

Clifton Creek Primary School adheres to requirements in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and the Department's Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools policy by ensuring that:

- Free instruction in the standard curriculum program is provided to all students
- Payments or contributions for education items and services are requested from parents in three categories – essential education items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions
- Certain essential education items such as text books, stationery and paper are provided by school council free of charge to all students.
- The parent payment policy (compliant with the Department's parent payment policy) is developed and approved by school council and provided to all parents before the second week of November.
- Parent payment requests are fully itemised with payment categories clearly identified for each item
- Costs are kept to a minimum
- No students are disadvantaged if parents cannot pay

## Parent Payment Categories

**Essential education items** are those other materials and services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program for which parents and guardians are responsible.

These items include:

- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. cooking, craft, art, gardening);
- 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:

- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music,
- school magazines
- Religious Education class materials

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

## Support options

### Second hand uniform

In order to support parents in meeting the costs of their children's education the school operates a second-hand school uniform swap shop.

### 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, including the School Start Bonus, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and State Schools Relief Committee support. Information on these means of support are made available to parents (NOTE Parents are entitled to know how the EMA is being used for their child's education. The school will advise parents and guardians of the itemised cost of student materials and services on which they propose to spend the EMA.)

## 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 six weeks' 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, two payment options have been developed:

Option A        Full amount

Option B        Regular Instalments by arrangement with Principal or Business Manager

- Alternative payment options are available through the school with parents 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 or letters 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 items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month.
- All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 18 October 2011.