St Peter’s Primary School
Stockton

Dunbar Street, Stockton 2295
Telephone: 4928 1861
Facsimile: 4920 1736
E-mail: admin@stockton.catholic.edu.au
www.stockton.catholic.edu.au
Welcome

May you find your association with St Peter’s both happy and rewarding.

At St Peter’s Primary School we aim to:

• Provide a balanced spiritual, emotional, physical, intellectual and creative education for each student.

• Promote a true sense of faith, friendship and high moral ideals, fostering the growth of self-discipline.

• Respect the inherent and unique dignity of each child and assist in the development of a Christian understanding of our mutual responsibilities and appreciation of self, others and the environment.

Vision Statement

At St Peter’s we grow in our faith by living the values and teachings of the Gospel and by passing on our faith, history and traditions through and example.
St Peter in Chains
School Motto

St Peter in Chains is named after the time Peter spent chained in prison after Jesus’ death.

The cross represents our vision of fostering growth to the “full stature of Christ.”

The keys represent that through Christ we unlock the way to our salvation; the keys to heaven.

The boat on the water represents our journey on the sea of life.
Prolife

St. Peter’s Primary School is a comparatively small school, located by the sea in one of Newcastle’s oldest suburbs. The school was first established in 1887 and has been handing on the Catholic tradition and practice of faith through successive generations. A family atmosphere has been nurtured as a result of this history. Over the years St. Peter’s has produced many fine sporting, cultural and civic leaders. The school currently has an enrolment of 78, catering for a range of children, including those who have special needs and talents.

Located by the sea, Stockton provides an enviable environment for the families of the area. It is a close-knit community with a large selection of sporting and interest clubs. St. Peter’s Primary School has a wonderful relationship with the community as a whole. Parents, teachers, residents and local industry take pride, interest and personal involvement in their school.

Sacramental and Liturgical Life

Throughout the year the children are given the opportunity to receive the sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation.

As school Masses, class Masses and liturgical services form an important part of school life, you are invited to join with us on these occasions.

Sacramental preparation within the school is PARISH-BASED-FAMILY CENTERED. This means that the immediate preparation for the reception of the sacraments of CONFIRMATION, EUCHARIST and PENANCE takes place within small groups, outside of the regular school day and structure.
School Procedures

Awards

The school likes to acknowledge and celebrate students’ achievements as they occur. To do this, the school uses a Merit Award system whereby a student is given a certificate that may be in recognition of academic achievement, displaying healthy attitudes and values, sporting success, being responsible and reliable, etc. Teachers hand out awards at fortnightly assembly (Wednesday of newsletter day commencing at 2.20pm), with the students’ names also being printed in the school Newsletter.

Absence From School

Reasons for absences from school, or any variation from normal travel arrangements, should be conveyed to the class teacher.

Partial absences must be recorded in the book kept in the office. This will require the parent’s/guardian’s signature, as well as the time and reason. This procedure is required for both early departures and late arrivals.

The Education Reform Act, 1990, requires that daily attendance be recorded in the class roll. It is your responsibility to ensure that your child/children attend school on each day that instruction is provided. Whenever a child is absent, you must provide a note stating their name, class, date/s, duration and reason for the absence. This should be signed and sent in to the class teacher. If the note has not been furnished within seven days of the absence, then the child is deemed absent without sufficient reason. This is recorded in the Class Roll, which is a legal document.
After School Routines

Parents may choose to pick their children up and take them home after school has finished. But unless you notify the school in writing or via a phone call, no child will be permitted to change their normal routine when going home. This practice ensures the safety of your child.

Animals In School

No animals are to be brought onto the school grounds without the principal’s consent.

Appointments

TEACHER – if at any time you wish to speak with your child’s class teacher, he/she is usually available before or after school. It is best if you arrange a mutually suitable time by phoning for an appointment.

PRINCIPAL – if you have any concerns regarding your child’s development, or if you need to discuss any matter with the principal, please do not hesitate to make an appointment.

Teachers are not able to talk with parents during class time.

Assemblies

Whole school assemblies are held each fortnight on Thursday afternoons commencing at 2.20pm. Each class will take responsibility for leading an assembly and sharing some of the work they have been doing in class. Merit Awards are also presented. Parents are more than welcome to attend these special occasions.
Banking

The Catholic Development Fund (CDF) provides banking facilities for children and parents at the school. Children are asked to bring their banking on Tuesdays. New account forms are available from the school office.

