

PARENT PAYMENTS POLICY

1. Rationale:

- 1.1 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 three categories – essential education items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.
- 1.2 The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program (i.e. eight key learning areas), and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

2. Aims:

- 2.1 To provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing government funds with approved financial contributions and payments from parents.
- 2.2 To ensure costs are kept to a minimum.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 The Department provides funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) and various programs. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items, equipment and operational costs.
- 3.2 Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities required to provide the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).
- 3.3 Kingston Heath Primary School spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students.
- 3.4 Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional educational items and voluntary financial contributions.
- 3.5 Payment requests will be clearly itemised under three parent payment categories.

1. Essential Education Items:

Are items which parents and guardians are **required** to provide or pay the school to provide for their child.

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. art, kitchen, science, inquiry)
- costs associated with camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend (e.g. transport and entrance costs)

2. Optional Education Items:

Optional educational items (or non-essential materials and services) are those items that are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and which are offered to all students. These optional educational items 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 (e.g. instrumental music, selected sporting events, Before and After School Care, Ski Camp, Netbook Program)
- materials and services offered in addition to the standard curriculum program

3. Voluntary Financial Contributions:

Are for those items and services that parents or guardians are invited to make a donation to the school (e.g. grounds maintenance, library, computers, School Council projects).

- 3.6 Payment requests 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.
- 3.7 No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 Parents and guardians also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, as 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.
- 3.10 Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, four payment options have been developed:
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| Option A | Full amount by end of Term 4 year prior |
| Option B | Two payments (Term 4 and Term 1) |
| Option C | Monthly Payment Plan |
| Option D | Payment plan arranged with Business Manager |
- 3.11 Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional extras will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month.
- 3.12 Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued per year to parents and guardians.
- 3.13 The status and details of any payments or non-payments by parents and guardians is confidential.

6. Evaluation:

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle. Ratified by School Council on 15th February 2016.