



## **The Scholarship Program - Information Guide**

### **Introduction**

William Clarke College (the College) operates for the purpose of providing children with a quality Christian based education at an affordable price. However, as a result of hardship, not all families will be able to afford an independent education without some financial assistance. The College recognises this and seeks to make the College accessible to a wide range of families.

Many years ago the College decided to discontinue staff discounts, sibling discounts, early payment discounts and any other discounts that were applied to a class of people regardless of their financial position. It replaced that former approach in favour of an approach directed to the specific financial needs of individual families. As a result, we have the Financial Assistance Program.

The Financial Assistance Program delivers financial assistance to families who face hardship through two programs:

1. Scholarship Program (*this Information Guide deals with the Scholarship Program*):
  - A Scholarship is offered to children at the point of entry to the College and this occurs during the enrolment process.
  - The aim is to provide access to the College for children where the family might not otherwise be able to reasonably afford a William Clarke College education due to a hardship.
2. Bursary Program (*further information is available on the Parent Portal Connect*):
  - A Bursary is offered to families who are already enrolled at the College and their financial circumstances dramatically change for the worse.
  - The aim is to enable children to continue at the College even though the family is facing financial hardship due to adverse circumstances that arose since enrolment.

The College is not able to respond favourably to all applications but conducts a streamlined process to determine how the resources can be allocated most appropriately.

We understand the sensitivities involved in you providing personal and financial information to us. The information you divulge is treated with strict confidence (see 'Confidentiality' section below). It is necessary for us to have certain information when assessing applications so as to make prudent and wise decisions on how we can support families.

### **Scholarship Application Process**

Within a framework of stewardship and governance responsibilities, the process for a Scholarship Application is kept to a minimum with confidentiality maintained throughout.

In relation to the main intake years (Kindergarten, Year 3, Year 5 and Year 7), the process is as follows:

#### *Enrolment Process*

- The family completes and submits an Application for Enrolment form.
- The enrolment process begins with an invitation to attend an Information Meeting (usually in February of the year prior to entry). Information about enrolment and Scholarship is made available at that time.
- The family continues to liaise with the Enrolments Department.



#### *Scholarship Process*

- Families wishing to also apply for a Scholarship would contact the Business Manager to request a Scholarship Application Form.
- The family is sent this Scholarship Program Information Guide and the Financial Assistance Application form to complete.
- The family completes the Financial Assistance Application form and lodges it with the College Business Manager.
- The family is contacted to arrange a time for a Scholarship Meeting.
- A Scholarship Meeting is held with the Head and Business Manager.
- The Head and Business Manager assess the need and the College's ability to financially assist.
- A sub-committee of College Council assesses the recommendation made by the Head and Business Manager.

The Enrolment process and the Scholarship process then merge at this point and, as a result of the dual processes, the College writes to the family to advise of one of three possibilities:

1. There is no enrolment place available.
2. There is an enrolment place available, but without a Scholarship offer.
3. There is an enrolment place available with a Scholarship offer. In this case we would indicate the *nature of financial support* which is available.

A similar process occurs for enrolment in other year groups and at other times throughout the year.

#### **The Financial Assistance Application Form**

This form enables you to provide information to us that is necessary in order for us to make an assessment of the support needed. The information requested covers:

##### *Page 1*

- name, address and family relationships
- basic information about your employment situation.

##### *Page 2*

- summary information of your assets and liabilities
- summary information of your income and expenses – reasonable estimates are acceptable

*Page 3* is the Statutory Declaration

The form does ask for some supporting documentation.

If your assets consist of a business or investment you own or part own through any entities (including sole proprietorship, companies, trusts, etc), then there will be additional information required with the application so that the College can properly assess your business and investment relationships. The information should include financial statements and tax returns of the most recently completed tax year.

#### **The Scholarship Meeting**

This meeting is a vital component of the process as it is our way of gathering necessary information and understanding your unique set of family circumstances. It allows us to make sense of the Scholarship Application form and understand your financial position. It also allows us to consider and explore the *nature of support* the College may be able to provide.



### **Nature of Support**

The nature of support offered to families under the Scholarship Program could be by way of:

- Short-term or long-term assistance (both are subject to a review process)
- Scholarship reduction of the Tuition Fee by a fixed amount
- Scholarship reduction of the Tuition Fee by a percentage.

*A Scholarship will only apply to the Tuition Fee.* It does not apply to any extras including the Year Levy, activity charges or discretionary items such as extra-curricular sport, music or drama charges. These extras charges are payable by the parents/carers and are not subject to Scholarship support.

