

MELBA COLLEGE PARENT/GUARDIAN PAYMENTS POLICY

RATIONALE:

Melba College aims to offer its students an equitable and high quality education. The Government contributes towards students' tuition and the college receives a global budget to cover administration, building maintenance, utilities and the provision of the standard curriculum. All school councils are able to request payments or contributions for additional educational items or services from parents and guardians of students in Victorian government schools in accordance with department policy. This policy is available from the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide (www.education.vic.gov.au/spag). There are three areas where parents/guardians are requested to make a payment or contribution – Essential Education Items, Optional Education Items and Voluntary Financial Contributions. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children are provided with Essential Education Items. The school makes every effort to keep the cost of items that need to be purchased at a minimum. Parents/guardians also have the option of providing Essential Education Items themselves in consultation with the school.

AIMS:

To ensure parent payment processes and responsibilities are clearly understood by all members of the Melba College Community.

This policy ensures that:

- payment requests are clearly itemised under the three parent payment categories
- items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- no student will be treated differently, denied access or refused instruction to the standard curriculum program for not making a payment or voluntary contribution
- access to enrolment or advancement in the standard curriculum to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy:

Essential Education Items are defined as items or services that are essential to support the course of instruction in the standard curriculum at Melba College (not covered by the global budget), which are also items or activities that the school deems compulsory.

Optional Education Items are defined as items or services that are not essential to supporting the course of instruction in the standard curriculum, but are included at Melba College as enhancements to the curriculum. The school deems students may choose to opt out of the activity or service.

Voluntary Financial Contributions examples include special school ground projects, library funds and new equipment

Fees refer to all items listed under essential education items

IMPLEMENTATION:

Parents/guardians are required to pay the college for Essential Education Items including:

- all items listed under Essential Education Items on the Melba College Year Level Fees Form
- materials for learning and teaching where the child consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (for example, home economics, ceramics, photography) These fees appear as Elective Subjects or Compulsory Subject Charges on the Melba College Year Level Fees Forms each year

If parents/guardians wish their child to participate they can be asked to pay for Optional Education Items. These include items such as:

- costs for guest speakers
- optional school camps/tours/excursions
- school magazine
- entry fees for school run performances
- fees for performances or activities provided by outside specialists
- instrumental music program, band and/or ensemble

Parents are invited to make Voluntary Financial Contributions. These will be itemised on the Melba College Year Level Fees Form. Examples include:

- building and grounds improvement programs
- chaplaincy program
- new classroom equipment

For students in Year 7 – 9 fees are expected to be paid by the commencement of the school year. For students in Year 10 – 12 fees for the following year are requested at course confirmation during December of the current year. Discounts apply for timely payment of fees. If a parent/guardian is experiencing financial hardship or difficulty a confidential instalment process can be arranged.

Costs for all excursions are not included in the Essential Educational Items but will be collected before the event. This also applies to outside sporting programs.

Payment for participation in the Instrumental Music/Band and Ensemble Program and for the hire of Musical Instruments is required by the end of the fourth week of Term 1. Students will be withdrawn from the program if payments are not received by the due date. If a parent is experiencing financial hardship or difficulty a confidential instalment payment process can be arranged.

Parents/guardians will be informed of the costs associated with Vocational programs prior to enrolment. Payment for participation in the external VET Program must be made by the start of term one each year. If payment is not made by the due date parents/guardians are required to attend an interview with the Assistant Principal and the student may be withdrawn from the external VET program with consideration given to an alternative low cost/no cost VET program. If a parent is experiencing financial hardship or difficulty a confidential instalment payment process can be arranged.

Payment can be made by Direct Deposit /Credit/Cheque/Cash/EFTPOS/Centrepay.

EVALUATION :

This policy will be reviewed by Education Sub- Committee at the end of Term 3 on an annual basis.

Prepared By	Submission to Council	Review Date
Melba College Council	24 February 2015	2016

RELATED POLICIES:

Melba College Camps and Tours Policy

Melba College Excursions Policy