

GOORNONG PRIMARY SCHOOL

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.

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 may 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.

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.

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

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.

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. These can be accessed through [“Cost support for families.”](#)

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 have written hardship arrangements that include 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.

ENGAGING WITH PARENTS

In respect to each school's development of its parent payments, school councils will engage in effective communication with the school community and have strategies in place to ensure they are aware of and understand the needs and views of parents.

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](#)

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

GOORNONG PRIMARY SCHOOL
PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

ESSENTIAL STUDENT LEARNING ITEMS

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 may take possession of. Parents may choose to provide the items themselves or buy the items from the school where practical and appropriate.

There are two categories of Essential Student Learning Items – Educational Supplies and Program Supplies.

**Please note that the school will purchase all Educational Supplies for students. These are provided to the students on the first day of the school year. Parents intending to provide equivalent stationary items must notify the school in writing of their intention to do so at least five weeks prior to the end of the preceding school year.*

Educational Supplies \$ 85 (Due on the day school supplies are collected at the beginning of Term One)	PRICE (Ex GST)
Essential Stationary Items (Appendix A) - workbooks, pens, pencils, coloured pencils, erasers, scissors, glue sticks, rulers & other classroom supplies.	\$ 35
Photocopy paper and coloured paper	\$ 15
Printing and photocopying	\$ 10
Materials for Home Economics and the Garden Science Program (ingredients, etc).	\$ 10
Materials for Art and Chinese (paper, paint, glue, craft items etc).	\$ 15

Program Supplies \$ 100 (Due by the end of Term One)	PRICE (Ex GST)
MARC Library Van	\$ 22
Excursion Costs Contribution to the cost of bus travel and/or entry fees for excursions such as Gym Program, Cross Country, Prep-Two Excursion, Performing Arts Excursion, Swimming Sports, Athletic Sports, Winter Sports, Summer Sports and any other excursions that add value to our school's curriculum that we attend.	\$ 78

Please note that our school does not ask for individual payments from families each time we attend an excursion. Rather, we ask families to make a contribution towards the cost of excursions as part of our fees structure.

OPTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING ITEMS

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.

Optional Items (The school will notify families via the newsletter of due dates).	PRICE (Ex GST)
Employment of AustSwim trained instructors to run Swim & Survive Schools Program, lifeguard and pool entry. (Term Four). <i>In 2018 our school was successful in gaining a Sporting Schools grant which provided a significant subsidy to the cost of the Swimming Program. We will pursue grant opportunities again in 2019.</i>	\$ 60
Grade Three-Four Echuca Camp (Term Two)	\$190 approx.
Grade Five-Six Canberra Camp (Term Four)	\$ 400 approx.
Grade Six Graduation Dinner (Term Four)	\$ 25pp approx.
End-of-Year Whole-School Excursion (Term Four)	\$ 15

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.

Voluntary Financial Contributions	PRICE (Ex GST)
Grounds Maintenance and Projects	\$ 50

Please note that the School Council Levy is a voluntary levy to cover the cost of all ground works needed over the year. If we did not have this Levy, each family would be rostered on and expected to do mowing and gardening etc. With this Levy we are able to employ someone to do this work.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

Fees Schedule

Due by the first day of school	Educational Supplies \$ 85
Due by the end of Term One	Program Supplies \$ 100
Due by the end of Term Two	Voluntary School Council Levy \$ 50 (voluntary)

Payments can be made by cash or cheque to the school office or by making a BPAY payment. All BPAY details are unique to each family and are provided at the bottom of each family statement.

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

Goornong Primary School has the following support options available to families.

- The school has a limited supply of second-hand uniforms available for purchase. Please see the Business Manager.
- The school is able to access support via State Schools Relief for families experiencing financial hardship and unable to provide proper school uniform for their child. Please see the Business Manager.
- There are community organisations available to support students to access school camps. Applications for support for school camps are considered on a case-by-case basis. It is our school's desire that all students who wish to are able to attend school camps. Parents are encouraged to contact the school principal to discuss options.
- The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) commenced in 2015 and will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. \$125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students. Payments are made directly to the school and can only be allocated to the student in which the payment applies. The school will notify families of the application process via the newsletter at the beginning of each school year.

