

WILLMOTT PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY



PURPOSE

The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 empowers school councils to charge parents for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children, as well as to raise funds. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by our school are enhanced by doing so, our School Council requests payment from parents for certain student materials and services charges, and for modest voluntary financial contributions.

AIMS

To provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funds with approved School Council and Departmental financial contributions and payments from parents/guardians.

IMPLEMENTATION

School Council supplements DET funds by requesting payments from parents and guardians for the following items:-

- **Essential Education Items** which parents and guardians are required to provide or pay the school to provide e.g.: stationery booklists, text books
- Parents/guardians are required to provide essential educational items for their students and they have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate. Booklists and supplies necessary for the student will be supplied for purchase commencing in December of the previous year. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school.
- **Voluntary Financial Contributions**
- Parents and guardians will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments by the beginning of November of the previous year along with the time line for these payments, in order to allow parents and guardians sufficient planning time.
- The payments schedule will include itemised details relating to all payments, an option to purchase goods elsewhere (where appropriate), essential payment dates, clear definitions of the category of any payments (i.e.: Essential, Optional), an alignment between payment dates.
- Parents and guardians will be made aware of payment requirements and requests via the school newsletter. New families will receive the information as part of the 'Information Package' for parents and guardians.
- All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential.
- All costs and processes associated with parent and guardians payments will be reasonable, will be defensible in relation to DET requirements, and will be within the expectations of the school community.
- Where families have difficulty making payments, the principal or nominated person will discuss the range of support options available; these include State School Relief and a range of local welfare and support agencies and negotiate an appropriate alternative arrangement, such as payment by instalments.

It is not acceptable to use coercion or to harass parents and guardians to obtain payment.

Students will not be treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, or refused instruction on the basis of payments not being made for education items or services.

Parents and guardians are to be provided with an alternative option for their children if they choose not to participate in an excursion or camp.

If the parent or guardian elects to send their child on an excursion, incursion or camp then all payments are expected to be paid by the parent/guardian **prior** to the camp or excursion.

- Unpaid **Essential Items** payments will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family.
- Unpaid **Optional Extras** payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in the future.

The school will not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment of essential educational items or optional extras.

No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents or guardians. Parents and guardians will be issued with receipts upon the payments received.

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the first School Council Meeting of a new school year.

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.

Refer Appendix Attached

Policy approved by School Council: February 2021

Policy for Review: February 2022

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

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 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

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

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