



Cranbourne East Primary School PARENT PAYMENTS 2013

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.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) provides funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) and various programs. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items, equipment and operational costs, which are an integral part of the SRP.

School Councils can request payments from parents in the following categories:

- **Essential educational items:** which parents/ guardians are required to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (stationery, text books and school uniforms where required).
- **Optional extras:** which are offered on a user pays basis and which parents/ guardians may choose whether their child access or participates in (school magazines or extra curricula programs or activities).
- **Voluntary financial contributions:** which parents/guardians may be invited to donate to the school (grounds beautification, library trust fund, additional computers).

Free instruction in the standard curriculum program is provided free to all students in Victorian government schools. Free instruction includes the provision of learning and teaching activities, instructional supports, materials and resources, and administration and facilities associated with the standard curriculum program.

Parents and guardians can be asked to pay for essential education items. This includes:

- Items which students take possession of, including text books and student stationery;
- Materials for learning and teaching where your child consumes or takes possession of the finalised articles (for example, home economics, ceramics, photography, catering);
- School uniform (where applicable);
- Travel costs incurred in the course of receiving the instruction from a teacher or other person; and
- Essential services associated with, but not considered to be part of, 'instruction' in the standard curriculum program, such as costs associated with camps and excursions, which all students are expected to attend (for example, transport and entrance costs).

AIMS

All students at Cranbourne East Primary School have access to the standard curriculum program encompassing the core learning and teaching activities associated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. Students are not treated differently, denied access to the 'standard curriculum program', or

refused instruction on the basis of payments not being made for essential education items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Parent payments are to be kept at a minimum and charged at cost price.
- Communication with parents about education items including requests for payment is fair and reasonable. Payment requests must be accompanied by the following information:
 - Parent/ guardians are required to provide essential education items for their students, and they have the option of purchasing these through the school or local supplier.
 - The availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the principal if the parent wishes to discuss these options.
 - Details of how payments or contributions will be spent by the school.
 - A copy of the school level policy is available on request.
- Alternative payment and support options will be made available and parents invited to discuss the options with the principal. A range of support options are available to parents, including:
 - The **Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)** is provided to low-income families to assist with the cost of educating their children.
 - Access to **State Schools' Relief Committee** support via the principal, which can assist with clothing/uniforms.
- A minimum of six weeks notice is to be provided to parents regarding payment. Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used. Information regarding Parent Payments is to be published annually in the newsletter, recorded on the booklist order form or by general notice sent home.
- The school will offer to purchase essential educational items on behalf of parents or provide the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, and should meet the specifications provided by the school. Some items, for example food provisions for home economics, may only be provided by the school.
- Requests for voluntary financial contributions are limited to the initial notice to all parents and guardians and one reminder notice. It is not acceptable to use coercion or to harass parents and guardians for any payments.
- Any record of payments or contributions is confidential. The public identification of students or their parents or guardians who have or have not made a payment or contribution is unacceptable and must not occur in any circumstances.
- Payment arrangements where possible are to coincide with the timings and availability of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). Parents should not be pressured to sign over their portion of the EMA cheque.
- Not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment of essential items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions.
- School Council will provide parents with information detailing how contributions will be spent by the school.
- Copies of this policy are available to parents on request.

EVALUATION

- The Parent Payments Policy is to be reviewed annually.