

## FINANCE - INCLUDING PARENT PAYMENTS (February 2023) (Annual)

*THIS POLICY COVERS THE FOLLOWING AREAS:*

1. <i>BPAY</i>	5. <i>COMPASSPAY</i>	8. <i>REFUNDS</i>
2. <i>EFTPOS</i>	6. <i>PURCHASING</i>	9. <i>REIMBURSEMENTS</i>
3. <i>QKR</i>	7. <i>PURCHASING CARD</i>	10. <i>PARENT PAYMENTS</i>
4. <i>INTERNET BANKING</i>		

*This policy incorporates all of the above policies and is required to be endorsed/ratified at the first School Council Meeting of every year.*

### RATIONALE

- Effective financial management provides the school with enhanced educational opportunity.
- To provide a financially well-managed school that grasps financial opportunities and makes decisions that are based on the best educational interests of the students.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- It is a requirement under the Education Act 1958 that School Council's use all moneys coming into their hands for proper purposes.
- School Council will appoint Finance subcommittee, which will meet prior to each School Council meeting and report on issues and present recommendations relating to all financial matters at each council meeting.
- The sub-committee will work closely with the school Business Manager and the principal.
- The sub-committee will liaise with all appropriate school groups to present both individual program budgets and annual budgets for council approval and monitor and report to council monthly on all receipts, expenditure and commitments against approved budgets, unpaid accounts, investments, and balances held in school accounts.
- All revenue and expenditure budgets will be based on the CASES21 chart of accounts, the school will use the CASES21 Accounts Receivable module, and all reports to School Council will be CASES21 generated.
- The sub-committee will be responsible for preparing annual financial statements and records for auditing, as well as provide School Council with annual receipt, expenditure and investment statements for public annual reports.
- The sub-committee will be responsible for advising School Council on all matters associated with centrally and locally raised funds including the levels of voluntary contributions and levies, sponsorships, DE&T grants, philanthropic contributions, trusts and local cooperatives.
- The Finance sub-committee will be responsible for managing any investment accounts consistent with School Council's Investment policy.
- Finance sub-committee members and School Councillors will declare any pecuniary or conflict of interest prior to partaking in any recommendation and will be vigilant in providing robust and thorough internal control procedures.
- School bank accounts may only be opened, operated or closed with the written authority of the School Council.
- The Finance sub-committee is actively encouraged to second extra members with additional expertise at times of major projects and to engage consultants when desirable.

## 1. *BPAY*

### RATIONALE

- Edithvale Primary School is committed to providing the best possible educational opportunities for all students.
- Parent Contributions make it possible for the School to maintain its high standards of education and to provide the best possible facilities.

### AIMS

- Edithvale Primary School is committed to providing a range of options to parents to make the payment of fees & charges as easy as possible. As well as cash or cheque payments over the counter or via your classroom teacher, we offer EFTPOS, QKR, BPay or Credit Card.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- BPay transactions will be recorded using the DET CASES21 Finance Program in accordance with the Process Guide instructions and in accordance with all internal financial controls already in place.
- BPay will only be available when indicated on notices and excursion forms etc; and will be limited to payments of \$20 and over. Note: Compass is our preferred payment method.
- To ensure the correct allocation of payments, parents are asked to forward advice to the school, showing what items are being paid. This can be via the remittance on their statement, the reply slip on excursion forms, a notification advice slip (available from the office), or an email to [edithvale.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:edithvale.ps@education.vic.gov.au) with 'BPay' in the subject line.
- If the School does not receive this advice within two (2) days of the payment being made, the funds will be allocated at the School's discretion - (if it is not obvious what the payment is for, it will be allocated to the 'oldest' outstanding charges).

## 2. *EFTPOS*

### RATIONALE

- EFTPOS (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale) will provide the school with the ability to accept non cash electronic payments by way of credit or debit cards.
- This facility will increase the options and convenience for parents and reduce the amount of cash handled and kept at the school.

### IMPLEMENTATION

EFTPOS will operate within the following guidelines-

- An EFTPOS register will be kept with the name of the authorised users and daily banking.
- Office staff only are authorised to use the machine.
- Manual credit card transactions may be authorised over the phone, using the school proforma, but it is preferable that the card be sighted where possible.
- Debit cards require the person to be present at point of sale.
- Cash out will not be available.
- Refunds for payments will be handled by issuing a cheque following approval by the Principal or a credit remaining on the family account.

