



## Parent Payment Policy

### Rationale:

School Councils are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – essential education items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.

### Aims:

This policy ensures that:

- costs are kept to a minimum
- payment requests are clearly itemised under the three parent payment categories
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- no student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution
- access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

### Implementation Strategies: Parent Payment Categories

**Essential education items** are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program. Parents or guardians are requested to pay the school to provide these items or may provide the items themselves, if appropriate. These items may include:

- materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. home economics, photography, catering)
- school uniform
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

**Optional education items** (or non-essential materials and services) are those that are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and which are offered to all students. These optional extras are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.

These items include:

- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. camps
- school magazines,.
- Music excursions, musical shows linked to specialist programs



**Voluntary financial contributions** are for those items and service, that parents or guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust. For the 2020 year there will be no voluntary contribution itemised.

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 eligible parents, including:

State Schools' Relief Committee Support. This is via the principal to assist with uniforms and shoes.

Department of Education and Training also have a Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) that will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. \$125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students, with \$225 per year paid for eligible secondary school students. Payments are made directly to the school and are tied to the student. Parents are encouraged to apply for this funding by filling out an application form provided from the school.

### **Payment arrangements**

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions.

Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, parents are welcome to make payments in full, spread across each term, weekly or as best suit them.

In circumstances of hardship Jennings Street School will assist families with the following supports;

- Low cost suppliers
- Access to CSEF
- Access to State Schools Relief
- Access to local community supports

And access to a nominated "Parent Payment contact person" who parents can communicate with by phone, email or in person about their financial situation and related difficulties in making payments.

Our preferred method of payment is Bpay however cash or cheque is acceptable.

Additional information, answers to any questions and further details of payment options are available by contacting the general office. The office is open from 8:00am – 4:00pm each school day.



Payments may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used. Payment requests to parents will be itemised and the category each item falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution.

Receipts will be issued to parents upon making payment.

Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional extras will be generated and distributed to parents.

Only the initial invitation for, essential education items, financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued per year to parents and guardians.

All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential

#### Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's one year review cycle. 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 DET

<b>Date Implemented</b>	19/12/15
<b>Author</b>	Policy Sub Committee
<b>Approved By</b>	School Council
<b>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</b>	
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>12.02.20</b>
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Policy Sub Committee
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Feb 2021</b>
<b>References</b>	

12.02.2021 – v3 – remove items listed that the school pays for, add camps; change voluntary to essential education items; Correct spelling errors; Update review box & footer