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

Goornong Primary School is committed to ensuring that all students are able to access the wide-range of curriculum and special activities offered by our school.

- Families are encouraged to contact the school principal should they be finding it difficult to make payments. There are supports available for families experiencing financial difficulty, to ensure that their child does not miss out.
- Where it becomes evident that a family may be experiencing financial hardship, the school may discretely contact the family to offer/discuss support options.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- Enquires and complaints should be directed to the school's Business Manager, who will communicate with the school principal regarding the enquiry.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The school's Parent Payment Policy is reviewed annually by school council. In setting parent payments, school council endeavors to ensure:

- That payments are affordable for families.
- That the school is able to offer its students the best learning opportunities possible.

Date Reviewed	
Approved By	School Council
Approval Authority (Signature & Date)	
Communication Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Parents – sent home in Term 4 of the preceding school year.▪ Staff – Via Induction pack.
Next Review Date	October 2019 or as necessary.

APPENDIX A – ESSENTIAL STATIONARY ITEMS

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 may take possession of. Parents may choose to provide the items themselves or buy the items from the school where practical and appropriate.

**Please note that the school will purchase all Educational Supplies for students. These are provided to the students on the first day of the school year. Parents intending to provide equivalent stationary items must notify the school in writing of their intention to do so at least five weeks prior to the end of the preceding school year.*

ESSENTIAL STATIONARY ITEMS - GRADE PREP

CVOS Code	Item	Quantity	Unit Price (excl. GST)	Total Price (excl. GST)
4179639	Pencil Tradition	4	\$0.36	\$1.44
561509	Spirax 150 100gsm Bond Scrapbook Writing x 2. Maths x 2. Gardening, Chinese, WTW	7	\$1.05	\$7.35
10553607	Reader Cover Double Ties	1	\$1.51	\$1.51
100644	Glue Bostik Stick 35gm	3	\$1.98	\$5.94
11150	Faber Connector Pens 10	1	\$2.99	\$2.99
191803	Faber Whiteboard Marker Wallet of 4	1	\$5.46	\$5.46
224080CL	Display Book A4 Clear Front Journals x2, MUSIC	3	\$1.12	\$3.36
529701	Crayola Twistables 16	1	\$4.45	\$4.45
READJ	Reading Journal Read It Junior	1	\$4.02	\$4.02
ACO-974398	Pencil Case	1	\$3.10	\$3.10

ESSENTIAL STATIONARY ITEMS - GRADE ONE-TWO

CVOS Code	Item	Quantity	Unit Price (excl. GST)	Total Price (excl. GST)
4179639	Pencil Tradition	4	\$0.36	\$1.44
561509	Spirax 150 100gsm Bond Scrapbook Maths x 2. Writing, Gardening, WTW	5	\$1.05	\$5.25
10553607	Reader Cover Double Ties	1	\$1.51	\$1.51
100644	Glue Bostik Stick 35gm	2	\$1.98	\$3.96
11150	Faber Connector Pens 10	1	\$2.99	\$2.99
191803	Faber Whiteboard Marker Wallet of 4	1	\$5.46	\$5.46
224080CL	Display Book A4 Clear Front Journals x2, MUSIC	3	\$1.12	\$3.36
529701	Crayola Twistables 16	1	\$4.45	\$4.45
READJ	Reading Journal Read It Junior	1	\$4.02	\$4.02
NB5103 or NB5102	Protex PP Exercise book A4. 24mm dotted (Grade 1), 18mm dotted (Grade 2)	3	\$0.67	\$2.01
SSP-140907	Tudor exercise book A4 25mm ruled	2	\$0.90	\$1.80
ACO-974398	Pencil case	1	\$3.10	\$3.10

