



# PARENT PAYMENT POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

## PURPOSE

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

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 parents<sup>1</sup> 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. Parents may choose to provide the items themselves or buy the items from the school where practical and appropriate.

**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.

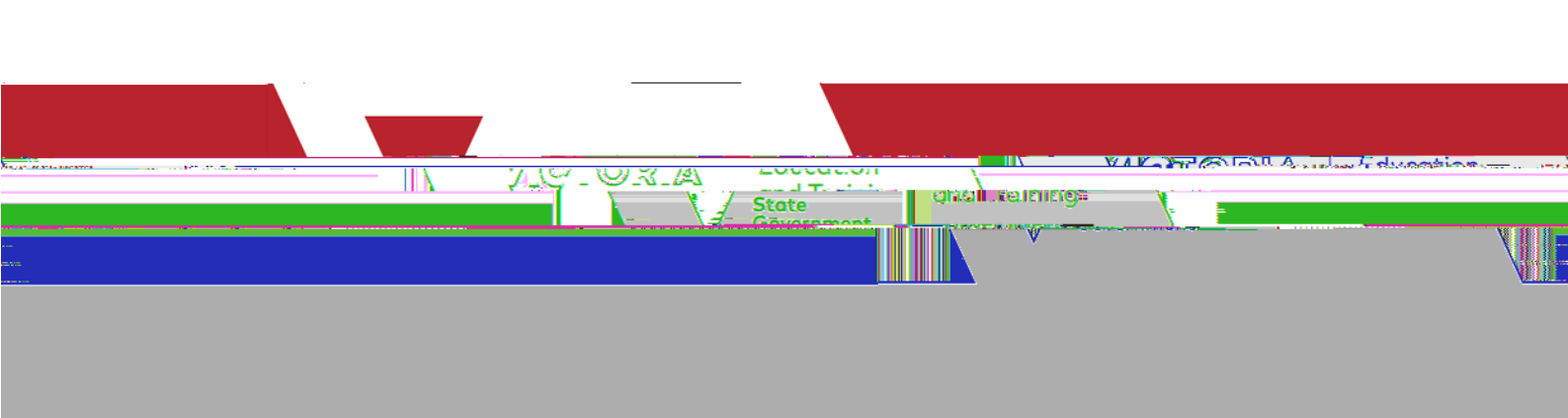
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<sup>1</sup> Parent' in the policy has the same meaning as in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, which is: 'parent', in relation to a child, includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental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

### 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

## 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.



## Voluntary Contributions

Rowville Secondary College will invite voluntary financial contributions for the following:

- x Contributions to ATO approved and tax deductible funds:
  - f Building Trust Fund
  - f Library Trust Fund
- x Contributions for a specific purpose identified by the College for services such as ground improvement
- x General voluntary financial contributions or donations to the College

Parent details of contribution or non-payment will be confidential.

## PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

Specific details for each year's fees will be communicated via Compass during the re-enrolment process each year.

Our preferred payment method is monthly instalments on card (VISA/MasterCard debit or credit cards)

These details are entered onto COMPASS by parents. Other methods available include cash at the general office and direct debit.

Instalments can be altered to suit individual circumstances by calling the Business Manager on 9755 4555

## FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

The Principal and School Council have the responsibility of making sure that no student is disadvantaged if parents/guardians are unable to pay the voluntary contribution.

A range of support options are available including:

- x The **CSEF Camps Sports and Excursion Fund** is provided to low income families to assist with the cost of educating their children. Payments are made directly to the College and are tied to the student.
- x Access to **State Schools' Relief Committee** support via the Campus Welfare Co-ordinator which can assist with clothing/uniforms. Y7 CSEF recipients are also automatically eligible for a uniform package.

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

*Participation in non-compulsory, non-curriculum related events or activities may be restricted where payment plans for 'non-standard curriculum programs', or optional items' have not been adhered to. These include Presentation Ball, Central Australia Trip, Formal, Graduation Evening, Production, Overseas or Interstate Trips.*

## CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

Access to student welfare support within the College provides further assistance to students and their families. The Campus Wellbeing Co-ordinator should be contacted to arrange a suitable appointment time, by phone on 9755 4555 or by email [rowville.sc@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:rowville.sc@edumail.vic.gov.au)

## COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Parents will be notified in writing of the Student Materials and Services charges and Voluntary Contributions with a clear description of each of the three payment categories.

All items will be accurately costed and details of how the payments and contributions will be spent by the College.

Receipts will be issued for all payments.

Should parents wish to raise any concerns, please contact the Principal by email on [rowville.sc@edumail.vic.giv.au](mailto:rowville.sc@edumail.vic.giv.au) or by telephone on 9755 4555.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

School Council 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.

**Date of approval by School Council**

**24/07/2019**