



## Woodside Primary School Parent Payment Policy

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.

This policy ensures that:

- costs are kept to a minimum
- payment requests are clearly itemised under the three parent payment categories
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- no student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution
- access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

Woodside Primary School spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students.

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.

### **PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES**

**Essential education items** are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents or guardians are requested to pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate.

These items include:

- materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery

**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:

- student computer printing for personal use
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music
- school-based performances, productions and events
- school magazines, class photographs.

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

## **PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS**

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (e.g. a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable.

Alternative payment options are available through the school and parents are 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 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.

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.

Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional extras 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 per year to parents and guardians.

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

## **FAMILY 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 eligible parents, including free second hand uniform, the Camp, Sport & Excursion Fund (CSEF) and State Schools Relief Committee support.

## **CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP**

Should any family be experiencing hardship please contact Anne Morris, Principal either by phone, email or in person and discuss your financial situation and difficulties in making payments.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

The policy and the school's implementation will be communicated in Term Four via the newsletter. It will be on the school website

Parents can at anytime raise any issues, make general inquires about charges and the contact details where complaints can be referred.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

The school council has a responsibility to monitor the implementation of the policy. The policy will be reviewed annually. It will be reported back to the community.

Endorsed at School Council:

Review Date: