

# PARENT PAYMENT POLICY



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office

### Rationale:

- The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 empowers school councils to request contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories –, curriculum contributions, other contributions and extra-curricular items and activities, as well as to raise funds. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by our school are enhanced by doing so, our School Council requests contributions from parents for certain student materials and services charges.

### Aims:

- To provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funds with approved financial contributions from parents.

### Implementation:

- Only the most appropriate requisites will be selected to meet the educational need of the students.
- School Council supplements Department of Education funds by requesting contributions from parents for the following items:-
  - **Booklist items / uniform** are those items that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents and guardians are responsible for and may choose to either provide or order through the school supplier. These items include:
    1. materials that the student takes possession of, including exercise books and student stationery;
    2. school uniform;
  - **Curriculum Contributions** are voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the school deems necessary for students to learn the curriculum.
  - **Other Contributions** are voluntary contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the school's functions and objectives.
  - **Extra-Curricular Items and Activities** are items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are above and beyond what the school provides for free to deliver the curriculum. These are provided on a user-pay basis.
- In addition, School Council invites parents to make donations by means of:-
  1. **Voluntary financial contributions** are for those items and services that parents and guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust.
  2. **Other support options**

## **Camps Sports and Excursion Fund**

A parent or guardian of a child under 16 years of age who holds an eligible Centrelink benefit and a Health Care Card or pension card, may be entitled to the Camps, Sports and Excursion Funds payment. Details of the entitlement are available from the school office

This payment goes directly to the school's account. It can be offset against any invoices for camps, sport or incursion/excursions.

Any portion of the CSEF not expended by the end of the year will be carried over into the next year.

### **Payment Arrangements**

- Parents and Guardians will be provided with early notice of contribution requests for curriculum contributions, other contributions and extra-curricular items and activities (a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year).
- These Payments are kept to a minimum. To further assist parents with payments, payment options are available via compass:
  - Option A                      Full amount
  - Option B                      Payment Plan of three Instalments
- Alternative payment options are available through the school with parents encouraged to email the Business Manager to discuss circumstances and available options.
- Payment requests or charges to parents will be itemised and the category each items falls under will be clearly identified as curriculum contribution, other contribution or extra-curricular items and activities..
- Receipts will be issued via compass to parents upon making payment.
- All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.
- Parents will receive notification via Compass of any upcoming school / year Level / class event and will need to consent and make payment by the date indicated on compass
- All costs and processes associated with parent payments and voluntary contributions will be reasonable, will be defensible in relation to Department of Education requirements, and will be within the expectations of the school community.
- The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist parents, including Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and State Schools Relief Committee support. As with all parent payments to the school, Council will provide opportunities for all parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the principal.
- No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents or students.
- Parents and guardians also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, as items should meet the specifications provided by the school. There may also be certain items that due to their nature may only be provided by the school.
- No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a voluntary contribution.
- The principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.

## **Refunds**

Parent requests for refunds are subject to the discretion of the school and made on a case-by-case basis. Refunds will be provided where the school deems it is reasonable and fair to do so, taking into consideration whether a cost has been incurred, the Department's [Parent Payment Policy and Guidance](#), Financial Help for Families Policy and any other relevant information. Parents are required to email the school with any refund / credit requests.

## **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the five-year review cycle. In addition, School Council will review the level and purpose of parent payments and voluntary contributions annually, and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction received from the Department of Education.