

Hardship Policy

1. Rationale:

The Education & Training Reform Act empowers School Councils to charge parents for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children, for school use. School Council recognises that some families experience financial hardship from time to time and to ensure the best possible education for each child, the following opportunities are available for all families at our school.

2. Aims:

To provide opportunities for children of families experiencing financial hardship to participate in the full breadth of educational experiences offered by the school.

3. Implementation:

- School Council supplements Department of Education and Training funds by requesting payments from parents for the following items:-
 - Essential Education Items which parents and guardians pay the school to provide eg: stationary items and booklists, text books and uniforms etc.
 - Optional Extras, for example payment for the school nurse and items which are offered on a user pays basis, eg camps and excursions etc.In addition, School Council invites parents to make donations by means of:-
 - Voluntary Financial Contributions which are non-compulsory donations for specific projects eg: library resources, grounds maintenance and projects, technologies or equipment.
- Parents will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments and voluntary contributions at least six weeks prior to the due date and with a recommended payments schedule.
- The Parent Payments schedule will include details relating to all payments, essential payment dates, options to make payments by instalments, with clear definitions of the category of any payments (ie: Essential, Optional or Voluntary)
- No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.
- Parents will be made aware of any government financial support schemes (eg: the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund – CSEF), plus advice to parents to contact the business manager or principal class if they require support or additional information.
- Council will provide opportunities for all parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the business manager or principal.
- A second-hand school uniform program is available, as well as the State School's Relief program for families in financial need.
- A modest annual discretionary budget that the principal may use to assist families experiencing financial hardship will be made available.
- All payments and non-payments by families, and participants in any school financial support programs will be strictly confidential.

4. Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of an annual review process.