

FEES AND PAYMENTS POLICY

Purpose

The Board of Hillbrook (the School) has established this policy to clearly set out the School's approach to the structuring, changing, charging and collection of Tuition and other School based Fees and charges (the fees/all fees).

Policy

Hillbrook Anglican School aims to keep all fees at a moderate level, maintaining affordability for prospective and current parents while at the same time ensuring financial sustainability for the School and continually improving the quality of education and resources at Hillbrook.

The School has an all-inclusive tuition fee, meaning as far as practicable the fee includes most curricular and co-curricular activities, including but not limited to standard outdoor education camps and activity days, class excursions, school-based programs and IT devices.

The Tuition fee does not include Project Active activities, stationery, uniforms and private lessons arranged through the School.

The School Board reviews all fees annually at the end of each year for the next calendar year. Parents will be notified in writing of the annual fees through the School's **Schedule of Fees**, which is available before the end of the School year, which will include:

- details of current tuition fees
- co-curricular music, and other charges
- payment methods and due dates for payment.

The following factors may be considered during the Board's review of annual fees: predicted inflation rates, increases in award wages, interest rates, maintenance requirements, new developments and expansions to the curriculum and co-curricular program offerings, increased technology requirements, government compliance requirements and funding levels and programmed capital expenditure.

Notice of any change to this policy or the fees are made to the School community via the School's website and may be provided by mail or email.

Schedule of Fees

Fee types include:

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- **Enrolment Application Fee** – application to express interest in enrolment at Hillbrook and a place on the waiting list
 - **Enrolment Confirmation Fee** – payment made to secure a place at Hillbrook
 - **School Tuition Fee** – annual tuition fee for education at Hillbrook
 - **Co-curricular Music (optional)** – charged per term based on participation
 - **Other Fee Charges** – activities, excursions and events not included in the standard offering, where costs are passed directly onto families

Whilst Education costs are generally GST-free, it is sometimes included on applicable fees and charges in accordance with current Australian Taxation Office rulings.

Fee Payment Options

Parents are able to select from the following payment methods in order to pay school fees:

- **Direct Debit** - Parents can enter an automatic online direct debit instalment plan to make weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly instalment payments directly from their nominated bank account or credit card. Instalment plans are calculated to commence in February and finish in November each year. Alternatively, parents can use the payment portal to make a manual payment by the quarterly due date.
- **BPay** - For those parents who do not wish to sign up to pay by instalment, payment can be made using the biller code and reference number provided on request.
- **Other** - Contact the School for alternative options.

Liability

The individuals who are party to an Enrolment Agreement with the School accepting financial responsibility are jointly and severally liable for the student's Tuition Fees and any other costs associated with the student's enrolment at the School. This means that each individual who signs the Enrolment Agreement accepting financial responsibility is personally liable for the full amount owed to the School. Where more than one individual signs the Enrolment Agreement accepting financial responsibility (for example, where both parents sign) the School may at its absolute discretion elect to pursue any signatory for the full amount owed.

Where the School is provided with a Court Order which provides for an alternate arrangement (as between the parents) for payment of the student's Tuition Fees and any other costs associated with the student's enrolment at the School, the School may act on the Court Order at its absolute discretion, to the extent permitted by law and will act in accordance with the Court Order as required by law.

Discounts for Upfront Payment and Fees in Advance

Each year the **Schedule of Fees** will present the rate of discount offered if a parent chooses to pay the annual School Fees upfront by a nominated date. The discount rate only applies to the School Fee and does not include co-curricular music charges or any charges for activities determined throughout the year.

Where a parent wishes to pay upfront for multiple years, the Principal may (at their discretion) approve a discount that is different to the standard Schedule of Fees. The discount shall not have the effect of guaranteeing the school fee charges for future years. Each year, the relevant upfront amount and discount will be applied to the parent account, and any shortfall after the annual school fee is charged will be payable prior to the due date for Term 1.

Any discount provided for fees paid in advance will be reviewed and approved by the Board through the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee on an annual basis.

Overdue Fees

Where fees are not paid by the due date they will be considered overdue. The School will facilitate the repayment of debt, where possible through a tailored payment plan. Where a tailored payment plan is in default, by payments not being received on the due date, or payment arrangements acceptable to the School cannot be agreed upon, a monthly administration fee may apply to the parent account. This is also considered a breach of the Enrolment Agreement. (Note: The administration fee is calculated based on additional time spent in managing overdue debts).

At the discretion of the Principal, the enrolment of a student may be suspended where tuition fees and other charges remain unpaid.

The School, at its discretion, may engage the services of a reputable debt collection agency or take legal action for the formal collection of debts.

