

## Morwell Park Primary School - Parent Payment Policy

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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.

Morwell Park Primary School has spent considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our children. The book packs contain high quality materials at a competitive price due to our ability to bulk order. The parent payment amount approved by School Council will be as minimal as possible and will be used to provide essential educational items.

No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

### 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 that parents and guardians are responsible for.

These items 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. cooking, art);
- 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. instrumental music, dance classes;
- school-based performances, productions and events; and
- class photographs.

**Voluntary financial contributions** are for those items and services that parents and guardians are **invited** to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust.

### Second hand uniform shop

In order 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 to assist parents including the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) and State Schools Relief Committee support.

#### *Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)*

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) will run over four years (2015-2018), continued into 2019 and 2020, and 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 will be paid for eligible primary school students. Payments will go directly to the school and be tied to the student.

Any funds in credit not expended by the end of the year will be carried over into the next year.

### **Payment arrangements**

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (a minimum of four weeks notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable. To be of further assistance payment options have been developed:

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| Option A | Full amount                                      |
| Option B | Other payment arrangements, including Centrepay. |

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

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 or letters 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 immediately upon making payment.

Reminders statements for unpaid essential education items or optional items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month.

Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued to parents and guardians.

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 the 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.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 23.04.2020