



School councils are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions.

This policy ensures that:

- costs are kept to a minimum
- 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 to the next year level will not be withheld as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.

Mount Clear College spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students.

Parents and guardians also have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school, as items should meet the specifications provided by the school. There may also be certain items that due to their nature may only be provided by the school.

Parent Payment Categories

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

These items include:

- materials that the student takes possession of, including text books and student stationery
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. Art and Technology subjects)
- school uniform
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

Optional extras 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:

- student computer printing for personal use
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. instrumental music, dance classes
- school-based performances, productions and events
- school magazines, class photographs.
- BAS After School Sport Program

Voluntary financial contributions are for those items and services that parents or guardians are invited to make a donation to the school, for example for grounds maintenance, a library or building trust.

Other support options

The school appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist eligible parents, including the Schoolkids Bonus, State Schools Relief Committee and the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.

Payment arrangements

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 prior to the end of the previous school year).

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

Option A	Full amount at the beginning of Term 1
Option B	Payment at the beginning of each Term
Option C	Half yearly payment (beginning of Terms 1 & 3)
Option D	Other payment arrangements

Alternative payment options are available through the school and parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the school to discuss circumstances and available options.

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 extra or voluntary financial contribution.

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.

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.

All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.

Information sheet for schools: Examples of items/services, potential categories and why

This table provides some examples of education items and services, identifies if they fall under free instruction or a parent payment category and the reasons why.

Item/service	Category/Rationale
Class sets	Free instruction – if temporarily used by students in class, then can be considered an instructional resource owned by the school.
Consumables	Free instruction – if consumable materials held by the school (other than cooking ingredients) and are required to provide the standard curriculum (such as paint, tissues, glue, laboratory chemicals, etc). This includes materials held by the school (instructional resources owned by the school) and distributed to students when required in class. Essential Education Item – where the student takes possession of the finished article and the amount of material actually kept by the student is accurately costed and it is at a significant cost, such as photography, cooking ingredients for home economics, etc.
Excursions/Camps	Essential Education Item – when associated with, but not part of instruction in the standard curriculum program, i.e. travel, accommodation or entry fees can be charged. Mount Clear College offers students many real world/authentic immersion experiences which enhance the standard curriculum. These experiences value add to their education journey, engaging students in school and in their learning. Optional extra – when in addition to the standard curriculum program.
First Aid/School Nurses	Free instruction – as schools have a duty of care to ensure student safety and provide appropriate first aid.
Graduations/school formals	Optional extra – not essential to providing the standard curriculum program.
Hire of text books from school	Essential Education Item – items that a student has possession of for the duration of the subject and then returns to the school (not requiring parents to pay full price for texts).
School programs to provide students with mobile computing devices (netbooks, notebook computers, or tablet computers)	For information on how to implement these programs and comply with legislative obligations, refer to the School Policy and Advisory Guide – Personal Devices (http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/personaldev.aspx)
Performances/activities provided by outside specialists (e.g. 'incursions' that are equivalent to excursions but are held at the school)	Essential Education Item – when essential to support instruction in the standard curriculum program, costs that are equivalent to 'entrance costs' for the use of facilities or equipment may be charged for. Optional extra – when provided in addition to the standard curriculum program.
Photocopying or printing	Free instruction – if materials provided to students are required to provide the standard curriculum program. Essential Education Item – when the school is providing a photocopied text or chapter instead of requiring a text book to be purchased and the students take possession of the item; or when equivalent to student stationery such as students printing out assignments. Optional extra – when it is extracurricular or not essential to providing the standard curriculum program.
Student Insurance	Optional extra – not essential to providing the standard curriculum program.
Student ID Cards	Free instruction – can be considered administration that is required to provide the standard curriculum program.

Note: If a school chooses to use headings such as *Subject levy* or *Electives* with a total cost, an itemised list of what makes up the total cost under these headings is required so that parents understand what they are being asked to pay for. The parent payment policy principles apply to what is considered to be free instruction, essential education item or optional extra.



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Dear Parent/Guardian

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* provides that instruction in the standard curriculum program is delivered free to all students in Victorian Government schools; this is referred to as 'free instruction'. The Act also grants school councils the power to charge fees for goods and services to support the delivery of free instruction and to raise funds.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities related to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and senior secondary certificates such as VCE, VCAL and VET in Schools programs.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development *Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools* policy provides advice on the different types of payments that schools can request from parents and outlines the procedures and protocols schools must adhere to. This policy is available from the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide (www.education.vic.gov.au/spag).

School councils are responsible for developing and approving a school-level parent payment policy that is compliant with the Department's policy.

There are three areas for which parents may reasonably be requested to make a payment or contribution:

- **essential education items** which parents/guardians pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate (for example, stationery, text books and excursions (travel and entry costs));
- **optional extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents/guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in (for example, school magazines or extracurricular programs, BAS After School Sports or activities); and
- **voluntary financial contributions** which parents/guardians may be invited to donate to the school.

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. Parents/Guardians will receive a booklist with requirements for students. These may be purchased at the retail outlet of their choice.

Alternative payment arrangements are also available through the school. Administration staff at Mount Clear College invite all parents/guardians to make an appointment to discuss fees. Staff will explain all fees, payment options and assist with a payment plan if required.

The Mount Clear College school council has passed this policy and has made a considerable effort to ensure that this school policy is fair and provides a number of options to support parents to access the materials and services associated with their child's education.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss your circumstances and the options available to you, please contact the school to make an appointment. A range of support options are available to parents who have difficulty making payments including the Schoolkids Bonus, State Schools Relief Committee or the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.

