

Parent Payment Policy

School councils are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – essential education items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.

This policy ensures that:

- costs are kept to a minimum
- payment requests are clearly itemised under the three parent payment categories
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- no student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution
- access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

Port Phillip SS spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students.

Parents and guardians also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, as items should meet the specifications provided by the school. There may also be certain items that due to their nature may only be provided by the school.

Parent Payment Categories

Essential education items are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents or guardians are requested to pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate.

These items include:

- materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. home economics, photography, catering)
- school uniform
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

Optional education items (or non-essential materials and services) are those that are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and which are offered to all students. These optional extras are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.

These items include:

- student computer printing for personal use
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes,
- school-based performances, productions and events
- school magazines, class photographs.

Voluntary financial contributions are for those items and services that parents or guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust.

Other support options

The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist eligible parents, including the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) and State Schools Relief Committee support.

Payment arrangements

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (e.g. a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

Whereby a student enrolls at Port Phillip Specialist School mid-way through the term the fee for a whole term will be charged. This is subject to Principal discretion.

Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, three payment options have been developed:

Option A	Full amount at the beginning of Term 1
Option B	Payment at the beginning of each Term
Option c	Other payment arrangements

Alternative payment options are available through the school and parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the school to discuss circumstances and available options.

Payments may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.

Payment requests to parents will be itemized and the category each item falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution.

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.

Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional extras will be generated and distributed on a

regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month.

Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued per year to parents and guardians.

All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.

Presented to SC meeting 22nd Feb 2021 and signed:

Juliet Cooper
Principal

Kevin Dillon
School Council President

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Information sheet for schools: Examples of items/services, potential categories and why

This table provides some examples of education items and services, identifies if they fall under free instruction or a parent payment category and the reasons why.

Item/service	Category/Rationale
Class sets	Free instruction – if temporarily used by students in class, then can be considered an instructional resource owned by the school.
Consumables	Free instruction – if consumable materials held by the school (other than cooking ingredients) and are required to provide the standard curriculum (such as paint, tissues, glue, laboratory chemicals, etc). This includes materials held by the school (instructional resources owned by the school) and distributed to students when required in class. Essential Education Item – where the student takes possession of the finished article and the amount of material actually kept by the student is accurately costed and it is at a significant cost, such as photography, cooking ingredients for home economics, etc.
Excursions/Camps	Essential Education Item – when associated with, but not part of instruction in the standard curriculum program, i.e. travel, accommodation or entry fees can be charged. Optional extra – when in addition to the standard curriculum program.
Graduations/school formals	Optional extra – not essential to providing the standard curriculum program.
Hire of text books from school	Essential Education Item – items that a student has possession of for the duration of the subject and then returns to the school (not requiring parents to pay full price for texts).
School programs to provide students with mobile computing devices (netbooks, notebook computers, or tablet computers)	For information on how to implement these programs and comply with legislative obligations, refer to the School Policy and Advisory Guide – Personal Devices (http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/personaldev.aspx)
Performances/activities provided by outside specialists (e.g. ‘incursions’ that are equivalent to excursions but are held at the school)	Essential Education Item – when essential to support instruction in the standard curriculum program, costs that are equivalent to ‘entrance costs’ for the use of facilities or equipment may be charged for. Optional extra – when provided in addition to the standard curriculum program.
Photocopying or printing	Free instruction – if materials provided to students are required to provide the standard curriculum program. Essential Education Item – when the school is providing a photocopied text or chapter instead of requiring a text book to be purchased and the students take possession of the item; or when equivalent to student stationery such as students printing out assignments. Optional extra – when it is extracurricular or not essential to providing the standard curriculum program.
Student Insurance	Optional extra – not essential to providing the standard curriculum program.
Student ID Cards	Free instruction – can be considered administration that is required to provide the standard curriculum program.

Note: If a school chooses to use headings such as *Subject levy* or *Electives* with a total cost, an itemised list of what makes up the total cost under these headings is required so that parents understand what they are being asked to pay for. The parent payment policy principles apply i.e. what is considered to be free instruction, essential education item or optional extra.

Parent Payments 2019

Port Phillip SS makes every effort to keep the cost and number of items that need to be purchased to a minimum. We also try to ensure that the costs are affordable for all parents. If you will have difficulty making payments please make an appointment to speak to the Principal or Assistant Principal to discuss possible support options and flexible payment arrangements. Any information about your financial circumstances, payment arrangements or status will be kept strictly confidential.

Please bring this completed sheet with you when making payment.

Please Note: Additional school charges may arise during the year. **Senior School students may attend camps where travel and accommodation will be billed. Payment to access these activities will be charged at the time.**

Payment arrangements

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (e.g. a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

To further assist parents with payments, three payment options have been developed:

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| Option A | Full amount at the beginning of Term 1 |
| Option B | Payment at the beginning of each Term |
| Option c | Other payment arrangements |

Child's Name: _____ Teacher: _____

Please return this form to school when making payment.

Section		Payment
A	Essential Education Items Pool entry, bike use, independent living skills consumables, local excursion travel, stationary, printing and lamination, art materials, technology materials and apps.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$750
B	Optional Items Excursion Levy (travel and entry) Incursion Levy (entry)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$70 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50
C	Voluntary Financial Contributions (Tax Deductable) Donations can be made for playground up grades and other significant projects at your nominated amount.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250 <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Parent Payment Charges

A Essential Education Items Amount \$ _____

B Optional extras Amount \$ _____

C Voluntary financial contribution Amount \$ _____

TOTAL _____

Parent Payment Arrangements

Please indicate your preferred method of payment:

Option A (full amount at the beginning of Term 1)

Option B (payment at the beginning of each Term)

Option C (other payment arrangements)*

* (If selecting Option C please make an appointment with the school to discuss your circumstances and the available options)

I HAVE ENCLOSED PAYMENT OF \$ _____

Early Learning Program

Child's Name: _____ Teacher: _____

Please return this form to school when making payment.

Section		Payment
A	Essential Education Items Pool entry, bike use, independent living skills consumables, local excursion travel, stationary, printing and lamination, art materials, technology materials and apps.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,100

Parent Payment Charges

A Essential Education Items Amount \$ _____

B Voluntary financial contribution Amount \$ _____

TOTAL _____

Parent Payment Arrangements

Please indicate your preferred method of payment:

Option A (full amount at the beginning of Term 1)

Option B (payment at the beginning of each Term)

Option C (other payment arrangements)*

* (If selecting Option C please make an appointment with the school to discuss your circumstances and the available options)

I HAVE ENCLOSED PAYMENT OF \$ _____