

7 October 2015

Ref: 0460-15JML-jsk l

Dear Families,

Please find enclosed in this letter some important information relating to fees and the Family Contribution Scheme that will come into effect from the beginning of 2016.

We are extremely grateful to the many families that contributed to the Parent Satisfaction Survey in 2014 and for the strong messages that were given in relation to fees and the completion of 'hours'.

FEES

Overnewton College is committed to providing the excellent level of teaching and learning that families have come to expect. Whilst continually improving NAPLAN scores and strong VCE results are an outcome of this commitment, the ongoing development of the whole Overnewton child through the provision of excellent co-curricular, leadership, service and spiritual opportunities is an essential part of an Overnewton education too.

The College continues to prudently manage its income, whilst meeting the curricular and co-curricular needs of students, employee costs, and sensibly reducing debt in preparation for building a new Middle School at Keilor, planned for 2018.

The College continues to derive income from only two sources: Government funding and fees. The level of Government funding is unknown beyond 2017, although it is possibly going to decrease, and this is something for which we must plan.

For 2016, we are pleased to advise families that the fee increase will be maintained at an average of 4%. While we appreciate that this increase is greater than CPI, it is lower than the education price index from June 2014 to June 2015 (i.e. the increased cost of schooling across the country in that time), which sits at 5.4% according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The fee schedule for 2016 is attached to this letter.

In addition to maintaining the fee increase to a very modest level, we are introducing a new **siblings discount** to come into effect in 2016.

Families that have three children at the college will receive a 10% discount for the third child; families with four children at the college will receive a 50% discount for the fourth child and families with five or more children at the college will receive a 100% discount for the fifth and subsequent children.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

From the beginning of 2016, the Family Contribution Scheme will be renamed the **Family Involvement Program**. This new title gives a stronger meaning to what the program has always enabled: the vital involvement of families in the life of their children's school.

The following changes will come into place from the start of 2016:

- Families in their first ten years at the College will be required to complete an equivalent of **12 hours** of service per term.
- Families who have been in the College for more than ten years will be required to complete an equivalent of **8 hours** of service per term.
- It will be possible to accrue hours across a term – as long as the College is advised of this intention via email so that we can best plan for the distribution of work.

The College is committed to refusing the option for families to pay in lieu of completion of hours. If such a system were to be introduced, we believe that it would fundamentally change the fabric of who we are as a College. Families would become less connected with their children's school community and a class system would result within the College. None of these things are desirable.

As an additional resource, parents will be able to view their completed 'hours' through the new parent portal that we expect to go live during Term 1, 2016.

We trust that the changes to the 'hours' requirement will provide the support requested of the College through the Parent Satisfaction Survey, whilst ensuring that we remain a school community that is compelled by the importance of involving family in the learning of children.

We are grateful to the important input that we received in the Parent Satisfaction Survey and trust that families will appreciate the efforts that have been made to address this feedback, whilst continuing to ensure that the College remains viable well into the future, both financially and in terms of its school mission.

Yours sincerely,

James Laussen
PRINCIPAL



Mark Ruff
BOARD CHAIR