



Templestowe Heights
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent Payment Policy – Version 1

RATIONALE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that parent payment practices are consistent, transparent and ensure that all children have access to the standard curriculum. 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.

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

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 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. Parents do have the option of purchasing equivalent Essential Student Learning Items themselves, in consultation with the school. At Templestowe Heights Primary they include:

- Textbooks (i.e. take home reader books) and subscriptions (i.e. Mathletics, Reading Eggs, Digital Excellence)
- Stationery items, such as glue sticks, pencils, pens, exercise books, photocopy paper and facial tissues.
- Materials and resources that support our curriculum programs (i.e. iPads, laptops, robotics, science equipment, art supplies, musical instruments, PE equipment, Italian resources, dictionaries, maths measuring equipment)
- Resources that support other whole-school programs including our School Ball, School Production, Art Show
- Excursions, whole-school sporting days (such as athletics day)
- Incursions (such as our annual artist in residence, visiting authors and Life Education)

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. At Templestowe Heights Primary they include:

- Swimming program
- Camps
- Class photos
- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) for grade 5/6 students
- Private music lessons
- Interschool sports
- Year 6 graduation
- Tickets for School Production and School Ball

Voluntary Financial Contributions is the third category where 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. Tax-deductible items at Templestowe Heights Primary include:

- A tax deductible donation to our Buildings and Grounds fund to help us create and maintain a stimulating environment for our students. The donations go a long way to keeping our oval and playgrounds beautiful, topping up playground soft fall, constructing garden beds, installing outdoor seating and purchasing shade sails and the upkeep of our community garden and chicken coop.
- A tax deductible donation to our Library fund to help purchase current and popular library books for our students to read and borrow during their weekly library sessions, before school, at playtime or lunchtime.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

- Payment methods include **One off payment** and **Pay-by-the-month**
- Payments can be made by **cheque, cash, credit card** (Master Card or Visa), by using **BPay**, or by **EFTPOS**.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to talk with the school's Business Manager or Principal if they would like to discuss other payment options or methods. The front office telephone number is 9850 1796.

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS

Options for family and guardian support include:

- Second hand uniform
- Camps, Sports, Excursions Funding (CSEF)
- State Schools Relief fund
- Local community support organisations

For more information on any of these options, contact the school's Business Manager, Principal or Assistant Principal.

CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

Templestowe Heights Primary is committed to supporting any family that is experiencing financial hardship. Families can contact the Principal or Assistant Principal by phone (9850 1796), email templestowe.heights.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au or speak in person about their financial situation. All communications are kept strictly confidential. Parents experiencing hardship are not pursued for outstanding school fees from one year to the next.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

School Council 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. Each year a letter to the community will be distributed with key information relating to the parent payment policy. This letter includes a FAQ section with reasoning behind the fee costings and is developed in consultation with School Council. This information is also referenced in the school's weekly newsletter and displayed on the school's website. This information is also part of the welcome pack for new families and discussed at the new prep family information night.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

It is the responsibility of School Council to annually monitor and review the implementation of the policy, to ensure transparency. Feedback will be sought at the end of each year to ensure there is openness and engagement across the school community.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's policy review cycle.

This policy was ratified in December, 2016.