Notice period and fee payment

The School's *Enrolment Policy* requires one term's **written notice** by the parent/s should they wish to terminate a student's enrolment at any time prior to the completion of Year 12. Parents failing to comply with this requirement, will either forfeit or pay one term's fees in addition to the fees of the current term. The notice fee will be due by the next term's due date but no later than 2 months after the date of termination of enrolment.

"One term's written notice" means notice in writing addressed to the Principal by:

- no later than the first day of the term (if the student intends to leave at the end of the term), or

- the first day of the preceding term (if the student intends to leave during the term).

The School through the Principal, at their discretion, may consider to **waive a portion of the term's fee in lieu of notice or any monies paid during the enrolment process.**

The Principal will give consideration to the following factors:

- The level of involvement of the School in the decision to not continue with a student enrolment
- Circumstances of the student's departure
- Eligibility for government funding in the February (State) and August (Commonwealth) census returns
- If the notice period is considered fair and reasonable under the circumstances
- Year 10 students and the reasons for not continuing enrolment into Year 11
- The School is fortunate to find a replacement student within a reasonable timeframe.

Where parents have paid the full years fees in advance and received the upfront discount a pro-rata refund will apply to the term/s not required, subject to deduction of any applicable fees due in lieu of notice.

Extended absence & deferment of starting date (excluding exchange students)

From time to time the School is asked to grant a **student leave of absence**. The student's place at the School can be held for their return provided the holding fees are paid by the due dates.

For student absences up to and including one full term, parents must pay the full term's fees plus a contribution to cover any loss of government funding.

For absences over one full term, families will be required to pay 50% of the school fees for the period of absence (with a minimum of one terms fee required) plus a contribution to cover any loss in government funding.

Families who request in writing a **deferment to their starting date** at the School, for up to a period of six months, will need to pay holding fees in order for the student's place to be held. For example, families working interstate or overseas may have their contracts extended. Families will be required to pay 100% of the School fees plus a contribution to cover any loss in government funding.

Exchange Students

If the student is undertaking an **exchange** through an accepted agency, fees are charged in accordance with normal student exchange arrangements.

Enrolment fees

Enrolment fees are payable at various stages throughout the enrolment cycle and advertised on the School's website.

- **Enrolment Application Fee:** payable at the time of lodging an online application and is non-refundable.
- **Enrolment Confirmation Fees:** paid by parents to confirm a place at Hillbrook. This is paid in two instalments: one instalment when the School's Enrolment Agreement is signed, usually when the student is in Year 4, and the balance when the student is in Term 4 of Year 5, approximately one year prior to commencing at Hillbrook.

After deducting a non-refundable fee to cover administration costs the balance will be held by the School as a **deposit** and applied to their account when the student departs*, as per the following scenarios:

Departing Scenario	How Fees In Advance Amount Is Applied
Student departs prior to Term 4, Year 12	Applied to final fee statement
Year 12 Student – annual pay upfront	Applied to total amount owing at beginning of year
Year 12 Student – regular payment plan	Applied to END of payment plan, effectively reducing the length of the plan in final year.
Year 12 Student – pay by term	Applied to last invoice in final year.

*Applies to enrolments commencing from **Year 7, 2024** with an anticipated finish in Year 12, 2029. All enrolments for students due to complete Year 12 prior to 2029 will receive their deposit in their first term at the school so that each cohort of students is treated consistently.

Withdrawal of a commencing student

In the event an offer of a place is declined by a family and the students' enrolment is cancelled, prior to commencement for any reason, then all monies paid during the enrolment cycle will be forfeited. A partial refund may be considered by the Principal on a case by case basis, e.g. written evidence provided providing information or the circumstances outside the control of the family. A partial refund may also be offered to families as an incentive to notify the School at an earlier point in time (eg. prior to the due date of their second payment) of their intention to cancel. This will allow the School the opportunity to offer the vacant place to the next family in line for a place, prior to the commencement of the School year. The refund amount will be at the discretion of the Principal.

Refund Process

All refund requests from parents must be made in writing to fees@hillbrook.qld.edu.au. Refunds are approved in accordance with our financial Delegations Policy and will be made to the bank account or credit card that was originally used for the payment.

Hillbrook may require the requestor to provide additional information to confirm the identity of the original payer or the original payment method. Hillbrook will endeavour to process requests within 10 business days.

Where parents have paid for an excursion, activity or item, a refund will only be considered when the School has not committed resources or can reasonably recover the cost.

If applicable, upfront payment discounts will be reversed on a pro-rata basis and deducted from the amount refunded.

Compassionate Circumstances

The School Leadership Team may judge a particular situation to be a special case due to compassionate grounds. In such a case, if deemed necessary, advice may be sought from the School Board before taking a decision to vary from the policy. Requests on compassionate grounds can be forwarded to fees@hillbrook.qld.edu.au.

Policy Accountability and Review

The Board is responsible for the development and approval of this Policy and will review on annual basis.