

Dinjerra Primary School

Parent Payment Policy

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.
- **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.

Implementation:

- **Educational value:** Student learning, aspirations and wellbeing are paramount when schools determine their parent payments practices
- **Access, equity and inclusion:** All students have access to the standard curriculum program and participation of all students to the full school program is facilitated
- **Affordability:** Cost to parents is kept to a minimum and is affordable for most families at the school
- **Engagement and Support:** Early identification and engagement strategies by the school ensure parents are well informed of the payment options and supports available for those experiencing hardship
- **Respect and Confidentiality:** Parents and students experiencing hardship are treated with respect, dignity, sensitivity and without judgment and the identity and personal information of all parents and students are kept confidential in respect to parent payments
- **Transparency and Accountability:** School parent payment practices are well communicated, clear and transparent and their impact on student programs and families are reviewed by school councils

Payment arrangements and methods

Dinjerra Primary School Council will ensure requests for parent payments are kept to a minimum and is affordable to most parents at the school.

The principal will ensure that:

- items students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- payment requests are broadly itemised within the appropriate category

- parents are advised that they have the option of purchasing equivalent Essential Student Learning Items themselves, in consultation with the school
- information on payment options is available, accessible and easily understood to all parents so that they know what to expect and what supports they can access
- parents are provided with early notice of annual payment requests for school fees (i.e. a minimum of six weeks' notice prior to the end of the previous school year). This enables parents to save and budget accordingly.
- parents are provided with reasonable notice of any other payment requests that arise during the school year- ensuring parents have a clear understanding of the full financial contribution being sought
- the status and details of any financial arrangements are kept confidential and only shared with relevant school personnel
- parents experiencing hardship are not pursued for outstanding school fees from one year to the next
- use of debt collectors to obtain outstanding school funds owed to the school from parents is not permitted
- there will be only one reminder notice to parents for voluntary financial contributions per year
- Invoices/statements for unpaid essential or optional items accepted by parents are not generated more than monthly or according to the parent payment arrangement with the school.

Family support options

- Families may experience financial difficulties and may be unable to meet the full or part payments requested. Dinjerra Primary School Council and staff will exercise sensitivity to the differing financial circumstances of students and their families when considering parent payment fees
- Consideration to hardship arrangements in respect to payment requests will be provided to families experiencing long term hardship or short term crisis on a confidential, case by case basis

Government Assistance Programs

- *The [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#) provides payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply and a Special Consideration eligibility category also exists.*
- *[State Schools' Relief](#) may cover the cost of new school uniforms, shoes, books and more for disadvantaged students. State Schools' Relief only responds to requests from school principals, assistant principals or welfare coordinators. Parents or Carers who are struggling need to make an appointment with the school to discuss their situation*

Consideration of hardship

- All parents requesting additional support can either discuss payment arrangements with the Business Manager or the Primary Welfare Officer.
- Parents only wishing to discuss these matters with the principal can naturally do so
- This can be done by contacting the school to make an appointment

Communication with families

- This policy will be placed on the school's web site
- Parents with issues about the school payment policy can meet with the principal or assistant principal to discuss their concerns

Monitoring and review of the implementation of the policy

- School Council will review this policy and its implementation along with other school policies on a regular basis

Evaluation:

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

This policy was ratified by School Council on ...

09 August 2016