



Fee Policy

Principle

Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten (the school) is a not-for-profit incorporated association that is funded by a combination of Commonwealth and State funding, parent fees, grants, fundraising and donations. The school depends on parent fees to bridge the gap between government funding and the cost of providing a high quality, Steiner education.

The school acknowledges the financial commitment families make to Steiner education when they pay their fees. The timely payment of fees is essential for financial stability and viability of the school, and the school adopts an assertive position regarding the collection of fees.

Policy

It is our policy that:

- Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten is a fee-paying school and kindergarten.
- Payment of both tuition and learning experience fees are a requisite for enrolment.
- Families applying for short-term financial assistance or Access Scholarships, consideration will be given to the family's history and contribution towards the school.
- Non-payment of fees without prior arrangement being made with the Operations Manager could result in the termination of the children's enrolment and any outstanding debts may be referred to a debt collection agency for recovery.

Conditions of Enrolment

Families that enrol at Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten are required to:

- Pay the non-refundable registration fee upon submission of the enrolment forms.
- Return the offer of enrolment letter, signed by the legal guardian/s or parent/s and pay the refundable fee bond.
- Contact the Operations Manager to discuss and agree your preferred payment method and then sign the financial declaration part of the enrolment forms. The person/s named in the financial declaration will be legally responsible for paying fees regardless of any change to marital status or living arrangements, until the school is notified otherwise by a variation to the financial declaration form signed by all parties. The school expects that such matters will be resolved between the parties prior to the commencement of the next term.
- Return the completed enrolment application form signed by legal guardian/s or parent/s.
- To continue enrolment, all fees and other charges must be paid as per the school's fee policy and fee schedule for each year. The school fees and charges are subject to alteration.



Fee Procedures

- Expression of interest.
- Enrolment offer.
- Statements issued at the start of each Term, with the first invoice issued by the end of January.

There are four payment options:

- Annual upfront fee payment – entire year's payment in advance attracts an early payment discount of 5% on the tuition fee component.
- Term by term payment – due within 14 days of the invoice issue date.
- Direct debit – weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments spread across a 10 month period. Forms can be supplied on enrolment or from our accounts payable.
- By arrangement with the Operations Manager.

Your fee statement will include:

- Tuition fees
- Learning experience fees
- Capital levy
- Instrument hire (where applicable)
- State bus charges (where applicable)
- Less any applicable discounts (such as sibling discounts)

Payment of Fees

Timely payment of your fees is essential for the sustainable management of the school's financial resources. Failure to pay your fees is a breach of the enrolment contract and will result in late charges to your account and could result in the termination of enrolment.

Payments can be made by:

- Completing a direct debit authorisation form (preferred payment method).
- Direct deposit into the school's account with Bendigo Bank, via your online banking facility
- EFTPOS terminal at the school administration office
- Cash or cheque at the school administration office
- The school's bank account details are included in your term's fee statement and on the relevant enrolment forms. Please use the invoice number and your child/ren's surname as the reference.



Late Payment Charges

A late payment fee of 1.5% on the account balance will be charged every 30 days to any fees not been paid by the invoice due date if no prior arrangement has been confirmed with the Operations Manager. This charge is to cover the costs that the school incurs for late payments, such as bank interest charges and administration costs.

Withdrawal of Student/s

The withdrawal of a child/ren from the school has a significant impact on the child, other students in the cohort and on the school itself. Parents are to give one full term's notice in writing to the Operations Manager and such notice will be acknowledged in writing. Where a student leaves during a term, the fees due are unchanged. A pro-rata refund would only apply if the full year of fees was paid in advance.

Enrolment Bond & Leaving the School

There are three ways an enrolled child might leave the school:

- Graduation from Year 12
- Withdrawal by the parent/guardians
- Termination by the school

Where a child is transitioning from Kinder to Prep, the enrolment bond will be credited to the family's fee account at the commencement of Term 1.

Where a child has been withdrawn and the required notice period given, the enrolment bond will be credited to the family's fee account within 5 days of written notice of the withdrawal being given.

Where a child's enrolment is terminated by the school due to fees being in arrears, the enrolment bond will be retained to offset fees.

Notes on Fees

Bank charges – where the school incurs costs related to failed bank transactions, this cost will be passed onto the person/s named on the financial declaration.

Commencement part way through a school term – families with new students commencing partway through a school term will be invoiced pro-rata.

Hired instruments – hired instruments must be returned to the school prior to your child/ren's last day of school. Instrument hire charges cannot be refunded should a child withdrawn from school part way through the year.



Long-term absences – all fees must continue to be paid during absences from school. The school will only consider waiving a component of the fees where a child is absent for an extended period of term time, if the child or parent/guardian experiences exceptional circumstances.

