Parent Payment Policy

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. Overport Primary School has spent considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our children. 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. No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

Parent Payment Categories

Essential education items are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents and guardians are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide. These items include:

- materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery;
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. home economics, ceramics, photography, catering);
- school uniform;
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

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, internet access for recreational or non-school use;
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes;
- school-based performances, productions and events; and
- school magazines, newsletters, class photographs.

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

Second hand uniform items

In order to support parents in meeting the costs of their children’s education the school sells second-hand school uniform items from the school office.

References:
Other 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. Overport PS also offers parents the opportunity of paying booklists / excursions and camps off via an instalment plan. The School is registered with Centrelink to accept regular fortnightly payments through Centrepay. Any parent who is in receipt of Family Tax Benefit A or B or any kind of pension is eligible to utilize Centrepay. Parents & Guardians who are in receipt of a Health Care Card can also apply to receive an annual CSEF grant of $125 per student, payable to the school for the sole use of excursions and camps. State Schools Relief is also available to support with provision of uniform items.

Payment arrangements

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (a minimum of four week’s notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, three payment options have been developed:

Option A  Full amount
Option B  Payment by 3 equal instalments.
Option C  Regular payments through Centrepay (apply with the business mgr).

Book packs must be paid for in full prior to the start of the school year in order for students to be issued with their book packs on the first day of school. Book packs will only be issued as they are paid for. The exception is those parents / guardians who are making payments via Centrepay.

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 or letters to parents will be itemised and the category each items falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item or voluntary financial contribution.

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payments and receipts will be issued to the students at the end of each day.

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.

**Evaluation:**

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