



**Rationale:**

This policy is developed to provide guidelines and outline circumstances where payments made to the school can be refunded to parents/guardians.

**Aims:**

- To ensure parents/carers are made aware of school charges in a timely manner.
- To ensure parents/carers inform the school of changes to circumstances regarding attendance at camps/excursions/incursions in a timely manner.
- To ensure opportunity is available for all students who take part in the camps and excursions program, whilst also ensuring the program is conducted on a financial viable basis.

**Guidelines:**

***Types of payments for which refunds might apply:***

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 i.e. school fees
- optional education items i.e. excursions, incursions, camps, swimming
- voluntary financial contributions i.e. Computer Levy

All administrative and financial processes are compliant with Department of Education and Training (DET) requirements, including CASES 21 financial reporting.

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.

**Implementation:**

***Essential education items***

**School Fees:** Where payment has been made refunds will be on the following basis:

- Where the child withdraws from the school prior to the commencement of the school year the refund will be 100% of the amount paid
- Where the child withdraws from the school in Term 1, the refund will be 75% of the amount paid
- Where the child withdraws from the school in Term 2, the refund will be 50% of the amount paid
- Where the child withdraws from the school in Term 3, the refund will be 25% of the amount paid
- Where the child withdraws from the school in Term 4, the child will not receive a refund

***Optional education items***

**Camps & Excursions:**

A school fee is directed to the purpose for which it is charged. Fees for excursions, camps and swimming are calculated on a cost recovery only basis, according to the number of students who have indicated their attendance. Participation of students in an excursion, camp and swimming is indicated through payment and provision of a permission form completed by the parent/carers. As the school budget may not be able to meet shortfalls in funding for an excursion, camp and swimming due to the subsequent non-participation of a student who had previously indicated attendance of the activity, fees already paid may be refunded in full or in part or not at all, having regard to the associated expenses incurred and the circumstances of the non-participation.

Refunds may be given for accident, illness or exceptional circumstances and at the principal's discretion.

***Voluntary financial contributions***

Refunds are all subject to the discretion of the principal on a case by case basis.

**Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle and feedback will be sought from the School Community.
- This policy was endorsed by School Council on Wed 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018.