## 3. *QKR by MASTERCARD*

### RATIONALE

- QKR (Quicker) provides the school with the ability to accept non-cash electronic payments by way of a payment App installed on a SmartPhone, iPad or Computer.
- This facility increases the options and convenience for parents and reduces the amount of cash handled and kept at the school.
- Only Canteen and Fundraising, and Staff Wellbeing & Uniform Payments are not processed through QKR. All other payments are processed via Compass.

### IMPLEMENTATION

QKR will operate within the following guidelines:-

- A QKR register will be kept with the name of the authorised users and daily banking.
- Admin staff only are authorised to make changes to QKR.
- Refunds for payments will be handled by direct deposit following approval by the Principal or a credit on the family account.

## 4. *INTERNET BANKING*

### IMPLEMENTATION

- School Council shall endorse names of employees, creditors and other associated bodies who will be paid using the internet banking functions.
- Internal control measures shall be adhered to as outlined in the booklet published by DET- "Internal Control for Schools."
- Documentation confirming all transactions performed using the online facility shall be authorised by the Principal and School Council delegate in a proper and timely manner.
- Documentation of all transactions shall be made available to School Council Finance Committee and Auditor upon request.
- Appropriate segregation of duties shall be implemented to ensure and maintain the accuracy and legitimacy of transactions.
- All transactions shall be performed in a secure and confidential environment.
- All documentation including personal bank account details shall be filed in a secure and safe environment and transactions performed in a confidential manner.
- Delegated authorisers and administrators shall be approved and minuted at School Council each year.
- Alterations to administrators or authorisers (eg provision for staff on leave) shall be fully endorsed by School Council before such changes are made.
- Only DET approved software will be used for internet banking functions.

## 5. *INVESTMENTS*

The Department has now deemed that Schools are not entitled to open investment accounts.

## 6. *PURCHASING (Including Delegation for Signing of Orders)*

### RATIONALE

- The devolution of responsibility for implementation of the approved school budget means that a wide variety of staff members have authority to purchase goods and services on behalf of the school.
- Such purchases need to be well monitored, need to comply with school expectations, and have to reflect the school's budgetary intentions.

### AIMS

To provide an effective and efficient process for acquiring goods identified by School Council for purchase.

- Quotes and tenders are obtained as per the following DET table and are to be attached and filed with the purchase information

Less than or equal to \$2500 (GST inclusive)	A minimum of one verbal or written quote. DET template not required.
Greater than \$2500 and equal to \$25000 (GST inclusive)	A minimum of one written quote DET template not required
Greater than \$25000 and equal to \$150000 (GST inclusive)	A minimum of three written quotes to be sought. DET template to be completed.
Greater than \$150000 (GST inclusive)	Public tender process

### IMPLEMENTATION

- The school's limited funds are allocated each year by School Council to various budgets for specific purposes.
- A School Purchase Order is to be completed and authorised by School Council approved signatories for all purchases. The person completing the order cannot be the signatory for that order.

Our delegated signatories for the signing of orders are:-

**James Whitla (Principal)**  
**Hayley Grindley (Assistant Principal)**  
**Natalie Firth (School Council President)**

- School Purchase Orders are not to be used for private purchases, must be kept secure and recorded in the accountable documents register. These are now completed on Compass and should be completed PRIOR to purchase.

- The appropriate authority to purchase goods is by a school order however staff who purchase goods on behalf of the school are to fill in a DET reimbursement form (direct deposit). Staff will only be reimbursed if funds are available, the budget leader has authorised the purchase and a valid tax invoice/receipt has been supplied.
- School Council's budgeting decisions are made after the Principal has sought input from staff.
- The school's Strategic Plan priority programs attract high precedence when budgets are being decided.
- Whilst the Principal always retains overall responsibility for the day-to-day financial management, the principal delegates individual staff members the responsibility of management of specific budgets.
- Staff members responsible for expenditure of program budgets will be provided with professional development as required.
- Goods that arrive at school and have been ordered without an official order form, or ordered by staff who do not have budget authority will be returned to the vendor.
- Staff will be provided with regular financial reports indicating the expenditure history of their respective budgets and unspent balances.
- The school's Principal & Business Manager will monitor budgets; ensure that expenditure does not exceed budget allocations; and regularly advise staff of the status of all budgets.
- Staff members responsible for budgets will also be responsible for checking goods that arrive against orders and communicating the results with the Business Manager.
- Unspent budget funds will not be carried over to the following year.
- The expenditure of, and outcomes achieved by each budget will be monitored and reported in full to the School Council.

