# **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.

# **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

## 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 parents[[1]](#footnote-1) 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.

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.”**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/management/PP_Costsupportforfamilies.docx)

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.**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/pages/parentpayments.aspx)

Answers to the most commonly asked questions about school costs for parents see:   
[**Frequently Asked Questions – For Parents**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/management/PP_FAQforparents.docx)



# **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

## Parent Payment Charges

Seaholme Primary School has selected the most appropriate requisites to meet the needs of our students. Student requisites contain high quality materials at a competitive price due to our ability to bulk order. We ensure that costs are kept to a minimum and that all materials are carefully selected to support and enhance the high level teaching and learning programs throughout the school. Seaholme Primary School requests payments from Parents/Carers under the following categories only:

**Essential Education Items** are those items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program that parents are responsible for and may choose to either provide or pay the school to provide. At Seaholme Primary School, essential items include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery. These include individual materials that are packed and provided to each individual student. Items vary per year level. |  |
| * Shared materials that are provided for students to use daily and are purchased in bulk and distributed to students when required in class. Items vary between years levels. |  |
| * Subject Resource Contributions are the items bought in bulk to support specialised programs such as Art, Italian, PE, Integrated Studies, Sound Waves and Values education. |  |
| * Incursion/Excursion Levy |  |
| * **Total Costs:** | **$380** |

**Voluntary financial contributions** are those items and services under which parents are invited to make a donation to the School, for example for grounds maintenance or building trust. Seaholme Primary School invites parents and carers to make a voluntary contribution to the Garden & Maintenance fund ($30 per family). Families are also welcome to make a voluntary contribution to the school, nominating their preferred amount.

**Optional education items** can also be referred to as non-essential materials and services. These items are those that are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and which are offered to all students. These optional extras are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for each item as they are required throughout the school year. These items can include:

* Extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, choir
* School-based performances, productions and events
* Excursions and incursions
* Additional school items such as student/ class photographs, school magazine
* Before and after school care.

## Payment arrangements and methods

Parents will be provided with early notice of payment request for essential education items, optional items and voluntary financial contributions with a minimum of six weeks’ notice prior to the end of the previous school year. We request that parents/carers return the completed Student Requisites and Parent Contributions Form at the time of payment.

**Other Guidelines include:**

* The Compass App is the preferred method for making payments and consenting to events such as incursions and excursions.
* The QKR App is the preferred method for Out of School Hours Care Program (OSHC), book list and excursion/incursion payments.
* Both the Compass App and QKR Apps are available to download in the applicable store for android and apple devices. If you require assistance using the Compass or QKR Apps, please contact the school office for assistance.
* EFTPOS payments can be processed at the school office; however, this is not the preferred option. Payment envelopes are available at the school office for this purpose. Once completed, payment envelopes can be provided to the classroom teacher or given to the school office. EFTPOS payments cannot be taken over the phone.
* Cash will only be accepted for fundraising initiatives such as special lunch days, raffles etc.

## Family support options

At Seaholme primary School we appreciate that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist parents, including:

* The **Camps, Sports and Excursion fund (CSEF)** supports families who met eligibility criteria set by the Victorian Government to ensure the student has the opportunity to participate in important, educational and fun activities.
* The **State Schools Relief Committee** support, applications can be made via the Principal to assist with clothing/uniforms
* **Welfare and support agencies** that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families.
* No student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution.
* Second hand uniform and low cost options e.g. school clothing pool, low cost suppliers

## Consideration of hardship

At times, families may experience circumstances that prevent them from participating fully in school life. At Seaholme primary School we believe that it is important that every support is provided to ensure all can access and participate in learning experiences at school. The Business Manager and the Principal are the contacts for parent payment inquiries. Parents may make contact by telephone, email, in writing or in person about their financial situation and related difficulties in making payments. The school contacts will use discretion and negotiate appropriate forms of payment assistance. Parents can make general inquiries about charges by contacting the school on [(03) 9398 2806](https://www.google.com/search?q=seaholme+primary+school&oq=seaholme+primary+school&aqs=chrome..69i57j0l7.4707j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) or via email: [seaholme.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:seaholme.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)

## Refunds

Our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents on a case by case basis taking into account the individual circumstances. Generally we will not be able to refund payments made for items purchased or costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred to a third party. For example, camp costs when a child becomes unwell and cannot attend in circumstances where the payment has already been made or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will make this clear to parents at the time of payment.

