



# Parent Payment Policy

## Eastern Ranges School

### PARENT PAYMENT CHARGES

Parent contributions at Eastern Ranges School assist the school in providing a personalised teaching and learning program for all students, in line with the Department of Education and Training initiatives and the school priorities.

Eastern Ranges School Council supplements Department of Education and Training funds by requesting payments from parents for the following items:

**Essential education items** are those items or services that parents or guardians are requested to provide or pay the school that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum program to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate.

These items include:

- Classroom materials, communication supports, sensory supports, and student stationery, ERS Communication Book, computer software and ICT resources.
- Materials for learning and teaching including Art/Craft, Music, Health and Physical Education, Maths and English resources and materials.
- Transport and excursions that support all students' learning outcomes using the school buses.

**Optional education items** (or non-essential materials and services) 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 and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.

These items include:

- Extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. Swimming, Camps
- School-based performances, productions and events, e.g. Graduation
- School magazines, class photographs.

**Voluntary financial contributions** are those items and services that parents or guardians are invited to make as a tax deductible donation to the school, e.g. for building & grounds maintenance, a library or technology funds. If families wish to donate to our school this will further assist our specialised programs. Eastern Ranges School is registered as a Charitable Organisation.

## **PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND METHODS**

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions (e.g. a minimum of six weeks' notice).

Costs will be kept to a minimum with payment requests/letters fair and reasonable. To further assist parents with payments, payment options have been developed:

**Option A:** Full amount at the beginning of term 2

**Option B:** Payment by instalment (120) at the beginning of each terms 2, 3 & 4

Parents are able to enter into confidential payment arrangements by contacting the Business Manager. Payments may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.

Payment requests to parents will be itemised and the category each item falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution. Receipts will be issued to parents upon making payment.

## **FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS**

A range of support options are available to assist eligible parents:

- Camps Sports & Excursion Fund
- State Schools' Relief (State Schools' Relief "clk2sell" app)
- Family tax benefits A & B, Health care card, Child Care Benefit, Centrepay, Saver Plus
- Relevant community organizations

## **CONSIDERATION OF HARDSHIP**

The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. Support for families experiencing hardship is available by contacting our Business Manager, Lynda Llewellyn on 9758 3772 or email [eastern.ranges.sch@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:eastern.ranges.sch@edumail.vic.gov.au) to arrange a confidential meeting to arrange support options.

Arrangements can be made to reduce the contributions by the following:

- Remove the full year's cost of excursion in favour of pay as you go
- Remove the optional items
- Arrange and implement an instalment plan for payment
- Provide information on other ways to pay the contributions:
  - Direct Debts
  - Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund
  - Centrepay

- Access to other support:
  - State School's Relief (SSR)
    - SSR - Clk2sell app
    - SSR - Foundation and Year 7 enrolments – Uniform subsidy
    - Family Tax Benefits, A or B, Health Care Card, Child Care Benefits

## COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional extras will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents, but not more than once a month. Only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued per year to parents and guardians.
- This policy is available on the school website and presentations on the implementation of the policy will be made at the Orientation Days.
- All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.
- Concerns regarding parent payments can be made through the office for general enquiries or by contracting the Principal or Business Manager to arrange a confidential discussion.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

Eastern Ranges School will annually review parent payments requested to ensure they are in line with Department of Education and Training guidelines.

- The School Council Finance Committee will conduct an annual review of the implementation of the Parent Payment Policy including addressing any concerns raised by the school community and report to the School Council.
- Changes to the Policy Implementation will be communicated to the school community via the school Newsletter, Website and Sentral.

**APPROVED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL:** 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019