



Flemington Primary School

POLICY FOLDER

ADMINISTRATION – Parent Payments Policy

Rationale

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program in the eight key learning areas. It empowers School Councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

DEECD provides funding to schools through the Student Resource Package. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items, equipment and operational costs.

- Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administrative and facilities required to provide the standard curriculum program.
- School Councils are responsible for developing and approving a school-level parent payment policy.
- There are three categories of payment – essential items, optional extras and voluntary contributions.

Purpose

- To ensure school-level parent payment policies and processes are compliant with the DEECD'S policy requirements.
- To ensure Flemington Primary School complies with the legislative requirements of Education and Training Reform Act.

Implementation

The school will develop and implement a school-level parent payment system that ensures

- All students have access to the standard curriculum program
- It covers the three parent payment categories ie essential education items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions.
- The school does not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.
- Items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed.
- Costs are kept to a minimum.
- Payment requests are to be clearly itemised within each category.
- Parents/Guardians are given the option of purchasing equivalent essential education items themselves, in consultation with the school.
- Students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, refused instruction or disadvantaged on the basis of payments not being made for education items, services or voluntary financial contributions. For example if Parents/Guardians choose for their children not to attend a compulsory excursion/camp an alternative option will be provided.
- The status and details of any payment or non-payments are confidential.
- Parents are provided with early notice of payments requests (ie a minimum of six week's notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

- Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.
- School-level payments meet the community's expectations.
- Invoices for unpaid essential education items or optional items accepted by parents will be generated and distributed on a regular basis, but not more than once a month.
- Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice per year will be sent to all Parents/Guardians.
- Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon payment and receipted on CASES 21.
- There will be clearly articulated process for the administration of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). Payment arrangements will coincide with the timing of the EMA's availability but parents will not be pressured to sign over EMA.
- The EMA cannot be used to offset voluntary financial contributions. Any portion of the EMA not expended by the end of the year must be returned to the parent unless there is agreement by the parent that this money can be carried over into the next year.
- The school will ensure that all communication with Parents/Guardians, including payments requests, is fair and reasonable. Payment requests, letters or CASES21 invoices for student materials and services charges will be accompanied by the following –
 - A description of each of the three parent payment categories,
 - Details of what parents are being asked to pay for,
 - That parents are required to provide essential education items for their children, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate,
 - The availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the Principal if the parent wishes to discuss these.
- A copy of the school-level policy will be provided.
- School Council will endorse all parent payments requests.
- It is not acceptable to use coercion or harass Parents/Guardians to obtain payment.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part the school's triennial review cycle or if guidelines change.

Ratified in line with School Strategic Plan development - VRQA Minimum Standards: July 2014.

Resources and Links:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/parentpayments.aspx>

FPS Essential Education Expenses and Voluntary Contributions forms

FPS Student Booklist

FPS Personal Devices Parent Payment Policy

Parent Payment Categories Flowchart