## Communication with families

* The Parent Payment Policy will be communicated with parents via the school website and through COMPASS. Hard copies of the Parent Payment Attachment will be available from the Front office.
* Key aspects of the Parent Payment Policy will be included in the information provided to parents with the student requisites list each year.
* Parents can raise issues, or make complaints by contacting the school on [(03) 9398 2806](https://www.google.com/search?q=seaholme+primary+school&oq=seaholme+primary+school&aqs=chrome..69i57j0l7.4707j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) or via email: [seaholme.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:seaholme.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)

# **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

**Related School Policies**

* Complaints and Concerns Policy
* Electronic Funds Management Policy
* Petty Cash Policy
* Cash Handling Policy

# **EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

It is School Council’s responsibility to monitor the implementation of the policy. The School Council of Seaholme Primary School will monitor this policy at least annually to ensure the process of requesting fees is transparent and easy to understand with clear options for parents experiencing hardship. Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with the Administration Staff, Leadership Team, Finance subcommittee and School Council as part of the school’s commitment to ongoing improvement and report back to the school community. The Parent Payment Policy will be communicated with parents via the school website.

# **FEE SCHEDULE 2021**

Please refer to the document below detailing the fee schedule for 2021

Monday 26th October, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Seaholme Primary School is looking forward to a more settled year of teaching and learning and would like to advise you of the parent payment arrangements for 2021.

Please find the Fee Schedule – Seaholme Primary School for all year levels attached. Please complete this form and return it to the school by Friday the 11th December, 2020, so we can plan and prepare accordingly.

Seaholme Primary School makes every effort to keep the cost of items and activities to a minimum and affordable for all parents. Whilst providing a diverse and impactful learning experience for all children.

The School Council has determined and approved the Essential Student Learning Items charge and the Excursion Levy for all students.

**Financial Support for Families**

Seaholme Primary School understands that some families may experience financial difficulty. If, for any reason, you experience difficulty making payments please contact Ashley Craig, Acting Principal or Oria Cozzolino, Business Manager on 9398 2806 to confidentially discuss possible support options and payment arrangements. Current supports in place include:

* The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF),
* An opportunity to purchase second hand uniform, and
* Support from State School Relief.

**Payment Methods**

Payments can be made via credit card, via the QKR! App, EFTPOS at the office or cheque.

***Please note: No cash payments will be accepted, keeping in line with the COVID precautions that have been implemented in an effort to minimise the risk to staff.***

**Option A:** Payment in full of $180.00 for the Essential Student Learning Items, $80 for the Curriculum Contribution, $120.00 for the Excursion Levy and any voluntary levies and additional items if required by Friday the 11th of December, 2020. ***Please note: No cheques will be accepted by the office after Friday the 11th of December, 2020. Only EFTPOS or QKR! transactions until Thursday 17th 2020.***

**Option B:** Payment in full of $180.00 for the Essential Student Learning Items, $80 for the Curriculum Contribution, $120.00 for the Excursion Levy and any voluntary levies and additional items if required between Friday the 22nd of January, 2021 and Wednesday the 27th of January, 2021.

