Policy Document

Parent Payments_v1.2

Rationale
School councils are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories:
- Essential education items
- User Pays optional education items
- Voluntary financial contributions

Objectives
To establish protocols and procedures regarding payments and/or contributions for education, items and services from parents and guardians of students at Stonnington Primary School.

Implementation
Stonnington Primary School spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate student learning requisites to meet the needs of our children. The student requisites payment request list contains high quality materials at a competitive price, due to our ability to bulk order.

There may also be certain items that, due to their nature, may only be provided by the school. No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

Parent Payment Categories
Essential education items are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program.

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 swimming, camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend

User Pays Optional education items (or non-essential materials and services) 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.

These items include:
- Extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes, ICAS, GATEWAYS
- School-based performances, productions and events; and
- School magazines, newsletters and class photographs

Voluntary financial contributions are requested for those items and services that parents and guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust.

Second hand uniform shop
In order to support parents in meeting the costs of their children’s education the school offers, from time to time, a second-hand school uniform sale.
Other support options
The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist parents, including the School Start Bonus, State Schools Relief Committee, Ardoch Youth Foundation and SWERN Inc.

Payment arrangements
Parents and guardians will be provided with reasonable notice (i.e. prior to the end of the previous school year) of payment requirements and requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions for the following 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 A Full amount
Option B Payment at the beginning of each term
Option C Half yearly payment (beginning of terms 1 & 3)
Option D Other; payment arrangement with the Principal/Assistant Principal

Alternative payment options are available through the school, with parents encouraged to make an appointment with the school to discuss circumstances and available options.

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

Payment requests or letters to parents will be reasonably itemised and the category each item falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution.

Receipts will be issued to parents as soon as practicable after receiving payment.

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.

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

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

Evaluation
• This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Ratification
Ratified by School Council: 18 March 2015
School Council President: Shane Rogerson Principal: Anne McPhee