

HARTWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT PAYMENTS POLICY

Philosophy

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* provides students with free instruction and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the school to fulfil the standard curriculum requirements in Victorian Curriculum F-10.

This policy covers payments for Curriculum Contributions, Other Contributions and Extra-Curricular Items & Activities essential education items that schools may request, and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests may be made. Any record of contributions is confidential, as is any decision by a parent not to make a financial contribution. It also aims to ensure that students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, or refused instruction on the basis of payments not being made for education items, services or voluntary financial contributions.

Parent Payment Categories

School Council may invite parents to make a financial contribution to support the school. These payments fall into three categories:

- *Curriculum Contributions* - Voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the school deems necessary for students to learn the Curriculum. These include classroom consumables, online subscriptions, printing & photocopying and whole school events.
- *Other Contributions* - Voluntary financial contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the school's functions and objectives. These include student wellbeing programs, first aid equipment and school grounds maintenance and improvements.
- *Extra-Curricular Items and Activities*- Items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are above and beyond what the school provides for free to deliver the Curriculum. These are provided on a user-pays basis. eg. School Yearbook, camps, excursions and Interschool Sport.

School Council may also invite parents to:

- supply or purchase educational items to use and own (e.g. textbooks, stationery, digital devices).
- invite voluntary contributions to a Building Fund or contributions to the Library Fund (these funds are approved by the Australian Taxation Office and are tax deductible)

Financial Hardship

Hartwell Primary School understands that some families may experience financial difficulty and offers a range of support options, including:

- the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- optional payment plans
- establish financial hardship arrangements to support families who cannot pay for items or activities so that their child doesn't miss out.

- The Principal will be the nominated contact that parents can have a confidential discussion with regarding financial hardship arrangements.

Financial Requirements

In accordance with DET guidelines the following procedures and processes will apply:

- School council must approve, in a timely manner, any request for contributions or payments from parents that the school develops
- any contributions and payments must be recorded in CASES21
- receipts must be issued immediately to parents upon contribution or payment
- records of contributions and payments must be kept confidential
- The school must not raise invoices or enter voluntary financial contributions (including all Curriculum Contributions and Other Contributions) into CASES21 until they have been received
- The school must not request late payment fees or offer 'pay-on-time discounts', for financial contributions or Extra-Curricular Items and Activities.
- Extra-Curricular Activities: If a parent has agreed to purchase an Extra-Curricular Item or Activity, but has not made payment, schools may send invoices or statements only once per term for outstanding amounts

Communication

Schools may communicate parent payment arrangements using any communication tool that is suitable for their school context, provided that communication is consistent with the Parent Payments policy. This includes letters in the post, email, or using third party communication tools.

Implementation

School Council develop their parent payment arrangements to suit the contextual needs and aspirations of their school community while ensuring their arrangements remain in alignment with this policy.

School's parent payment arrangements will:

- support the functions and objectives of the school, including the enhancement of student learning, access, equity, inclusion and wellbeing
- ensure costs to parents are kept to a minimum, affordable for families, and proportionate to the needs of the school
- follow the finance requirements set out in the policy
- follow the communication requirements set out in the policy
- use the templates provided by the Department to create and communicate their parent payment arrangements
- follow all monitoring and compliance requirements as directed by the Department.