



V I O L E T S T R E E T BENDIGO PRIMARY SCHOOL

OLD VIOLET STREET

BENDIGO

VICTORIA



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PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

Bendigo Violet Street Primary School

PURPOSE

To ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and ensure that all children have access to the standard curriculum.

RATIONALE

The Victorian community shares a vision to build an education system that champions excellence and ensures that every child and young person has access to the opportunities to succeed in life, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Schools are best placed to make local decisions which ensure that all students can access a broad range of learning opportunities that support their expectations and promote their aspirations as they move through the education system. Parent contribution, in all forms, assists schools to provide an enriched learning and teaching program for every student and is highly valued by school communities.

Learning and teaching programs vary across schools based on local needs and circumstances and reflect each school's priorities, decisions and resources. This, in turn, informs the parent payment charges approved by school councils that may vary from one school to the next.

PARENT PAYMENTS IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for instruction in the standard curriculum program to be free to all students in government schools.

<http://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/parent-payment/policy>

Essential Student Learning Items are those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. These are items that the school considers essential for all students and which students take possession of. Parents may choose to provide the items themselves or buy the items from the school where practical and appropriate.

These items may include:

- Materials that the student takes possession of, including books and stationery
- Materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (eg. food, technology or art subjects)
- Excursions and incursions directly related to classroom programs

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 may include:

eg: netbooks, camps, photos, etc.

VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Parents can be invited to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose, e.g. school grounds projects or new equipment

COST AND SUPPORT TO PARENTS

All communication with parents or guardians in regard to Essential Educational items, including requests for payment will be fair and reasonable.

Consideration to hardship arrangements in respect to payment requests will be provided to families experiencing long term hardship or short term crisis on a confidential, case by case basis. All schools have written hardship arrangements that include a proactive approach to providing support for parents experiencing financial difficulty.

Parents may contact the school to make arrangements to discuss payment arrangements.

PAYMENT METHOD OPTIONS

When making payment to the school for any transaction, the following payment options will be available:

- Cash or EFTPOS, in person via the General Office
- Credit Card in person or via MOTO (phone payment) Card details will not be retained.
- Internet transfer to school bank account (one off or regular payment)
- Instalments by arrangement

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

- Clear specification of the Items, description and costs within the three payment categories will be provided

REFUNDS

- All camp deposits/payments will be non-refundable unless a medical certificate is provided stating the student is unable to attend for medical reasons.
- CSEF is not refundable to parents/guardians
- Other refund requests may be made to general office

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

Developing support for parents experiencing hardship, including:

- Secondhand and low cost options e.g. school clothing pool, low cost suppliers
- CSEF
- State Schools Relief
- Local community supports

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

Providing support to parents experiencing hardship, including:

- The Principal as the nominated parent payment contact person, communicating with parents by phone, email or in person about their financial situation and related difficulties in making payments.
- The Principal will provide confidential documentation of processes used when meeting/communicating with parents experiencing hardship, including information to be provided

Note: in reflecting on the school's hardship arrangements, Bendigo Violet Street Primary School will use proactive strategies to engage with parents disconnected from the school who may be experiencing hardship, such as discretely approaching families who may need support and special payment arrangement

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- The policy and the school's implementation will be communicated with the school community through School Council, Parents and Friend's group, the school newsletter and prominently displayed on the school website.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

- It will remain the responsibility of the Bendigo Violet Street Primary School Council to monitor the implementation of the policy, identify the factors/measures to be taken into account, such as transparency of processes and engagement with parents and be reported back to the school community on the school website in line with the policy review period.

This policy was ratified by School Council on Monday, October 19th, 2020

and will be reviewed in October 2021.



Principal



School Council President

Understanding Parent Payment Categories

Schools What does the legislation say?

The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge fees to parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child.

In the Act, a 'Parent' includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a child including parental responsibility under the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

What do schools pay for as part of 'free instruction'?



Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The standard curriculum for Years F-10 means implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

What principles govern parent payment practice?

- Educational Value | Access, Equity & Inclusion | Affordability
 Engagement & Support | Respect & Confidentiality | Transparency & Accountability

Parents What may parents be asked to pay for?

Schools can request payment for Essential Student Learning Items



These are items, activities or services that the school deems **essential** to student learning of the standard curriculum.

Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own.

These may also be either:

Items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of

- e.g.
- textbooks, activity books, exercise books
 - stationery, book bags
 - student ID cards, locks
 - cooking ingredients students will consume
 - materials for final products that students take home (technology projects, build-your-own kits, dioramas)
 - Picture Exchange Communication Systems

Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend

- i.e. travel, entry fees or accommodation
- e.g.
- excursions
 - incursions
 - school sports
 - work placements



Parents can be asked to pay for items, activities and services in the three Parent Payment Categories:

Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Schools determine how items, activities and services are classified within these categories based on the learning and teaching program of their school.

Schools can request payment for Optional Items

These are items, activities or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.

Students may access these on a user-pays basis.

These may be either:



Items the student purchases or hires

- e.g.
- school magazines, class photos
 - functions, formals, graduation dinners
 - materials for extra curricular programs
 - student accident insurance

Activities the student purchases

- e.g.
- fees for extra curricular programs or activities, such as instrumental music tuition
 - fees for guest speakers
 - camps, excursions, incursions, sports
 - entry fees for school run performances

Items and/or materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum

- e.g.
- use of silver in metal work instead of copper
 - supplementary exam revision guides

Support for families experiencing hardship is available at every school and each school has a parent payment contact person. See your school's policy for more information.

For more information on Parent Payments and Personal Devices, visit the DET website at: www.education.vic.gov.au

Schools can invite **Voluntary Financial Contributions** for

- e.g.
- Building or Library fund (Tax deductible)
 - Voluntary contributions for a specific purpose, such as equipment, materials, services.
 - General voluntary contributions