Applications for fee waiver for a long-term absence may be made in writing to the Operations Manager and are granted wholly at the discretion of the school.

Short-term financial assistance – limited financial assistance (formerly bursaries) may be offered to families with children currently enrolled at the school. Applications for financial assistance are assessed based upon financial considerations (the school may ask to see documentation to support your application) and the demonstrated commitment of the family to the school and Steiner education. Please contact the Principal or Operations Manager to discuss further and/or apply.

Access scholarships - Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School is a not-for-profit organisation seeking to deliver the best possible Steiner education to our students. We do not wish fees to be a barrier to attendance, and for those families who are committed to a Steiner Education, but do not have the financial means to meet the full cost of school fees we offer Access Scholarships. These limited scholarships are assessed based upon the financial capacity of the family and require information such as income, expenses, assets, or tax return statements. Please contact the Principal or Operations Manager to discuss further and/or apply. These are confidential arrangements between the school and an individual family and are therefore conditional on the family in receipt of the access scholarship maintaining confidentiality of the agreement.

Donations – all donations to the school in form of goods, services or of a monetary value are appreciated and help to keep expenses down and fees affordable to the largest number of families. The use of any donations will be allocated at the discretion of the school unless offered and accepted for a specific reason.

Fee Collection

The collection cycle is as follows:

Action
Invoice issued
Payment due within 14 days
Email payment reminder sent
Late payment charges applied to the account
Second email reminder sent
Late payment charges applied to the account
Third and final email reminder sent
Late payment charges applied to the account
Account referred to School Finance Committee for further action, including enrolment review and/or debt collection options



Term invoices are issued in the week prior to the start of term, from late January to early October. Instalments are due as per the fee payment schedule. Other fee payment options are outlined in fee procedures.

Any significant financial difficulty leading to an historical fee debt or any default on current fee payments will require a payment arrangement agreed upon with the Operations Manager. It is expected that all such payments will involve direct debit arrangements with the school.

Where fee payments fall behind the agreed terms, the school will follow its fee collection procedure as outlined above. Should your family be experiencing financial hardship we encourage you to make an appointment to connect with the Operations Manager so that alternate payment arrangements can be made to ensure your child/ren's continued enrolment.

Where the school has not been contacted to arrange payment of an outstanding fee account, the parties on the financial declaration will be advised via email and by registered mail that their account will be referred to the school's debt collection agency. The school Governance Committee will review the outstanding fee account and decide on the termination of the child/ren's enrolment.

Definitions

Building fund – these voluntary donations provide vital resources for maintaining a high standard of infrastructure to support a quality education. It has deductible gift recipient status with the Australian Taxation Office and all contributions towards the fund are fully tax deductible.

Sibling discount – families with more than one child enrolled at the school receive a sibling discount. This discount is applied according to the payment schedule selected, i.e. on the full year invoice for annual upfront fee payment, fee payment plan or per Term invoice.

Upfront fee discount – annual fees paid in full by mid-February are eligible for the upfront fee discount. This 5% discount is applied to the tuition fee component only. Please contact the Operations Manager if you wish to pay upfront.

Enrolment Fee Bond

This is a bond payment that confirms the acceptance of a child's enrolment and place at the school. This amount is held by the school until the child graduates, or the enrolment is withdrawn or cancelled with the appropriate withdrawal notice period given. The amount of the enrolment bond can be found on the annual fee schedule.

Registration Fee

This is a non-refundable administration fee that is payable per family. The amount of the registration fee can be found on the annual fee schedule.



Fee Schedule

The document issued to current and prospective families that specifies the amount of all fees, levies, discounts and bonds for the school. This document is available on the school's website.

Instrument Hire

A hire fee will be applicable across all years, where a parent chooses to hire instead of buying an instrument for their child. This may be preferable as it allows the student to change instrument sizes (should they require) and includes insurance against repairs from accidental damage.

Capital Levy

The levy is a quarterly charge that is used to offset the cost of maintaining the school's grounds and gardens as well as fund our ongoing Building and Grounds improvement program. The amount of the levy can be found on the annual fee schedule.

Tuition Fee

This fee covers the cost of your child/ren's education and tuition. Tuition fees are reviewed annually and are set in Term 4 of each year and can be found on the fee schedule.

Learning Experience Fee

This fee covers the cost of Class 1 recorders, swimming & athletics program costs, all classroom resources, any visiting teachers and the annual camps and excursion program. Learning experience fees are reviewed annually and are set in Term 4 of each year and can be found on the fee schedule.

Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten is committed to the continuous review and improvement of all its operations including this policy. It is the responsibility of the Principal and Operations Manager to regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Fee Policy to ensure it is working in practice and revise the policy when required.

Review date – 31st October 2024

Next review date – 31st October 2026

Approved by – School Finance Committee

