

Parent Payment Policy

Mt Martha Primary School

PURPOSE:

To ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and ensure that all children have access to the standard curriculum.

RATIONALE:

- To provide guidelines for the collection of parent payments and to communicate them to the school community

AIMS:

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DET) provides funding to schools for the standard curriculum program which includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Victorian Curriculum.

All students will have access to enrolment, the standard curriculum program and receive instruction and services. An alternative option will be provided for students if their parents choose for them not to participate in an incursion, excursion, camp or in school visits.

School Council requests payments from parents for student materials and services charges, and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

1. Essential Education Items:

Essential Education Items are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parent and guardians are responsible for;

- materials that the individual student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finalised articles for (e.g. ceramics, photography, catering)
- essential services associated with, but not considered to be a part of, instruction in the standard curriculum program such as costs associated with camps, excursions and in school visits which all students are expected to attend (e.g. transport, food, accommodation and entrance costs)

2. Optional Extras

Optional Extras 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:

- instructional support material, resources and administration beyond the provision of the standard curriculum program
- extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum program eg., instrumental music
- school-based performances, productions and events
- materials for subjects where the payment sought is the difference between the basic materials/services required for access to the standard curriculum program and higher cost alternatives
- materials and services offered in addition to the standard curriculum program
- school facilities and equipment not associated with provision of the standard curriculum program

3. Voluntary Financial Contributions

Parents are invited to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose. Only some Voluntary Financial Contributions are tax-deductible.

This invitation for voluntary financial contributions may be for the following purposes:

- contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school. This may include additional computers or student-related services
- contributions to a co-operative loan
- contributions to a building trust fund or contributions to a library trust fund (these trust funds are approved by the Australian Taxation Office and are tax deductible)
- general voluntary financial contributions or donations to the school

Implementation:

School organizational arrangements will ensure that:

- school council determines parent payment charges annually
- charges will be kept to a minimum and will not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services provided to the student
- a minimum of six weeks' notice will be given for essential educational item payments to allow parents and guardians sufficient planning time
- voluntary financial contributions will be sought by initial invitation only
- records of parent payments or contributions will be kept confidential

- invoices for essential education items or optional items will be entered on Compass. Parents are able to choose a payment plan of three fortnightly payments or full payment.
- parents can also negotiate a payment plan with the Principal
- parents / guardians are required to provide essential education items for their students, and they have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate. Parents do this in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. There may also be certain items that due to their nature may only be provided by the school.
- details of how payments or contributions will be spent by the school
- a copy of the school-level policy is available upon request

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Payment requests on Compass or letters to parents/guardians will identify which category the items fall into i.e., essential education items and optional education items.

Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.

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 CSEF, State Schools Relief, Local Community Support and the school can also offer parents a payment plan for Essential Items and Extra Curricular Activities (based on individual circumstances). Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal to discuss circumstances and available options.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed in line with DET requirements.

This policy was last reviewed by School Council on 10/09/2020
Next review Date - February 2021