



The changed fee structure - what does it mean for me?

Questions and answers

1. Will quality of education be reduced?

The new fee restructure will not reduce the quality of education at SGS. The Diocese has agreed to support the reduction and neither physical nor human resources have been reduced to make this possible.

2. Will class sizes increase?

SGS will maintain the excellent teacher/student ratios it has always enjoyed.

3. Will extra curricular fees or sundries be increased?

Everything covered in the school fees to date will remain part of the new structure. The purchase of new text books will be reviewed in the future.

4. What is SGS aiming for with the change?

Bishop Brian has a passion for Anglican Schools in the Diocese becoming accessible and affordable. The Diocese is offering SGS support in line with this change of focus.

5. What are the benefits? Are there any downsides?

These changes will ensure our ability to offer quality independent education to the children of the Upper Hunter. Increased demand for student places may create waiting lists in some year levels.

6. How did the Council determine the new figures?

The Council enlisted the services of a consulting company, conducted focus groups, and compared fees to other Newcastle Anglican Diocesan Schools. The Council worked within budgetary constraints to find the most suitable levels for fees to fulfill our mission to become accessible and affordable.

7. Will these changes effect future growth or development of SGS?

By providing an accessible and affordable fee structure, SGS will be able to maximize its current resources and develop an exciting strategic plan for future development. (This Strategic Plan will be launched in 2007). The new structure receives the support of Bishop Brian and the Newcastle Diocese to encourage schools to become faith communities offering inclusion, tolerance and compassion in line with the Anglican Tradition.

8. How can SGS afford this change?

The new fee structure is possible due to the support of the Diocese and the School Community. Full support of our fund raising activities and our school bodies (P&F and Foundation) remains imperative. SGS will continue to rely on the contribution of volunteers.

9. Why have we had to pay such high fees in the past?

Previous School Councils conducted school business within the constraints at the time to provide the best education and facilities possible. The establishment costs of a new school are high and debts for new buildings need to be serviced. With the school in a more established phase and the Diocesan support now offered, the Council is excited to be able to offer this fee restructure to underpin the future development and success of SGS.

ACCESSIBILITY

10. How will this affect my child's scholarship or sibling discount?

All financial assistance for current school fees are calculated on an individual basis. Scholarships and sibling discounts are percentage based and will be retained as per the attached letter. If at any time a school family's circumstances change and they need financial assistance, a bursary may be tailored by the Principal and the Finance Committee.

11. How will SGS be able to afford to increase its course offerings?

The Council is committed to maintaining the school's current offering and with a potential increase in student numbers expects greater opportunities will be available. SGS has always offered a variety of HSC study courses as well as a quality foreign language, music and extra curriculum component from K to 12.

12. Will this change the essence of SGS?

The essence of SGS will continue to be based on quality education and the individual care of each student. The new structure will create additional opportunities to support students and staffing in the future.

13. Will this effect the recruitment and retention of quality teaching staff?

SGS will continue to recruit the best teaching staff available. The Council expect that the changes being made will enhance the working environment for our dedicated teaching staff.

14. Are the fees likely to rise substantially in the future?

The Council expects that the tuition fees will only rise to keep pace with inflation and the overall cost of providing education to the children. As previously mentioned, school families will be called on to support fundraising activities and future building projects and their commitment at these times will be essential for the future development of SGS.

15. Will this mean a change for my child?

There will be no change in the quality of education or care provided to your child.

16. Can we be confident that the financial future of the school is secure?

The Council through the Finance Committee has undertaken a robust exploration of outcomes relating to these changes and has modeled five and ten year projections in consultation with the Diocese, our financiers and consultants. We are confident that our new fee structure will secure the financial needs of the school within the Bishop's overall vision for schools.

17. Can we get a refund on this year's fees?

The new fee structure becomes available in January 2007 and all present fees must be paid under existing arrangements.

Once the new structure is introduced, SGS will strictly enforce collection of fees. It is expected that both tuition and sundry accounts will be paid on time. Late payers (who do not have a pre-existing arrangement with the School) and bad debtors will be referred to a debt collection agency. Refusal to pay fees promptly will result in your child's place in the school being jeopardised.

If you have any further questions regarding this initiative please speak to a Council Member.

