

Caulfield South Primary School

**C.S.P.S.
Policy # 6.8**

Parent Payment Policy

Rationale:

This policy is designed to ensure our school's compliance with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's requirements relating to payments to be made by parents. In particular, these may be essential education items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions. The policy also deals with the parameters, terms and conditions under which these payments can be requested.

Purpose:

School council can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

1. **essential education items** which parents and guardians are required to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (e.g. for stationery, text books)

2. **optional extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and in which parents and guardians may choose whether their child accesses or participates (e.g. such as instrumental music lessons, school-based performances, productions and events)

3. **voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be invited to donate to the school (e.g. for grounds beautification, additional computers).

Principals and school councils have the responsibility of making sure that no student is disadvantaged if parents are unable to pay the voluntary contribution

Implementation:

When requesting payment for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions the school will:

- Provide parents and guardians with early notice of requests for payment of essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions. A minimum of six weeks notice should be given to allow parents and guardians sufficient planning time. Payment may be requested, but not required prior to the start of the year in which the materials and services are to be used
- Coordinate payment arrangements to coincide with the timing and availability of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) support for

eligible parents/guardians and parents should not be pressured to sign over their portion of the EMA cheque

- Ensure that the status and details of any payment or non-payments by parents and guardians are confidential

The school will ensure that:

- Students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, or refused instruction on the basis of payment not being made for education items, services or voluntary financial contributions
- All students have access to the standard curriculum program
- Parents and guardians are provided with an alternative option for their child if they choose not to participate in an excursion or camp
- Invoices for unpaid essential education items or optional extras accepted by parents are generated and distributed on a regular basis, but not more than once a month
- Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice is sent to all parents and guardians
- Under no circumstances can collectors of any type, including debt collectors, be used by the school to obtain any funds from parents

The principal must ensure any record of payments or contributions by parents and guardians is kept confidential

Payment requests must be accompanied by the following information:

- Parents/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
- The availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the principal if the parent wishes to discuss these
- Details of how payments or contributions will be spent by the school
- A copy of the school policy is available on request

School councils may invite voluntary financial contributions for:

- Contributions to a school related trust fund, which are approved by the Australian Taxation Office and are tax deductible
- Contributions for a specific purpose such as computers or grounds projects
- General voluntary contributions or donations

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle

Ratified by School Council: 9 May 2012