Book Club

The Scholastic Book Club operates within our school. Order forms are sent home at regular intervals. This service provides an opportunity to buy books, which are reasonably priced and suitable to the age and interest of the children within each grade.

Buddy System

Each new Kindergarten child is introduced to a Year 6 “buddy” who helps and informs them about the various aspects of school life at St Peter’s. Any other new child to the school is also assigned a “buddy” regardless of their age. Kindergarten children are introduced to their buddy on orientation day, where they spend time getting to know each other. Once the school year begins, this same buddy then greets and accompanies the new Kindergarten child to their classroom and continues to interact with them in the playground during recess and lunch. During the term, playing with their buddy on the playground is slowly phased out to encourage the children to play with their Kindergarten peers.

Bus Transport

Bus transport is available for all children who require it. The children in all infants’ classes (Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2) and the children who live outside the 1.6 kilometre radius of the school are eligible for a free bus pass. Forms are available from the school upon request. Children in Year 2 and Year 6 must re-apply at the end of the year for the following school year. All other children are required to pay the appropriate fare.
Canteen

Canteen facilities are available three days each week at lunchtime only – every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. This service is provided on a voluntary basis and works on a roster system. Please provide your child with a lunch bag with name, class, order and amount enclosed, clearly marked on the front of the bag. Orders are collected from the classroom at the beginning of the school day. A canteen menu is distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Change Of Address/Phone Numbers/Emergency Contacts

To ensure that our records are kept up to date, please advise the office in writing, of any change to your address, phone number and emergency contact details.

Child Protection

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are committed to providing safe environments for students. Whilst we have a legal obligation to protect children, this commitment is central to our Catholic beliefs. At St Peter’s, we believe that all children have a right to a safe environment which is free from any form of abuse or harm. At St Peter’s, relationships between adults and children are governed by trust and Gospel values.

Schools in NSW are required to meet the statutory obligations of legislation relating to child protection. Schools in this diocese are required to uphold the policies and guidelines set out by the Catholic Schools Office.

This legislation includes:

- The Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection and Community Services) Act, 1998
- The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act, 1998
- Commission for Children and Young People Act, 1998

Catholic Schools Office documents include:

- Child Protection – Identifying and Notifying Abuse
Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act

This legislation establishes a shared responsibility for the protection of children. Teachers have a legal responsibility to report a child or young person who is at risk of harm. This means that staff at St Peter's are required by law to make a report to the Department of Community Services when they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of harm from abuse or neglect. This includes physical, sexual and psychological abuse, exposure to domestic/family violence, homelessness or the inability of the parents to provide appropriate medical care for the child or young person.

Child Protection and Volunteers

Being a volunteer in a school is an important task. St Peter’s would not be able to function as well as we do without the contribution made by the myriad of volunteers who so generously give of their time and expertise. Unfortunately, history has shown us that some adults put themselves in situations where they can use their positions of trust and power to harm children. This history has resulted in legislation in NSW which aims to protect children from abuse.

The legislation that applies specifically to volunteers includes:

- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- NSW Ombudsman Act 1974

*All adults working on a voluntary basis at St Peter’s must sign a Voluntary Workers Declaration.*
Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

This legislation was enacted as a recommendation of the 1997 Wood Royal Commission. Under this legislation, in a school context, ‘employees’ include all persons, paid or unpaid, who have direct, unsupervised contact with children or young people through any aspect of their work in, or for, the school. It aims to protect children and young people from contact with people who have been convicted of the following:

- serious sex offence;
- child-related personal violence;
- murder of a child;
- indecency offences punishable by imprisonment of 12 months or more;
- kidnapping (unless the offender is or has been the child’s parent or carer);
- offences connected with child prostitution;
- possession, distribution or publication of child pornography; or
- attempt, conspiracy or incitement to commit the above offences.

A prohibited person includes a Registrable person under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000.

Examples of ‘employees’ who perform a task for the school include, but are not limited to:

- volunteers assisting in classrooms, e.g. reading or library helpers;
- those attending a “working bee“;
- persons providing transport on the request of the school;
- anyone assisting in the school canteen;
- people assisting with camps, retreats, community days and excursions;
- religious and clergy who attend the school for liturgies, retreats or services.
All volunteers are required to complete a Prohibited Employment Declaration prior to commencing as a volunteer. Declarations are available from the school office. Volunteers must read the Declaration, sign it and return it to the school.

