Hello everyone,

We have had a wonderful start to our swimming program, although a little cold on Tuesday! Our students have participated well and enjoyed learning and practising new skills. Those little successes may come in different forms. For some success may be in mastering a swimming stroke, being able to hold their breath under water and for some of our little ones, success is getting cleaned, changed and remembering to have all their gear in their bag.

It has been a very busy week for school council, including our Annual General Meeting and our first meeting for the year. I would like to introduce our new School Council for 2016 and congratulate them on their appointment;

President (Mr Simon Sutton)

Vice President (Ms Michelle Blackney)

Treasurer (Ms Melissa Smith)

Secretary (Ms Jo McCarthy)

General committee (Ms Clare Roberts, Ms Belinda O’Grady)

DET staff (Mrs Deb Keating, Mrs Chris Dunleavy, Ms Justine Forsyth)

We understand the commitment and time that joining these committee’s involves, but we are grateful for the contribution and sharing of skills, ideas and thoughts in good spirit for the most important people, our students and their education.

This week school council approved the parent payment for 2016, along with our parent payment school policy. Both will be coming home this week, so please check your children’s school bags. Please read the policy and letter attached and contact myself if you have any further questions or queries. Payment plans can be arranged with the school.

Camp 2016 will be to the beautiful city of Canberra. This camp is very exciting and I know a lot of students have been waiting for this one to come around. It will be open to students from Grade 3 to 6 and has an amazing itinerary! Letters and payment options will be sent home soon. Deposits will be needed by the due date to book places, this camp cannot go ahead if we do not get enough students attending.

We have such an exciting year ahead in 2016, great camps, great teachers and curriculum and great events….including school concert this year. The very talented Ms Jacqui Pascoe will be co-ordinating it and is very excitedly organising the theme and choreography. Can’t wait to see it!

Enjoy your week,

Deb Keating.

a/g PRINCIPAL.
IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

18th, 19th, 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 26th and 29th February

**Our Swimming Program for February.**

Friday 4th March:
STUDENT FREE DAY.

No students are required at school on this day. Teachers are participating in a small school network, whole day Professional Development learning sessions.

NO SCHOOL FOR PREPS FIRST 4 WEEKS.

Prep students have the first four Wednesday’s off and begin full weeks on the week starting Feb 29th.

3rd March:
Clean up Australia Day

7th March:
Twilight Sports

5.45pm Start

10th March:
MARK THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR!

School Photos. Order forms will be sent home shortly

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KIDS CLUB NEWS

Please remember hats are compulsory in first term.

If parents have any enquiries please feel free to drop in and talk to one of our friendly staff at anytime.

**Bookings and cancellations**

To book/cancel your child into before or after school care please ring the school on 5786 1284.

**Kids Club Staff:**

Craig: Co-ordinator/Education Leader.
Andrea: Certified Supervisor.
Anita: Certified Supervisor.
Chris: Accounts.

**IMPORTANT:** All enrolment forms must be up to date for 2016 and your children must be enrolled to use our service. This is part of the Education and Childcare National Regulations.

Accounts can be paid by EFTPOS at School Office Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. If you are having problems please see Chris for a Payment Plan.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PARENTS!

Please note that as from the beginning of Term 2 2016 we will no longer be offering payments to the school via B-Pay.

You may pay the school in Cash, via Electronic Funds Transfer through your bank or EFTPOS at the school.
Parent Payments 2016.
Details regarding Parent Payments for 2016 are attached to this newsletter. Also attached is both our School Policy and DEECD Policy on Parent Payments. Please make sure you read these documents thoroughly so that you have all the information needed on Parent Payments.

TISSUE REQUEST!
We are asking all families to please donate a box of tissues to our school. Our students use so many of them and your donation would greatly be appreciated!

KINGLAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL WEBSITE
Our weekly newsletter is now available to view on our Website.

www.kinglakeps.vic.edu.au

CAR PARK SAFTEY
A FREINDELY REMINDER !!!! For the safety of your children please do not park in the staff car park between the hours of 8.30-9.00am and 3.15-4.00pm. Thank you for your assistance in making our school a safe place for our children to grow.

