Dear Parents/Carers

At this time each year, following endorsement by the Diocesan Schools Finance Committee and approval by the Bishop of Broken Bay (currently the Diocesan Administrator Fr Casey), I write to advise you of school fees and charges for next year.

**TOTAL ANNUAL SCHOOL FEES**

Total annual school fees are made up of three components:

- **Diocesan Tuition Fees** which are principally used to contribute to salary costs. The majority of salary costs are met by Commonwealth and State Government grants. Increases in Diocesan Tuition Fees will range from 4% to 8% across different schools.

- **Diocesan Building Levy** to assist with the upgrading of school buildings and the construction of new schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay. The levy will increase by 3.57%.

- **School-Based Charges** to meet many of the expenses at your school. In most schools these changes will increase by 4% - 5%.

Regrettably it has been necessary to increase fees. However, the CSO has limited the increase in the Total Annual School Fees to a maximum of 6%. For some schools the increase will be less.

**WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENT DIOCESAN TUITION FEES FOR DIFFERENT SCHOOLS?**

In 2013 the Federal Labor Government passed the Australian Education Act (often referred to as the “Gonski” reforms). This new law set out “Capacity to Contribute” rules which school systems must follow in relation to setting school fees. The Federal Liberal/National Coalition has since kept these requirements, which have influenced the level of the Diocesan Tuition Fees for 2015. As a result of the new funding arrangements the Diocese of Broken Bay will introduce a differential Diocesan Tuition Fee which is calculated using each school’s socio-economic status (SES).

In essence, parents from communities that have a higher socio-economic status are required to make a greater contribution to their children’s education. Across the Diocese the Diocesan Tuition Fees will increase by between 4% and 8% in 2015. Fees at your child’s school will rise by 6%.

Diocesan Tuition Fees for 2015 will be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>K – 6</th>
<th>7 – 8</th>
<th>9 – 10</th>
<th>11 – 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Child</td>
<td>$1,492.50</td>
<td>$2,032.50</td>
<td>$2,160.00</td>
<td>$2,610.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Child</td>
<td>$1,194.00</td>
<td>$1,626.00</td>
<td>$1,728.00</td>
<td>$2,088.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Child</td>
<td>$746.25</td>
<td>$1,016.25</td>
<td>$1,080.00</td>
<td>$1,305.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Child</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**DIOCESAN BUILDING LEVY**

The Diocese currently receives very modest levels of support from government for the building of new schools and the upgrading of schools to meet current needs. The Diocesan Building Levy is used to build new schools and renovate existing schools. Most schools in the Diocese have loans relating to renovation work that need to be serviced. The current level of this debt is $96 million. So that this work can continue, in 2015 each family will be asked to contribute $880 per annum.

**SCHOOL-BASED CHARGES**

In addition to the Diocesan based tuition fees each school sets its own school-based charges. These vary across the Diocese and cover such items as excursions, sport and other school needs. In light of the need to raise diocesan tuition fees, I have requested principals, as far as practical, to contain school-based charges and to provide information to parents about charges in 2015.

**PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

I recognise that for some families this change in fees may pose a significant challenge, and should this be the case, I encourage you to discuss your situation with your principal. The Diocesan Schools System has a commitment to supporting families experiencing financial difficulties. No child will be excluded from access to a Catholic systemic school due to genuine family financial hardship.

Fee payments are due at the beginning of Terms 1, 2 and 3. Parents can apply to the school to arrange smaller, more frequent payments and use BPAY. EFTPOS is also available for payment in person at school.

I acknowledge the generous support by families of our Catholic schools through their financial contributions to the school.

Yours sincerely

Peter Hamill
Director of Schools