It is very important for volunteers to read the Declaration before signing as it is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for, undertake, or remain in child-related employment.

**Volunteers not willing to provide a Prohibited Employment Declaration are not permitted to undertake any duties in the school.**

*A volunteer who has any doubts about his/her status should seek independent legal advice.*

**NSW Ombudsman Act 1974**

This Act guides the Catholic Schools Office and school’s response when a child protection allegation has been made against an employee. It applies to paid and unpaid employees (volunteers) in schools. The Act requires the school to notify allegations that constitute sexual offences, misconduct, assault, ill-treatment, neglect and behaviour that causes psychological harm to children to the Diocesan Child Protection and Professional Conduct Unit (DCPPCU).

Once the allegation is received by the DCPPCU it is reported to the Ombudsman’s Office. The DCPPCU then conducts an investigation into the allegation. The investigation gathers facts relevant to the allegation and arrives at a finding at its conclusion. The process of investigation provides the employee with an opportunity to respond to the allegation and have the response heard. All evidence is considered before a decision is made in regard to the finding.
Clothing and Personal Property

All clothing and personal effects such as lunch boxes, school bags, etc. must be marked clearly with your child’s name. This makes the return of any lost property a much simpler task.

Clothing Pool

Some items of school clothing are available at a very small cost from a clothing pool, which operates from the canteen. When your child grows out of his/her uniform, you might like to consider donating clothing items to the school.

Communication

A Newsletter is sent to each family fortnightly on a Friday. These are given to the eldest family member. You can also have the newsletter emailed to you directly. Other notes and parent advice will be sent home from time to time, so a regular check of your child’s bag is advisable.

Discipline

St Peter’s has a whole school approach to behaviour support based on the 4R’s –

RIGHTS RESPONSIBILITIES RULES RESPONSE

The whole school community – the parents, the children and the teachers, has built the 4’s. Therefore, there are agreed positions to the following questions:

- What are our community rights?
- What are our community responsibilities?
- What are our community rules in regard to both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour?
- What response do we as a community make to both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour?
RESPONSE PROCESSES

- What management system do we have in place to **prevent** inappropriate behaviours and to **encourage** appropriate behaviours?
- What are the **consequences** of chosen behaviours? Does the school community agree to these consequences?

A copy of the Behaviour Management Policy is available from the school.

Dismissal

Parents are asked to meet the children outside the gate near the church following afternoon dismissal.

Early Departure/Late Arrival

All children are expected to remain at school until after they have been dismissed from the afternoon assembly. If your child needs to leave early, the Leavers Register which is kept in the Office, must be signed by the parent/guardian.

Enrolment

St Peters Stockton follows the Diocesan Enrolment Policy, which aims to accommodate the needs of families seeking a Catholic education for their children. The Enrolment Policy requires all schools to comply with its published procedures, and has, as its primary focus, the provision of guidelines for the enrolment (where possible) of children from Catholic families. Catholic families are defined as: *Families in which a parent is a Catholic and in which the children to be enrolled have been baptised Catholics.*

When determining the order of preference for accepting enrolments, St Peters will follow the recommended guidelines set out in the Enrolment Policy. However, St Peter’s encourages children from all denominations to apply. N.B.
In the case of enrolment into a Catholic High School, the same priorities apply. *Enrolment in a Catholic Primary School does not guarantee enrolment in a Catholic High School.* All students, whether Catholic or a member of another religious denomination, will be required to complete an Application for Enrolment Form and return it to the school before the enrolment period has finished.

**Fruit Break**

Each day, the children have a morning fruit break where they are able to “recharge their batteries”. Parents are asked to send along fruit, dried fruit or vegetables (cut into manageable pieces). Not only does the fruit break encourage healthy eating habits but also teachers have noticed a marked improvement the concentration levels of the children.

