



OUTSTANDING DEBTS POLICY

Rationale:

School Council has a responsibility to manage the finances of the school, and in doing so, must ensure that a fair and reasonable process for managing outstanding debts is developed and implemented.

Aims:

- To minimise outstanding debts, and to provide an effective process for managing outstanding debts should they occur.

Implementation:

- School Council will consider the costs associated with parent-funded materials and services, and the parent's capacity to pay before deciding upon activities to be offered.
- School Council will ensure the costs associated with parent funded materials and services, and due dates for payment are provided to parents at least 6 weeks in advance so as to allow parents appropriate times to prepare for future expenses.
- School Council will provide opportunities for all parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential arrangements with the principal.
- School Council will allocate funds annually to be used at the discretion of the principal to assist families experiencing genuine financial hardship.
- Outstanding debts generally relate to parents who have agreed to pay for optional goods or services, but then don't pay, or when payments for the hire of school facilities etc are not made by users according to School Council agreements and payment schedules.
- Outstanding debts are generally avoided by pre-payment of optional goods and services by parents, and by hirers paying a minimum of 4 weeks in advance.
- Sundry debtors, staff and students with current outstanding debt older than 4 months or more will not be eligible for optional goods and services until the long term outstanding debts have been paid. This includes the hire of facilities and also camps and excursions.
- However, parents who have agreed to alternative payment arrangements with the principal for optional goods and services but have then reneged upon the arrangement after the event, will be required to pay all future optional expenses in advance.
- Unpaid voluntary financial contributions do not constitute outstanding debts.

- The principal will be responsible for managing all outstanding debts sensitively and confidentially.
- Outstanding debts will carry over from one year to another.
- Students will not be denied access to programs, materials or services for which they have paid or form part of the standard curriculum program, simply because payment has not been received for other charges.
- Community groups that hire school facilities and in doing so create outstanding debts, may have access to the schools facilities suspended until all debts are paid.
- Debt collectors will not be used to collect debts.
- The principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in **September 2010**

References: S381-2007: Parent Payments and Voluntary Financial Contributions in Victorian Government Schools
www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/schoolcharges.htm