ESSENTIAL STATIONARY ITEMS - GRADE THREE-FOUR

CVOS Code	Item	Quantity	Unit Price (excl. GST)	Total Price (excl. GST)
4179639	HB Pencil Tradition	4	\$0.36	\$1.44
425450BL	BIC Economy medium blue	2	\$0.15	\$0.30
425450RE	BIC Economy medium red	2	\$0.15	\$0.30
708520	Faber Eraser large sleeve	2	\$0.60	\$1.20
1006	Pencil Sharpener metal double	1	\$0.49	\$0.49
829029	BIC Kids evolution colour pencils pk12	1	\$1.38	\$1.38
11150	Faber Connector Pens pk10	1	\$2.99	\$2.99
4783428	Ruler 30cm Essential Wooden	1	\$0.38	\$0.38
100644	Glue Stick 35gm	2	\$1.98	\$3.96
READD	Do it Senior Diary/Home reading journal	1	\$5.30	\$5.30
561509	Spirax 150, 100gsm, Bond Scrapbook (WTW, SOSE, Chinese, Gardening)	5	\$1.05	\$5.25
NB5145	Protex PP Exercise book 10mm Graph A4 48pg (Maths)	2	\$0.74	\$1.48
NB5126	Protex Binder Book A4 14mm Dotted Thirds. 64pg (Writing & Literacy)	2	\$0.70	\$1.40
NP9590	Wallet PP & Button A4 (Writing, Literacy, Maths)	2	\$0.57	\$1.14
NP9880	A4 Mesh Pouch with zipper (reader bag)	1	\$3.53	\$3.53
224080CL	Display Book (Learning Journals - Sem 1 & 2, Music) A4 Clear front	3	\$1.12	\$3.36
XT1103 / XT1104	Oxford Handwriting Workbook	1	\$12.92	\$12.92
96517	Scissors Staedtler 17cm	1	\$3.18	\$3.18

ESSENTIAL STATIONARY ITEMS - GRADE FIVE-SIX

CVOS Code	Item	Quantity	Unit Price (excl. GST)	Total Price (excl. GST)
4179639	HB Pencil Tradition	4	\$0.36	\$1.44
425450BL	BIC Economy medium blue	2	\$0.15	\$0.30
425450RE	BIC Economy medium red	2	\$0.15	\$0.30
708520	Faber Eraser large sleeve	2	\$0.60	\$1.20
1006	Pencil Sharpener metal double	1	\$0.49	\$0.49
829029	BIC Kids evolution colour pencils pk12	1	\$1.38	\$1.38
11150	Faber Connector Pens pk10	1	\$2.99	\$2.99
4783428	Ruler 30cm Essential Wooden	1	\$0.38	\$0.38
100644	Glue Stick 35gm	2	\$1.98	\$3.96
READD	Do it Senior Diary	1	\$5.30	\$5.30
561509	Spirax 150, 100gsm, Bond Scrapbook (WTW, SOSE, Chinese, Gardening)	5	\$1.05	\$5.25
NB5145	Protex PP Exercise book 10mm Graph A4 48pg (Maths)	2	\$0.74	\$1.48
NB5125	Protex Binder Book A4 9mm Dotted Thirds. 64pg (Writing & Literacy)	2	\$0.58	\$1.16
NP9590	Wallet PP & Button A4 (Writing, Literacy, Maths)	2	\$0.57	\$1.14

224080CL	Display Book (Learning Journals - Sem 1 & 2, Music) A4 Clear front	3	\$1.12	\$3.36
NP9880	A4 Mesh Pouch with zipper (reader bag)	1	\$3.53	\$3.53
XT1105 / XT1106	Oxford Handwriting Workbook	1	\$12.92	\$12.92
96517	Scissors Staedtler 17cm	1	\$3.18	\$3.18