**Homework**

Homework is a valuable tool for the many opportunities it provides to consolidate and supplement the work being carried out in the classroom. By its nature homework provides:

- Opportunities to practise skills and enrich ideas developed at school
- Opportunities for children and adults to interact in learning and family life
- Opportunities to develop responsibility and work organisation habits which will assist them in later school years

Each student will be provided with homework grid on Monday, which will be able to be completed within the allotted time frame for each grade. Approximate time frames for each grade are:

- **Kindergarten** - 10-20 minutes per night
- **Year One** - 10-20 minutes per night
- **Year Two** - 20-30 minutes per night
- **Year Three** - 20-30 minutes per night
- **Year Four** - 20-30 minutes per night
- **Year Five** - 30-40 minutes per night
- **Year Six** - 30-40 minutes per night

It should be noted that these are *suggested maximum times* and in the event that a child cannot complete set work in this timeframe, parent/teacher consultation should take place.
Illness or Accident at School

Minor illness and accidents will be treated by the teacher on duty or by the class teacher. If the accident/illness is of a more serious nature, parents will be contacted. The school is covered by an ambulance scheme and in extreme emergencies, it will be called and parents notified. It is extremely important that the school be notified of any change to home, work and emergency contact details.

Infectious Diseases

Parents are reminded that all children should be fully immunised before commencing Kindergarten. An Immunisation History Statement is required for school entry. If this cannot be provided the child will have to be excluded from school when outbreaks such as measles etc occur.

Inservice Days and RFF Days (Release From Face to Face)

The first day of the school year is a pupil free day. This is used by staff to prepare for the start of the year’s program. The final two days of the school year are also pupil free days. Other staff inservice days occur throughout the year and are used by teachers to update curricula and for professional development. You will be notified at least one month prior to each of these days. As part of teachers’ professional development they are given release time to attend inservices and do programming, etc. A casual teacher is employed to take the class on these days.

Library

The school has a well-stocked Library from which the children borrow each Tuesday. We ask that all children have a Library Bag and that they handle books carefully whilst they are on loan. Parents wishing to purchase a Library Bag from the school should see the school secretary. Failure to return books may result in
the children losing their library privileges as well as being invoiced for the cost of replacing the book.

The school also has a selection of Parent Resource books which you are welcome to borrow.

**Lost Property**

You can assist your child to identify their clothing, drink bottles, lunch bottles by marking them clearly. All unclaimed property will be held for a short period and then placed in the second hand clothing pool.

**Medications**

Any child who suffers from a chronic condition or allergies which may be likely to manifest themselves at school should complete a *Medical Action Plan*. This will allow school staff to effectively deal with your child’s individual health care needs. Medical Action Plans are available from the office.

A child’s parent must complete a *Consent Form To Administer Medicines* before any medication is administered to a child at school. This includes Asthma medications. If your child has prescribed medication to take while at school, you need to complete the appropriate form and hand this in at the office, with the medication. These forms are available from the office.

**Money Collection**

All money sent to school should be in a sealed envelope clearly marked with:
- Name
- Class
- Purpose
- Amount

Your child should place all money (excursion money, school fees, etc.) and permission notes into the Note Bag in class after Morning Assembly.
Parents and Friends Association

The school Parents and Friends Association is a voluntary body of parents and interested friends of the school and operates under the patronage of the Parish Priest. The P & F meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. Meeting times will be advertised in the St Peter’s Press. The school Parents and Friends Association is a voluntary body of parents and interested friends of the school and operates under the patronage of the Parish Priest.

Parent Involvement

This school functions best with your support. Throughout the year, there will be many ways you could offer your support.

- Parents & Friends Association
- Canteen
- Class Helpers
- Library Helpers
- Sport Carnivals
- Fundraising Activities
- Working Bees

Whatever your talent, we welcome your contribution and extend an invitation to you to participate in your child’s education.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Parent information evenings are held early in Term One of each year. Teachers will give an outline of what the children will be studying in all of the Key Learning Areas (KLA’s). During the evening, they will also outline their homework expectations, class practices and their expectations with regards to the children’s behaviour.

Communication between home and the school may also take the form of individual meetings, initiated by either the teacher or yourself. Please don’t hesitate to contact the teacher to set up all appointments to discuss any concerns.
Privacy Legislation

The Privacy Act does not distinguish between adults and children and thus clearly envisages that young people are to be afforded rights in respect of their privacy.
However, the underlying arrangement between the School and Parents is contractual. The parents (who are recognised by the common law as having the right to make decisions concerning their child’s education and religion) have engaged the school to provide schooling for their children on the terms agreed to by both parties. Therefore the school’s authority over the child derives from the contract with the parents and also with its duties at law.