**Collection of Book Packs**

In 2021, each student in grades 1 to grade 6 shall receive their own Stationary and Book Pack. Parents of students in Foundation are not required to collect Stationary and Book Packs as they will be kept in the classroom. The Stationary and Book Pack may be collected from the school office between 9:00am and 3:00pm on any of the following days:

- Monday 7th December, 2020 thru to Thursday 17th December, 2020,

- Friday 22nd January 2021, Monday 25th January 2021 or Wednesday 27th January 2021

***Please note: Book packs will not be distributed on the morning of Thursday 28th January 2021 as all staff will be focusing on transitioning all students from Foundation to grade 6, quickly and safely into their classrooms.***

**Refunds**

Effective from the 2021 school year, we will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents on a case by case basis taking into account individual circumstances. In general, we will not be able to refund payments made for items purchased or costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred to a third party. For example, camp or swimming costs; where a child becomes unwell and cannot attend and the payment has already been made or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will make this clear to parents at the time of payment.

**Classroom Items from Home**

Students are also required to bring the following items from home:

* Large box of tissues,
* Library Bag ~ (a new lightweight bag suitable for library/swimming/sport/excursions has been approved by School Council and is available from our uniform stockists DCS Uniforms), or alternatively a shopping bag could be used.
* Art smock ~ an old shirt/dustcoat will do although the smock does needs to be waterproof to resist paint stains etc.

If you have any questions in relation to the Fee Schedule – Seaholme Primary School, please do not hesitate to contact Oria Cozzolino, Business Manager on 9398 2806.

Yours sincerely,

Ashley Craig Acting Principal Tina Gladigau School Council President

**Fee Schedule - Seaholme Primary School**

Please find the itemised list of Essential Student Learning Items and Optional Items for your child. Seaholme Primary School also continues to welcome your voluntary contributions for 2021.

Please complete this form and return it to the school by Friday the 11th of December, 2020 so the school can prepare accordingly.

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| **Essential Student Learning Items**  Below is a list of items and activities that are essential for your child to learn the standard curriculum. You may choose to purchase these items through the school or provide your own.  **Stationary and Book Pack**  Each child will receive their own Stationery and Book Pack that will contain some of the classroom materials required for the year. The Stationery and Book Pack will include items such as pencils, pens, glue sticks, scissors, exercise books, folders, document wallets, etc. An Itemised list will be provided with the pack.  **$50.00**  **Digital Technology**  Subscriptions for Reading Eggs and Mathletics.  **$30.00**  **Classroom Consumable Materials**  The following materials shall be purchased as bulk items to be utilized by all children in the class throughout the school year; paper, craft and bookmaking materials, laminating sheets, newsprint, A3/A4 card, Seaholme Primary School portfolios, independent reading log books (F-2), USBs (3-6), etc.  **$50.00**  **Mandarin**  Workbooks and Mandarin consumable supplies.  **$10.00**  **Performing Arts**  Workbooks and Performing Arts consumable supplies.  **$10.00**  **STEM**  Workbooks and STEM consumable supplies.  **$10.00**  **Visual Arts**  Visual Art materials, folios, workbooks, coloured paper, textiles, modelling and creative art materials including clay and glazes.  **$20.00**  **Total $180.00** |
| **Essential Student Learning Items – Foundation and New Students**  **Home Reader Bag**  Each child will require a Home Reader Bag. These bags are used to transport classroom library books, along with home readers to and from school. Hard copy parent communication is also put in this bag along with diaries when students are in the later years of primary school. All students at Seaholme Primary School require a Home Reader Bag and are available from the school office.  **$10.00** |

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| **Excursion Levy**  The Excursion levy will cover the cost of incursions/excursions organised by the teaching staff as part of the curriculum program for the year. A detailed list of all excursions will be available to parents/carers at the end of the 2021 school year.  **$120.00**  **Total $120.00** |

