

Policy Name:	Family Payments Policy
Date Adopted:	August 2015
Review Date:	August 2018
Referred Documents:	S381-2007: Parent Payments and Voluntary Financial Contributions in Victorian Government Schools <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/schoolcharges.htm">www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/schoolcharges.htm</a> <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/lifeatschool/parentpayments.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/lifeatschool/parentpayments.htm</a>

## Rationale

The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 empowers School Councils to charge families for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children, as well as to raise supplementary funds. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by Newport Lakes Primary School are enhanced by doing so, our School Council requests payment from families for some student materials and services. The school also requests additional voluntary contributions, notably for capital improvements , ground improvements , technology initiatives and to enhance the school library .

## Aims

The purpose of this policy is to explain the school's approach to family payments. Such payments facilitate the provision of high-quality learning opportunities for all students by supplementing government funds provided under the Student Resource Package and other programs with approved financial contributions and payments from families.

## Implementation

School Council supplements government funds with payments from families for the following items, in accordance with Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD) policy.

- Essential Education Items** which parents and guardians are required to provide, or pay the school to provide, that include but are not limited to stationary, book packs, materials for learning where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished article (eg photography, woodwork ) excursions which all students are expected to attend, school uniform (where applicable) and activities associated with, but not part of instruction in the standard curriculum program.
- Optional Education Items** are those subjects or activities offered on a user-pays basis for which parents or guardians can choose whether or not their child participates, as the resources required to run those programs go beyond the standard curriculum. (These items include, but are not limited to, instrumental music tuition, sports excursions, swimming programs, enrichment and extension programs, camping programs.)

In addition, School Council invites parents to make donations by means of:

- Voluntary Financial Contributions** which are non-compulsory donations for specific projects, such as but not limited to - Building and Library Fund (approved by the Australian Taxation Office and tax deductible) grounds projects and technologies equipment.

Families will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments and voluntary contributions six (6) weeks before the end of the school year, along with a recommended payments schedule.

Payment requests will be accompanied by a copy of this policy.

The payments schedule will include itemised details relating to all payments, an option to purchase goods elsewhere (where appropriate), essential payment dates, options to make payments by instalments, clear definitions of the category of any payments (ie: Essential, Optional or Voluntary), an alignment between payment dates and advice to parents to contact the principal if they require support or additional information.

All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential. The public identification of students or their families where payments have or have not been received will not occur.

All costs and processes associated with family payments for Essential and Optional contributions will be reasonable and defensible in relation to DEECD requirements.

School Council will provide opportunities for those families experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the principal.

Statements for unpaid Essential Education Items and Optional Education Items will be distributed on a regular basis. Requests for Voluntary Financial Contributions on the same statement will be clearly identified as "Voluntary".

School Council expects that the Essential Education Items payments will be made before or at the same time as any Optional Education Items.

Unpaid Essential Items payments will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family. Unpaid Optional Extras payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in the future. Unpaid Voluntary Financial Contributions do not constitute a non-payment and will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family.

No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents or students.

Voluntary contributions will be acknowledged unless otherwise requested not to do so by the family.

Any unpaid levies and charges will be carried forward to the following year and appear on family statements. This remaining debt will be considered as an amount still owing to the School and will need to be repaid prior to any enrolment to Optional Education activities in future years.

#### **Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle. School council will review the level and purpose of school levies annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction received by DEECD.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

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