

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

APOLLO BAY P-12 COLLEGE

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 parents¹ 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

¹ Parent' in the policy has the same meaning as in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, which is: 'parent', in relation to a child, includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* of the Commonwealth and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

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.

The attached diagram "Understanding Parent Payment Categories" provides examples of items and materials under each category.

In implementing this policy, schools must adhere to the following principles:

PRINCIPLES

- **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 judgement 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

COST AND SUPPORT TO PARENTS

When school councils consider the proposed requests for parent payments the cost is kept to a minimum and is affordable to most parents at the school.

School principals must 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.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

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. These can be accessed through [“Cost support for families.”](#)

Consideration to hardship arrangements in respect to payment requests is provided to families experiencing long term hardship or short term crisis on a confidential, case by case basis. All schools have written hardship arrangements that include a proactive approach to providing support for parents experiencing financial difficulty.

All parents are provided the name and contact details of a nominated parent payment contact person at the school who they can discuss payment arrangements with.

ENGAGING WITH PARENTS

In respect to each school’s development of its parent payments, school councils 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.

REVIEW OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Schools will monitor the effectiveness and impact of the implementation of this policy at least annually as part of its ongoing improvement and report back to the school community.

The full Parent Payment Policy is available from the Department’s [School Policy and Advisory Guide](#).

Answers to the most commonly asked questions about school costs for parents see:
[Frequently Asked Questions – For Parents](#)

Understanding Parent Payment Categories

Schools

What does the legislation say?

The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. The Act also empowers school councils to charge fees to parents for goods and services provided by the school to a child.

In the Act, a 'Parent' includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a child including parental responsibility under the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

What do schools pay for as part of 'free instruction'?



Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

The standard curriculum for Years F-10 means implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The standard curriculum for senior secondary schools means a program that enables a student to be awarded a VCE or VCAL qualification.

What principles govern parent payment practice?

Educational Value | Access, Equity & Inclusion | Affordability
Engagement & Support | Respect & Confidentiality | Transparency & Accountability

Parents

What may parents be asked to pay for?

Schools can request payment for Essential Student Learning Items



These are items, activities or services that the school deems **essential** to student learning of the standard curriculum.

Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own.

These may also be either:

Items the student takes temporary or permanent possession of

- e.g.
- textbooks, activity books, exercise books
 - stationery, book bags
 - student ID cards, locks
 - cooking ingredients students will consume
 - materials for final products that students take home (technology projects, build-your-own kits, dioramas)
 - Picture Exchange Communication Systems

Activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend

i.e. travel, entry fees or accommodation

- e.g.
- excursions
 - incursions
 - school sports
 - work placements



Parents can be asked to pay for items, activities and services in the three Parent Payment Categories:

Essential Student Learning Items,
Optional Items and
Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Schools determine how items, activities and services are classified within these categories based on the learning and teaching program of their school.

Schools can request payment for Optional Items

These are items, activities or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum.

Students may access these on a user-pays basis.

These may be either:



Items the student purchases or hires

- e.g.
- school magazines, class photos
 - functions, formals, graduation dinners
 - materials for extra curricular programs
 - student accident insurance

Activities the student purchases

- e.g.
- fees for extra curricular programs or activities, such as instrumental music tuition
 - fees for guest speakers
 - camps, excursions, incursions, sports
 - entry fees for school run performances

Items and/or materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum

- e.g.
- use of silver in metal work instead of copper
 - supplementary exam revision guides

Support for families experiencing hardship is available at every school and each school has a parent payment contact person. See your school's policy for more information.

For more information on Parent Payments and Personal Devices, visit the DET website at: www.education.vic.gov.au

Schools can invite
**Voluntary
Financial
Contributions**
for



- e.g.
- Building or Library fund (Tax deductible)
 - Voluntary contributions for a specific purpose, such as equipment, materials, services.
 - General voluntary contributions

APOLLO BAY P-12 COLLEGE

Parent Payment Policy

PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

A detailed description of Parent Parents for students across various levels of school will be provided to all parents as per the 'Charges' Information Sheet at the end of this policy.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS

Parents will receive an **Invoice** from the College at the beginning of Term 1 containing each of your child's 2017 Charges according to the below '**Essential Education Items**' and '**Optional Extras**'.

FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS & CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP

There are a range of support options available for parents experiencing difficulty in paying for essential items including:

- State Schools' Relief committee support via the principal to assist with uniforms, shoes, textbooks, stationery and software.
- the [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](#), which is available for eligible families, to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities
- welfare and support agencies that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families.

Apollo Bay P-12 College will at all times exercise sensitivity to the differing financial circumstances of individual students and their families.

The principal shall make decisions about how to manage non-payment of essential education items or optional extras on a case-by-case basis.

Where families have difficulty making payments, the Principal and/or Business Manager shall discuss with the family the range of support options available, and will negotiate an appropriate alternative arrangement, such as payment by instalments. The Principal will explore ways to make quality second-hand books and uniforms available to parents in need. Parents/guardians who experience difficulties or hardship providing or paying the school to provide essential education items, will be encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal, Business Manager, or other nominated senior staff member, to discuss alternative payment methods. The Principal, as the executive officer of school council, will ensure that this policy complies with the Department's policy and that all staff are familiar with and adhere to it.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Payment requests, letters or CASES21 invoices for student materials and services charges will be accompanied by the following information:

- A description of each of the three parent payment categories
- Details of what parents are being asked to pay for
- That parents are required to provide essential education items for their children, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate
- The availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the principal if the parent wishes to discuss these
- A copy of the school-level policy

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

This document is to be reviewed annually as part of the College's ANNUAL policy review cycle.

REFERENCES:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/parentpayments.aspx>

DATE RATIFIED: Term 4 2016, 18/10/2016, 21/11/17

DATE FOR REVIEW: Term 4 2018

Tiffany Holt
Principal

Andrew Gardiner
College Council President



2018 Charges Years Prep to Four

Parents will receive an **Invoice** from the College at the beginning of Term 1 containing each of your child's 2018 charges according to the below '**Essential Education Items**' and '**Optional Extras**'.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS	
Essential Photocopying, Printing & Classroom Stationary Supplies	125.00
Admission and Program Delivery- Swimming	20.00
Consumables- Arts & Craft, Tissues	20.00
College Bus Transport- Local Excursions	20.00
Library- Goods & Services	10.00
TOTAL	195.00
OPTIONAL EXTRAS	
School Magazine	20.00
School Based Performances, productions and Events	10.00
TOTAL	30.00

Apollo Bay P-12 College also invites parents to assist our school by making the following '**Voluntary**' Payments.

Parents will not be invoiced for these payments.

We welcome parents to attend our General Office to make these Voluntary Payments.

Our College is extremely grateful to parents for making 'Voluntary' payments which help to ensure our School Buses, Technology devices and services, and buildings and grounds remain in an exceptional standard.

Parents may choose to pay any or all of the below Voluntary Payments.

VOLUNTARY	
School Bus Support This voluntary payment is to help fund the school to replace and upgrade our College Buses in the future.	20.00
Technology Contribution The Technology Contribution assists with the cost of technology in the school – hardware, software, digital learning devices (i.e. interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, computers and tablets). This contribution also assists with the upkeep and upgrading of digital learning devices, subscriptions to providers etc.	20.00
Facilities Contribution Used for the maintenance of outdoor equipment, grounds and school buildings.	20.00
TOTAL	60.00



2018 Charges Years 5 to 8

Parents will receive an **Invoice** from the College at the beginning of Term 1 containing each of your child's 2018 charges according to the below '**Essential Education Items**' and '**Optional Extras**'.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS	
Essential Photocopying, Printing & Classroom Stationary Supplies	135.00
Admission and Program Delivery- Swimming	20.00
Consumables & Take home items- Arts & Technology Classes	75.00
College Bus Transport- Local Excursions	20.00
Some Textbook and Class Set Materials	20.00
Locker Provision	10.00
	280.00
OPTIONAL EXTRAS	
School Magazine	20.00
School Based Performances, productions and Events	10.00
*** Netbook Computer (this will be invoiced separately)	
TOTAL	30.00

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Parents may choose to pay any or all of the below Voluntary Payments.

