

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

We provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funding with approved financial contributions and payments from parents to ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and ensure that all children have access to the standard curriculum

SCOPE

This policy applies to all families at Croydon Hills Primary School.

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 empowers School Councils to raise funds, charge parents for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by our school are enhanced, School Council request payments from parents for certain student materials and service charges, and for some voluntary financial contributions.

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program. Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program.

However, funding provided by the Federal and State Governments is insufficient to meet all of the requisite classroom materials.

POLICY

School Council supplements Department of Education funds by requesting payment from parents for the following items:

- **Essential education items** which parents and guardians are **required** to pay or provide for their child eg stationary, books and school uniforms where required.
The school will purchase essential educational items on parent's behalf or give parents the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, and should meet the specifications provided by the school.
- **Optional extras** which are offered on a user pays basis; and which parents and carers may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in eg extra curricula programs or activities or school based events such as camps, swimming and incursions/excursions and music tuition
- **Voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be **invited** to donate to the school eg grounds beautification, additional computers, library books etc

See Appendix 1 – Understanding Parent Payment Categories

- Parents will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments and voluntary contributions by December of the previous year, along with a recommended payments schedule. (Appendix 2)
- The payments schedule relates to all payments as well as options to purchase goods elsewhere (where appropriate), essential dates, options to make instalments, clear definitions of the categories (Essential, Optional or Voluntary), an alignment between dates and the Camps, Sports & Excursion Fund (CSEF) payments, and advice to parents to contact the Principal if they require support or additional information.
- All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential.



- Invoices for unpaid Essential educational Items, will occur in February and April if required each year. There will be one reminder notice only to parents for voluntary financial contributions.
- Unpaid optional extras may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the activity in question.
- Payment arrangements should coincide with the timing of the CSEF for eligible parents/carers.
- Any portion of CSEF not expended by the end of the year is carried over to the following year.
- Support, if required, to parents experiencing hardship is provided and where appropriate families are approached discretely that may need support or extra assistance.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the Principal team regarding any concerns.

REVIEW CYCLE

The policy will be reviewed annually as required by Department policy.

School Council will review the levels and purpose of parent payments and voluntary contributions annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction from DET. They will also monitor payment processes.


Understanding Parent Payment Categories

Schools What does the legislation say?

The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge fees to parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child.

In the Act, a 'Parent' includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a child including parental responsibility under the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

What do schools pay for as part of 'free instruction'?



Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The standard curriculum for Years F-10 means implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.


The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

What principles govern parent payment practice?

Educational Value | Access, Equity & Inclusion | Affordability
Engagement & Support | Respect & Confidentiality | Transparency & Accountability

Parents What may parents be asked to pay for?

Schools can request payment for **Essential Student Learning Items**



These are items, activities or services that the school deems **essential** to student learning of the standard curriculum.

Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own.

These may also be either:

Items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of

e.g.


- textbooks, activity books, exercise books
- stationery, book bags
- student ID cards, locks
- cooking ingredients students will consume
- materials for final products that students take home (technology projects, build-your-own kits, dioramas)
- Picture Exchange Communication Systems

Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend

i.e. travel, entry fees or accommodation

e.g.

- excursions
- incursions
- school sports
- work placements



Schools can request payment for **Optional Items**

These are items, activities or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.

Students may access these on a user-pays basis.

These may be either:

Items the student purchases or hires

e.g.

- school magazines, class photos
- functions, formals, graduation dinners
- materials for extra curricular programs
- student accident insurance

Activities the student purchases

e.g.

- fees for extra curricular programs or activities, such as instrumental music tuition
- fees for guest speakers
- camps, excursions, incursions, sports
- entry fees for school run performances

Items and/or materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum

e.g.

- use of silver in metal work instead of copper
- supplementary exam revision guides

Parents can be asked to pay for items, activities and services in the three Parent Payment Categories:

Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Schools determine how items, activities and services are classified within these categories based on the learning and teaching program of their school.

Schools can invite **Voluntary Financial Contributions** for



e.g.

- Building or Library fund (Tax deductible)
- Voluntary contributions for a specific purpose, such as equipment, materials, services.
- General voluntary contributions

Support for families experiencing hardship is available at every school and each school has a parent payment contact person. See your school's policy for more information.

For more information on Parent Payments and Personal Devices, visit the DET website at: www.education.vic.gov.au