



# PARENT PAYMENT POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

## Frankston Primary School 2020 - 2021

### PURPOSE

To ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and ensure that all children have access to the standard curriculum.

### RATIONALE

The Victorian community shares a vision to build an education system that champions excellence and ensures that every child and young person has access to the opportunities to succeed in life, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Schools are best placed to make local decisions which ensure that all students can access a broad range of learning opportunities that support their expectations and promote their aspirations as they move through the education system. Parent contribution, in all forms, assists schools to provide an enriched learning and teaching program for every student and is highly valued by school communities.

Learning and teaching programs vary across schools based on local needs and circumstances and reflect each school's priorities, decisions and resources. This, in turn, informs the parent payment charges approved by school councils that may vary from one school to the next.

### WHAT CAN SCHOOLS CHARGE FOR?

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for instruction in the standard curriculum program to be free to all students in government schools. School councils are responsible for developing and approving school-level parent payment charges and can request payments from 'parents<sup>1</sup>' under three categories only- Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

**Essential Student Learning Items** are those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. These are items that the school considers essential for all students and which students take possession of. Parents may choose to provide the items

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<sup>1</sup> Parent' in the policy has the same meaning as in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, which is: 'parent', in relation to a child, includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* of the Commonwealth and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

themselves or buy the items from the school's chosen booklist provider where practical and appropriate.

**Optional Items** are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum program. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents choose to access them for students, they are required to pay for them.

### **Voluntary Financial Contributions**

Parents can be invited to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose, e.g. school grounds projects, library fund or for new equipment. Only some Voluntary Financial Contributions are tax-deductible.

The attached diagram "**Summary of Parent Payment Categories**" provides examples of items and materials under each category.

In implementing this policy, schools must adhere to the following principles:

## **COST AND SUPPORT TO PARENTS**

When school councils consider the proposed requests for parent payments the cost is kept to a minimum and is affordable to most parents at the school.

School Principals must ensure that:

- items students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- payment requests are broadly itemised within the appropriate category
- parents are advised that they have the option of purchasing equivalent Essential Student Learning Items themselves, in consultation with the school
- information on payment options is available, accessible and easily understood to all parents so that they know what to expect and what supports they can access
- parents are provided with early notice of annual payment requests for school fees (i.e. a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year). This enables parents to save and budget accordingly.
- parents are provided with reasonable notice of any other payment requests that arise during the school year eg. Camps and excursion
- the status and details of any financial arrangements are kept confidential and only shared with relevant school personnel
- use of debt collectors to obtain outstanding school funds owed to the school from parents is not permitted
- invoices / statements for unpaid essential or optional items accepted by parents may be generated each term according to the parent payment arrangement with the school.

## **SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES**

Families may experience financial difficulties and schools must develop arrangements that support families experiencing financial hardship. There are a range of support options available to support and assist parents and can include:

- Tailored payment plans, waiving, reducing or extending payment deadlines
- Referrals to Victorian Government or community support programs.

Consideration to hardship arrangements in respect to payment requests is provided to families experiencing long term hardship or short term crisis on a confidential, case by case basis.

All parents are provided the name and contact details of our school nominated parent payment contact person at the school who they can discuss payment arrangements with.

## **ENGAGING WITH PARENTS**

In respect to each school's development of its parent payments, school councils will engage in effective communication with the school community and have strategies in place to ensure they are aware of and understand the needs and views of parents.

## **PARENT PAYMENT SUMMARY 2021**

### **STUDENT STATIONERY PACK CHARGE**

These are the student learning items that students require for personal classroom use. The total of this section to be paid varies slightly for year level dependent on the learning items required for each level – the specific amount will be indicated on each year level's Book List.

### **ESSENTIAL EDUCATIONAL ITEMS CHARGE**

The Essential Educational Items charge is a charge all schools charge parents that varies from school to school and is for items and activities which the school deems essential for student learning.

