Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

Concessional Fee Program – Procedures

MACS Primary Schools

Purpose

These procedures outline the process for applications for concessional school fees in Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) primary schools.

Scope

These procedures apply exclusively to MACS primary schools. They do not apply to MACS secondary schools or colleges.

Procedures

1. Eligibility for Concessional School Fees

Families may qualify for concessional school fees if they meet any of the following criteria:

1.1. General eligibility criteria

- of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage
- holding Services Australia Health Care Cards (HCC) and eligible for Camps, Sport and Excursion Fund (CSEF)
- holding a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold Card
- identified as refugees holding Department of Home Affairs Proof of Identity card (ImmiCard)
- refugees, where the child has attended a school within Australia for less than five years
- experiencing genuine financial hardship (e.g., loss of family home, and/or loss of income through volunteering to fight bushfires, illness and/or loss of livelihood/income caused by bushfires)

1.2. Special Medical Circumstances

Any family required to relocate their (Australian resident) child to St Michael's Catholic Primary School, North Melbourne, due to the child requiring long term medical treatment at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne will be eligible for concessional student fees. Pro-rata concession is provided for part-year attendance. An annual statutory declaration is required to confirm eligibility.

1.3. Home schooled students (HSS): who attend a MACS primary school on a part time basis, who meet any of the criteria detailed in 1.1 or 1.2 are eligible for concessional student fees.

2. Ineligibility for Concessional School Fees

Full Fee-Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) are ineligible for concessional school fees, as government funding is not available for these categories.

3. Concessional School Fees for Eligible Students

Concessional fees (including tuition fees and levies) for eligible students are subject to an annual review for reasonableness and ongoing suitability. The fee assessment is endorsed by General Manager, School Finance and approved by the Chief Financial Officer. All schools are required to comply with this assessment prior to setting fees.

Refer to the current year's concessional fees notice for the applicable concessional fee information.

4. Application for Concessional School Fees

4.1. Applications for a concessional school fee must be made on the school approved form and emailed to the school every year prior to the commencement of term 1 of the school year, except for families of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. These families are not required to reapply once their initial application has been approved.

4.2. Information provided in support of concessional school fee applications must be treated in the strictest confidence, in accordance with the MACS Privacy Policy.

5. Approval process for Concessional School Fees Applications

5.1. MACS primary school principals are delegated authority to approve concessional school fees applications, in accordance with Instrument of Delegation.

A principal's approval or decline of concessional school fees applications should be retained in writing.

Successful Applications:

5.2. When an application for concessional school fees is approved, an automated payment plan must be established. Where applicable, the payment plan should be set up through CentrePay or via direct credit to the school.

5.3. When invoicing families for concessional school fees, schools should issue invoices showing the full school fees and levies (excluding the Camp levy), along with a separate line for the fee remission, so that the total amount reflects the concessional school fee payable. The concession does not apply to the Camp levy.

Unsuccessful Applications:

5.4. In the circumstance that a family applies for but does not meet the eligibility threshold for a school fee reduction, the school may consider establishing an appropriate payment plan with the family.

5.5. Unsuccessful applications for concessional school fees are not entitled to top-up grants, as outlined in Section 7.

6. Concessional Fees Applicable to Split Families

For Split Families, invoicing arrangements will align with the parenting court order. Separate debtor accounts may only be established where a parenting court order explicitly requires split payments.

The concessional fee criteria will apply to each account in cases where split billing is in place.

7. Health Care Card Factor Funding and Top-up Grants for Concessional Fees

7.1. Schools with eligible students whose families hold a HCC and are successfully registered for CSEF will automatically receive Health Care Card (HCC) Factor funding for those students. No further action is required by the school.

7.2. Where schools have students eligible for concessional fees and their total loss of income exceeds the school's total Health Care Card Factor funding, the school may be eligible for top-up grant funding from the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) or MACS to cover the shortfall. Top-up grant funding is provided by the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) and is centrally managed by Group Finance. Schools are not required to submit an application for this funding. To be eligible for top-up grant funding, the school must meet all of the following criteria:

- The school's total loss of income from concessional fees exceeds its HCC Factor funding entitlement
- The school's adjusted bank balance is less than 15% of recurrent income
- The school's adjusted bank balance is less than $750,000
- Top-up grant payments are made to eligible schools in October each year.

7.3. Grants received by schools from the VCEA or MACS under this policy, such as HCC Factor funding or top-up funding, must be solely used to enable financially disadvantaged MACS primary school students to access a faith based Catholic education and must not be used for any other purpose, such as capital expenditures.

7.4. MACS will conduct periodic reviews to ensure that HCC Factor funding and top-up funding have been expended appropriately by recipient schools.

Definitions

Definitions of standard terms used in this Procedure can be found in the Glossary of Terms.

Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF)

Victorian Government funding for students of families who are eligible, means tested Services Australia Concession Card (DHSCC) holders. CSEF is used to offset school fees or levies related to camps, sports and excursions.

CentrePay

A free, voluntary service to pay bills and expenses as regular deductions from a client's Centrelink payments.

Health Care Card (HCC)

Services Australia Health Care Card which entitles the card holder to receive Australian Government financial and other assistance.

Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold Card

Department of Veterans' Affairs Health Card – All Conditions or Totally & Permanently Incapacitated. Eligible card holders are veterans and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) their widow(er)s and dependants. Eligibility is determined by the level of disability of the veteran or the status of dependants of the veteran, as determined by the DVA.

Fee concession

A remission or exemption from school fees payable because of financial hardship.

Home school student (HSS)

A home schooled student. Home school students who attend a Catholic primary school on a parttime basis are eligible to receive government funding towards their education on a fractional, fulltime equivalent basis.

Refugee

A person who:

- in a case where the person has a nationality, is outside the country of his or her nationality and, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution, is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or
- in a case where the person does not have a nationality, is outside the country of his or her former habitual residence and owing to a well-founded fear of persecution, is unable or unwilling to return to it. Refer Migration Act 1958 Sect 5H.

Split Families

Families in which the parents or guardians of a child are separated or divorced

Related policies and documents

Supporting documents

Concessional Fee Program – Application Form

Concessional Fee Program – Letter to Applicant – Approved – Template

Concessional Fee Program – Letter to Applicant – Declined - Template

Related MACS policies and documents

Enrolment Policy for MACS schools

Privacy Policy

Resources (external to MACS)

Services Australia Health Care Cards (HCC)

Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold Card

ImmiCard
Home schooled students (HSS)

Legislation and standards

Migration Act 1958 Sect 5H

Policy information table

Responsible executive	Director, Finance, Infrastructure and Digital
Procedure owner	General Manager, Group Finance
Approving authority	Director, Finance, Infrastructure and Digital
Approval date	5 February 2026
Risk Rating	Moderate
Major review required by	February 2030
Publication	CEVN, school website

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
Assigned framework	Enrolment
Related documents	See above
Superseded documents	Concessional Fee Policy for MACS primary schools – v2.0 – 2023 Concessional Fee Program – Procedures – MACS Primary Schools – v1.0 – 2023