

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

OVERVIEW

FREE INSTRUCTION

- Schools provide students with free instruction and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the school to fulfil the standard curriculum requirements in Victorian Curriculum F-10, VCE and VCAL.
- Schools may invite parents to make a financial contribution to support the school.

PARENT PAYMENT REQUESTS

Schools can request contributions from parents under three categories:

Curriculum Contributions

Voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the school deems necessary for students to learn the Curriculum.

Other Contributions

Voluntary financial contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the school's functions and objectives.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities

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-pays basis.

- Schools may also invite parents to supply or purchase educational items to use and own (e.g. textbooks, stationery, digital devices).

FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES (attached)

- Schools put in place financial hardship arrangements to support families who cannot pay for items or activities so that their child doesn't miss out.
- Schools have a nominated parent payment contact person(s) that parents can have a confidential discussion with regarding financial hardship arrangements.

SECONDHAND UNIFORM SHOP

To support parents in meeting the costs of their children's education second-hand school uniforms are available from the office at a cost of \$1 per item.

OTHER SUPPORT OPTIONS

The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available including the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) and State Schools Relief Committee support.

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) provides 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 will be paid for eligible primary school students. Payments will go directly to the school and be tied to the student.

Any CSEF credit not expended will be carried over to the next year, or be transferred to next Victorian school if a student leaves the school

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for 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-pays basis.

Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable. To be of further assistance payment options include, full amount, payment by instalments and Centrepay.

Instalment options are available with parents encouraged to make an appointment with the school to discuss circumstances and available options.

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.

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

REFUNDS

Our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents on a case-by-case basis, taking into account individual circumstances.

Generally, we will not be able to refund payments made for items purchased or costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred to a third party. For example, camp costs when a child becomes unwell and cannot attend in circumstances where the payment has already been made or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will make this clear to parents at the time of payment.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2022
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	March 2023

FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES CHECKLIST

This checklist is to assist schools to develop and implement financial help arrangements under the Financial Help for Families Policy.

1. Planning

- Nominate a parent payment contact.

The school's financial help for families arrangements are developed to suit the school's context. This can include:

- reminding families that Curriculum Contributions and Other Contributions are voluntary
- offering tailored payment plans, waiving, reducing or extending payment deadlines for Extra-Curricular Items and Activities
- referring parents to State Government or community support programs e.g. CSEF, State Schools Relief
- establishing the sale/exchange of second hand items to own.

2. Review and approval

The school's financial help for families arrangements are reviewed by the:

- parent payment contact
- student welfare coordinator
- principal.

3. Training

- All staff are provided with information or training on how to recognise signs of financial hardship and know who to refer families to.
- The school's parent payment contact is aware of State Government and community support programs to refer families to.

4. Communication

The school's Financial Help for Families arrangements are communicated:

- whenever a school is inviting parents to pay for Extra-Curricular Items and Activities and/or educational items to own
- using culturally inclusive language
- in multiple languages (if applicable), using the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service.

Communications are placed in a range of formats for parents such as:

- parent payment arrangements and notices
- school newsletters
- school website
- excursion notices and parent permission forms.