



Invermay Primary School

Parent Payment Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and ensure that all children have access to the standard curriculum.

RATIONALE

The Victorian community shares a vision to build an education system that champions excellence and ensures that every child and young person has access to the opportunities to succeed in life, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Schools are best placed to make local decisions which ensure that all students can access a broad range of learning opportunities that support their expectations and promote their aspirations as they move through the education system. Parent contribution, in all forms, assists schools to provide an enriched learning and teaching program for every student and is highly valued by school communities.

Learning and teaching programs vary across schools based on local needs and circumstances and reflect each school's priorities, decisions and resources. This, in turn, informs the parent payment charges approved by school councils that may vary from one school to the next.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS CHARGE FOR?

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for instruction in the standard curriculum program to be free to all students in government schools. School councils are responsible for developing and approving school-level parent payment charges and can request payments from parents¹ under three categories only- Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Essential Student Learning Items are those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. These are items that the school considers essential for all students and which students take possession of.

Optional Items are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum program. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents choose to access them for students, they are required to pay for them.

Voluntary Financial Contributions

Parents can be invited to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose, e.g. school grounds projects, library fund or for new equipment. Only some Voluntary Financial Contributions are tax-deductible.

The attached diagram "**Understanding Parent Payment Categories**" provides examples of items and materials under each category.

¹ Parent' in the policy has the same meaning as in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, which is: 'parent', in relation to a child, includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* of the Commonwealth and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

In implementing this policy, schools must adhere to the following principles:

PRINCIPLES

- **Educational value:** Student learning, aspirations and wellbeing are paramount when schools determine their parent payments practices
- **Access, equity and inclusion:** All students have access to the standard curriculum program and participation of all students to the full school program is facilitated
- **Affordability:** Cost to parents is kept to a minimum and is affordable for most families at the school
- **Engagement and Support:** Early identification and engagement strategies by the school ensure parents are well informed of the payment options and supports available for those experiencing hardship
- **Respect and Confidentiality:** Parents and students experiencing hardship are treated with respect, dignity, sensitivity and without judgement and the identity and personal information of all parents and students are kept confidential in respect to parent payments
- **Transparency and Accountability:** School parent payment practices are well communicated, clear and transparent and their impact on student programs and families are reviewed by school councils

COST AND SUPPORT TO PARENTS

When school councils consider the proposed requests for parent payments the cost is kept to a minimum and is affordable to most parents at the school.

School principals must ensure that:

- items students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- payment requests are broadly itemised within the appropriate category
- parents are advised that they have the option of purchasing equivalent Essential Student Learning Items themselves, in consultation with the school
- information on payment options is available, accessible and easily understood to all parents so that they know what to expect and what supports they can access
- parents are provided with early notice of annual payment requests for school fees (i.e. a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year). This enables parents to save and budget accordingly.
- parents are provided with reasonable notice of any other payment requests that arise during the school year- ensuring parents have a clear understanding of the full financial contribution being sought
- the status and details of any financial arrangements are kept confidential and only shared with relevant school personnel
- parents experiencing hardship are not pursued for outstanding school fees from one year to the next
- use of debt collectors to obtain outstanding school funds owed to the school from parents is not permitted
- there will be only one reminder notice to parents for voluntary financial contributions per year
- Invoices/statements for unpaid essential or optional items accepted by parents are not generated more than monthly or according to the parent payment arrangement with the school.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Families may experience financial difficulties and may be unable to meet the full or part payments requested. Principals and school councils exercise sensitivity to the differing financial circumstances of students and their families when considering parent payment fees. There are a range of support options available to support and assist parents.

Consideration to hardship arrangements in respect to payment requests is provided to families experiencing long term hardship or short term crisis on a confidential, case by case basis. All schools should take a proactive approach to providing support for parents experiencing financial difficulty.

All parents are provided the name and contact details of a nominated parent payment contact person at the school who they can discuss payment arrangements with.

