

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY		
UPPER SANDY CREEK PRIMARY SCHOOL		
Policy Implementation Date: 2020	Policy review date: 2021	Responsible for review: School Council

RATIONALE

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and 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.

GOALS

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

To provide information for the school community regarding parent payments at Upper Sandy Creek Primary School. (USC) This policy covers payments for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions that our school requests and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests will be made. This policy complies with the requirements of the Department of Education and Training (DET) Parent Payments Policy.

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

ESSENTIAL STUDENT LEARNING ITEMS

Category 1

These are items, activities or services that the school deems essential to student learning in the standard curriculum. Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own. Examples are:

- items that the student takes temporary or permanent possession of such as text books, student stationery, book bags, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS)
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. technology projects, workbooks, photography)
- school uniform (where applicable)
- activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend, such as costs associated with excursions and work placements.

Note: If parents choose to provide equivalent materials themselves, this must be done in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. However, there are some items (e.g. food provisions for home economics, music, technology) that, due to their nature, can only be provided by the school

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Category 2

These are items or services that are optional and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum. Students may access these on a user pays basis. These items include:

- activities the student purchases (e.g. fees for extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum such as instrumental music tuition; fees for guest speakers; optional camps and excursions; entry fees to school-based performances, productions and events)
- items the student purchases or hires (e.g. school magazines; class photos; formals/graduation functions; materials for extracurricular activities; student accident insurance)

**VOLUNTARY
FINANCIAL
CONTRIBUTIONS**

Category 3

Parents, or anyone else, can be invited to make a voluntary contribution or donation to the school for the following purposes:

- contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school (e.g. equipment, materials or services) in addition to those funded through the SRP. This may include additional computers or student-related services. These contributions are NOT tax deductible.
- general voluntary financial contributions or donations to the school. These contributions or donations are NOT tax deductible.
- donations to a building fund or library fund (if these funds have been endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office and have a Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) status). Donations to these funds ARE tax deductible to the donor.
- any donations to special schools with a DGR status are also tax deductible to the donor.

CATEGORY 1 CHARGES	CATEGORY 2 CHARGES	CATEGORY 3 CHARGES
School uniform	Camps Skiing School photos School concert Year 6 shirts Excursions X4 Swimming	School Building Fund \$50 - voluntary

School council will determine charges schedule at the last school council meeting of each year to ensure parents time to save and prepare for the new school year.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

Upper Sandy Creek Primary School Council will determine the payments to be made by families at the end of each school year. This will be articulated to parents in the form of a letter from the Principal. Families will be invoiced at the commencement of the school year for essential items listed under category 1. Families who experience difficulties making the payments should contact the school to arrange a payment plan. The follow items are related to payments:

- The status and details of any payments or non-payments by parents/guardians are strictly confidential.
- Parents/guardians are informed of alternative payment options and invited to contact the Principal, or delegate if they wish to discuss these options.
- All requests for payment are fair and reasonable.
- Access to the standard curriculum program and enrolment or advancement to the next year level is not withheld as a condition of payment.
- In the event of non-payment for an optional item (eg. excursion, camp) a student shall not be permitted to access this activity or resource without prior approval of the Principal. The student shall be provided with an alternative option for the duration of school hours covered by the excursion/camp if the non-payment of same results in the student being excluded.
- Invoices for unpaid *essential educational items or optional items* will not be sent more than once a month. Statements are available to families at all times and can be accessed by making at request of the Business Manager at the office.
- The Parent Payment Policy complies with the requirements of DET.
- All staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

- *Second hand and low cost options e.g. school clothing pool, low cost suppliers*
- *CSEF*
- *State Schools Relief*
- *Local community supports*

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

Upper Sandy Creek Primary School will endeavor to support families experiencing hardship. The school Principal should be contacted by families who experience financial hardship and cannot make the payments set out by the school council. The Principal may contact families believed to be suffering financial hardships. This will be done in a discrete manner and the status and details of non-payments by parents/guardians are strictly confidential.

Families will be referred to [Cost support for families](#) document in cases of financial hardship. It will be the Principals discretion as to determine if payments for optional activities can be waived if support services are not an option.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

This policy will be published on the school website. Details of the parent payment schedule will be made available at the end of each year preceding the final school council meeting.

This policy will be made available to all parents each time it has been ratified by the school council.

Monitoring and review of the implementation of the policy

School Council will ensure that:

- The Parent Payments policy is reviewed as part of the school's annual review cycle.
- The Parent Payments Schedule is reviewed and endorsed annually, however no later than the end of March of the year requiring payments.
- Parent Payments are kept to a minimum and will not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services to the student.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that:

- Essential education items are provided for their child/ren. If parents/guardians choose to provide items themselves, 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.
- The Principal, or delegate is contacted to discuss alternative payment options if required.

Understanding Parent Payment Categories

Schools

What does the legislation say?

The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge fees to parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child.

In the Act, a 'Parent' includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a child including parental responsibility under the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

What do schools pay for as part of 'free instruction'?



Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The standard curriculum for Years F-10 means implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

What principles govern parent payment practice?

Educational Value | Access, Equity & Inclusion | Affordability

Engagement & Support | Respect & Confidentiality | Transparency & Accountability

Parents

What may parents be asked to pay for?

Schools can request payment for Essential Student Learning Items



These are items, activities or services that the school deems **essential** to student learning of the standard curriculum.

Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own.

These may also be either:

Items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of

- e.g.
 - textbooks, activity books, exercise books
 - stationery, book bags
 - student ID cards, locks
 - cooking ingredients students will consume
 - materials for final products that students take home (technology projects, build-your-own kits, dioramas)
 - Picture Exchange Communication Systems

Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend

i.e. travel, entry fees or accommodation

- e.g.
 - excursions
 - incursions
 - school sports
 - work placements

Parents can be asked to pay for items, activities and services in the three Parent Payment Categories:

Essential Student Learning Items,
Optional Items and
Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Schools determine how items, activities and services are classified within these categories based on the learning and teaching program of their school.

Schools can request payment for Optional Items

These are items, activities or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.

Students may access these on a user-pays basis.

These may be either:

Items the student purchases or hires

- e.g.
 - school magazines, class photos
 - functions, formals, graduation dinners
 - materials for extra curricular programs
 - student accident insurance

Activities the student purchases

- e.g.
 - fees for extra curricular programs or activities, such as instrumental music tuition
 - fees for guest speakers
 - campus, excursions, incursions, sports
 - entry fees for school run performances



Items and/or materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum

- e.g.
 - use of silver in metal work instead of copper
 - supplementary exam revision guides

Support for families experiencing hardship is available at every school and each school has a parent payment contact person. See your school's policy for more information.

For more information on Parent Payments and Personal Devices, visit the DET website at: www.education.vic.gov.au

Schools can invite
**Voluntary
Financial
Contributions**
for



- e.g.
 - Building or Library fund (Tax deductible)
 - Voluntary contributions for a specific purpose, such as equipment, materials, services.
 - General voluntary contributions