Privacy Policy - Collection Notice

1. St Peter’s School (the Diocese both independently and through its Schools) collects personal information, including sensitive information about pupils and parents or guardians before and during the course of a pupil’s enrolment at the School. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the School to provide schooling for your son/daughter.

2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the school’s legal obligations, particularly to enable the School to discharge its duty of care.

3. Certain laws governing or relating to the operation of schools require that certain information be collected. These include Public Health and Child Protection laws.

4. Health information about pupils is sensitive information within the terms of the National Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act. We ask you to provide medical reports about pupils from time to time.

5. St Peter’s School from time to time discloses personal and sensitive information to others for administrative and educational purposes. This includes to other schools, government departments, Catholic Schools Office, the Catholic Education Commission, your local diocese and the parish, schools within other Dioceses, medical practitioners, and people providing services to the school, including specialist visiting teachers, sports coaches, volunteers and counsellors.

6. If we do not obtain the information referred to above we may not be able to enrol or continue the enrolment of your son/daughter.
7. Personal information collected from pupils is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians. On occasions information such as academic and sporting achievements, pupil activities and other news is published in School newsletters and magazines.

8. Parents may seek access to personal information collected about them and their son/daughter by contacting the school. Pupils may also seek access to personal information about them. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the school's duty of care to the pupil, or where pupils have provided information in confidence.

9. As you may know the school from time to time engages in fundraising activities. Information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. It may also be disclosed to organisations that assist in the school's fundraising activities solely for that purpose. We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.

10. We may include your contact details in a class list and school directory.

11. If you provide the school with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the school and why, that they can access that information if they wish and that the school does not usually disclose the information to third parties.

**School Fees**

The school tuition fee is set by the Diocesan Board of Financial Administration and is your contribution towards the recurrent cost of educating your children in a Catholic School. The current schedule of fees is the end of this handbook.

We are committed to the ideal that no child will be denied a Catholic education due to the inability to pay fees. From 2007 low income and those families holding a Commonwealth Health Care Card or Pension Card are required to pay no more than 50% of the tuition fee charged for the 1st child for each child attending a Catholic School.

Part of the money collected is remitted to the Catholic School Office as our contribution towards the recurrent cost of the whole education system. The balance is the major source of income for the operating costs of the school.

Apart from the tuition fee, the school sets a **general service fee (Resource Fee)** of $120.00 per year per child that covers amongst other things: exercise books, text books, reading material, duplicating costs, art/craft supplies and, teaching aids such as computer hardware/software.
School fees may be paid weekly, monthly, by the term or annually by Bpay, cash or cheque. Fees can also be paid through direct debit facilities. We do not wish fees to become a burden for any family, nor do we wish to exclude children from our school because of such. If you find yourself in difficult circumstances, it is essential that you discuss the situation with the principal.

To assist in providing appropriate and relevant school facilities for all schools throughout the Diocese, each family is charged a Diocesan Family School Building Levy of $579.00 per year. All money raised will be used by the Diocesan Planning Committee for the construction and maintenance of school facilities throughout Maitland-Newcastle. Please note that any parishioner who contributes more than $579.00 per year to their Parish Planned Giving Scheme will be given a rebate from the DFSBL for the following school year.

### School Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School commences</td>
<td>8:55am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>11:10am – 11:30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>1:00pm - 1:50pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>2:55pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parents are reminded that the playground is unsupervised before 8:25am. All children arriving before this time are to sit under the Parish Hall Shelter until the teacher arrives for the morning duty.

### School Uniform

Your general appearance is the outward sign to others of the pride and respect you have in yourself. We aim to develop an understanding of this concept and encourage the children to be well groomed and to dress in the correct school uniform.