REVIEW OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Schools will monitor the effectiveness and impact of the implementation of this policy at least annually as part of its ongoing improvement and report back to the school community.

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

Answers to the most commonly asked questions about school costs for parents see:

[Frequently Asked Questions – For Parents](#)

The attached diagram "**Understanding Parent Payment Categories**" provides examples of items and materials under each category.

Understanding Parent Payment Categories

Schools

What does the legislation say?

The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge fees to parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child.

In the Act, a 'Parent' includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a child including parental responsibility under the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

What do schools pay for as part of 'free instruction'?



Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The standard curriculum for Years F-10 means implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

What principles govern parent payment practice?

Educational Value | Access, Equity & Inclusion | Affordability
Engagement & Support | Respect & Confidentiality | Transparency & Accountability

Parents

What may parents be asked to pay for?

Schools can request payment for Essential Student Learning Items



These are items, activities or services that the school deems **essential** to student learning of the standard curriculum.

Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own.

These may also be either:

Items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of

- e.g.
- textbooks, activity books, exercise books
 - stationery, book bags
 - student ID cards, locks
 - cooking ingredients students will consume
 - materials for final products that students take home (technology projects, build-your-own kits, dioramas)
 - Picture Exchange Communication Systems

Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend

i.e. travel, entry fees or accommodation

- e.g.
- excursions
 - incursions
 - school sports
 - work placements

Parents can be asked to pay for items, activities and services in the three Parent Payment Categories:

Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Schools determine how items, activities and services are classified within these categories based on the learning and teaching program of their school.

Schools can request payment for Optional Items

These are items, activities or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.

Students may access these on a user-pays basis.

These may be either:

Items the student purchases or hires

- e.g.
- school magazines, class photos
 - functions, formals, graduation dinners
 - materials for extra curricular programs
 - student accident insurance

Activities the student purchases

- e.g.
- fees for extra curricular programs or activities, such as instrumental music tuition
 - fees for guest speakers
 - camps, excursions, incursions, sports
 - entry fees for school run performances

Items and/or materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum

- e.g.
- use of silver in metal work instead of copper
 - supplementary exam revision guides

Support for families experiencing hardship is available at every school and each school has a parent payment contact person. See your school's policy for more information.

For more information on Parent Payments and Personal Devices, visit the DET website at: www.education.vic.gov.au

Schools can invite **Voluntary Financial Contributions** for



- e.g.
- Building or Library fund (Tax deductible)
 - Voluntary contributions for a specific purpose, such as equipment, materials, services.
 - General voluntary contributions

IPS PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES FOR 2019

ESSENTIAL STUDENT LEARNING ITEMS

Those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. These are items that the school considers essential for all students and which students take possession of.

**2019 BOOKLISTS

For the fourth year running we have ordered bulk quantities of booklist items for each grade, to attain the best pricing we can. The majority of booklist items are supplied by Boltons Stationers, Ballarat. Orders are delivered directly to school, saving families from running around over the school holidays. Our 2018 booklists prices are as follows: (incl: pencils/textas, ruler, writing books, scrap books, erasers, book box, tissues, glue sticks, Portfolio folders, Spelling Mastery workbook – from ext supplier, Handwriting Matters workbook – from ext supplier, crayons, scissors, diaries, dotted third writing paper, printing paper, online student subscription to Lexiles Reading comprehension from ext supplier)

Foundation/Prep – \$88.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$120)

Gr 1 – \$92.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$127)

Gr 2 – \$92.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$127)

Gr 3 – \$100.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$133)

Gr 4 – \$100.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$133)

Gr 5 – \$100.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$133)

Gr 6 – \$100.00 (in 2013, prior to our iPad program, this list was \$133)

Please forward payment to IPS Office or pay IPS electronically any time before first day of school.

**IPAD HIRE PURCHASE 2019

FOUNDATION (Prep) First year payment of **\$150** in 2019 - please endeavour to pay in Term 1.