### **7. PURCHASING CARD**

#### **RATIONALE:**

- Edithvale Primary School Council approves the use of Westpac Purchasing Card following the Ministerial Guidelines and Directions as set by DET 2005.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- a) School Council and Principal determine which personnel and activities will be eligible to use the Purchasing Card.
- b) The School Council and Principal determine the expenditure limit of \$2,500 for each cardholder - total of \$7,500 over three cards.
- c) School Council, after advice from the Principal, appoint an "Authorisation Officer".
- d) An "Undertaking by the Cardholder" is completed by each user.
- e) Principal ensures that

All approved purchasing cardholders receive a briefing on the use under specific guidelines.

The cardholder's names, card details and other information are minuted at School Council, and any subsequent changes.

- f) Determine and document arrangements for safe and secure custody of the Purchasing Card.
- g) Arrange for the monthly purchasing card statement/s to be attached to the relevant reports (CASES21) and tabled at School Council meetings.
- h) Ensure adequate internal controls, security measures, Cardholder Register, relevant locally determined category limits and School Council reporting procedures to implement and monitor the operation of the School Purchasing Card.
- i) Purchasing charges to be approved by a more 'senior' member ie Business Manager's purchases approved by Assistant Principal or Principal. Assistant Principal's charges approved by Principal and Principal's purchases approved by School Council President.
- j) Ensure that all Westpac Card purchasing card procedures and controls are met.

**Reference**     **Ministerial Guidelines and Directions 2005 DET School Purchasing Card Guidelines & Procedures**

Westpac Purchasing Cards with a limit of \$2,500 each, have been issued to:

**James Whitla** (Principal)  
**Hayley Grindley** (Assistant Principal)  
**Sandie Wishart** (Business Manager)  
**Holly Smith** (Office Admin & Relief Business Manager on Fridays)  
**Jacqui Miller** (Robotics/ICT)  
**Bec Laver** (Suspend - as she is on Leave)  
**Jess Iaconese** (in Safe)  
**Hayden Callahan** (PLC Leader)  
**Ashlee McCarthy** (PLC Leader)

We will apply for a purchasing card for **Sandra Dovey** (AP)

& **Diane Cameron** (Canteen Manager) (limit of \$1,000).

## **8.     REFUNDS**

### **RATIONALE**

- The school must ensure that the provision of services for students, (ie: excursions / camps / visiting groups / services) do not incur direct costs to the school, nor cause the school to run at a loss.

### **AIM**

To provide a fair and equitable refund system.

## GUIDELINES

1. Where the school is charged for the provision of a program or service as a bulk cost and not per head cost, no refund is able to be given.
2. Where a “per head” fee is charged refunds are able to be given.
3. Where there is a combination of a bulk charge and a “per head” charge in an excursion eg: visit to the zoo - bus charge is bulk cost. Entry fee is per head cost. Only the “per head” component is able to be refunded.
4. All claims for reimbursements must be made in writing within 14 days of the event.
5. Points 3 and 4 to be included on all excursions/camps/visiting groups/services notices where there are charges.
6. All refunds / reimbursements to be authorised by the Principal.  
If a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis taking into account the individual circumstances. Generally we will not be able to refund payments made for costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

## 9. REIMBURSEMENTS

### RATIONALE

- The school must ensure that the provision of reimbursements to staff, do not incur direct costs to the school, nor cause the school to run at a loss.

### AIMS

To provide a fair and equitable reimbursement system for staff.

## GUIDELINES

1. Where a staff member purchases items on behalf of the school, whether it be for classroom use, an excursion or any School activity, the staff member may request a reimbursement by completing a DET reimbursement form, available from the General Office and providing receipts and purchase order.
2. Reimbursements may be paid directly into the individual’s bank account.
3. Items must be on their own receipt and a tax invoice should be provided for larger purchases. **Note:** most providers’ receipts also serve as a tax invoice.
4. A purchase order must be completed, prior to the purchase, where possible.

5. All claims for reimbursements must be made prior to the end of the term in which the purchase was made.
6. All refunds / reimbursements are to be authorised by the Principal.

### **10. PARENT PAYMENTS**

Our 2023 contribution amounts have been established to continue to provide the level of curriculum, support, and facilities to our students to best prepare them for future education. We understand that COVID-19 has impacted a number of families within the community; and we have consciously kept our amounts for 2023 low, to assist families in maintaining voluntary contributions. Once again, individual booklists are not required in 2023.

The School once again, purchased stationery items for ALL students in 2023 (a saving of between \$65-85 per student). This included exercise books, text books, paper, folders, document wallets, scrapbooks, clipboards, display books, magazine holders, tissues etc. We ask all families to purchase pencil case items for their children. These include, pencils, pens, erasers, sharpeners, glue sticks, markers, textas, crayons & scissors.

