Parent Payment

POLICY

 Objective
This policy covers payments for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions that school may request, and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests may be made. This school-level policy ensures that parent payments are kept to a minimum and do not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services to the student.

 Guidelines
The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, some materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Australian Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS).

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) and various programs. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items, equipment and operational costs which are an integral part of the SRP. However it does not cover all costs associated with Essential Educational Items.

Kororoit Creek Primary School Council allocates their overall resources – human, financial and physical – in accordance with the goals, targets and strategies outlined in their Strategic Plan. This includes the allocation of funding provided under the SRP any other funding provided by DET and locally-raised funds.

 Categories of parent payments
Kororoit Creek Primary School can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

1. Essential Education Items are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instructions in the standard curriculum program that parents or guardians are requested to pay the school to provide.

These items include:

- Items which students take possession of, including text books and student stationery items
• materials used for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished article (e.g. artwork, catering, classroom projects appropriate to the year level)

• entry to the aquatic centre which all students are expected to attend

This amount is non refundable as materials & services are paid for by the school at the commencement of the school year.

II. **Optional Extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in (e.g. extra curricular programs or activities)

Optional extras (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:
- instructional supports, resources and administration beyond the provision of the standard curriculum program
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. Genesis instrumental music, State Schools Spectacular, Year 6 Graduation, Tournament of Minds
- materials and services offered in addition to the ‘standard curriculum program’ (for example school magazines, class photographs)
- school excursions, incursions and camps

III. **Voluntary Financial Contributions** which parents and guardians may be **invited** to donate to the school (e.g. classroom libraries, additional computers).

Communication with parents
Kororoit Creek Primary School will ensure all communication with parents about education items, including requests for payment is fair and reasonable.

When payment requests, letters and or CASES21 invoices for student materials and services charges are sent out we will ensure that:
- parents/guardians are required to provide essential education items for their students, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through local suppliers, where appropriate
- clear description of each of the three parent payment categories is provided

Support options
The School Council appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist families including:
- The Schoolkids Bonus which is provided by Centrelink to help with education costs and is automatically paid in January and July to eligible families (this bonus is being phased with the final instalment, which will be paid in July 2016.
- Access to State Schools’ Relief to assist with uniforms
- The Camp, Sports and Excursions Fund which is available for eligible families to cover costs such as excursions, regional or district sports and camps.
- Centrepay which is a free service that can make deductions from regular Centrelink payments to the school on your behalf.

**Implementation**
The aim of Kororoit Creek Primary School Council is to ensure:
- all students have access to the standard curriculum program
- parents and guardians are provided with early notice of requests for payment of essential education items and optional extras
- the advice to parents/guardians provides a clear description of the payment categories and which category items fall under and that where appropriate, parents/guardians have the option of purchasing certain items themselves
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- the status and details of any payments or non-payments by parents and guardians is confidential
- details of how funding collected will be spent are provided by the school
- payment requests or letters to parents clearly identify whether the items are essential education items or optional extras
- parents are immediately provided with a receipt upon payment
- all payments are receipted in CASES21
- payments are kept to a minimum and all requests for payment are fair and reasonable
- a copy of the school-level policy is available on the school’s website
- statements for unpaid essential education items or optional items accepted by parents are generated and distributed on a regular basis, but not more than once a month.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 19th November 2015

Nicole Oakley
School council President

To be reviewed annually