All uniform items are available from Lowes, Newcastle (with the exception of the school hats which are available from the school office). At the moment, girls summer & winter uniforms are not kept in stock and have to be ordered in. Orders will only be taken during the indicated months.
Girls Uniform

Summer
- Blue and white check dress with Peter Pan collar
- White socks
- Black shoes only – no sandals
- Navy school hat

Winter
- Grey and maroon checked pinafore and white long sleeved blouse with a Peter Pan collar
- Long grey pants (same style as the boys pants) may be worn as an alternative to the Pinafore
- Maroon crossover tie
- Navy jumper/jacket
- White socks or grey stockings
- Black shoes only
- Navy school hat
Boys Uniform

Summer
- Grey shorts
- Regulation blue shirt
- Grey socks
- Black shoes only – no sandals
- Navy school hat

Winter
- Grey shorts or long grey trousers
- Regulation blue shirt
- Maroon tie
- Navy jumper/jacket
- Grey socks
- Black shoes only
- Navy school hat

Sports Uniform
- Red collar T-shirt with school emblem
- Navy knit shorts (girls may wear navy netball skirt)
- Predominately white or black joggers and white socks
- Navy tracksuits may be worn during winter

Parents are asked to ensure when purchasing school jumpers, jackets and sport shirts that they purchase these items from Lowes as it is the only store that stocks the correct St Peter’s School Uniform with our school logo. Navy school hats are available from the school office.
## School Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.25 am</td>
<td>All Teachers Are To Be On Duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.55 am</td>
<td>Assembly Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.10 am</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30 am</td>
<td>Classes Resume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.45 pm</td>
<td>Warning Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50 pm</td>
<td>Classes Resume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50 pm</td>
<td>Clean-up Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.55 pm</td>
<td>Afternoon Assembly and Dismissal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Secretarial Times

The school Administration Officer works 3 days per week *Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday* during the following times:

- **8:30am – 3.00pm**
## Term Dates 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term One Ends</td>
<td>Friday, 12th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term two Begins</td>
<td>Monday, 29th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Two Ends</td>
<td>Friday, 28th June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Three Begins</td>
<td>Monday, 15th July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Three Ends</td>
<td>Friday, 20th September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Four Begins</td>
<td>Tuesday, 8th October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Four Ends</td>
<td>Friday, 20th December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Parents

Attached is a letter from the Catholic Schools Office outlining the Diocesan Tuition Fees for 2013.

These fees, along with the Resource Fee ($120.00 per year) and the Diocesan Family School Building Levy ($580.00 per year) are billed over the first three terms of the year. Accounts can be settled by cash, cheque or Bpay. However, St Peter’s offers a direct debit facility which enables families to have a set amount debited from a nominated bank or building society account on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or per term basis. If you choose to utilise the direct debit system, your fees will be calculated over the whole year (52 weeks). There are no costs associated with using the direct debit facility.

In an effort to reduce the financial burden on families with limited financial resources, catholic schools in our Diocese offer a discounted rate of 50% on tuition fees for any family who hold a Health Care Card/Pension Card. Application forms for the HCC concession are also included in your pack. The table below does not reflect this discount.

If you are interested if utilising direct debit, forms are included in your enrolment pack.

Yours faithfully

Denis Prendergast

Direct Debit 2013

Amounts below are for includes Tuition Fees, Resource Fee and Diocesan Family School Building Levy for the eldest child attending St Peter’s – please note that sibling discounts on Tuition Fees do apply for additional children in the family attending other Diocesan Catholic Schools. Health Care/Pension Card concessions are not reflected in the amounts below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency Amount</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Fortnightly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$33.00</td>
<td>$66.00</td>
<td>$143.08</td>
<td>$429.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
31 October 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing in regard to the setting of Diocesan fees for 2013 to support and strengthen Catholic schools and pastoral services. As you are aware, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle schools have been established over many years by the generosity of parents, parishioners, the religious and Catholic school staff. The funding of our schools is a shared responsibility between Commonwealth and State Governments, parents and parishes. The commitment and continuing financial contribution of parents and parishioners is greatly appreciated and is essential to help fill the gap between the amount of government funding received and the cost of running our schools.

1. A New Family Model for Diocesan Tuition Fees

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is very conscious of the financial challenges for Catholic school parents. We are therefore implementing in 2013 a more equitable approach to discounting tuition fees for families and adjusting full fee rates to make it as manageable as possible for families. These fee changes will assist us to maintain strong Catholic schools and to provide quality educational outcomes, facilities infrastructure and pastoral services to our families.

Following requests from parents, the Federation of Parents and Friends Association and the Catholic Schools Council, the Catholic Schools Office has reviewed the discount process applied to families with more than one child attending a Catholic school. The new model, which has been endorsed by the Catholic Schools Council, the Federation of Parents and Friends Association, the Diocesan Finance Council and approved by Bishop Wright, applies discounts consistently across all children in the same family no matter which school they are attending.