Frankston Primary School's Essential Student Learning Item charge for 2021 is:

- \$120 for Prep – Year Two
- \$100 for year Three – Six

### **VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION CHARGE**

The Voluntary Contribution Charge is a charge to parents that varies from school to school and is for Frankston Primary School is for the support of learning activities and equipment that extends learning programs in the school.

Frankston Primary School's Voluntary Contribution Charge for 2021 is:

- \$50 for Prep – Year Two
- \$60 for year Three – Six

## **PARENT PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS and FINANCIAL SUPPORT 2021**

Frankston Primary School understands that some families may experience financial difficulty and offers a range of supports and options. Including:

- The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- Second hand uniform if available
- Prep uniform vouchers
- A variety of payment facilities – credit card, B-Pay, Direct Debit and Cash payments
- A number of Frankston Primary School 'Parent Payment Arrangement Options'.

### **PARENT PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT OPTIONS FOR ESSENTIAL STUDENT LEARNING ITEMS AND VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION CHARGE INCLUDE:**

1. Total paid in full to Frankston Primary School by Friday February 12<sup>th</sup> 2021.
2. 2 x installments paid to Frankston Primary School:
  - The first installment by end of Term 1 (Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021)
  - Second installment by end of Term 2 (Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021).
3. 3 x installments paid to Frankston Primary School:
  - The first installment by end of Term 1 (Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021)
  - Second installment by end of Term 2 (Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021); the third installment by end of Term 3 (Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021).
4. 4 x installments paid to Frankston Primary School. The first installment by mid Term 1 (Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March); second installment by mid Term 2 (Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021); third installment by early Term 3 (Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July); fourth installment by early Term 4 (Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October).
5. Parents are also able to discuss an alternate confidential payment plan with the school.

## **REFUNDS**

Funds paid for Essential Student Learning Items will be refunded per rata paid for students leaving Frankston Primary School through Terms 1, 2 and 3. Parents should note that no refunds will occur in Term 4 for paid Essential Student Learning Items.

Funds paid for any Optional Items will be refunded if the school has not already made payment to suppliers for items on behalf of the student.

## POLICY REVIEW

School Council (via the Finance Committee) will conduct an annual review of the implementation of the Parent Payment Policy including addressing any concerns raised by the school community.

Each year the Parent Policy will be reported back to the community via notice on the schools website and report in the schools Newsletter.

<b>DEVELOPED 2018 - 2019</b>	REVIEWED 2020 - 2021
<b>PRINCIPAL</b>	Renée Kennedy
<b>SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT</b>	Chad Wilson
<b>EVALUATION</b>	This policy will be reviewed annually as per the DET's Parent Payment Policy or should situations arise that require earlier consideration.

### References:

Parent Payment information can be found on the Department of Education and Training Parent's Page: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/school-costs.aspx>

For the full Parent Payment Policy that schools are required to follow [School Policy and Advisory Guide](#).

### Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Department of Education and Training – Summary of Parent Payment Categories



### FREE INSTRUCTION

- Schools provide students with free instruction to fulfil the standard curriculum requirements as outlined in the Victorian Curriculum F-10, VCE and VCAL.



### PARENT PAYMENT REQUESTS

- Schools do not ask parents to pay for school operating costs (e.g. utility costs) or general and unspecified charges.
- Schools request payments from parents under three categories:

#### Essential Student Learning Items

- Items and activities which the school deems essential for student learning.
- Parents may choose to purchase essential items through the school or provide their own.

#### Optional Items

- Items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.
- These are provided to students on a user-pays basis.

#### Voluntary Contributions

- Voluntary contributions support the school to continue to be the best local school for all students and can be for general or specific purpose.
- Students will not be disadvantaged in any way if parents do not make a contribution.



### 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) that parents can have a confidential discussion with regarding financial hardship arrangements.



### SCHOOL PROCESSES

- Schools obtain school council approval for their parent payment arrangements and upload their arrangements on their school's public website for transparency.