The College is not always able to provide financial support by way of a reduction to the Tuition Fee. Therefore, an application does not guarantee support. The College has to weigh up the circumstances and its own stewardship and governance responsibilities in reaching its assessment.

### **The Outcome**

The College sends one combined letter (an Offer of Enrolment) in relation to the Enrolment and Scholarship process. As noted above, the outcomes could be one of three:

1. There is no enrolment place available.
2. There is an enrolment place available but without a Scholarship offer.
3. There is an enrolment place available with a Scholarship offer. In this case we would indicate the nature of financial support which is available.

The family then considers the Offer of Enrolment and decides whether or not to accept.

The College does not require anything special of a child who is a Scholarship recipient. Like all other children at the College, they would be expected to comply with all College rules and expectations and contribute to College life in a positive way.

### **Stewardship and Governance**

The Head and Business Manager are accountable to the College Council for the proper running of the Scholarship Program. However, within this accountability, confidentiality is protected (see 'Confidentiality' section below for further information).

Generally, support will not be provided in the following situations unless there are very extenuating circumstances:

- Your financial position appears to be as a direct result of lifestyle choices – for example you have overextended yourself on the purchase of a home which has caused the financial difficulty.
- You own lifestyle or investment assets such as a luxury car, a boat or a rental property.
- As parents /carers you collectively are able to afford the education costs for your child, but one parent/carer chooses not to be a financial supporter of the child.
- You have not made reasonable attempts to review and reduce your expenditure and are attempting to maintain lifestyle while seeking support from the College.
- In the case of siblings, you have an existing debt to the College where you have not proactively sought to come to suitable arrangements with us or we have already commenced debt recovery action.



*Other considerations:*

- A divorce or separation, whether or not it consists of agreed financial arrangements between the parents/carers, will not automatically give rise to a Scholarship.
- If you have substantial investment funds, funds in bank accounts or education trusts it would be expected that these funds would be utilised first.
- The process will consider the financial support available through the child's grandparents and other family sources.
- The process will consider the ability of the parents/carers to first borrow to fund the education, either in the short-term or long-term.
- Generally, it will be expected that both parents/carers are working at least 20 hours per week. However, the College will consider extenuating circumstances.

Financial support is more favourably considered to families in the following special circumstances such as:

- prolonged and significant medical issues of a parent, parents or caregiver
- one or both parents/carers have a disability which limits the income earning capacity of the family
- single parent/carer families
- prolonged periods of unemployment
- business failure for those who are self-employed or run family businesses
- families with multiple children enrolled at the College (this acts as a more directed way of providing sibling discounts)
- dependent children under the age of 12 months, which results in one parent/carer not being able to work full-time for that period, particularly where the cost of child care would outweigh the after-tax amount from part-time work.

**Confidentiality**

The College does not divulge details of Scholarship assistance in any public form or to any third party.

Within the College, information about the existence of a Scholarship is maintained by the Head, the Director of Enrolments and the Business Manager. Their personal support staff have access to the details necessary to arrange appointments and manage your enrolment process and your fee account with the College. Access to the database containing such information is restricted to these people only.

Strict internal confidentiality is maintained. For example, teachers, Stage Coordinators, Heads of Faculty, Tutors, Heads of House, Heads of Schools, the Deputy Head (except when acting for the Head during his absence), Counsellors, administration staff etc are NOT provided ANY information about financial assistance. Even when the Scholarship Program is reviewed by College Council, they do not see names and addresses of people receiving support, they just see a set of circumstances.

The College does NOT tell your child about the existence of financial support. However, the decision whether to tell your child that they are a recipient of financial assistance through a Scholarship is your decision alone – some parents/carers decide to tell them, some parents/carers decide to tell them at a later time, some parents decide to never tell them. All responses are equally appropriate. We would just ask that if you tell your child that they have the maturity to keep the information confidential.



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### **Review Process**

The Head and the Business Manager, as part of their stewardship and governance responsibilities, conduct reviews of the assistance provided.

In the case of a Scholarship there will usually be a review at least every two years. This is to establish whether your circumstances are largely the same or if they are better or worse. Adjustments to the assistance provided can be made as a result of reviews.

### **Trust**

We accept information provided by you in trust and good faith.

We trust that should your financial circumstances change for the better during the period your child is on a Scholarship, you will inform us in good faith so that we can adjust downwards the level of financial assistance provided by the College. This allows us to support other families.

Any questions about the Scholarship Program can be directed to the Business Manager via [dej@wcc.nsw.edu.au](mailto:dej@wcc.nsw.edu.au).