

## ACCOUNTABILITY

- develop practices at school and Archdiocesan levels that document and report fee concessions to the appropriate authority
- ensure all families contribute to the education of their children within their financial capacity

- ensure that all Catholic families regardless of their financial capacity are welcomed in our schools.

## REFERENCES

Archdiocese of Brisbane. (2001). Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998-2001. Brisbane Catholic Education. Brisbane.

Congregation for Catholic Education. (1998). The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium. St Paul's. N.S.W.

New Jerusalem Bible. (1985). New York, Doubleday.



Archdiocese of Brisbane  
Catholic Education Council

# Financial Accessibility of Catholic Education Schools

SEPTEMBER 2008

## Policy Statement

FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS



For more information please contact the  
Catholic Education Council  
G.P.O. Box 1201 Brisbane 4001  
Telephone (07) 3033 7400  
Fax (07) 3844 5101





## FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS

### FOREWORD

*This policy statement on the Financial Accessibility of Catholic Schools reflects the ongoing commitment of Catholic Education in furthering our Archdiocesan Vision of Jesus Communion Mission through the educational ministry of the Church.*

*Through the implementation of this policy:*

*'All Catholic children, not just those whose families have the financial means, have a right to a Catholic education. Vatican documents stress that the Church's preferential option for the poor means that she offers her educational ministry in the first place to "those who are poor in the goods of this world." (The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools, pg 15, 2006).*

*The Catholic school is fundamental to bringing the presence and activity of Christ and the Church into the lives of people within our communities especially those who experience disadvantage. Through the Church's' educational services the staff of Catholic education are called into mission through or by providing access for the people who are poor or who are at the margins of our society.*

*As they enact this policy our community of schools will be fulfilling the Gospel command to "Bring the good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). I have no doubt that this policy will promote justice and equity in a practical way within our community for the betterment of society.*

*I invite each school community to promote this policy and to further the educational mission of the Church to people in the Archdiocese who are disadvantaged.*

*Sincerely in Christ*

Most Rev John Bathersby DD  
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE  
September 2008

### POLICY

Catholic schooling across the Archdiocese should be open and accessible to all families who seek our religious and educational values regardless of financial capacity.

### INTRODUCTION

Catholic schools as a mission of the church in the Archdiocese of Brisbane are challenged to fulfil the gospel command to "Bring the good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). This option for the poor is expressed in a practical way by ensuring our schools remain financially accessible to all, especially those who can least afford them.

### RATIONALE

All Catholic schools are called to service and to demonstrate an authentic response to Christ's call. They serve their Catholic community and provide an apostolic outreach for the local church. They are faithful to the gospel as they witness to the teachings of Jesus to love God and neighbour<sup>1</sup>. They are challenged to balance financial accessibility with their need to provide resources to a standard acceptable to their community. In doing so they remain mindful of the core gospel mission.

There is tension between the authenticity of a Catholic school, its inclusiveness and its quality of education. Catholic school communities are called to address this tension creatively and to respond to the needs of diverse groups, "with special attention to those who are weakest"<sup>2</sup>, in particular the socio-economically disadvantaged. They are also called to welcome those from a different background including those who are spiritually poor and those in danger of future unemployment and marginalisation.

For our schools to remain open to all, especially the marginalised, our community of schools is challenged to reach out to all, encouraging them publicly to join our school communities and welcoming them when they do. This provision of Catholic education to "all who support its religious and educational values"<sup>3</sup> requires in

turn a commitment by school communities to freely and equitably share resources among the whole community of schools. In this way all schools support the financially disadvantaged across the Archdiocese.

### CONSEQUENCES

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, individually and collectively, will:

### INCLUSIVENESS

- promote Catholic schooling in a way that actively encourages all families who share our religious and educational values to access our schools
- develop mechanisms across the Archdiocese that financially assist schools to support families in need.

### EQUITY

- ensure there are processes to develop fees and concessions which are consistent and fair
- develop fee concession processes within their local community
- assist families with students at multiple parish and Archdiocesan schools with discounted fees
- encourage groups of Catholic schools to develop fee concession policies for families enrolled in more than one school
- create an environment in each school which reduces any incidence of discomfort felt by students and families due to financial constraints
- ensure that, financially, all students have access to all aspects of the curriculum, including school functions and activities.

<sup>1</sup> New Jerusalem Bible. (1985). New York, Doubleday.

<sup>2</sup> Congregation for Catholic Education. (1998). The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium. St Paul's. N.S.W.

<sup>3</sup> Archdiocese of Brisbane. (2001). Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998-2001. Brisbane Catholic Education. Brisbane.