

## **Doncaster Gardens Primary School Parent Payment Policy**

### **Philosophy**

Doncaster Gardens Primary School is very proud of the quality programs that we have put in place to cater for the needs and interests of our students. Annually Doncaster Gardens Primary School will review parent payments requests to ensure they are in line with Department of Education and Training guidelines. Charges will be clearly itemised, costed and categorised as Essential Student Learning, Optional Items or Voluntary Financial Contributions.

### **Parent Payment Charges**

Essential Student Learning Items: these are items, activities or services the school deems essential to student learning of the standard curriculum

Optional Items: these items, activities or services that are optional and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum

Voluntary Financial Contributions: parents are invited to make a donation in the form of a voluntary contribution towards the grounds, the school nurse or general contribution towards the school

*Victorian legislation states that instruction in the standard curriculum program must be provided free of charge to all students in Victorian government schools. Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with instruction of the standard curriculum program.*

Parents will be provided with early notification of annual payment requests (a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the commencement of the school year). Reasonable notice will be given for any other payment requests during the year (ie Term Planners).

### **Payment Arrangements and Methods**

Payments can be made via Compass or by cash, cheque, credit card or BPAY. Parents will have the option to pay in instalments via Compass or at the office. Parents are able to enter into confidential payment arrangements by contacting the Business Manager, Lisa Dudley on 039848 5282 or by appointment at the office.

### **Family Support Options**

There are a number of support options available for parents including but not limited to:

- CSEF – Camps, Sport and Excursion Fund available to families with an eligible health care card
- Second-hand uniform sales held at school every term
- State Schools Relief
- Doncare
- Anglicare

### **Consideration of Hardship**

The school understands that families may experience financial difficulties or hardship at times and may be unable to meet full or part payments requested. Families are invited to contact the Business Manager, Lisa Dudley on 039848 5282 to make payment arrangements or alternatively, can contact the Principal, Michele Beal for a confidential discussion. Information regarding support options will be available at the office.

### **Communication with Families**

The Parent Payment Policy will be available on the school website and on Compass. General enquiries regarding parent charges may be made at the office or by phoning 039848 5282.

**Evaluation**

The School Council (via the Finance Committee and the Education Sub Committee) will conduct an annual review of the implementation of the Parent Payment Policy including addressing any concerns raised by the school community. Any changes to the Policy Implementation will be reported back to the community via the school newsletter and the website.

# 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.

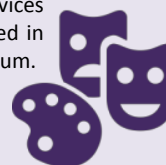
These may be either:

#### 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](http://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