TERM 1 IS A SUNSMART TERM!
DON’T FOGET YOUR HAT AND MAKE SURE YOU ARE DRESSED FOR THE SUN!
Hats are to be worn at all times when outside and clothing must cover shoulders to prevent any damage from the sun. Students who are not dressed appropriately or do not have a hat will have to remain indoors or in a solid shaded area.

Singlets or shoe string strapped tops are not permitted to be worn at school.
HOT DOG DAY

Tuesday the 1\textsuperscript{st} of March 2016

Name: ...........................................................................

Class:............................................................................... 

Hot Dogs - $2.50 each  

QTY ............... 

Cupcakes 2 for $1.00  

QTY ............... 

Tropical Juice – $1.00 each  

QTY ............... 

Vegetarian Hot Dogs - $2.50 each  

QTY ............... 

Total Order ....................................................

Order and money to be returned by Wednesday 24\textsuperscript{th} of February

Thank You

P.F.A
Dear Parents,

**PARENT PAYMENTS 2016.**

This week School Council reviewed the cost of providing high quality education for your children, in a safe, clean and happy environment at the most affordable cost to families.

All our Parent Payments are within the 3 categories in accordance with Departmental Policy and Procedures and within the School Parent Payment Policy of which I have attached a copy of both for your information.

1. Essential Educational Items.
2. Optional Extra Items.
3. Voluntary Contributions.

1. **Essential Educational Items, Camps, Excursions and School Activities.**

These Parent Payments are **NOT Voluntary Contributions** but payment for goods and services provided to your child/ren for educational items, services and programs.

**a) Essential Educational Items.** The cost of Essential Educational Items (formerly Booklist Payments) is **$120 per child.** School Council spends considerable time selecting the most appropriate items and services to meet the needs of our students. Parent Payments are valuable and contribute to the learning outcomes of your child/ren and all children in the school community. School Council understands that financial stresses on today’s families may be quite high and it is for that reason it has been decided to leave Essential Educational Items the same as for the past few year at $120 per child.

These items include:
- materials that students take possession of, including text books and stationary,
- materials for learning or teaching where students consume, use or take possession of the finished articles. (eg. Art, Science, Cookery etc).

Parents have the option of purchasing equivalent materials from other sources, however should they choose this option then it must be in consultation with the school, as items need to meet the specifications provided by the school. There will be certain items that due to their nature may only be provided by the school.
b) Camps, Excursion and School Based Activities. Costs of transport, accommodation, food, activities and other related costs for school camps. Cost of transport, entry fees and other related costs for Excursions including Swimming and Other Sporting Activities where students are required to leave the school. All other school based learning activities that incur a cost. All students are expected to attend and participate in these activities and parents are required to pay for these activities prior to their child attending. These items will be invoiced to parents as they occur through 2016.

2) Optional Extra Items.

These items are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program and may be offered to all students. The optional extra are provided on a user pay basis, and if parents choose to access them then they will be required to pay for them. These items will be invoice to parents as they occur through 2016.

These items include:

- student extra curricular programs or activities such as instrumental music, dance classes etc.
- school based performances, productions (concerts) and events.
- cost of transport, entry fees and other related costs for Excursions and Other Sporting Activities where students are required to leave the school but it is parent choice as to whether their children participate in these activities. All other school based activities that incur a cost but are parent choice whether their children attend. Parents are required to pay for these activities prior to their child attending.

3) Voluntary Contributions.

Kinglake Primary School has not made a request for Voluntary Contributions in the past. However, it has been decided this year to introduce a Voluntary Contribution of $50 per family. This is being requested as the school is very much in need of some attention in the building maintenance and garden cleaning and pruning areas. Our budget in these areas is stretched to the limit and we cannot afford to have the work that is needed done without your support. There has been many sightings of snakes over the past few years and so we need to prune back vegetation and clear certain areas so that any snakes may be easily spotted and for bushfire readiness therefore making a safer environment for the children. Also there is much maintenance to be done on the buildings. I will state again that this is a voluntary fee and therefore is not compulsory to pay but it would be of great benefit to our school if families were able to assist. These donations are tax deductible. Parents will be invoiced at the time of Essential Items. Please let me know if you are unable to help us out with this fee.
Payment Plans.

As stated above school council appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. A range of support options are available to assist families and you are welcome at any time to discuss these with either myself or with our Principal. Just call the school to make an appointment.

