**FEE ACCOUNTS - FAQS**

**When is my Fee Account sent out?**
Your Fee Account will normally be issued early January each year. It will be in the form of a Statement which will show the current balance owing on your Fee Account, including:

- any unpaid charges and balance from the previous year;
- the Tuition Fees per student and Family Capital Levy billed for the current year;
- the annual compulsory ICT Resource Charge of $295 for all year 8 to 12 students;
- applicable sibling discounts on tuition fees;
- credits for applicable Enrolment and/or Re-Enrolment Deposits paid in the previous year; and
- account credit balances at end of the previous year allocated against the current year’s fees.

The current balance of your Fee Account is due and payable by 31st March each year.

**Are there any other charges or fees?**
All Year 7 students are required to pay an annual ICT Resource Charge of $350 – this charge has not been added to the school fee account as it must be paid before students can collect their Acer laptop on 24th January. Payment must be made via the online portal available under Quicklinks on the College website homepage.

All non-curriculum activities such as private music tuition, VET course fees and other elective courses (if applicable) will be billed separately to tuition fees. These additional accounts are billed as soon as the activity costs or course fees are known at start of Semester 1 and/or 2. Payment of these invoices is compulsory and must be paid within 30 days of the bill date, and generally cannot be added to fee payment plans.

**Do I have to pay the school fees?**
The tuition fees cover the cost of all compulsory curriculum, excursion, camp and sports activities, and are the same amount across all year levels.

All parents are required to pay their accounts for annual Tuition Fees, Capital Levy and ICT Resource Charge to help pay for the costs associated with providing relevant education resources.

All fee payers are expected to meet their commitment and obligation to pay fees for their children’s education, ensuring a fair and just system for all families and to help maintain the financial stability of the College.

**Is there a discount if I pay the fees in full by the due date?**
For all accounts paid in full by 31st March, a 6.5% discount off the current year tuition fees (excludes capital levy and other charges) applies i.e. $319 for 1 student's fees, $574 for 2 students, $860 for 3 students and $956 for 4 or more students (or pro-rata amount applicable to your fee payer percentage).

**What if I can’t pay by 31st March?**
A range of payment options is available for those who need more time to pay their fee account. There are a number of acceptable payment methods (cash, cheque, EFTPOS, BPay or Direct Debit from your bank or credit card account) and instalment frequency options available (weekly, fortnightly or monthly).

All accounts must be paid no later than 1st December for methods other than Direct Debit or if the current year is your last year at the College, or by end of January in next year if you have an approved Direct Debit arrangement in place.

**How do I organise an approved payment plan?**
New or current fee payers are required to sign up to an approved payment plan if they are not able to pay their fees in full by 31st March.

These arrangements must be submitted to the Business Office, using the forms available on the College website (under “Enrolments & Contacts” - “Fees and Allowances”) to advise the payment option you wish to use:

- Fee Payment Consent Form (Form F) - must be completed, indicating the method and payment option you wish to use i.e. regular instalments via BPay, cash, Eftpos or by automatic Direct Debit instalments; and
- Direct Debit Request Form (Form D) or Credit Card Authority (Form C) – only complete this form if you wish to set up an automatic direct payment from your bank account (Form D) or credit card account (Form C).

These forms must be returned before the 31st January in current year so the new plan can be set up by the first scheduled run date of first week in February.
What if I already have an approved Fee Payment Plan and/or Direct Debit arrangement in place?
If you have already submitted an ongoing Fee Payment Plan Consent form and/or Direct Debit (Bank or Credit card) Authorisation form in a previous year, you do not need to complete another form, unless you wish to change your payment method or bank account details.

Fee payers who previously paid by BPAY, Direct Deposit, cash or Eftpos can continue to do so in the current year, without submitting another form, if instalments are continued to be paid in the approved frequency and amount required to clear the account by December each year. If you wish to change your current payment method or frequency, then a new Form F (and Form D or C if applicable) must be lodged by 31st January.

How much will I pay in each instalment?
This will depend on the current balance of your fee account, and the payment frequency you have selected in your Fee Payment Plan, so it can be different for every fee payer.

Generally if the amount of tuition fees and charges has increased since last year, and/or the number of children you have attending the College has changed, then the instalment amount will be different to previous years. For your reference, a Fee Payment Schedule is available on the College website and on the Parent Access module (PAM) which gives a general overview of approximate fee instalment amounts. If you usually pay by cash, Eftpos, BPAY, or Direct Deposit and are unsure of how much to pay, then contact the Business Office at the start of the current year and they will advise your new instalment amount.

If you have a Direct Debit arrangement in place, the Business Office will automatically re-calculate the new instalment amount to commence from 1st Thursday in February to ensure the current year’s fees are paid off by end of January in next year, or by 1st December in current year if this is known to be your last year at the College (e.g. year 12 students with no siblings).

Can fee payments continue during holidays?
Fee payers can continue to make payments by BPAY or Direct Deposit into our College bank account during holidays. Fee Payers who usually come to the College Business Office to pay their fees will have to check “The Beacon” newsletter for the revised office operating hours during term breaks.

