

School parent payments

Rationale

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.

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.

Aim

This policy ensures that:

- costs are kept to a minimum
- payment requests are clearly itemised under the three parent payment categories
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- no student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution
- access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

Daylesford Primary School spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students.

Implementation

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 or guardians are requested to pay the school to provide.

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. Visual Art)
- Photocopying and printing for school-based programs and purposes

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. Unpaid Optional education items payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in the future.

These items include:

- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. camps, excursions, kitchen-garden program)
- school-based performances, productions and events
- school magazines, class photographs.

Voluntary financial contributions are for those items and services that parents or guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust. Unpaid Voluntary Financial Contributions do not constitute a non-payment and will not result in any penalty by the school to the student or family.

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 eligible parents, including the State Schools Relief support.

Payment arrangements

Parents and guardians will be provided with six weeks' notice for payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions.

Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, payment options have been developed:

Option A: Full amount at the beginning of Term 1

Option B: Other payment arrangements, including Centrepay.

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

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

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.

Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional education items will be generated and distributed to parents at least once per term.

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

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

Evaluation

The School Council Finance sub-committee will review this policy annually.