An option that may be of great help to ease the financial burden of parents is a payment plan. With this option you may choose to pay any amount at any time to take the pressure off paying for an event or item in full. For example: Essential Education Items are $120 for the year per child. You may find it easier to pay this by the term. Eg $30 per child per term. Just make the payment within the first 2 weeks of each term and you’re done. You may wish to pay weekly, fortnightly or monthly - it is your choice. You may make payments for Camps, Excursions or other School Activities or you may wish to pay for it all on a payment plan. Just get in contact with me and together we will set up a plan to suit your family.

I hope this letter sets out clearly what is incorporated into Parent Payments for 2016. Please if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Faithfully,

Jennifer McDonald-Price.
BUSINESS MANAGER.
Kinglake Primary School.

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY.
(Ratified by School Council 15th February, 2016)

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure school level parent payments and processes are compliant with DEECD policy requirements.

The Department provides funding to school through the Student Resource Package (SRP) and various programs. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items and operating costs.

Free instruction includes learning, instructional support, materials and resources, administration and facilities to provide the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

**Rationale:** The Education Training and Reform Act 2006 empowers School Councils to charge parents for goods and services used in the course of instructing their children, as well as to raise funds to be used to support programs at the school.

**Aim:** Our aim is to provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funds with approved financial contributions and payments from parents.

The policy at Kinglake Primary School is to ensure that all students have access to the standard curriculum program, that no student is treated differently or disadvantaged in any way and that the school does not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year as a condition of payment of any of the following DEECD approved categories.

**Implementation:** School Council may supplement DEECD funds by requesting payments from parents which will cover the following three areas. As at 2015 Kinglake Primary School is only requesting Parent Payment for Essential Educational Items.

1) **Essential Education Items.** These are the items that parents pay to school to provide, or may provide themselves if appropriate, and are essential to support instruction to the standard curriculum program. These are not voluntary contributions but are payments for goods and services received, and therefore parents are responsible to pay for and include:
   a) Materials that the students take possession of such as text books and student stationary.
   b) Materials for learning and teaching where students consume or take possession of the finished items eg. Cooking, science, art.
   c) Items associated with but not part of instruction in the standard curriculum program such as costs associated with camps and excursions, incursions and school activities which students are expected to attend. The school has the right to not allow students to participate in these programs if payment has not been made in advance.
   d) School Uniform where applicable.
2) **Optional Extras.** These are items provided in addition to the standard curriculum program and are offered to all students. They are provided on a user pays basis, and if parents choose to access them they will be required to pay for them. These items include:
   a) Instructional support material, resources and administration in addition to the standard curriculum program (eg personal use computer printing, photocopying etc).
   b) Extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum program. Eg. Instrumental music, Choir, Gardening Club etc.
   c) School Based performances, production and events where required.

3) **Voluntary Contributions.** Parents/Guardians or anyone else may be invited to make a donation to the school for the following purposes:
   a) Contributions to a building fund or contributions to a Library Fund. (These are the only 2 funds approved by the Australian Taxation Office and are tax deductible).
   b) Contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school (eg materials, equipment or services) in addition to those funded through the SRP. This may include additional computers or student related services.
   c) General Voluntary Contributions to the school.

**Costings:** Every effort is to be made by School Council to ensure that all costs are kept to a minimum and that items students consume or take possession of are accurately costed.

Parents are also to be advised that they are responsible for providing essential items for their children, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate.

**Note:** If parents/guardians choose to provide equivalent materials themselves, this should be done in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. However, there are some items (eg food provisions for cooking classes) which, due to their nature, can only be provided by the school.

**Payment Plans:** To further assist parents/guardians to make it easier for them to budget and pay for Parent Payments, Kinglake Primary School offers families the option of paying by instalments. Families may pay by the week, fortnightly, monthly, by the term, in full or by adhoc payments of any amount of their choosing. This will allow parents to be able to save for Camps, Excursions or School Based Activities and to pay off Essential Items.

**Confidentiality and Sensitivity:** Parent Payment details MUST be treated confidentially and no discussion are to be held with any students in relation to this matter. The public notification of students and/or their guardians financial situation is unacceptable and MUST not occur under any circumstances. It is not acceptable to use coercion or harass/parents/guardians to obtain payments.

