



# CLIFTON CREEK PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Parent Payment Policy

August 2017

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 Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions
- Certain Essential Student Learning Items such as text books and subject materials are **provided by school council free of charge** to all students at Clifton Creek PS.
- The Parent Payment policy (compliant with the Department's parent payment policy) is reviewed and approved by school council annually. It is distributed to all parents before the end of October accompanying the Statement of the next year's Education Fees.
- Parent payment requests are fully itemised with payment categories clearly identified for each item
- Costs to parents are kept to a minimum.
- No students are disadvantaged if parents cannot pay. Families experiencing hardship are treated with respect, personal information of all parents and students are kept confidential in respect to parent payments

### Parent Payment Charges

Parent contribution, in all forms, assists to provide an enriched learning and teaching program for every student and is highly valued by our school community.

**Essential Student Learning Items** are those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum.

These items include:

- stationery, activity books, exercise books
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. cooking, craft, art, gardening);
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

Note – Parents may choose to provide these stationery items after consulting with school.

**Optional Items** are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum program. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents choose to access them for students, they are required to pay for them.

These items include:

- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music,
- annual school commemorative publication
- State Schools Spectacular camp, Somers Camp

**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.

## Communications With Families

Parents are informed of this policy each year mid-way through Term 4 via personal letter, website and newsletter. Parents are reminded that they have the opportunity at any time to raise any issues with the Business Manager or Principal.

## Family Support Options

The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments. There are a range of support options available to support and assist parents.

- **State Schools' Relief** committee support via the principal to assist with uniforms, shoes, textbooks, stationery and software
- **Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund**, (CSEF) which is available for eligible families, to go towards the costs of school trips, camps and swimming programs.
- In order to support parents in meeting the costs of their children's education the school operates a **second-hand school uniform** swap shop.
- **CentrePay** is a free, voluntary service for Centrelink customers to pay expenses as regular deductions from their Centrelink payments. Centrepay can help families to pay for many types of bills, such as education fees and expenses, child care, rent, electricity, gas and water bills, or medical services.
- **Local Community Supports**- in the Bairnsdale district we have community organisations such as Uniting Care and Berry Street who provide support to families.

## 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).

Payment reminders 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 by the end of February
- 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 business manager to discuss circumstances and 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 Student Learning Item, Optional Item or Voluntary Financial Contribution.
- Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.
- Reminders for unpaid items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month.
- Parents experiencing hardship are not pursued for outstanding school fees from one year to the next.
- All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.
- Only the initial invitation for Voluntary Financial Contributions and one reminder notice per year will be issued.
- Bus Fees are not part of the Education Fees and will be invoiced separately to those families using the school run bus service in 2018.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 21/03/2018.  
The effectiveness and impact of its implementation is to be reviewed on an annual basis.