

4 August 2025

Dear parents and caregivers,

2026 Tuition Fees

As part of planning for the next school year, each year in July (as part of our budget process) we conduct a review of expected operating costs for the coming year and determine the level of school tuition fees that will apply. I am writing to advise you that our tuition fees for primary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Cairns will increase by 3.5% in 2026.

Raising fee levels in the current economic times is something that is very carefully considered. It is not taken for granted nor made without careful consideration of the resource needs of schools, balanced against the capacity of families to contribute. This increase, in line with the current inflation rate, has been endorsed by our Board of Governance and our Diocesan Finance Committee.

For Catholic schools, the need to charge tuition fees and levies arises from the lower funding that is provided by government for students in non-government schools.

Revenue raised via tuition fees is used by schools to meet the ongoing expenses of providing a world-class education for our students. A minor portion of the tuition fee is also used to fund the purchase of land for existing and new schools and accommodation for teaching staff in regional and remote areas.

The 2026 tuition fee schedule for families with children attending primary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Cairns is attached. Sibling discounts will continue to be offered to families with more than one child enrolled in one or more Catholic schools in the Diocese, at 15% for two students, 30% for three students and no additional tuition fee at all for four or more students.

Please note that the 2026 tuition fee increase detailed here applies to tuition fees only. Schools and colleges also charge various levies to support specific initiatives or needs within each school or college community. As these costs vary from school to school, these levies are set individually by our schools and colleges.

I appreciate that some families may face financial hardship in paying for tuition fees and levies. It is central to our mission that families who want to access a Catholic school for their children are not excluded because they do not have the means to pay full fees. It has long been the Church's policy and practice to assist any family which finds itself in such a situation. It is therefore equally important that those families who can afford to pay their fees do so, so that we can continue to support those in need and reach out to the disadvantaged.

I am pleased to be able to announce that the tuition fee discount for eligible parents/carers with a means-tested eligible Australian Government Concession Card will continue at the rate of 70% in 2026.

Families without an eligible Concession Card who are experiencing genuine financial hardship in paying fees should continue to apply for special consideration by speaking directly with their school Principal or Parish Priest who will treat the situation with understanding, sensitivity, and complete confidentiality.

Thank you for your continuing commitment to Catholic Education. We are proud of the quality of the world-class education provided in our schools and we are keenly aware of (and grateful for) the significant parental support we receive, both through payment of tuition fees and levies and so many other forms of generous assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Diarmuid O’Riordan

Executive Director of Catholic Education

Diocese of Cairns