

PARENT PAYMENTS

POLICY

Rationale:

- Mentone Primary School is committed to providing the best possible education and access to a broad range of pathways for all students at the School.
The major source of funding for the school is through Government funding ie the School Resource Program (SRP). This provides for a standard curriculum at the school. In order to ensure that our students have access to an educational program that provides a range of opportunities and rich learning experiences we ask for the financial support of families in the form of payment for Parent Supported Materials and Services charges.
- 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.

Aims:

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

Implementation:

- School Council supplements DEECD funds by requesting payments from parents for the following items:-
- **Essential Educational Items** (sometimes referred to as a Materials Levy) – This payment is required for all students. It covers the bulk purchase of materials and services such as text books, stationery, art materials, sporting equipment, technology, photocopied materials in all subject areas and some activities (such as Bike Education, Life Education)
- **Optional Extras** – These payments are offered on a user pay basis and parents can choose whether or not their child participates, such as incursions, excursions, camps, sleepovers, swimming, optional competitions, out of hours activities.
In addition, School Council invites parents to make donations by means of:-
- **Donations** – This payment is entirely voluntary. Parents are invited to contribute to the development of School facilities eg Capital works projects, purchase of computer technology, improving the external environment and extra sporting equipment.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Families who are in receipt of the Education Maintenance Allowance will be able to:

1. direct the school's portion of the EMA towards Essential Educational Items, or if this is fully paid, to Optional items as specified by the family.
2. authorize the school to deduct the cost of optional items from their portion of the EMA payment

Any portion of the EMA not expended by the end of the year will be returned to the parent/guardian unless there is an agreement by the parent/guardian that this money be carried over in the next year.

Procedures

Parents and guardians will be provided with sufficient notice to plan for the payment of the Essential Educational Items and Optional Extras

1. Initial notice for payment of the Essential Educational Items (Materials Levy) will be made to parents/guardians in November of the year prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used. School council will determine the amount.
2. Students who are new to the school or are leaving the school will be charged on a quarterly pro rata basis.
3. At least 6 weeks notice via the newsletter and follow up notices will be given for Optional Extras such as payments of camps, excursions, incursions, swimming etc.
4. Details relating to all payments will be given with an option to purchase goods elsewhere (where appropriate), essential payment dates, options to make payments by instalments, clear definitions of the category of any payments (ie: Essential, Optional or Voluntary), an alignment between payment dates and the timing of EMA payments, and advice to parents to contact the principal if they require support or additional information.
5. Opportunities for all parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the principal.
6. Invoices for unpaid **Essential Items** and **Optional Extras** will be mailed quarterly.
7. All costs and processes associated with parent payments will be reasonable, will be defensible in relation to DEECD requirements, and will be within the expectations of the school community.
8. All details of payment or non payments by parents and guardians will be kept confidential
9. Unpaid **Essential Items** payments will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family. All students will be treated the same and not denied access to the standard curriculum program or refused instruction on the basis of payments not being made for education items, services.
10. Unpaid **Optional Extras** payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in the future.
11. The principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.

Evaluation:

- * This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle. School Council 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 DEECD.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

2008