

# DANDENONG HIGH SCHOOL

# PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

#  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 parents[[1]](#footnote-1) 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.

**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.

At Dandenong High School in order to provide a range of quality learning opportunities for all students, parents are required to pay for essential materials, excursions and equipment, not pro9vided by the Government Grant. This enables the use of materials and resources to support learning.

The Dandenong High School Council has approved the school’s parent payment charges for 2019 and finds the charges in line with similar schools in the area and affordable for most families.

# Payment arrangements and methods

Parents will be given the option to pay in full, by instalments or through Centrepay (Centrelink payment scheme), to provide all families with the flexibility to pay in line with their specific needs.

# Family support options

The school appreciates that parents who have difficulty making payments including the school’s second–hand books and uniforms through Sustainable book shop, State Schools Relief or the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.

Wellbeing may provide support to parents experiencing hardship, including:

* Hire of text books
* Provision of uniforms
* Additional support as required

# Communication with families

* The policy and the school’s implementation will be communicated with the school community on the school Website and Compass. A letter will be sent with course selection charge sheets.
* Opportunities are available for parents to raise any issues, make general inquiries about charges and the contact details where complaints can be referred.
* ​Free interpreting and translating services is available for families who do not have English as their first language, to communicate with school for certain activities.
* Parents and students experiencing hardship will be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity and without judgement.

# Monitoring and review of the implementation of the policy

* School councils having a key role in ensuring the school level approach is effective.

**Evaluation: This policy will be reviewed annually.**

**Date of approval by School Council Date: 21st May 2019**

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)