**Parent Payment Policy 2019** 

**Policy Statement**

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures 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.

The standard curriculum program includes the core learning and teaching activities associated with the National Curriculum.

School councils are responsible for developing a school-level policy which covers essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions.

These payments fall into three categories:

1. **essential education items** which parents and guardians are *required* to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (e.g. for stationery, text books and materials that the student takes possession of);
2. **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. for school magazines, performances or extra-curricular programs or activities ); and
3. **voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be invited to donate to the school (e.g. for additional computers, building and grounds beautification).

**Guidelines**

1.1 Mount Dandenong Primary School Council can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges, for optional extras and for voluntary financial contributions.

1.2 **Essential Education Items**

Parents and guardians can be asked to pay for essential education items. This includes:

* items which students take possession of, including text books and student stationery, ID Cards;
* materials for learning and teaching where your child consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (for example: all electives as outlined in the curriculum handbooks);
* school uniform;
* travel costs incurred in the course of receiving the instruction from a teacher or other person; and
* essential services associated with, but not considered to be part of, 'instruction' in the standard curriculum program, such as costs associated with camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend (for example, transport and entrance costs).

1.3 **Optional Extras**

Optional extras are those that are provided in addition to the ‘standard curriculum program’, and which are offered to all students. These optional extras are to be provided on a user-pays basis and if you choose to access them for your child you 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 offered in addition to the standard curriculum program (for example, instrumental music tuition);
* entry fees for school run performances, productions and events;
* materials for subjects where the payment sought is the difference between the basic materials or services required for the standard curriculum program and higher cost alternatives which may be more desirable (for example, the use of more expensive materials);
* materials and services offered in addition to the ‘standard curriculum program’ (for example, school magazines or school photographs); and
* school facilities and equipment not associated with provision of the ‘standard curriculum program’, and not otherwise provided for through the School Resources Package (for example hire/lease of equipment such as musical instruments or purchase of laptops).

1.4 **Voluntary Contributions**

Mount Dandenong Primary School encourages voluntary financial contributions for the following:

* contributions in support of the educational needs by school curriculum leaders,
* general voluntary financial contributions or donations to the school.

1.5 Parent details of contribution or non payment will be confidential.

1.6 The Principal and school council have the responsibility of making sure that no student is disadvantaged if parents are unable to pay the voluntary contribution.

* 1. **Administrative and Payment Processes**
     1. Administrative and financial processes are compliant with Departmental requirements such as CASES 21 financial reporting.
     2. Invoices 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.
     3. Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice per year is sent to all parents/guardians.
     4. Families may experience financial difficulties and may be unable to meet the full or part payments requested. Principals and school councils exercise sensitivity to the differing financial circumstances of students and their families when considering parent payment fees. There are a range of support options available to support and assist parents including access to State Schools’ relief Committee support, the CSEF and, when available, the Hills St Vincentian Scholarship Scheme.
     5. Receipts are issued to parents upon payment when requested and receipted on CASES 21.

Policy drafted by: Julie Francis

Date ratified by School Council: 15th October 2018