VOLUNTARY	
School Bus Support This voluntary payment is to help fund the school to replace and upgrade our College Buses in the future.	20.00
Technology Contribution The Technology Contribution assists with the cost of technology in the school – hardware, software, digital learning devices (i.e. interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, computers and tablets). This contribution also assists with the upkeep and upgrading of digital learning devices, subscriptions to providers etc.	20.00
Facilities Contribution Used for the maintenance of outdoor equipment, grounds and school buildings.	20.00
TOTAL	60.00



2018 Charges Year 9

Parents will receive an **Invoice** from the College at the beginning of Term 1 containing each of your child's 2018 charges according to the below **'Essential Education Items'** and **'Optional Extras'**.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS	
Essential Photocopying, Printing & Classroom Stationary Supplies & Consumables	145.00
Admission and Program Delivery- Swimming	20.00
College Bus Transport- Local Excursions	20.00
Some Textbook and Class Set Materials	20.00
Locker Provision	10.00
Year 9/10 Electives	80.00
Year 9 IBL Program	50.00
TOTAL	345.00
OPTIONAL EXTRAS	
School Magazine	20.00
School Based Performances, productions and Events	10.00
*** Netbook Computer (this will be invoiced separately)	
TOTAL	30.00

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Parents may choose to pay any or all of the below Voluntary Payments.

VOLUNTARY	
School Bus Support This voluntary payment is to help fund the school to replace and upgrade our College Buses in the future.	20.00
Technology Contribution The Technology Contribution assists with the cost of technology in the school – hardware, software, digital learning devices (i.e. interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, computers and tablets). This contribution also assists with the upkeep and upgrading of digital learning devices, subscriptions to providers etc.	20.00
Facilities Contribution Used for the maintenance of outdoor equipment, grounds and school buildings.	20.00
TOTAL	60.00



2018 Charges Year 10

Parents will receive an **Invoice** from the College at the beginning of Term 1 containing each of your child's 2018 charges according to the below '**Essential Education Items**' and '**Optional Extras**'.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS	
Essential Photocopying, Printing & Classroom Stationary Supplies & Consumables	145.00
Admission and Program Delivery- Swimming	20.00
College Bus Transport- Local Excursions	20.00
Some Textbook and Class Set Materials	20.00
Locker Provision	10.00
Year 9/10 Electives	80.00
VCE/VET Unit Materials-	50.00
TOTAL	345.00
OPTIONAL EXTRAS	
School Magazine	20.00
School Based Performances, productions and Events	10.00
*** Netbook Computer (this will be invoiced separately)	
TOTAL	30.00

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Parents will not be invoiced for these payments.

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Our College is extremely grateful to parents for making 'Voluntary' payments which help to ensure our School Buses, Technology devices and services, and buildings and grounds remain at an exceptional standard.

Parents may choose to pay any or all of the below Voluntary Payments.

VOLUNTARY	
School Bus Support This voluntary payment is to help fund the school to replace and upgrade our College Buses in the future.	20.00
Technology Contribution The Technology Contribution assists with the cost of technology in the school – hardware, software, digital learning devices (i.e. interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, computers and tablets). This contribution also assists with the upkeep and upgrading of digital learning devices, subscriptions to providers etc.	20.00
Facilities Contribution Used for the maintenance of outdoor equipment, grounds and school buildings.	20.00
TOTAL	60.00



2018 Charges Years 11 & 12

Parents will receive an **Invoice** from the College at the beginning of Term 1 containing each of your child's 2018 charges according to the below '**Essential Education Items**' and '**Optional Extras**'.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS	
Essential Photocopying, Printing & Classroom Stationary Supplies & Consumables	145.00
Admission and Program Delivery- Swimming	20.00
College Bus Transport- Local Excursions	20.00
Some Textbook and Class Set Materials	20.00
Locker Provision	10.00
VCE/VET/VCAL Unit Materials	120.00
TOTAL	335.00
OPTIONAL EXTRAS	
School Magazine	20.00
School Based Performances, productions and Events	10.00
*** Netbook Computer (this will be invoiced separately)	
TOTAL	30.00

Apollo Bay P-12 College also invites parents to assist our school by making the following '**Voluntary**' Payments.

Parents will not be invoiced for these payments.

We welcome parents to attend our General Office to make these Voluntary Payments.

Our College is extremely grateful to parents for making 'Voluntary' payments which help to ensure our School Buses, Technology devices and services, and buildings and grounds remain at an exceptional standard.

