



Purpose

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.

Guidelines

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.

Parent Payment Charges

Essential Education Items

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 temporary or permanent possession of the finished articles (e.g. text books, eBooks, photocopying, subscriptions, apps, resources...)

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, dance classes, sports
- school-based performances, productions and events
- excursions and school based activities
- additional school items such as student/ class photographs.

Voluntary Financial Contributions

Those items and services under which parents are invited to make a donation to the School, for example for grounds, maintenance or building trust.

Payment arrangements and methods

- Payments may be requested prior to the commencement of the academic year in which the materials and services are to be used for example, a deposit for a camping activity to be held early in Term One of the new academic year.
- We will seek to notify parents and carers as soon as reasonably practicable prior to any requests for payments.
- 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.
- Payment is required in full prior to all camps, excursions and school based activities (Payment Plans are available where appropriate).
- Upon making payment, receipts will be issued to parents within **10** school days.
- 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.
- Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued to parents and guardians.

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

Family 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
- Welfare and support agencies that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families – see the Principal or Business Manager if required.
- Flexible Payment Plans are available - see the Principal or Business Manager if required
- No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

Consideration of hardship

Parents experiencing hardship are invited to make an appointment with the Principal or Business Manager for alternate payment plans or the possibility of accessing funding via support agencies. These arrangements are kept confidential. We will seek to support students, parents and carers experiencing difficulty with payments

Implementation

Student Requisites

Yarra Glen 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. Parents also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents 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.

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).

Payment Options

Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, two payment options are available:

- Option A - Full amount payment
- Option B - Paying in two instalments
- Option C- Alternative payment options are available for families experiencing financial hardship. Parents/carers are encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal/Business Manager to discuss circumstances and available payment plan options.

Communication with families

The Parent Payment Policy will be communicated to the Yarra Glen Primary School community via our newsletter and will be posted on the school website for easy access. We will also include this information in our "Transition to school Packs" for the Foundation year and for new students in Grade 1-6 transferring to our school. If families have any questions or concerns, please contact the school Principal or the Business Manager so these concerns can be addressed efficiently


Monitoring and review of the implementation of the policy

School Council will review this policy annually to confirm/enhance internal control procedures.

Support Agencies

Free interpreting and translation services are available through the Department to support schools in communicating written and verbal information in languages other than English. See Interpreting and Translating under Department resources below.

A range of support options are available for parents experiencing difficulty in paying for essential student learning items.

An outline of the support options, that schools should make families aware of, is available at  [Cost support for families \(docx - 75.91kb\)](#) and includes:

Linked Policies: See *Refunds Policy* for details regarding refunds.

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