

Understanding Parent Payment Categories

Schools

What does the legislation say?

The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge fees to parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child.

In the Act, a 'Parent' includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a child including parental responsibility under the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

What do schools pay for as part of 'free instruction'?



Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The standard curriculum for Years F-10 means implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

What principles govern parent payment practice?

Educational Value | Access, Equity & Inclusion | Affordability

Engagement & Support | Respect & Confidentiality | Transparency & Accountability

Parents

What may parents be asked to pay for?

Schools can request payment for Essential Student Learning Items



These are items, activities or services that the school deems **essential** to student learning of the standard curriculum.

Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own.

These may also be either:

Items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of

- e.g.
- textbooks, activity books, exercise books
 - stationery, book bags
 - student ID cards, locks
 - cooking ingredients students will consume
 - materials for final products that students take home (technology projects, build-your-own kits, dioramas)
 - Picture Exchange Communication Systems

Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend

i.e. travel, entry fees or accommodation

- e.g.
- excursions
 - incursions
 - school sports
 - work placements

Parents can be asked to pay for items, activities and services in the three Parent Payment Categories:

Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Schools determine how items, activities and services are classified within these categories based on the learning and teaching program of their school.

Schools can request payment for Optional Items

These are items, activities or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.

Students may access these on a user-pays basis.

These may be either:

Items the student purchases or hires

- e.g.
- school magazines, class photos
 - functions, formals, graduation dinners
 - materials for extra curricular programs
 - student accident insurance

Activities the student purchases

- e.g.
- fees for extra curricular programs or activities, such as instrumental music tuition
 - fees for guest speakers
 - camps, excursions, incursions, sports
 - entry fees for school run performances

Items and/or materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum

- e.g.
- use of silver in metal work instead of copper
 - supplementary exam revision guides

Support for families experiencing hardship is available at every school and each school has a parent payment contact person. See your

Schools can invite **Voluntary**



- e.g.
- Building or Library fund (Tax deductible)

Clifton Springs Primary School

Parent Payment Policy

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

(WILL BE CLEARLY OUTLINED IN THE ANNUAL BOOKLIST INFORMATION PACKAGE):

- **Essential Student Learning Items:** In accordance with the departmental “Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools” directives, the Essential Student Learning Items charge covers items which are essential for your child’s learning of the standard curriculum, that the student takes either permanent or temporary possession of.
- **Optional Items:** Are offered on a user-pays basis and parents and guardians may choose whether their child accesses or participates in (e.g. extra-curricular programs or activities such as school based performances, productions or events, Religious Education, excursions and camps).
- **Voluntary Financial Contributions:** Parents and guardians may be invited to make contributions to support the ongoing effective running and development of the school. All voluntary financial contributions received by the school are used to develop our school’s buildings and grounds and upgrade and maintain the hardware and software of our digital device program.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

CSPS offers a diverse range of payment arrangements and methods, including; Cash / EFT / Credit Card / Cheque / Centrepay / Direct Deposit into the bank account

OPTION A: Lump sum payment when collecting book pack.

OPTION B: Various Instalment Payment Plans – Centrepay / Credit Card / Direct Deposit

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

- Second hand and low cost uniform options are available at school
- CSEF
- State Schools Relief
- Local community supports

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

- CSPS provides support to parents experiencing hardship:
- Parents should arrange an appointment with the Principal, on 5251 3581 via phone or in person regarding their financial situation and related difficulties in making payments.
- The school will link families with local support services where appropriate.
- The school will identify and approach families who are known or suspected to be experiencing hardship.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- The policy will be communicated with the school community via the school’s newsletter and website.
- Hard copies available at the office.
- Any parent feedback - formal, informal, written, verbal, queries or concerns may be raised with the Principal or Assistant Principal.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

It is the responsibility of the School Council to monitor the implementation of this policy.

Parent feedback, and the engagement of families in the process, will be considered when reviewing this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Policies sub-committee of School Council as per the review cycle.

POLICY REVIEWED AND RATIFIED JUNE 2018