This document outlines the College’s policy on the non-refund of part of the school fees when a child is unable (for any reason) to attend an excursion, activity or other event organised by the college.

Policy

Regardless of the reason, there shall be no partial refund of school fees where there has been non-attendance by a student at an excursion or other compulsory curricular activity, except in the circumstances outlined under Exceptions (below).

The College, further, reserves the right to refuse to provide parents a breakdown of the components that make up the Tuition Fee and/or the resource levy on the following grounds:

1. The College is transparent in the way that it presents its fee schedule each year;
2. That information is confidential financial information of the College;
3. There is no compelling reason why a parent would require this information; and
4. All events and excursions within the scope of this policy are compulsory curricular activities.

Exception

The only exception to the above shall be where the school has requested that the student not attend for disciplinary or other reasons.

Background

At the beginning of 2006, Good Shepherd Lutheran College moved to an all-inclusive fee structure, absorbing all extra tuition charges into a resource levy. There were several compelling reasons for this change including transparency, efficiency of administration, fairness and ease of budgeting for our parents, our clients.

Explanation

Where there is a request for the College to refund part of the resource levy due to their students non-attendance on a specific excursion or at a specific event, the answer will always be NO. The reasons for this are as follows:

1. The redistribution illusion
   Where a student has not attended a College excursion or other event, there is often the perception by the parent that they have been unfairly disadvantaged compared to other parents. This is, for the most part, untrue and could be labelled the redistribution illusion.

   The costs to the College of educating any particular child consist of a bundling of hundreds of different items. To account for all of these items individually would be an exercise in futility. Moreover, some children benefit more from some activities and events than others.

   The College’s single largest cost is that of teacher’s salaries which accounts for nearly 60% of the College’s entire expenses in any given year! In terms of equity what this means is that unless teachers invest exactly the same amount of time in each child, there is an automatic cost reallocation from one student to another. No parent would reasonably expect the College to account for these inequities in any meaningful way as regards this, the College’s single largest expense line, so why should there be an expectation to do so for relatively minor costs like excursion attendance etc?

2. Compulsory attendance
   The College’s general policy is only to charge those items for which attendance is compulsory. Attendance at all curricular excursions in our programs are compulsory so if there is non-attendance then that should not reasonably be expected to be the College’s responsibility.

   Moreover we budget for each of our excursions on the basis that each and every child in the class WILL ATTEND THAT EXCURSION. A very important point is that just because a child does not attend an excursion or event does not mean that there will not be a cost to the College for that child for that event due to pre-bookings of events.
3. **Contractual matters**  
Clause 8 of the College’s enrolment contract which all parents sign states the following:

*(Undertaking to)* …to pay the College fees by the due dates as set out on the Fees Schedule published each year and to be jointly and severally liable for payment of all fees and charges levied by the College from time to time;

There is therefore also a contractual obligation for parents to pay the fees as set out in the fee schedule each year without reference to individual items that might be financed by those fees charged.

4. **Cost**  
As a result of the streamlining of the College’s fee schedule at the start of the 2006 year, dramatic reductions in staffing in the business office of the College have been able to be achieved *with the result that each and every parent of the College has benefited from SUBSTANTIAL savings that the college has made on wages in this area.*

5. **Inclusion of other benefits to parents**  
Frequently over the last year (2006) students of the College have benefited from additional excursions that were not anticipated at the commencement of the year, due to the way we now budget for tuition expenses in our resource levy. These additional activities have NOT been charged on to parents due to the fact that the College has given its word (on the fee schedule) to charge parents at a given fee level and will not go back on that word.

Any further questions about this matter should be directed to the Business Office of the college on (07) 5455 8600.