



Rationale

The Victorian community shares a vision to build an education system that champions equity and excellence and ensures that every child and young person is supported to learn.

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds. Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program.

School Councils can request payments from parents for student materials and service charges, and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

1. Essential Student Learning Items: These are items, activities or services that the school deems essential to student learning in the standard curriculum. Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own. (E.g. stationery, text books and school uniforms.)
2. Optional Items: These are items or services that are optional and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum. Students may access these on a user pays basis. (E.g. Extra curricula programs or activities, camps or class photos.)
3. Voluntary Financial Contributions: Parents, or anyone else, can be invited to make a voluntary contribution or donation to the school. (For the purpose of, ICT equipment, funds etc.)

A variety of extra-curricular activities (e.g. excursions) will be offered to compliment the educational program and these will be provided on a user-pays basis.

Aims

To ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and that all children have access to the curriculum.

Sufficient funds are raised through parent payments and voluntary contributions to enable the school to offer a high quality educational program.

Students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, or refused instruction on the basis of payments not being made for educational items, services or voluntary financial contribution.

Parent/carer payments for essential education items and optional extras are kept to a minimum and do not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services to the students.

Where families have difficulty making payments, the principal will discuss the range of support options available and negotiate an appropriate alternative arrangement.

All communication with parents will be fair and reasonable and based on the spirit of the school's values.

This policy complies with the requirements of the DET policy.

Implementation

1. The school will provide parents and carers with early notice of requests for payment of essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions. A minimum of six weeks notice will be provided to allow sufficient planning time.
2. Payment may be requested, but not required, prior to the commencement of the year in which materials and services will be used.

3. Payment arrangements should coincide with the timing of the availability of Camps, Sport and Excursions Fund (CSEF) support for eligible parents/carers.
4. The status and details of any payments or non-payments will remain confidential.
5. Payment requests to parents/carers must clearly identify which category the items fall into. The three categories are outlined above.
6. The school will only issue one request for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice.
7. Optional extras are provided on a user-pays basis, and if parents/carers choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.
8. The school may invite voluntary financial contributions to improve or beautify buildings or grounds, to contribute to a library trust fund, to support a specific purpose identified by the school (e.g. ICT equipment) or to make a general financial contribution or donation to the school.

Companion Policies:

Parent Payments: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/pages/parentpayments.aspx>
Camps, Sport and Excursions Fund (CSEF) Policy 2015

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's annual review cycle.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the School Council on Monday the 19th of February 2018.