

Parent Payments - General Information Letter for Parents



Dear Parent/Guardian,

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* provides that instruction in the standard curriculum program is delivered free to all students in Victorian Government schools; this is referred to as 'free instruction'. The Act also grants school councils the power to charge fees for goods and services to support the delivery of free instruction and to raise funds.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities required to provide the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities related to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and senior secondary certificates such as VCE, VCAL and VET in Schools programs.

The Department of Education and Training *Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools* policy provides advice on the different types of payments that schools can request from parents and outlines the procedures and protocols schools must adhere to. This policy is available from the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide (www.education.vic.gov.au/spag).

School councils are responsible for developing and approving a school-level parent payment policy that is compliant with the Department's policy.

There are three areas for which parents may reasonably be requested to make a payment or contribution:

- **Essential education items** which parents/guardians pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate (for example, stationery, text books and excursions (travel and entry costs));
- **Optional education items** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents/guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in (for example, school magazines or extracurricular programs or activities); and
- **Voluntary financial contributions** which parents/guardians may be invited to donate to the school.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children are provided with essential education items. The school makes every effort to keep the cost of items that need to be purchased at a minimum. Parents/guardians also have the option of providing essential education items themselves. Alternative payment arrangements are also available through the school.

The Melton Specialist School Council has made a considerable effort to ensure that this school policy is fair and provides a number of options to support parents to access the materials and services associated with their child's education. If you have any queries or wish to discuss your circumstances and the options available to you, please contact the school to make an appointment.

DET also have a Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) and will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. \$125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students, with \$225 per year paid for eligible secondary school students. Payments are made directly to the school and are tied to the student. Parents are encouraged to apply for this funding from the school.

The school-level parent payment policy will be provided in the newsletter at the start of each year along with the Parent Payment Charges form. It is also available on request from the school at any time during the year.

Yours sincerely

A blue ink signature of Glen Glanvill, consisting of a series of loops and a horizontal stroke.

School Council President: Glen Glanvill

A black ink signature of Brooke Briody, featuring a stylized, cursive 'B' followed by several loops.

Principal: Brooke Briody