**Edithvale Primary School must adhere to the Department of Education's Policy, as outlined below:**

#### **DET Policy**

This Parent Payments policy outlines the ways in which schools can request financial contributions from parents and ensures that parent payment practices in Victorian government schools are consistent, transparent and that all students have access to the Curriculum.

#### **Summary**

- Schools must 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 requirements of the Curriculum.
- Schools may request parents make voluntary financial contributions towards the cost of schooling under 2 categories: Curriculum Contributions and Other Contributions.
- Schools may invite parents to purchase optional Extra-Curricular Items and Activities on a user-pays basis.
- Schools may invite parents to supply or purchase their own educational items for their child to use and to own.



- Schools must apply the Financial Help for Families policy when implementing the Parent Payments policy.
- Schools must follow the requirements on finance and communications set out in the Guidance tab.

### **Details**

#### **Free instruction**

All students in Victorian government schools must have free access to instruction that is offered by a school to fulfil the requirements of the Victorian Curriculum F-10, Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) (Curriculum).

Free instruction includes the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the Curriculum, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.

Schools must ensure that students have free access to items and activities as required for the school's delivery of the Curriculum. The extent and frequency of access that students require depends on the school's context and their approach to delivering the Curriculum.

Schools are not required to provide students with items to own, or keep, on a one-to-one basis. However, schools must determine appropriate resourcing to ensure students have access to the relevant items for the duration required to access the Curriculum.

Schools cannot refuse students instruction in the Curriculum or disadvantage students on the basis of financial contributions and payments not being made. Schools cannot deny students access to the Curriculum by withholding enrolment or advancement to the next year level on the basis of payments and financial contributions not being made.

#### **Principles of voluntary financial contributions**

Schools seeking a parent payment must adhere to the following principles of voluntary financial contributions:

- the school council should clearly explain how contributions will be spent when making a request for a contribution
- each contribution is to be voluntary and obtained without coercion or harassment
- a student at the school is not to be refused instruction in the Curriculum because their parents do not make a contribution
- a student is not to be approached, coerced or harassed for contributions

- any record of contributions is confidential, as is any decision by a parent not to make a financial contribution.

### **Parent payment categories**

School councils may request parents to make voluntary financial contributions and payments to the school under the following categories.

### **Curriculum Contributions**

Curriculum Contributions are voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the school deems necessary for students to learn the Curriculum. As each school delivers the Curriculum based on their own local context, it is at a school's discretion to determine whether an item or activity is necessary for delivering the Curriculum. Schools must be able to justify why an item or activity is necessary to the school's delivery of the Curriculum.

Schools cannot refuse students instruction in the Curriculum or deny student access to items or activities on the basis of Curriculum Contributions not being made. Each student must have the same access to curriculum items or activities regardless of whether a student's parent has made a Curriculum Contribution.

Schools must provide a clear description of the item or activity when requesting Curriculum Contributions so that parents are informed of what their contributions are going towards. However, schools do not need to itemise each individual item when requesting Curriculum Contributions. Schools must use funds raised from Curriculum Contributions for the purposes of which they were requested.

### **Other Contributions**

Other Contributions are voluntary financial contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the school's functions and objectives.

Schools cannot refuse students instruction in the Curriculum or disadvantage them in any way on the basis of Other Contributions not being made.

Other Contributions can be requested for a broad area of school need or a specific, clearly described purpose that relates to the school's functions and objectives. Schools must use funds raised from Other Contributions for the purposes of which they were requested.

### **Extra-Curricular Items and Activities**

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities are items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are additional to or outside what the school provides for free

in order to deliver the Curriculum. As each school delivers the Curriculum based on their own local context, it is at a school's discretion to determine whether an item or activity is extra-curricular.

An item or activity can be provided on a user-pays basis and categorised in Extra-Curricular Items and Activities if it is not required for students to meet Curriculum outcomes or if there is a free standard activity available for students to participate in the Curriculum. Items or activities provided on a user-pays basis can still support curriculum-based learning; however, schools must be able to deliver the standard curriculum requirements to a student who does not participate.