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| **Voluntary Curriculum Contributions**  In order to comply with, and implement the change in classification in the Parent Payment Policy, the former Book Pack and Consumable Charge of $260 has now been split between the **Essential Student Learning Items ($180),** refer above**,** and the **Curriculum Contribution ($80)** referbelow**.**  It will greatly assist the school in the delivery of all the curriculum programs if parents could contribute towards both items. These items allow us to deliver the most impactful and holistic educational experience for all students at Seaholme Primary School.  **Curriculum Contribution**  Curriculum and Assessment - Purchase of curriculum and assessment resources that allow for the delivery of learning that caters to the individual needs of each child.  Classroom consumables – Updating and purchasing of classroom and school library books, mentor texts for student writing and numeracy manipulatives.  *Physical Education* – Updating and purchasing new sports equipment for student use during Physical Education lessons, Interschool Sports as well as for use during recess and lunch breaks.  *Performing Arts* – Updating and purchasing new Performing Arts equipment (musical instruments, costumes, props, digital technology for recording purposes) for student use during Performing Arts lessons, lunchtime club and the school band.  *Information, Communication, Technology* – Updating and purchasing new Information, Communication, Technology equipment (ipads, laptops, robotics, 3D printing, apps) for student use during classroom and specialist classes.  **$80.00**  **Total $80.00** |

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| **Voluntary Contributions**  Seaholme Primary School continues to welcome your voluntary contributions to support our school. Families can make a general voluntary contribution that goes towards all of our school’s important priorities for 2021 as well as providing additional activities and services for all students.  Alternatively, you can make a voluntary contribution to any of the specific priorities outlined in the table below.  **Grounds Levy (recommended per family)**  School Council believes it is very important that the school grounds are always kept neat, well maintained and safe for all children. A recommended voluntary annual fee of $30 per family will enable School Council to maintain the school grounds to a high standard without the need to conduct regular working bees.  **$30.00**  **Air Conditioning Levy (recommended once per new family)**  School Council elected to have air conditioning installed in all classrooms. The financing of this facility is the school’s responsibility, as the Government does not provide funds for air-conditioning. Families new to the school are asked to contribute to this cost with a recommended voluntary ‘once only’ levy of $50.00 per family. This is a modest contribution, but a most important one in order to meet regular service costs.  **$50.00**  The voluntary levies are set at a recommended value, however all and any contributions are gratefully accepted.  **Building Fund Donation**  The Seaholme Primary School, School Council has set up a Building Fund that has DGR status with the Australian Taxation Office. This means that the school is now able to accept donations from parents and organisations that are specifically for the School Building Fund, which will be tax deductible for the donor.  All donations will be gratefully accepted.  Your child will not be disadvantaged if you do not make a voluntary contribution. All records of voluntary contributions are kept confidential, as well as your decision about whether to make a contribution or not. |

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| **Optional Items**  Optional items are items and activities that enhance and broaden the educational experience of students, such as instrumental music, extension classes, camps, swimming, etc. The cost of these will be communicated to parents/carers prior to the activity, should the school be able to offer these programs to students. |

**Seaholme Primary School Fee Schedule 2021**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Year Level (2021):** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Methods**

Payments can be made via credit card, the QKR! App, EFTPOS at the office or cheque. Cheques are to be made payable to Seaholme Primary School.

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**Payment Methods**

Please tick one.

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|  | Credit Card |
|  | QKR! |
|  | EFTPOS |
|  | Cheque |

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**Amount**

Please tick the items required for your child from the list below:

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | $180.00 | Essential Student Learning Items |
|  | $80.00 | Curriculum Contribution |
|  |  |  |
|  | $120.00 | Excursion Levy |
|  |  |  |
|  | $10.00 | Essential Student Learning Items - Home Reader Bag |
|  |  |  |
|  | $30.00 | Grounds Levy (recommended per family) |
|  | $50.00 | Air Conditioning Levy (recommended once per new family) |
|  | $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Building Fund Donation |

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**Credit Card Payment**

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Visa / Mastercard (Please circle one)

Card Number:

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Total Amount: $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CCV 3 digits: (back of card)

Expiry Date: ­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)