

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Statewide Vision Resource Centre

This Statewide Vision Resource Centre policy is available in braille hard copy and etext format from our administration upon request.

PARENT PAYMENTS 2022

Department of Education (DE) have released mandatory guidelines regarding how schools must implement the Parent Payment Policy.

SUMMARY

This Parent Payment Policy outlines the ways in which the school council can request financial contributions from parents and ensures that parent payment practices in the centre are consistent, transparent and that all children have access to the Curriculum.

POLICY

- Victorian government schools must provide students with free instruction and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the centre to fulfil the curriculum requirements in the 8 key learning areas as outlined in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 and Expanded Core Curriculum.
- School councils may request parents make voluntary financial contributions towards the cost of schooling under categories: Curriculum Contributions and Other Contributions.
- School councils may invite parents to purchase Extra-Curricular Items and Activities – items, activities and services that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are additional to or outside of the school’s delivery of the Curriculum (including alternative forms of instruction). These are provided on a user-pays basis.
- School councils may invite parents to supply or purchase their own educational items to use and to own. If a student does not provide or purchase their own educational items, the school must ensure the student has free access to what is needed at school to access the school’s delivery of the Curriculum.
- Schools must follow the requirements on finance and communications set out in the guidance.

Implementing the policy in schools.

Statewide Vision Resource Centre must:

- follow the finance requirements set out in the guidance
- follow the communication requirements set out in the guidance

- use the templates provided by the Department of Education to create and communicate their parent payment arrangements
- follow all monitoring and compliance requirements as directed by the Department of Education.

Schools develop their parent payment arrangements to suit the contextual needs and aspirations of their school community while ensuring their arrangements remain in alignment with this policy.

Statewide Vision Resource Centre must not:

- refuse instruction of the curriculum to a student if parents do not make a parent payment or purchase any Extra-Curricular Items and Activities or their own educational items
- discriminate, harass or coerce parents or students in relation to payments
- approach students regarding any payments
- undertake debt recovery activities for any payments
- ask parents to pay for reasonable adjustments for children with a disability
- publish parent payment arrangements and school policies that are inconsistent with these requirements.

Free instruction

- Schools provide students with free instruction and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the school to fulfil the standard curriculum requirements in Victorian Curriculum F-10, VCE, VCAL and Expanded Core Curriculum.
- Schools may invite parents to make a financial contribution to support the centre.

Parent payment requests

Schools can request contributions from parents under three categories:

1. Curriculum Contributions

Voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the centre deems necessary for students to learn the Expanded Core Curriculum.

2. Other Contributions

Voluntary financial contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the centre's functions and objectives.

3. Extra-Curricular Items and Activities

Items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are above and beyond what the school provides for free to deliver the Curriculum. These are provided on a user-pays basis.

- School may also invite parents to supply or purchase educational items to use and own (e.g., textbooks, stationery, digital devices).

Financial help for families

- Schools put in place financial hardship arrangements to support families who cannot pay for items or activities so that their child doesn't miss out.
- Schools have a nominated parent payment contact person(s) (Assistant Principal) that parents can have a confidential discussion with regarding financial hardship arrangements.

School processes

- Schools must obtain school council approval for their parent payment arrangements and publish all requests and communications for each student on their website for transparency.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Made available in hard copy from administration

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	Approved by	Next scheduled review date
February 2023	Principal	February 2025