Schools do not need to provide students with access to Extra-Curricular Items and Activities if payment is not received. However, schools cannot refuse students instruction in the Curriculum if payment is not received.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities must be specific, clearly described and identified as optional.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities can include:

- optional alternative forms of instruction
- optional non-curriculum-based school events (graduation)
- optional non-curriculum items (school magazines, yearbooks)
- optional excursions and camps
- optional sporting programs
- optional music programs
- optional out of school hours care
- optional items and materials that are linked to the Curriculum but are additional to or outside what the school provides for free to deliver the Curriculum.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities must not include:

- items, activities, and services that are required to fulfil the Curriculum
- educational items such as headphones, stationery packs, digital devices, textbooks (including digital textbooks), calculators
- general enrolment fees
- subject enrolment fees (including VET courses and subjects defined by the school as 'elective')
- the hire, lease, or lease-to-own, of school owned digital devices.

Schools should ensure the cost of Extra-Curricular Items and Activities are kept to a minimum and made affordable for families. Schools must apply the Financial Help for Families policy in relation to Extra-Curricular Items and Activities to support families experiencing financial hardship.

## **Educational items for students to own**

Schools can invite parents to bring from home, purchase, or lease educational items directly from third parties instead of using what is made available for free by the school. Educational items for students to own include items that have a specific curriculum purpose and for which students take individual possession. When inviting parents to purchase or lease educational items to own directly from a third-party provider, the school may include a list of recommended items or specifications.

Schools cannot communicate to families that parents must purchase educational items for students to own from third parties. If a parent does not provide or purchase educational items, the school must ensure that the student has free access to items as required for the school's delivery of the Curriculum. Schools are not required to provide students with items to own, or keep, on a one-to-one basis. However, schools must determine appropriate resourcing to ensure students have access to the relevant items for the duration required to access the Curriculum.

Educational items for students to own can include:

- textbooks (paper or digital versions)
- stationery
- calculators
- digital devices
- fitted safety equipment (safety boots, closed shoes).

Educational items for students to own must not include:

- items not directly related to curriculum-based learning
- classroom consumables (including class materials such as food ingredients or art supplies that contribute to finished products that students take home)
- items that students do not take individual possession of (for example, class sets of devices, sports equipment, whole-school subscriptions)
- items that are developed and produced by the school (for example, school-developed workbooks, school-developed exam papers)
- activities or services (for example, camps, excursions, events, device repair costs).

## **Financial help for families**

While all contributions are voluntary, schools must prepare for and support families experiencing financial hardship in order to facilitate student participation in the full school program (for example, purchasing Extra-Curricular Items and Activities and educational items for students to own).

Schools must:

- apply the Financial Help for Families policy to parent payment arrangements
- nominate a parent payment contact person(s) to support families with financial help arrangements and support programs.

Refer to Financial Help for Families for further information.

### **Implementing the policy in schools**

Schools develop their parent payment arrangements to suit the contextual needs and aspirations of their school community while ensuring their arrangements remain in alignment with this policy.

School's parent payment arrangements must:

- support the functions and objectives of the school, including the enhancement of student learning, access, equity, inclusion and wellbeing
- ensure costs to parents are kept to a minimum, affordable for families, and proportionate to the needs of the school
- follow the finance requirements set out in the guidance
- follow the communication requirements set out in the guidance
- use the templates provided by the Department to create and communicate their parent payment arrangements
- follow all monitoring and compliance requirements as directed by the Department.

School's must not:

- have parent payment arrangements that are inconsistent with the above requirements
- undertake debt recovery activities for any payments or contributions
- have a localised Parent Payments policy
- use terms, such as fees, charges or levies, that suggest or communicate that contributions are compulsory
- have parent payment arrangements that request payments for:
  - teacher professional learning
  - the provision of gifts, benefits or hospitality to school staff or school council members
  - items or activities that schools receive full funding for such as electricity, standard internet access and department provided administrative software
  - administrative costs such as merchant fees associated with electronic payment transactions, sending text messages or letters to parents.

A one page overview is included on the following page:

# PARENT PAYMENTS POLICY

## ONE PAGE OVERVIEW



### 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.

Further information can be found at: [www2.edithvale.vic.edu.au](http://www2.edithvale.vic.edu.au).

For more information, please see the Department's FAQ page at:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/parent-payment/policy>

### *THE RATIFICATION OF THIS FINANCE' POLICY COVERS THE FOLLOWING:*

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. BPAY            | 6. PURCHASING       |
| 2. EFTPOS          | 7. PURCHASING CARD  |
| 3. QKR             | 8. REFUNDS          |
| 4. INTERET BANKING | 9. REIMBURSEMENTS   |
| 5. COMPASSPAY      | 10. PARENT PAYMENTS |

### **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated in February 2023 and is scheduled for review in 2024 (Annually). This policy will also be updated if significant changes are made that require a revision of this policy.