



Parent Payment Policy

1. Purpose:

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 the three categories:
- essential education items
- optional education items
- voluntary financial contributions.

All administrative and financial processes are compliant with Department of Education and Training (DET) requirements, including CASES21 financial reporting.

2. Guidelines:

2.1. For the purpose of this policy the term *parents* is also inclusive of guardians, carers or family members who are making payments for a student.

3. Parent Payment Categories

3.1. Essential education items

Are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard

curriculum program that parents are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide. These items can 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 (e.g. netbook);
- Internet access and online programs
- school uniform
- school bags and reader bags
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

3.2. Optional education items

These can also be referred to as non-essential materials and services. These items 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 choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for each item. These items can include:

- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music
- school-based performances, productions and events
- sporting events
- excursions and incursions
- additional school items such as student/ class photographs

3.3. Voluntary financial contributions

Are those items and services under which parents are invited to make a donation to the School, for example for grounds maintenance or building trust. *Rowellyn Park Primary does not request contributions of this type.*

4. Requests for Payment

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

4.2. Payment requests or letters 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.

4.3. Upon making payment, receipts will be issued to parents within 5 school days.

4.4. Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month. All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.

5. Payment 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:

The **Camps, Sports and Excursion fund (CSEF)** supports families who met eligibility criteria set by the Victorian Government to ensure the student has the opportunity to participate in important, educational and fun activities.

The **State Schools Relief Committee** support, applications can be made via the Principal to assist with clothing/uniforms

Payment Plans to distribute payments over a longer period to enable families to access the same items as others.

Welfare and support agencies that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families. No student will be treated

differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

6. Implementation:

6.1. Student Requisites

Rowellyn Park Primary School has spent considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our students. Student requisites contain high quality materials at a competitive price due to our ability to bulk order. We aim to get the best price possible for these items and we buy in bulk and pass on these savings to our families.

However, parents also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents choose to provide equivalent materials (books, materials and stationery), 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; in our case this situation occurs with the netbook program which commences in grade 4. All configuration of the netbooks and access to Edustar programs from the department of education requires the school to use only approved equipment that be effectively managed on our school network; therefore we choose the netbooks which have the specifications we require and the required operating system which allows us to effectively manage their use. There will be three payment options made available to parents and a 10% discount for those families who purchase the netbook in a single payment.

6.2. Uniform shop

In order to support parents, several items of uniform are available at the school, for large orders we recommend the uniform company Beleza who stock our full uniform range. Grade 5 and 6 rugby jumpers are ordered directly through the school as is the grade six specific (named) tee-shirt.

6.3. Payment arrangements

Parents will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (a minimum of four weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

6.4. Payment Options

Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable. For parents of children in grade s 4 – 6, books and materials costs are significantly reduced to reflect the change in teaching and learning that is reflective of the netbook program. To further assist parents with the costs associated with books and materials, payment options may be developed with the school principal.

7. Resources:

7.1. *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Sections 2.2.4(1), 2.3.6 (1)(c), 2.2.

8. Evaluation:

8.1. This policy is required to be reviewed annually by School Council to confirm/enhance internal control procedures.

Review Date: 2017