

**CEWA HEALTH CARE CARD TUITION FEE DISCOUNT SCHEME**

**Frequently Asked Questions A guide for Parents & Guardians**

1. When was the HCC Tuition Fee Discount Scheme introduced?

2005.

2. Who provides the funds to run the HCC Tuition Fee Discount Scheme?

The School community gives up part of its fees so that families with lower means may have easier access to a Catholic Education.

To mitigate the financial impact to the School community, the Catholic System provides a rebate back to the school, per eligible child. The funds for this rebate are provided by Catholic Education WA.: all of the Catholic schools across Western Australia give up some of their respective federal funding entitlements so that this rebate may be paid. A budget of \$6.6m has been set aside for 2017.

3. How long will the Scheme operate?

It is expected that the Scheme will continue to operate for the length of the child's enrolment at the school as long as a valid family Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card is held.

4. Who can access the Scheme?

For the purposes of this Scheme, references to a means tested Health Care Card (HCC) holder include:

- Centrelink Family Health Care Card:
  - The card holders must be the Parent/Guardian
  - Only a Family card is acceptable (individual cards are not means-tested).
  - Claims cannot be made by a parent using a student's card (students may hold a card for disability purposes) or by a parent quoting a student's card number.
- Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card.
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card (Blue card only).

The Scheme applies to:

- Catholic and non-Catholic families;
- New and current students.

#### 5. Which Concession Cards are not eligible under this Scheme?

Centrelink issues a number of cards for a variety of reasons.

The cards which are eligible under this scheme have stringent income test requirements, whereas for other cards income test are more generous or non-existent.

The aim of the HCC Scheme is to assist families with the most limited financial resources and, therefore, only the cards with the relevant income test requirements are automatically eligible.

The Scheme does not apply to:

- ABSTUDY students – they can access financial support from the government;
- Holders of the Mobility Allowance Health Care Card,
- Department of Veterans Affairs TPI and Gold, White and Orange Health Cards.

#### 6. What financial information should be requested to parents?

Beneficiaries of eligible cards are expected to present their current valid card to the school, in order to benefit from the HCC fee discount.

Schools shall not request any other financial information from families on an eligible card, as the income test has already been performed by Centrelink.

#### 7. What happens if the card expires during the year?

The reduced tuition fee applies on a pro-rata basis until the expiry date on the card.

In order to claim a fee reduction beyond the card's expiry date, please provide a copy of the new card to the school

#### 8. What happens if a family qualifies to an eligible Centrelink card during the year?

The reduced tuition fee applies on a pro-rata basis until the expiry date on the card.

For example, if a family receives an eligible card in June they will be charged two terms at the full rate and two terms at the reduced rate.

#### 9. What if a family is no longer eligible for the Centrelink card?

If you are no longer eligible to a means tested cards covered by this scheme, please bring it to the school's attention.

The reduced tuition fee will apply on a pro-rata basis for the period during which the card was valid.

#### 10. What happens if I have the 'wrong' card or no card?

If a family currently holds a concession card other than the ones listed as being eligible but still have limited financial resources, they can apply for fee assistance to the school Principal – as has always been the case.

As per the "School Fees: Setting and Collection" policy, the Principal may, from time to time, request financial information from families to support applications for fee concessions or any other concessions.

You may be asked to provide information to assist the school in assessing your individual claim for assistance. For example, you may obtain an Income Statement from Centrelink via the internet, by telephone or from a Centrelink office.

If you do not have a Centrelink card and wish to apply for the discount you should apply in person through the school Principal.

#### 11. How much will I have to pay?

In 2017, the tuition fee per child included on an eligible HCC will be:

- Kindergarten students: \$300 p.a.
- Primary students (PP - Year 6) \$300 p.a.
- Secondary students (Year 7 - 12) \$1,500 p.a.

#### 12. What does the discounted fee cover?

The HCC Scheme provides a discount on tuition fees only.

It does not cover additional charges such as camps, book hire, building levy, insurance, subject levies. Application fees and Enrolment fees are also not covered by the HCC Scheme.

However, parents who are experiencing financial difficulty can apply to the Principal to have these additional charges discounted, as has always been the case.

#### 13. What if I have more than one child at the school?

The school's normal sibling discounts will continue to apply to the already discounted HCC fee tuition amount.

14. What do I need to do to access the HCC Scheme?

No information is necessary at the time of enrolment.

All families have to follow the school's standard enrolment procedures in order to secure a place for their child at the school.

To access the discount, parents/guardians will need to show a valid card and complete an Application Form. It is preferable if this can happen during Term 1 each year or as soon as the card is issued.

The school may follow up the HCC Discount application later in the year, after the card expires to ensure that you are still eligible.

15. How will this affect the custodial/non-custodial HCC holder?

Entitlement to the automatic discount should be granted only if the eligible card holder is legally responsible for payment of the fees.

Split families and foster care arrangements will need to be assessed on an individual basis.

16. Will this Scheme result in an increase in fees to non-HCC holders?

No.

The funds to run this scheme are provided by all of the Catholic school in the System in Western Australia, through a pool of "co-responsibility" funds.

Fee increases at the school will remain within the "recommended maximum fee increase" levels that the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) has approved for each school.

17. Are HCC holders guaranteed a position at the school of their choice or will they be prevented from gaining a place because they are not paying full fees?

Normal enrolment procedures shall apply as per the CECWA Student Enrolment Policy with the following enrolment priorities:

- Primary
- Catholic students from the Parish with a Parish Priest reference
- Catholic students from outside the Parish with a Parish Priest reference

- Other Catholic students
- Siblings of non-Catholic students
- Non-Catholic students from other Christian denominations
- Other non-Catholic students
  - Secondary
- Catholic students from Catholic Primary schools with a Parish Priest reference
- Catholic students from non-Catholic Primary Schools with Parish Priest reference
- Other Catholic students from Catholic Primary schools
- Other Catholic students from non-Catholic Primary schools
- Siblings of non-Catholic students
- Non-Catholic students from Catholic Primary schools
- Non-Catholic students from other Christian denominations
- Other non-Catholic students

18. What happens if I receive a HCC during the school year but after Term 1?

The reduced fee will apply on a pro-rata basis.

For example, if a family receives the card in June they will be charged two terms at the full rate and two terms at the reduced rate.

19. What happens if I pay the discounted HCC tuition fee for the whole year and my card is no longer valid or is not renewed?

You should inform the school immediately once the card is no longer valid. An amended account will be issued with the correct charges on a pro-rata basis.

20. If I am receiving the HCC tuition fee discount, does this mean my child will not be able to take part in school activities, trips and excursions?

No.

Providing your child meets the school's requirements for all students, your child will not be prevented from taking part in school activities because they are receiving a fee discount. However, you may be required to pay for activities which require additional payment.

21. What happens when my child turns 16 and gets their own card?

When a student turns 16 their name will no longer appear on the family card. However, these students are still covered by the family card.

A card in the name of the student is not eligible.

22. Where can I get more details on Health Care Cards?

HCCs are issued through Centrelink. For more information on HCCs, you can contact Centrelink on 132 490 (local call charge except for mobiles which will be charged at mobile rates) or you can log onto <http://www.humanservices.gov.au>