Parent Payment Policy

Authorisation: By the Armadale Primary School Council on 29th October 2012
Recommended: By the Finance Sub Committee

Review Date: It is recommended that this policy is reviewed by the Finance Sub Committee by October 2013.

1. PURPOSE

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.

No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.

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 and guardians are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide.

Armadale Primary School has spent considerable time selecting the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our children. See details below.

Individual classroom - materials which your child will receive as his/her personal property for use during the year- charged at cost – this includes paper both for worksheets and photocopying, exercise books, pens, pencils, textas, etc.

Parents are not required to individually supply children's stationery items. All supplies will be purchased by the school at bulk order prices (GST free) and will be supplied to children as needed throughout the year.

Group Classroom - materials and items of equipment which your child will have access to in the classroom during the year on a shared basis. Materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. cooking, ceramics, photography, ICAS)

Information sharing - photocopying, photocopying paper, excursion envelopes, special notices, reading logs.

Specialists classes - supply of materials, the purchase and maintenance of equipment and aids. In order to maintain high quality teaching programs, upgrading of resources is constant.

Technology – use and maintenance of computers, internet and computer software.

Other Items -

- school uniform
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

Optional education 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-pays basis and if parents and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.

These items include:
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- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes;
- school-based performances, productions and events;
- Religious education
- class photographs

Voluntary financial contributions
are for those items and services that parents and guardians are invited to contribute to the school. See below.

School Council Voluntary Contribution
This amount, per family, assists Council to supplement the budgets in specialist areas, support curriculum initiatives throughout the school, provide additional items of equipment and maintain the buildings and grounds in a safe and healthy state for your children. This voluntary contribution request has remained unchanged since 2007 and is $60.00 per child /$100.00 per family.

Information Technology Contribution
To enable School Council to continue with the upgrade of all areas of Information technology, we are seeking the support of the school community by way of donations. We would hope that all families would donate at least $50.00 towards this, however if you wish to donate more it would be greatly appreciated.

Armadale Primary School Building Fund
Introduced for the first time in June 2005, the School Building Fund is a vehicle in which funds can be raised to support the on-going Improvement of the School Buildings. As an eligible fund all donations are Tax Deductible. An Official Building Fund receipt will be issued.

Parents & Friends Association (PFA)
The opportunity is open to all families to join the PFA and be a part of the various activities this group runs at the school for Children & their families. Just add your $10 fee to become a member.

Other 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 parents, including the School Start Bonus, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and State Schools Relief Committee support.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
A parent or guardian of a child under 16 years of age who holds an eligible Centrelink benefit and a Health Care Card or pension card, may be entitled to the Education Maintenance Allowance(amount determined by the Commonwealth.)

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). Alternative payment options are available through the school with parents 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 or letters to parents will be itemised and the category each items falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution.
Receipts will be issued to parents upon request.
Reminders for unpaid essential education items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents. An initial invitation and one reminder letter for voluntary financial contributions and optional items will be issued to parents and guardians. As per the current Armadale Primary School Excursion Policy, the Excursion/Incursion levies are a term by term expense and notice will be given to parents in the term prior, with payment expected by the end of the first week.

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