

PARENT PAYMENTS

POLICY

Rationale:

- 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, 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 financial contributions and payments from parents.

Implementation:

- School Council supplements Department of Education funds by requesting payments from parents for the following items:-
 1. **Essential Education Items** which parents and guardians are required to provide or pay the school to provide eg: stationary booklists, text books and uniforms etc
 2. **Optional Extras** which are offered on a user pays basis and parents can choose whether or not their child participates eg: school magazine, religious education, instrumental music tuition or instrument hire, camps and excursions etc.
- In addition, School Council invites parents to make donations by means of:-
 3. **Voluntary Financial Contributions** which are non-compulsory donations for specific projects eg: library resources, grounds projects, or technologies equipment.
- 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.
- The payments schedule will include itemised details relating to all payments, an option to purchase goods elsewhere (where appropriate), essential payment dates, options to make payments by instalments, clear definitions of the category of any payments (ie: Essential, Optional or Voluntary), an alignment between payment dates and the timing of EMA payments, the School Start Bonus and advice to parents to contact the principal if they require support or additional information.
- All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential. The public identification of students or their parents where payments have or have not been received will not occur.
- All costs and processes associated with parent payments and voluntary contributions will be reasonable, will be defensible in relation to Department of Education requirements, and will be within the expectations and capacity of the school community.
- As with all parent payments to the school, Council will provide opportunities for all parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the principal.
- Invoices for unpaid **Essential Items** and **Optional Extras** will be mailed monthly, with requests for **Voluntary Financial Contributions** to occur in February and July (if required) each year.
- 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 question. Unpaid **Voluntary Financial Contributions** do not constitute a non-payment and will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family.

- No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents or students.
- Parents who make voluntary contributions will receive letters of appreciation.
- The principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-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 the Department of Education.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in...

February 2015