Parents may choose to pay any or all of the below Voluntary Payments.

VOLUNTARY	
School Bus Support This voluntary payment is to help fund the school to replace and upgrade our College Buses in the future.	20.00
Technology Contribution The Technology Contribution assists with the cost of technology in the school – hardware, software, digital learning devices (i.e. interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, computers and tablets). This contribution also assists with the upkeep and upgrading of digital learning devices, subscriptions to providers etc.	20.00
Facilities Contribution Used for the maintenance of outdoor equipment, grounds and school buildings.	20.00
TOTAL	60.00

FEBRUARY 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Please find enclosed the following information in relation to your Parent Payments for 2018.

1. An itemised **Invoice** for your child's or children's 2018 fees.
2. A **2018 Charges Information Sheet** explaining the *Essential Education Items, Optional Extra's* and *Voluntary Contributions* for your child/ren's fees according to their current year level at school.
3. A general information sheet titled "**Apollo Bay P-12 College Parent Payments Policy Summary**".

As well as the included invoiced fees, a separate invoice will be sent to parents of students in Years 5-10 who are participating our in College Notebook Program.

Parents will also be required to pay for other specific items such as Camps and Excursions as they occur during the school year.

At Apollo Bay P-12 College, we also invite parents to assist our school by making the following '**Voluntary**' Payments;

SCHOOL BUS SUPPORT: This voluntary payment is to help fund the school to replace and upgrade our College Buses in the future. \$20.00

TECHNOLOGY CONTRIBUTION: The Technology Contribution assists with the cost of technology in the school – hardware, software, digital learning devices (i.e. interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, computers and tablets). This contribution also assists with the upkeep and upgrading of digital learning devices, subscriptions to providers etc. \$20.00

FACILITIES CONTRIBUTION: Used for the maintenance of outdoor equipment, grounds and school buildings. \$20.00

Our College is extremely grateful to parents for making 'Voluntary' payments which help to ensure our School Buses, Technology devices and services, and buildings and grounds remain at an exceptional standard. Parents wishing to pay any or all of the above Voluntary contributions may do so by adding the amount to their invoice when using Direct Deposit, or by requesting to do so at the General Office when making fee payments.

Our College Invoicing system is in line with DET Policy and we are pleased that fees are at the lower end of the scale compared with other schools. Where Invoices are not paid by the end of Term 1, a reminder of outstanding balances will be sent out as an Invoice at the start of each term until paid.

We encourage you to contact Judy de Carteret or Tiffany Holt at the school office on 52 376 483 should you have any questions or concerns regarding the enclosed information or if you would like a complete copy of the college Parents Payments Policy. Our Parent Payments Policy can also be found on COMPASS under School Documentation- School Policies.

Yours sincerely,

Judy de Carteret
Business Manager

Tiffany Holt
Principal



Parent Payments Policy Summary Sheet

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 Victorian Curriculum and senior secondary certificates such as the VCE including VET in Schools programs.

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, ID Cards, text books and school uniforms where required, and all electives as outlined in the curriculum provision);
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 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 Maintenance and Grounds Maintenance and Development).

After considering the expectations of our wider community, the Apollo Bay P -12 College Council will ensure that:

- Fees and contributions are kept to a minimum and are subject to the 'free instruction' provision to ensure charges will not exceed the cost of providing the relevant goods or services to our students (As per Appendix 1 diagrams)
- All students have access to the standard curriculum program
- The school does not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment for any of the three categories
- Students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, refused instruction or disadvantaged on the basis of payments not being made for education items, services or voluntary financial contributions. Where parents/guardians choose for their children not to attend a compulsory excursion/camp an alternative option will to be provided
- The status and details of any payments or non-payments remain confidential
- Payment requests must be clearly itemised within each category (see Appendix 2)
- Parents/guardians are given the option of purchasing equivalent essential education items themselves, in consultation with the school
- Parents are provided with notice of payment requests and a payment schedule at the beginning of Term 1 each year

A range of support options are available if parents are experiencing difficulty in paying for essential items. Parents are encouraged to contact the Principal for a confidential meeting if they would like assistance in any way.

Parents are welcome to visit the Department of Education and Training website for more detailed information.
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/pages/parentpayments.aspx>