The school-level parent payment policy will be provided in the newsletter/student start pack.

Yours sincerely

Lynita Taylor
Principal

Wayne Ward
School Council President

MOUNT CLEAR COLLEGE Parent Payment Charges Year 7 – 10 2016

Name of child: _____ Year level _____

Name of child: _____ Year level _____

Please find the itemised list that includes essential education items (those items that your child needs for school) and optional extras (that you can choose whether your child participates in or accesses).

Mount Clear College makes every effort to keep the cost and number of items that need to be purchased to a minimum. We also try to ensure that the costs are affordable for all parents. If you will have difficulty making payments please make an appointment to speak to Julie Dodgshun (Business Manager) to discuss possible support options and flexible payment arrangements. Any information about your financial circumstances, payment arrangements or status will be kept strictly confidential.

We would appreciate payment by 11 December 2015 however payment should be finalised by 1 February 2016. Please bring this completed sheet with you when making payment.

Please Note: Additional school charges may arise during the year. For example: In particular, costs for the Production, school jacket, sports uniforms, BAS (Ballarat Associated Schools) after school sport transportation and uniforms. We also anticipate that there will be some excursions planned during the year with an estimated cost of \$180 per year (not including the costs of purchasing food items on the day).

Essential education items

Essential education items supplied by the school are as follows:

Essential Education Items	Specifications	Cost	✓
Essential Education Items Year 7-10	Includes material costs for Technology, Arts and other subjects including Electives at Year 9 and 10 Compass Organiser Locker Provision Travel to whole school sporting events	\$240.00 \$20.00 \$20.00 \$15.00 Total Cost 295.00	
Essential Education Items Core Years 7-9	Manga High Maths App Subscription	\$10.00	
Leap Program Year 8-9	Camp/Excursion Fee	\$70.00	
SEAL Program Year 7-10	National Benchmark Testing, Affiliations with SEALP Network and Victorian Gifted and Talented Association	\$80.00	
Year 7 Water Safety Program	Fees for use of facilities at the University Pool	\$45.00	
Mentor Journal	Resilience Program	\$20.00	

Optional extras

Item	Cost	✓
Instrumental Music	\$260.00	
School magazine	\$15.00	
Year 7 Philip Island Camp (Estimate Based on 2015)	\$325.00	
Year 8 The Summit Camp (Estimate Based on 2015)	\$480.00	
Year 9 Tasmania Camp (Estimate Based on 2015)	\$830.00	
Year 10 Amazing Race (Estimate Based on 2015)	\$250.00	
Year 9 Advance (Elective) Anglesea Camp (2 Semesters \$450)	\$275.00	
Year 10 Outdoor Ed (Elective) Camp Semester 1 (Summer)	\$250.00	
Semester 2 (Winter)	\$275.00	
BAS Sport after school program – \$20 per Sport per Term		
General Excursions for Budgetary Purposes per student 7-12	\$180.00	

Note: Parents may choose to provide or purchase some items themselves. If you choose to do this you must consult with the school so that your child has the right items. There may be some items or services you cannot purchase yourself.

Voluntary financial contributions

Item	Amount
Building and Library Trust Fund The School has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Status If paying this amount please ask for a DGR receipt to claim on your Tax	

Parent Payment Charges

Essential education items Amount _____

Optional extras Amount _____

Voluntary financial contribution Amount _____

TOTAL _____

Parent Payment Arrangements

Payments may be made at any time using cash, cheque, VISA, MasterCard or EFTPOS via the General Office. BPAY and Centrepay are also available. Centrepay is a direct bill-paying service offered to customers receiving payments from Centrelink. Through Centrepay, you can choose to pay bills by having a regular amount deducted from your Centrelink payment. Centrepay is completely voluntary and free of charge to families.

- Option A (full amount at the beginning of Term 1)
- Option B (payment at the beginning of each Term)
- Option C (half yearly payment)
- Option D (other payment arrangements)*

* (If selecting Option D please make an appointment with the school to discuss your circumstances and the available options)

I HAVE ENCLOSED PAYMENT OF \$ _____

MOUNT CLEAR COLLEGE Parent Payment Charges Year 11 – 12 2016

Name of child: _____ Year level _____

Name of child: _____ Year level _____

Please find the itemised list that includes essential education items (those items that your child needs for school) and optional extras (that you can choose whether your child participates in or accesses).

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Essential education items

Essential education items supplied by the school are as follows:

Essential Education Items	Specifications	Cost	✓
Essential Education Items Year 11-12	VCE/VCAL – Subject Levy Includes all material costs for VCE/VCAL Subjects at Years 11 & 12 Compass Organiser Locker Provision Travel to Sporting Venues for large school events	\$260.00 \$20.00 \$20.00 \$15.00 Total Cost \$315.00	
Mentor Diary	Individual Student study planner	\$20.00	

Optional extras

Item	Cost	✓
Year 12 Outdoor Ed (Elective) Camp	Semester 1 (Summer) \$300.00 Semester 2 (Winter) \$300.00	
Instrumental Music	\$260.00	
School magazine	\$15.00	
BAS Sport after school program – \$20 per sport per Term		
General Excursions for Budgetary Purposes per student 7-12	\$180.00	

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Parent Payment Charges

Essential education items	Amount _____
Optional extras	Amount _____
Voluntary financial contribution	Amount _____
	TOTAL _____

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Option D (other payment arrangements)*

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