



Parent Payments and Voluntary Contributions Policy

Mooroopna Primary School

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.

This policy ensures that:

- costs are kept to a minimum
- payment requests are clearly itemised under the three parent payment categories
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- no student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution
- access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

Mooroopna Primary School spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students.

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.

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 or guardians are requested to pay the school. 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.

Optional education items are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to, or in support of, the standard curriculum program. 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.

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



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Family 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 eligible parents. These options include:

- [State School's Relief](#)
- [Second-Hand School Uniform](#) In order to support parents in meeting the costs of their children's education the school has a supply of second hand uniforms.
- [CSEF](#) Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund available to all eligible families
- [CSEF](#) Foundation CSEF Uniform Package available to all eligible families
- [Saver Plus](#) is an initiative of Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ, delivered locally by community organisations in 22 locations in Victoria. Saver Plus assists individuals and families on lower incomes to have every dollar up to \$500 saved over a 10-month period matched by ANZ to go towards education-related costs.
- [The Smith Family's 'Learning for Life program'](#) provides financial support, guidance and mentoring for disadvantaged students. The Smith Family works with a select number of schools and may require referral from the school principal.
- The Commonwealth Government provides a range of payments and services to help families look after their children's health, education and other family issues.

Consideration of Hardship

In addition to the Family Support options outlined above parents may communicate with the Business Manager by phone, email or in person about their financial situation and related difficulties in making payments.

Communication with Families

The school's implemented Parent Payment Policy will be communicated with our school community via our website, newsletter, FlexiBuzz and printed information sent home to families.

Families may raise any issues, make general enquiries about charges or register any complaints by contacting the Business Manager by phone or MPS email.

Payment arrangements

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (e.g. a minimum of six weeks notice prior to the end of the preceding school year).



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Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, four payment options have been developed:

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| Option A | Full amount at the beginning of Term 1 |
| Option B | Payment at the beginning of each Term |
| Option C | Payment via regular Centrepay deductions. Centrepay is a voluntary bill-paying service, which is free for Centrelink customers. Use Centrepay to arrange regular deductions from your Centrelink payment. You can start or change a deduction at any time. The quickest way to do it is through your Centrelink account online. |
| Option D | Alternative payment options are available through the school and parents are 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 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 extras 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 per year to parents and guardians.

All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.

The following documents, as attached, form part of this policy:

2020 Parent Payment
Understanding Parent Payment Categories

References

DET Policy –

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/parentpayments.aspx#link43>

Evaluation

Mooroopna Primary School will monitor the implementation of this policy and identify the factors/measures to be taken into account, such as transparency of processes and engagement with parents.

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's annual review cycle.