

## **1. Rationale:**

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 grants School Councils the responsibility of developing and approving school level parent payment charges and can request payments from parents under three categories – Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

## **2. Aims:**

The policy aims to ensure fair and equitable resources for use within the school and to create a clear and precise process working in partnership with parents/guardians to support the best learning environment for students.

## **3. Implementation:**

- 3.1 Each year Greenvale Primary School Council review the parent payments in line with Department of Education (DET) guidelines and approves the school budget based upon the goals and priorities as outline in the school strategic plan.
- 3.2 Provide parents/guardians with reasonable notice of requests for payment of booklists, material charges and voluntary contributions under the headings of Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Contributions. A minimum of 6 weeks' notice will be given to allow parents/guardians sufficient planning time to meet financial commitments. Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the school year in which the materials and services are to be used. Reasonable notice will be given for any other payment requests during the year (ie. excursions). A variety of payment methods will be available to parents including cash, cheque, Qkr, credit card and EFTPOS.
- 3.3 Booklists are presented to School Council annually for approval.
- 3.4 This school-level policy will ensure that all communication with parents about education items, including requests for payment, is fair and reasonable, payment requests, letters or CASES21 family statements for student materials will be accompanied by the following information:
  - Parent/guardians are required to provide essential education items for their students, and they have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate.
  - If parents/guardians require assistance with payments, they should contact the Business Manager who will respond with alternative payment options.
  - Details of how payments or contributions will be spent by the school.
  - A copy of the school-level policy is available upon request.
- 3.5 Essential Student Learning Items are those items used in the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents/guardians are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide.

These items include:

  - Materials that the individual student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery
  - Materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finalised articles e.g. cooking, ceramics, photography, printing, computer access
  - School uniform
  - Essential services associated with, but not considered to be a part of instruction in the standard curriculum program, such as costs associated with camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend e.g. transport and entrance costs.
- 3.6 Optional 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-pay basis and if parents/guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.

These items include:

  - Instructional support material, resources and administration beyond the provision of the standard curriculum program e.g. Student computer printing for personal use, internet access for recreational or non-school use

- Extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum program e.g. instrumental music tuition
- Materials for subjects where the payment sought is the difference between the basic materials/services required for access to the standard curriculum program and higher cost alternatives which may be more desirable e.g. the use of more expensive materials.
- Materials and services offered in addition to the standard curriculum program e.g. school magazines.
- School facilities and equipment not associated with provision of the standard curriculum program, and not otherwise provided for through the SRP e.g. student accident insurance and hire or lease of equipment such as musical instruments.

3.7 Voluntary Contributions - School Councils may invite parents/guardians of a student enrolled at the school to make a donation in the form of a financial contribution to the school. Schools may invite financial contributions for the following purposes:

- Buildings and Grounds beautification contribution.
- Contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school e.g. equipment, materials or services, in addition to those funded through the SRP. This may include additional computers or student-related services.
- General financial contributions or donations to the school.

3.8 The school will make support options available for parents who have difficulty paying for essential items and who can access a range of support options which will include:

- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) available to eligible families
- State Schools Relief committee
- Staged progress payments/payment plans.

3.9 The school understands that families may experience financial difficulties and hardships at times and be unable to meet full or part payments requested. Families are invited to contact the Business Manager to make confidential payment arrangements either in person or phone on 9333 2500.

3.10 Students will not be treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, or refused instruction on the basis of payments not being made for education items, services or financial contributions.

3.11 All students have access to the standard curriculum program.

3.12 Invoices for unpaid essential education items or optional items accepted by parents are generated and distributed on a regular basis, but not more than once a month.

3.13 Only the initial invitation of voluntary contributions and one reminder notice is sent to parents/guardians.

3.14 Under no circumstances can collectors of any type, including debt collectors be used by schools to obtain any funds from parents/guardians.

3.15 For families who leave the school throughout the school year, a refund of these parent payments will be reimbursed on receipt of a written request and shall be refunded on a percentage basis depending on the time during the term.

3.16 General enquires regarding parent payments may be made at the school office. Concerns may be directed to the Business Manager.

#### **4. Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's ongoing policy and process review cycle.

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#### **References and Related Documents:**

- The full Parent Payment Policy is available from the Department's [School Policy and Advisory Guide](#).

*This policy was ratified by School Council in August 2016*