



Parent Payment Policy



Rationale:

The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child, as well as to raise funds.

Free instruction includes teaching staff, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

School Council can request payments from parents/guardians for essential student learning items, optional items and for voluntary financial contributions.

These payments fall into three categories:

1. **Essential Student Learning Items:** These are items, activities or services that the school considers are essential to support learning. Parents and guardians are **required** to provide or pay the school to provide for their child. (e.g. books, levies to support class programs)
2. **Optional Extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in. (e.g Swimming, Soundhouse Music Program, Camps, incursions/excursions)
3. **Voluntary Financial Contributions** which parents and guardians may be **invited** to donate to the school (eg. Grounds projects/maintenance)

Aims:

For Footscray West Primary School, to provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing government funds with approved financial payments from parents/guardians.

Guidelines:

- A variety of extra- curricular activities will be offered to compliment the educational program and these will be provided on a user-pays basis.
- Where families have difficulty making payments, they are encouraged to contact the Principal, Assistant Principal or Business Manager to discuss the range of support options available and negotiate an appropriate alternative arrangement. All communication with parents/guardians will be confidential, fair and reasonable.

Implementation:

- The school will provide parents and guardians with early notice of requests for payment of essential educational items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions. A minimum of six weeks' notice will be provided to allow sufficient planning time
- School council will determine the annual amount of payments
- Students who are new to the school will be charged on a quarterly pro rata basis
- Details relating to all payments will be given with:
 - essential payment dates
 - options to make payments by installments
 - clear definition of the category of any payments
- Eligible parents may apply for the Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF) which can be used for all purposes other than essential education items
- The school will only issue one request for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice
- Invoices for unpaid Essential Educational Items or Optional Items accepted by parents/guardians are generated and distributed on a regular basis, but not more than once a month
- Receipts will be issued for cheque and cash payments received
- A copy of the policy will be provided to all parents in annual information packs and the school web site
- The Principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it
- School Council will review the level and purpose of payments and voluntary contributions annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction received from DET.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed annually.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/parentpayments.aspx>