GRADE 1 Second year payment of **\$150** in 2019 - please endeavour to pay in Term 1.

GRADE 2 Third and final payment of **\$100** in 2019 - please endeavour to pay in Term 1.

GRADE 3-6 No charge for your existing device if you have paid your 3 x annual instalments in previous years.

***New students to IPS, along with existing students requiring a new or replacement iPad, may enter into a new hire purchase agreement at any time. Please discuss with Mr Borchers should you require a replacement iPad.

**UNIFORM

Price as per individual need. Available through Crockers – Armstrong St Ballarat. Ph 5331 3222

Take advantage of 10% off all uniform prices at Crockers during the month of November.

Reminder that all students are required by school council to attend school in our approved uniform.

**GR 6 Commemorative Hoodie / Jumper – our school council have approved a parent suggestion for Gr 6 students to have the option of purchasing an annual Gr6 year jumper for themselves. 2019 = \$50

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum program. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents choose to access them for students, they are required to pay for them.

****TERM 4 SWIMMING & GYMNASTICS at Ballarat Aquatic Centre 2019**

Option a) SWIMMING + GYMNASTICS + BUS TRAVEL = \$135 (to be confirmed) - payable Term 4. Option b) SWIMMING only + BUS TRAVEL = \$80 (to be confirmed) - payable start Term 4.

Option c) GYMNASTICS only + BUS TRAVEL = \$80 (to be confirmed) - payable start Term 4.

** Federal Government CSEF (Camps, Sport & Excursion Fund) for eligible families may be used toward payment for this.

****CAMP**

Following our amazing Gr 3-6 Queenscliff Beach Camp held 29 – 31 March 2017, there is a Gr 3-6 adventure & farm stay camp being planned for families to budget for in 2019. Details TBC. Expected cost \$225-\$275per student.

** Federal Government CSEF (Camps, Sport & Excursion Fund) for eligible families may be used toward payment for this.

****SPECIALIST TENNIS GOLF PIANO GUITAR UKELELE COACHING**

**Optional Gr 1-6 coaching at school on Monday and Thursday afternoons with some of the best coaches in Victoria. Commit to 28 lessons for the school year (ave 7 per term). \$80 per term payable beginning of each term. Coaches invoice our school each term....
.....so no pay – no play sorry.

Invermay PS Council heavily subsidise these lessons to offer them at this price to your child/ren. We do however require students and parents to commit for the full year so that we can commit to our coaches.

++ Small incidentals: hot lunches, single day excursions, junior school council fundraisers etc are all payable with cash throughout year

Voluntary Financial Contributions

Parents can be invited to make a donation to the school for a general or specific purpose, e.g. school grounds projects, library fund or for new equipment. Only some Voluntary Financial Contributions are tax-deductible.

Invermay PS have no current requests or requirements for voluntary contributions from parents/families.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

- *Please refer to arrangements noted on previous page/s for respective activities.*

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

- *Second hand uniform stand is provided for respective families to buy and sell low cost uniform options.*
- *Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund for families who meet federal government criteria.*
- *State Schools Relief*

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

All schools understand that families can experience financial difficulty or a crisis which makes payment difficult.

- *At Invermay PS, please feel free to book an appointment with our parent payment contact Karen Rieniets (our Admin Office Manager) or Principal Justin Marshman (53326396), who you can discuss your situation with and help with setting alternate payment arrangements. Karen or Justin will ask you to complete a brief written summary of the hardship experienced and agreed payment arrangements.*

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- *This policy will be shared by hard copy with families annually (attached to family newsletter), as well as displayed prominently on our school website.*
- *Any families with queries regarding charges, payments made, or payments outstanding, should contact Karen Rieniets (our Admin Office Manager) or Principal Justin Marshman (53326396), who will assist you as required.*

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

This Invermay PS Parent Payment Policy shall be updated, reviewed and endorsed annually in Term 4 by our School Council, prior to any new charges being confirmed for the following school year.

Date of approval by School Council (.....Insert Date.....)