Croydon Hills Primary School

Parent Payment Policy

Policy Statement
We provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funding with approved financial contributions and payments from parents.

Rationale
The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 empowers School Councils to raise funds, charge parents for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by our school are enhanced, School Council request payments from parents for certain student materials and service charges, and for some voluntary financial contributions.

Implementation
School Council supplements Department of Education funds by requesting payment from parents for the following items:

1. Essential education items which parents and guardians are required to pay or provide for their child eg stationery, books and school uniforms where required.
   The school will purchase essential educational items on parent’s behalf or give parents the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, and should meet the specifications provided by the school.

2. Optional extras which are offered on a user pays basis; and which parents and carers may choose whether their child accesses or participates in eg extra curricula programs or activities or school based events such as camps, swimming and incursions/excursions (term levies) and music tuition

3. Voluntary financial contributions which parents and guardians may be invited to donate to the school eg grounds beautification, additional computers, library books etc

See appendix 1

• Parents will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments and voluntary contributions by December of the previous year, along with a recommended payments schedule.
• The payments schedule relates to all payments as well as options to purchase goods elsewhere (where appropriate), essential dates, options to make instalments, clear definitions of the categories (Essential, Optional or Voluntary), an alignment between dates and the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) payments, and advice to parents to contact the Principal if they require support or additional information.
• All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential.
• Invoices for unpaid Essential educational Items, along with requests for Voluntary Financial contributions will occur in February and July if required each year.
• Parents who make voluntary contributions will receive letters of appreciation.
• Unpaid optional extras may compromise a student’s ability to be involved in the activity in question.
• Payment arrangements should coincide with the timing of the EMA for eligible parents/carers.
• Eligible parents/carers are encouraged to make a voluntary decision to sign over their portion of the EMA cheque to assist with payments of fees and contributions.
Any portion of EMA not expended by the end of the year must be returned to the parent/carer unless there is an agreement that this money be carried over to the following year.

References
The Education and Training Reform Act 2006
DEECD guidelines

Review
The policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle.
School Council will review the levels and purpose of parent payments and voluntary contributions annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction from DEECD. They will also monitor payment processes.
Parent Payment Policy

What does free instruction mean?

The legislative requirements provide that instruction in the STANDARD CURRICULUM must be delivered free to all students in government schools.

The STANDARD CURRICULUM is curriculum that is assessed under the VELS, VCE, VCAL.

Legislative requirements of FREE INSTRUCTION also mean that schools cannot require parents to pay for:

- Instruction in the STANDARD CURRICULUM
- Instructional resources for the STANDARD CURRICULUM
- Instructional support for the STANDARD CURRICULUM
- Administration that is associated with the STANDARD CURRICULUM

Does include:

- 'Elective' subjects where students can select from a range of different alternatives
- VET in Schools programs
- school sports
- camps/excursions and attendance at school performances, where the school deems such activities compulsory

Does not include extra-curricular activities i.e. dance classes

such as instruction provided by visiting specialists or VET instruction
such as library resources, school nurses or first aid equipment
such as essential printing or photocopying
such as student ID cards or VET administration including VET cluster administration

What may parents be asked to pay for?

There are 3 parent payment categories: essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions.

Schools can invite VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS for:

- School grounds projects
- Library funds
- New equipment

Request payment for OPTORAL EXTRAS:

These are items or services that are not essential to supporting the course of instruction in the standard curriculum and the school deems students may opt out of the activity or service.

i.e.

- student accident insurance
- subject fees for extra-curricular subjects such as instrumental music tuition
- school magazines, graduation dinners, presentations, functions, school formal
- recreational or non-school internet use or printing
- hire or lease of equipment not associated with the standard curriculum and not otherwise provided for by the Student Resource Package (such as dance classes)
- materials for extra-curricular subjects

Or may be items used as part of the standard curriculum where the materials are more expensive than the standard curriculum requires.

i.e. use of silver in metalwork instead of copper

require payment for ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS:

These are items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum. These are also items or activities that the school deems compulsory. The items must also be either:

- Items the student consumes
- Items the student takes possession of
- Travel, accommodation or entry fees

i.e.

- text books
- stationary
- purchase or hire of locks
- diaries/ handbooks/workplanners
- travel and entry fees for school sports
- swimming programs
- camps
- incursions

Footnotes:
1. Costs that could be considered instruction, instructional support, instructional resources, instructional administration, or school facilities cannot be charged i.e. consumable materials held by the school (other than cooking ingredients) and are required as part of the standard curriculum (such as paint, tissues, glue, laboratory chemicals, etc).
2. Students should not be charged for material they do not actually consume or take possession of.