Direct Debit arrangements will continue to run on their scheduled dates throughout the year including term breaks and Christmas holidays. You must contact the Business Office during office hours in the week before any scheduled payment date or before the term break if you require any changes to your payment plans, so that we can make the necessary change before processing the bank transfer file on the next scheduled date.

Are there any government allowances I can claim?
In 2015, the government provided extra financial support to eligible parents via the Camp Sport Excursion Funding Levy (CSEF) of $225 per student up to 17 years old. This funding is still available in 2017 for any parent who holds a current Centrelink Pension or Health Care Card at 31st January. The CSEF application form is available on the College website and should be returned to the Business Office by 15th February.

What if I experience financial difficulty with paying the fees?
If accounts are not paid regularly or in a timely manner, the College will instigate appropriate debt collection processes. Therefore, if your circumstances change (e.g. marital status, unemployment) or if you experience financial difficulty at any time during the year, it is essential that you communicate with us regarding your situation. Please contact our Debt Management Officer on 8734 2427 or debt officer@thomascarr.vic.edu.au to discuss your situation and to arrange a mutually acceptable payment plan.

What happens if my payments void?
If your fee payments void, the College will have the right to pass on bank charges to you. The College also maintains the right to pass on debt collection charges, if the matter is referred to our external debt collection agency. For this reason, it is important to contact the Business Office if a situation arises that makes paying the fees difficult, even if it’s only for a short time, or if your nominated bank account has insufficient funds to cover the next scheduled direct debit or credit card instalment payment.
When can I collect a laptop for a new student?
The ICT Resource Charge for all new students (year 7 to 12) must be paid before the laptop will be issued – refer to separate “ICT Resource Charge Payment” document.

New students will be able to collect their laptops from the Paul D’Astoli Information Centre between 9am and 4pm on Tuesday 24th January 2017.

For the laptop to be issued, one or both parents must:
- attend on collection day i.e. students cannot attend on their own;
- provide photo ID (e.g. drivers licence);
- bring the completed and signed “Digital Device Program Agreement” form for each student in year 7 to 12; and
- provide proof of payment of the applicable ICT Resource Charge per student.

The laptops remain the property of the College and are loaned to the student specifically for use in their curriculum studies. All students have a responsibility to use and care for the laptop in an appropriate and authorised manner, as outlined in the “Digital Device Program Agreement”. Any breaches or improper use may result in the device being taken from the student which may impact on their learning outcomes.

Any damages or losses to devices will be fully chargeable to parents, as outlined in the “Damaged Device Procedure 2017” document on the College website.

What if my current contact details or family circumstances change?
Where possible the College will use email and SMS to correspond with parents regarding important student and school information, to improve timeliness of communication and to reduce administration and printing costs, Therefore, it is essential that if there are changes to parents’ current situation during the year that we be notified in writing as soon as possible by using one of the following forms:
- “Change of Details” – to update contact information e.g. new home or mailing address, new mobile phone and/or email address; or
- “Change of Family Status” – to advise changed marital or custody arrangements e.g. which parent the student lives with and/or changes in responsibility for fee accounts.

These forms are available on the College website or by contacting the Business Office.

How do I access important student information and parent correspondence?
The College provides the following information tools:
- CareMonkey – to be used by parents to update their children’s personal information, including medical conditions and contact details, and to complete permission slips for excursions, camps and ACS attendance. A link to “A step by step guide to using Caremonkey” is on the College website.

  Parents of all new students MUST sign onto CareMonkey by 31st January – for assistance, please contact Ms Tina Alphonso on 8734 2421 or email StudentReception@thomascarr.vic.edu.au

- Parent Access Module (PAM) – this gives parents access to general school correspondence, specific records and term reports for their children, and for booking meeting times for the Parent Teachers Conferences at end of each semester. New parents will be sent their own specific login user name and password in early February so that they can access PAM. Current parents who have forgotten their login or password can click on the link at the bottom of the College website homepage.

- College website – all school curriculum, administration and general information, including forms, policies, fees and other relevant details can be found on the website www.thomascarr.vic.edu.au

- The Beacon – the College newsletter is issued electronically by email to parents every fortnight during the school year. Hard copies may be obtained by contacting the Main Administration office.
Where is the Business Office located?
The Business Office is normally located in the reception area in the Administration Centre (E Block). However, during 2016 and early 2017, due to the refurbishment of E Block, the Administration and Business Office staff, as well as the Principal, Deputy Principal, Business Manager, Principal's PA and several teaching staff are located in D Block.

All parents and visitors attending the College from January 23 2017 onwards for appointments, student collection, payment of fees, canteen and other volunteer work, will be required to report and sign in at the temporary Reception and Main Administration Office located in D5. The nearest entry is from the car park located near the gymnasium or at the end of the Paul D’Astoli Information Centre.

It is anticipated that the refurbishment of E block will be completed in February 2017; parents will be notified when the Main Reception and Business Office will re-commence operating from this building.

The Student Absentee Line (8734 2400) and all office phone numbers will remain the same.

What if I have other fee account queries?
All enquiries regarding fees accounts can be made at the Business Office between 8.00 am to 4.00pm during the term, by email on fees@thomascarr.vic.edu.au or by phone on 8734 2453 (if no answer, please leave a message stating clearly your name, account number, phone number and brief details about your enquiry and your call will be returned as soon as possible during office hours).