



Parent Payment

POLICY

Rationale

School Council's are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents/carers for students in Victorian government schools in three categories – Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Definition

Essential Student Learning Items are those items, activities or services that the school deems are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. This includes items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of (e.g. text books, exercise books, stationary or material for final products the student takes home). Parents/carers may choose to provide these items themselves or buy the items from the school where practical and appropriate.

Optional Items are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents/carers choose to access them for their child, they are required to pay for them. This includes excursions, incursions, class photos, extra-curricular programs such as instrumental music tuition and school camps.

Voluntary Financial Contributions are items which parents/carers, or anyone else, are **invited** to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose (e.g. school grounds projects, library fund for new equipment). Only some Voluntary Financial Contributions are tax-deductable.

Aim

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

Scope

This policy applies to all requests for payment by parents/carers.

Implementation

- Requests for payments and contributions will be kept to a minimum and the school will attempt at all times to provide parents/carers with early notice of payment requests for Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.
- Parents/carers will be provided with early notice of annual payment requests for school fees to enable them to save and budget accordingly. Early notice is considered to be a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year.
- Parents/carers will be provided with reasonable notice of any other payment requests that arise during the school year (i.e. excursions, incursions and sports days). If payment is not received prior to the day of the event, then the student may not be allowed to attend.
- A range of support options are available to assist parents in meeting requests for payments and contributions, including the Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF), State Schools Relief and local community supports.

- The Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF) is funded by the Victorian Government and provides payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Payments are made directly to the school and are tied to the student. More information about the CSEF is available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/csef.aspx> .
- Any portion of CSEF not expended by the end of the year will be carried over into the next year.
- If a student leaves the school, any portion of CSEF not expended will be forwarded onto the student's new school.
- Parents/carers who are experiencing financial difficulties are welcome to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the Principal that suits both the parents/carers and the school.
- Receipts will be issued to parents/carers as soon as possible after a payment has been made.
- No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.
- All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential. The public identification of students or their parents/carers where payments have or have not been received will not occur.
- No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents/carers or students.
- Reminders for unpaid Essential Student Learning Items or Optional Items may be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents/carers, but not more than once a month.
- After the initial invitation for payment of a Voluntary Financial Contribution only one reminder notice per year will be sent to parents/carers.

References

- School Policy and Advisory Guide
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/pages/parentpayments.aspx>

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every year or as deemed necessary.

Ratified

This policy was ratified by School Council on 31st July 2019.