



Donvale Primary School

Parent Payment Policy

Policy Statement

To provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funds with approved financial contributions and payments from parents.

No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

Rationale

The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 empowers school councils to charge parents for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children, as well as to raise funds. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by our school are enhanced by doing so, our School Council requests payment from parents for certain student materials and services charges, and for modest voluntary financial contributions.

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, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.

Donvale Primary School has spent considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our children. The book packs contain high quality materials at a competitive price due to our ability to purchase in bulk.

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 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
- school uniform;
- transport and entrance for camps, excursions and incursions which all students are expected to attend.

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; RE
- school-based performances, productions and events; and
- class photographs.

Voluntary financial contributions are for those items and services that parents and guardians are **invited** to make a donation to the school.

Implementation

- Parents will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments and voluntary contributions by December of the previous year, along with a recommended payments schedule.
- The payments schedule will include itemised details relating to all payments, essential payment dates, options to make payments by instalments, clear definitions of the category of any payments (ie: Essential, Optional or Voluntary) and advice to parents to contact the principal if they require support or additional information.
- All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential. The public identification of students or their parents where payments have or have not been received will not occur.
- All costs and processes associated with parent payments and voluntary contributions will be reasonable, will be defensible in relation to Department of Education requirements, and will be within the expectations of the school community.
- As with all parent payments to the school, Donvale Primary School will provide opportunities for all parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the principal.
- Statements will be mailed to families from time to time as deemed necessary by the Business Manager and Principal. Statements are available to families at all times and can be accessed by making a request at the office.
- Unpaid Essential Items payments will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family. Unpaid Optional Extras payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in the future. Unpaid Voluntary Financial Contributions do not constitute a non-payment and will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family.
- No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents or students.
- 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 and payment plans.
- The principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually. Management committee will review the level and purpose of parent payments and voluntary contributions annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction received from the Department of Education.

References

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Parent Payments in Victorian Government schools policy