



PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

BLACKBURN LAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

12 – 14 Florence Street Blackburn 3130

BACKGROUND

This policy document is to be read in conjunction with Department of Education and Training (DET) 'Parent Payment Policy and Implementation Template' which forms part of our parent payment policy and informs our Blackburn Lake Primary School 'Parent Payment Policy'. The purpose of DET's document is to ensure that parent payment practices are consistent and transparent and to ensure all children have access to the standard curriculum. Further information of DET's policy can be found at www.education.vic.gov.au

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

The School Council is responsible for developing and approving school-level Parent Payment Charges and can request payment under 3 categories only: *Essential Student Learning Items*, *Optional Items* and *Voluntary Financial Contributions*. The school and its community of parents have expectations of high educational outcomes for students, with teaching and learning occurring in a supportive and inclusive educational environment. Accordingly, Parent Payment Charges are reviewed annually and set at an amount that reflects a cost effective way of resourcing the curriculum to improve student outcomes particularly as identified in the school's Strategic Plan. Parent Payment Charges are also determined and communicated in a manner consistent with the principles set out in DET's policy.

Essential Student Learning Items

These are items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. The school considers these items, which students take temporary or permanent possession of, essential for all students. Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to provide some of these items themselves.

The Essential Student Learning Items will comprise a Book Bag of stationery. It will also cover the cost of diaries, student portfolios, subscriptions including to Mathematics, textbooks, readers, printouts and handouts in lieu of workbooks and textbooks and materials for projects.

Optional Items

These are items, activities or services, additional to the needs of the standard curriculum nevertheless support its instruction. They are provided on a user-pay basis.

- The Service Charge covers the cost of incursions and excursions that occur approximately one per term at each and every grade level.
- The Service Charge does not cover the cost of some other Optional Items such as Grade 5 and 6 Camp, Grade 4 Camp, Swimming Program, Sporting Activities, String Stars, Band. Appropriate notice will be given to parents about these activities and the costs involved.
- Other activities e.g. *Instrumental Music* lessons, *Tennis in Stages* etc are voluntary arrangements between parent and provider as far as payment is concerned.

Voluntary Financial Contributions

Parents are invited to make a donation to the school for general and/or specific purposes or projects.

Areas where the school is seeking Voluntary Financial Contributions are:

- Technology / STEM – Money raised will help increase the level of resourcing across a range of technologies
- Library Fund – Money raised would help support the establishment and ongoing costs of a computer lab in the library.
- Building Fund – Money raised in this area will help support the school's ability to maintain and improve the school's buildings

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS FOR PAYING THE 'PARENT PAYMENT CHARGE'

- Two main payment options are made available: full payment at the start of the year or 2 instalments over the course of the year.
- Other arrangements and variations on the timing of payments can be made by agreement with the Business Manager
- Parent payment records are kept strictly confidential. Administrative and financial processes are compliant with Departmental requirements such as CASES21 financial reporting.

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

Family support is made available to parents, such as:

- The school's Uniform Shop sells a range of second hand clothing.
- CSEF (Camps, Swimming & Excursion Fund) is available to individual parents / guardians who qualify for this State Government Grant to be used solely for the purposes indicated.
- Requests for assistance for families can be made by the school to 'State Schools Relief'.
- Welfare and support agencies e.g. 'Whitehorse Community Chest', that have established partnership arrangements with school may be able to provide assistance.

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

- The Principal and School Council will ensure no student is disadvantaged if parents are unable to pay.
- To assist families having difficulty paying the Essential Student Learning Items the Business Manager will act as the parent payment contact person. Parents can speak in person to Business Manager by phoning 9894 2855 or via email blackburn.lake.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au regarding their financial situation. The Business Manager will consult with the Principal before finalizing arrangements with any family. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to arrange a meeting with the family to explore and finalize arrangements concerning payment.
- The school administration will assist parents to access any available support detailed in 'Family Support Options' above.
- Where the school is aware of particular hardship cases parents may be approached discretely by the parent payment person to assess their need for support and special payment arrangements.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- The school's Parent Payment Policy is approved by the School Council must be appropriately communicated.
- The Parent Payment Policy will also be prominently displayed at the School Office.
- The Department document 'Parent Payments – FAQ's' (Frequently Asked Questions) will also be posted on the website in an effort to assist parents understanding of this policy area.
- General inquiries parents may have about the Parent Payment Policy and charges can be referred by parents to the Business Manager in person, by phone 9894 2855 or by email blackburn.lake.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
- Complaints should be directed to the Principal.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The School Council has responsibility 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, how / when the policy will be reported back to the school community, and the timing and processes of review. Review of the policy and its implementation will occur at least annually.

School Council President

Dan Watts

Principal

Loisia Steed

Date of approval by School Council

May, 2017