



# Mernda Primary School 0488

## PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 allows school councils 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.

### PARENT PAYMENT CATEGORIES

#### Essential education items

Are the items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that *parents and guardians are responsible for*.

These items include:

- Materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery.
- School uniform; (school uniform is supplied by LOWES).
- Camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend as part of the school curriculum.

Mernda Primary has spent considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our students. The book packs contain high quality materials at a competitive price due to our ability to bulk order.

Parents and guardians also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, as items should meet the specifications provided by the school. There may also be certain items that due to their nature may only be provided by the school.

#### 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:

- School-based performances, productions and events.
- School magazines, book club, class photographs.

#### Voluntary financial contributions

Are those items and services that parents and guardians are **invited** to make a donation to the school. (e.g. first aid, library or ICT.)

#### Requests for Payment

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

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

\* Upon making payment, receipts will be issued to parents.

\* 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.

### **Payment 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 **Camps, Sports and Excursion fund (CSEF)** supports families who met eligibility criteria set by the Victorian Government to ensure the student has the opportunity to participate in important, educational and fun activities.

\* The **State Schools Relief Committee** support, applications can be made via the Principal to assist with clothing/uniforms

\* **Welfare and support agencies** that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families.

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

### **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 17 <sup>th</sup> August 2016
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