/carer.
5. If the parent/carer does not communicate with the Principal about the outstanding account, the Principal will decide the necessary action, which may include referral to a debt recovery agency.

*Where a parent/carer finds themselves in financial difficulty due to changed financial circumstances, an Application for Fee Concession can be made.

Transferring/Leaving Students

We appreciate that changing family circumstances will sometimes require that a student transfers to another school. A term's notice, in writing, must be given to the Principal before the removal of a student from the School, pro-rata fees will be applied. Failing this, one term's fee may be charged.

Non-Payment of Fees

On rare occasions, parents/guardians fail to pay their account, do not respond to reminder notices and do not contact the school to make alternative arrangements. In these instances, the school is reluctantly forced to consider engaging the services of the school's professional debt collection agency and may involve the instigation of legal action.

The matter then effectively passes out of the school's control and all negotiations for payment must then be made with the debt collection agency. The parent's/carer's credit rating may also be affected and listed as a default account with Veda Advantage, the largest credit reference agency in Australia.

Any fees incurred by the school in collecting outstanding fees (including fees for dishonoured cheques or debt collection services) will be passed on to the parent/carer concerned.

Bursaries

Subject to a means test, a number of bursaries are available to assist families and they are reviewed annually. Applications for bursary are to be made in Term 4 prior to the year of education for consideration. Enquiries should be made to the Principal.

Bursaries are valid for an individual year and are required to be re-applied each year.

Bursaries are reviewed in line with the ABS income and cost of living data and ACOSS poverty guidelines. The assessment process takes into consideration all income (including wages, Youth Allowance, all other Centrelink and Child Support payments), as well as housing costs (including rent or mortgage/rates). Parents/guardians will be requested to provide relevant evidence to support their application.

Long Absence from School

If a student is to be away from school for a year or more and the parents wish to keep the student's place at Rossbourne, the following will apply:

- Full fees are payable for the balance (if any) of the school year in which the absence commences
- One third fees are payable during the first year of absence
- Absence beyond one year require approval from the Principal. If approved, one quarter fees are payable during the second and any subsequent year of absence

Fee Concessions

We are aware that, from time to time, some families find themselves in financial difficulty. With this in mind, our intent is that no student will be excluded from our school due to a genuine inability to pay full or even part fees.

Fee concessions may be considered in cases where a family's financial circumstances have subsequently changed in such a way as to make fee adjustments necessary. An application for fee concession should be made as early as possible in the billing cycle.

An application for fee concession is valid only for the current school year.

Fee concessions are means tested in line with the ABS income and cost of living data and ACOSS poverty guidelines. The assessment process takes into consideration all income (including wages, Youth Allowance, all other Centrelink and Child Support payments), as well as housing costs (including rent or mortgage/rates). Parents/guardians will be requested to provide relevant evidence to support their application.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the Rossbourne School annual policy review cycle.