For example a family with 2 children attending Catholic schools will receive a 10% discount on each child’s tuition fee. If for example you have a child in a Primary school and a Secondary school you will receive a 10% discount on the Primary fee and the Secondary fee instead of paying the full tuition fee for each child. This change to discounting for families represents a significant financial saving for a large number of families in 2013, and for most families across their child/children’s K-12 Catholic school experience. The biggest saving for a two child family will be when the eldest child is in Year 11 or Year 12 and the second child is in primary school as they will receive, for the first time, a discount on the higher rate senior school tuition fees.

Key benefits to families over the 2012 and prior years’ approach include – attracted discount that recognises all children in the family attending Diocesan Catholic schools from Kinder to Year 12, uniform discounting of fees for oldest and youngest children in the family, and a more equitable recognition of family costs over each child’s whole schooling. Our modelling in recent months identifies savings in tuition fees for approximately 2,000 families.

2. Diocesan Tuition Fees 2013

Proposed rates and structure for Diocesan Tuition Fees are reviewed annually by the Catholic Schools Council, Federation of Parents & Friends Association and the Diocesan Finance Council for recommendation to the Bishop. Structure and rates for Diocesan Tuition Fees in 2013 approved by the Bishop follow.

In 2013, the attracted family discount for each child off the Diocesan Tuition Fee full rate will be:

- 1 child family 0% - full rate to be applied
- 2 child family 10% each child
- 3 child family 20% each child
- 4 child family 40% each child
- 5+ child family 50% each child
In 2013, the Diocesan Tuition Fee full rates will be:

- Kinder to Year 6 $1,017
- Years 7 to 10 $1,401
- Years 11 to 12 $2,196

The Diocesan Tuition Fee full rate scholastic year groupings have been reduced from four to three groups (Years 7 to 10 will become the same rate). In comparison with 2012 Diocesan Tuition Fee full rates, the Kinder to Year 6 rate has increased by $0.93 per week, the Years 7 to 8 rate by $1.56 per week, Years 9 – 10 rate Nil increase, and Years 11 to 12 rate by $2.00 per week.

3. Impact of NSW Government Funding Cuts

As stated in a letter to parents in late Term 3 the school fee increases for 2013 have **NOT** been inflated beyond our normal rate of increases to compensate for the school funding cuts implemented by the NSW Government. The impact of reduced funding is still under review but in 2013 will be met by reductions in the CSO budget.

4. Diocesan Family & School Building Levy (DF&SBL)

The DF&SBL is a diocesan family levy charged to the oldest child in each family. The levy assists in the financing of capital works and repairs and maintenance of school facilities, the provision of new schools and the need to provide for annual debt-servicing requirements. This levy also supports the diocese in its pastoral ministries including the provision of Pastoral Workers, Refugee and Aboriginal ministries, the Hospital Apostolate and the change, loss and grief program, Seasons for Growth. In 2013 the levy will increase to **$580** per year per family. This amounts to a cost increase of approximately **65c** per week per family compared to 2012.

5. Special Fee Reductions

In an effort to reduce the financial burden on families with limited financial resources, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle offer a different tuition fee rate for ‘means tested’ low income Health Care / Pension Card holders. The rate provides a discount for each child of 50% off the Diocesan Tuition Fee full rate. The discount is for the Diocesan Tuition Fee only and the Diocesan Family School & Building Levy and resource / service fees set by each school are additional to this amount.

It is important to note that financial hardship should not prevent a child from attending a Catholic school and **no child will be denied a Catholic education because of a family’s genuine inability to pay the required school fees**. This **does not** only apply to eligible Health Care / Pension card holders as any families experiencing financial difficulty are entitled to fee assistance. The Principal of the school can be contacted to discuss such matters.

Together with parents, parishioners, parish priests, principals and staff in our schools, we are strongly committed to offering our children and young people outstanding learning environments in which their faith can be nurtured and they can realise their intellectual spiritual and social potential. We thank you for your continuing commitment and contribution to Catholic schools and the diocese.

Yours sincerely

Ray Collins
DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Most Reverend William Wright
BISHOP OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE