

Parent Payments Policy – Preparing for 2023



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Today's session

1. Recap – Parent Payments Policy
2. Preparing for 2023
3. Additional support available
4. Questions

Parent Payments Policy - Recap



FREE INSTRUCTION

- Schools provide students with free instruction and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the school to fulfil the standard curriculum requirements in Victorian Curriculum F-10, VCE and VCAL.
- Schools may invite parents to make a financial contribution to support the school.



PARENT PAYMENT REQUESTS

Schools can request contributions from parents under three categories:

Curriculum Contributions

Voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the school deems necessary for students to learn the Curriculum.

Other Contributions

Voluntary financial contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the school's functions and objectives.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities

Items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are above and beyond what the school provides for free to deliver the Curriculum. These are provided on a user-pays basis.

- Schools may also invite parents to supply or purchase educational items to use and own (e.g. textbooks, stationery, digital devices).



FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES

- Schools put in place financial hardship arrangements to support families who cannot pay for items or activities so that their child doesn't miss out.
- Schools have a nominated parent payment contact person(s) that parents can have a confidential discussion with regarding financial hardship arrangements.



SCHOOL PROCESSES

- Schools must obtain school council approval for their parent payment arrangements and publish all requests and communications for each year level on their school website for transparency.

Learning from school experiences

Since launching the clarified and strengthened Parent Payments Policy in August 2021 the department has:

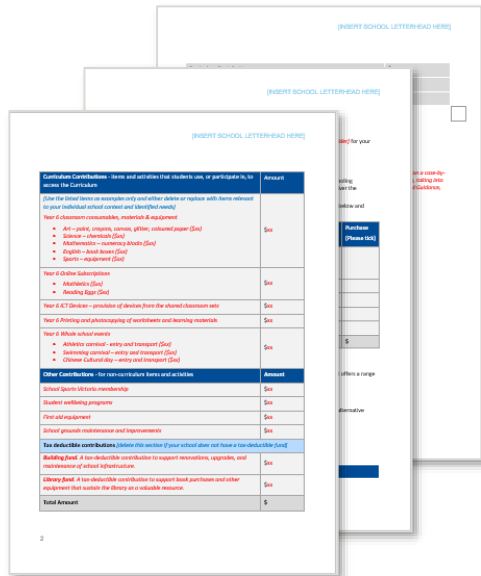
1. Worked directly with 949 schools (60% of all schools)
2. Completed a desktop review and data collection with a representative sample of 200 schools including:
 - A review of alignment with policy requirements
 - A data collection to measure the impact of the emergent financial, administrative and program impacts of the clarified policy
3. Established a Parent Payments Principal Reference Group to:
 - Analyse the emergent impacts of the policy
 - Provide advice on supports required by schools

Preparing for 2023

Preparing for 2023 - Key areas of focus

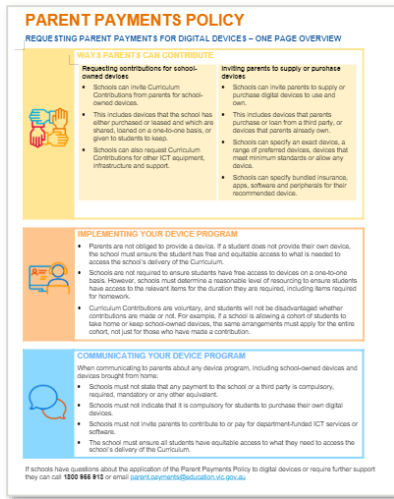
1. Using the updated parent payment arrangement templates
2. Raising funds for camps and excursions
3. Determining your preferred approach for stationery packs
4. Maintaining revenue and collection rates
5. Reducing your administrative workload in processing parent payments

Preparing for 2023 - Updated templates



- The primary school template has been updated to make it simpler and clearer to use
- Schools can have one arrangement for the whole school or each year level
- Schools can edit the bottom table to make it clear what the total amount being requested is
- Alternative options available based on your school context for Extra-Curricular Items and Activities

Preparing for 2023 - Camps and excursions



- Schools can continue to invite parents to purchase camps and excursions on a user pays basis when:
 - they are not required for students to meet Curriculum outcomes in the Victorian Curriculum F-10, VCE or VCAL, or
 - there is a free alternative activity provided to meet Curriculum outcomes
- We have updated the [one-page overview on camps and excursions](#), which includes suggestions for how to communicate these activities with parents

Preparing for 2023 - Stationery packs

Schools have two options when determining their preferred approach to stationery:

Option 1 – Ask for a voluntary Curriculum Contribution

- All students treated the same
- Stationery purchased by the school.

