



PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

School Councils can request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – essential student learning items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.

East Bentleigh Primary School spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our children. School Council determines the level of class requirements, and all children receive the same books and stationery. **As a dual curriculum school (Steiner or Mainstream), parents choosing Steiner are required to pay for the extra curriculum of Instrumental Music, Eurythmy, Dance and Craft which are essential components of the Steiner stream curriculum methodology.**

Department of Education: GUIDELINES

Parent Payment Categories

1. **Essential Student Learning items** are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents and guardians are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide.

These items 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 of the finished articles (e.g. home economics, ceramics, photography, catering);
- school uniform;
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

2. **Optional Items - Extra – Curricular Items and Activities - Mainstream and Steiner:** 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 and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them. Payments will be on a cost recovery model, excluding fundraising events. **Please note; costs of Instrumental Music (3-6), Eurythmy, Dance and Craft are not optional for families in the Steiner stream**

These items include:

- student computer printing for personal use, internet access for recreational or non-school use;
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes;
- school-based performances, productions and events; and
- school magazines, newsletters, class photographs.

3. **Voluntary financial contributions** are for those items and services that parents and guardians are **invited** to donate to the school, for example for grounds maintenance or updating curriculum-based materials for the Library and Computers. Donations made to the library fund will be tax-deductible.

Support options

The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. Families who are experiencing financial hardship can contact the principal for financial consideration. A range of support options are available to assist parents.

- CSEF
- Secondhand uniform
- State Schools' Relief

IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Payment arrangements

Parents and guardians 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).

Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, four payment options have been developed:

- **OPTION 1: Payment in full by Friday 23rd February and receive a 5% discount if your whole account is paid.**
- **OPTION 2: Payment in full by Thursday 28th March 2024.**
- **OPTION 3: Three instalments, proposed as follows: (Your full account divided by 3)**
 - Instalment 1 - Friday 23rd February 2024.**
 - Instalment 2 - Friday 19th April 2024.**
 - Instalment 3 - Friday 21st June 2024.**
- **OPTION 4: Alternative payment options are available through the school with parents encouraged to make an appointment with the school to discuss circumstances and available options.**

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

2.3 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.

2.4 Receipts will be issued to parents upon request.

2.5 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.

2.6 Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued to parents and guardians.

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

2.8 Non-payment

- Children will not be permitted to participate in Extra-Curricular activities if the applicable costs are not paid prior to the activity.
- A place in a mainstream class may be offered to families who are unable to pay the costs of the Steiner stream.
- **Children will not be permitted to begin a new school year in a Steiner class unless all payments are up to date by the beginning of the previous December.**
- Any family having difficulty in meeting this deadline should contact the principal as soon as possible to arrange a schedule for the payment of all outstanding costs.
- No extension of time to pay will be granted in any case where the family has not discussed the matter with the principal by the end of third term.

EVALUATION

- This policy will be evaluated and reviewed annually by the Finance Subcommittee and School Council or as directed by DET policy and direction.
- Implementation will be monitored for all stakeholders.
- Essential Education costs will be approved by School Council.
- Audit reports will monitor practices and budgets.

REVIEW CYCLE

Policy last reviewed	October 2023
Approved by	School Council – 13 th November 2023.
Next scheduled review date	review in October 2024

PARENT PAYMENTS POLICY

ONE PAGE OVERVIEW

The following is a summary of the main principles of the Parent Payments Policy:



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.

More details can be found at: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/parent-payment/policy>