Option 2 – Invite parents to purchase items from a third-party supplier

Schools can either:

a) Prepare a list of recommended items for parents to source individually

b) Recommend a supplier for parents

- Schools can prepare a list of items, to be purchased individually or as a single pack
- Online suppliers can deliver stationery to parents or directly to the school
- Our Implementation and Communication Guide includes a recommended approach for schools sourcing a third-party provider, to get the best deal for parents

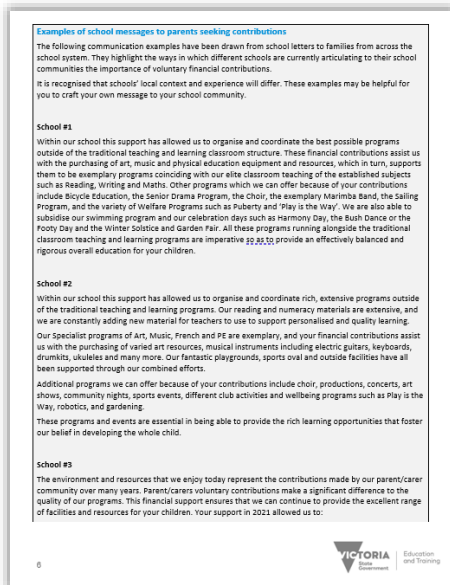
Please note:

- Parents are not obliged to purchase a pack or to provide their own stationery
- Schools must ensure that a child has whatever is necessary to access the Curriculum
- Schools can apply to [State Schools Relief](#) on behalf of families facing financial hardship

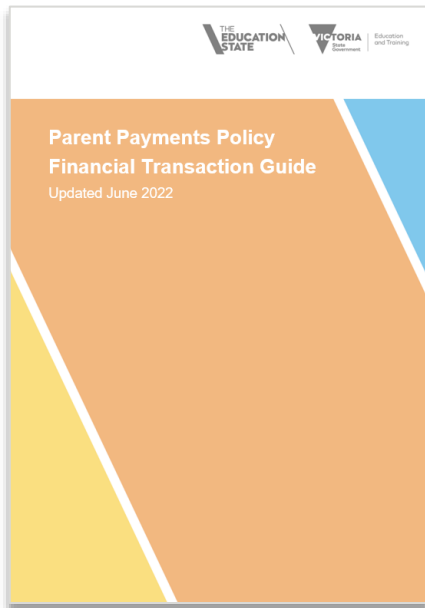
Questions

Preparing for 2023 - Maintaining revenue and collection rates

- Based on initial observations, schools that experienced revenue increases:
 - requested highly specific contributions linked to tangible items or and activities that parents value
 - emphasised that these items/activities are made possible through the generosity of parents
 - Provided examples of previous items/activities that were made possible through the generosity of parents
 - Communicated directly with parents
 - Provided parents with a range of user-friendly ways to immediately make payment
- Examples have been included in the new [Implementation and Communication Guide](#)



Reducing the administrative workload of processing parent payments



- **Read our guidance for schools**
 - The updated financial transaction guide moves away from an FAQ format to remove duplication and makes it simpler and quicker to access information
- **Understand your school context**
 - Determine required reports
 - Determine practices that are no longer necessary
 - Determine practices that can be adapted
 - Utilising the full functionality of third-party administrative software
- **Work with other schools in your area**
 - Sharing practices that reduce administrative burden
- **Speak with the School Financial Management Support Unit**
 - schools.finance.support@education.vic.gov.au

Additional support available

New and updated resources

- Available now on the department's [Policy and Advisory Library](#)

Ongoing supports

- The Parent Payments Team is available to support schools in preparing arrangements for 2023
 - Email: parent.payments@education.vic.gov.au
 - Phone: 1800 955 913
- For support with budgeting, financial management, or transacting under the Parent Payments Policy, contact the School Financial Management Support Unit:
 - Email: schools.finance.support@education.vic.gov.au

Targeted support for identified schools

- The Parent Payments Team will reach out to identified schools that have experienced a significant shift in parent payments

Local area network workshops

- Tailored interactive sessions will be provided on request to local principal and business manager networks

Questions