Invoices for unpaid essential education items or optional items accepted by the parents are to be generated and distributed on a regular basis but no more than once a month. Only the initial request for Voluntary Contributions and one reminder notice per year is to be sent to parents/guardians.

The Principal and Business Manager must exercise sensitivity to the different financial circumstances if individual students and their families. The Principal and Business Manager are encouraged to make decisions about how to manage non-payment of essential educational and optional extras on a case by case basis.
Where families are experiencing difficulty in making payments, the Principal or Business Manager are expected to discuss with them a range of support options available, and to negotiate an alternative arrangement such as a change in Payment Instalments. Parents/Guardians who are experiencing difficulty are to be encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal or Business Manager to discuss alternative payment methods and advice given to parents of any assistance which may be available such as State Schools Relief, Welfare and Support Agencies.

**Administration:** Administrative and financial processes must be compliant with DEECD requirements such as CASES 21 Reporting. CASES 21 Receipts are to be issued immediately upon payment.

No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents/guardians or students.

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle. School Council will review the level and purpose of parent payments and voluntary contributions annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction received by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
School Policy & Advisory Guide

Parent Payments

Purpose of this policy

To ensure school-level parent payment policies and processes are compliant with the Department's policy requirements.

Background

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program (i.e., eight key learning areas), and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

The Department provides funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) and various programs. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items, equipment, and operational costs.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional support, materials, and resources. Administration and facilities required to provide the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and senior secondary certificates (VCE, VCEA, and VET programs).

Policy

School councils are responsible for developing and approving a school-level parent payment policy that includes:

- All students have access to the standard curriculum program.
- It covers the three parent payment categories: i.e., essential education items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions.
- If the school does not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment for any of the three categories.
- Items that students consume or take possession of are accurately recorded.
- Cost is kept to a minimum.
- Payment requests must be clearly itemized within each category.

Parents/guardians are given the option of purchasing equivalent essential education items themselves, in consultation with the school.

Students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum program, refused instruction or disadvantaged on the basis of payments not being made for education items, services or voluntary financial contributions. For example, if parents/guardians choose for their children not to attend a compulsory excursion/trip, an alternative option needs to be provided.

The status and details of any payments or non-payments are confidential.

Parents are provided with early notice of payment requests (e.g. a minimum of six weeks notice prior to the end of the previous school year).

Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.

It meets the community’s expectations and is provided to parents.

Principals, as executive officers of school councils, must ensure that the school-level policy complies with the Department’s policy and that all staff are familiar with and adhere to it.

Important:

It is not acceptable to use coercion or harass parents/guardians to obtain payment.

Principals must ensure any payment records are kept confidential. The public identification of students or their parents/guardians who have or have not made a payment or financial contribution is unacceptable and must not occur in any circumstance.

Under no circumstances can collectors of any type, including debt collectors, be used by schools to obtain any funds from parents/guardians.

Categories

This table describes the three parent payment categories that school councils can request payments from parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential education items</td>
<td>These are items which parents/guardians pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate. These items are essential to support instruction in the standard curriculum program and include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- materials that the individual student takes possession of, such as text books and student stationary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. home economics, photography, catering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- school uniform (where applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- activities associated with, but not part of instruction in the standard curriculum program, such as costs associated with camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend (e.g. transport and entrance costs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: If parents/guardians choose to provide equivalent materials themselves, this should be done in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. However, there are some items (e.g. food provision for home economics) which, due to their nature, can only be provided by the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional extras</td>
<td>These are items provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and are offered to all students. They are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents/guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>These items include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- instructional support material, resources, and administration in addition to the standard curriculum program (e.g. student computer printing for personal use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum program (e.g. instrumental music)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- school-based performances, productions and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- materials for subjects where the payment sought is the difference between the basic materials/services required for access to the standard curriculum program and higher cost alternatives which may be more desirable (e.g. the use of more expensive materials)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- materials and services offered in addition to the standard curriculum program (e.g. school magazines)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                   | - school facilities and equipment not associated with providing the standard curriculum program, and not otherwise provided for through the
For a parent payment categories flowchart see Parent Payments Categories Flowchart (PDF - 212KB)

School-level processes

Communication with parents

The school-level policy should ensure that all communication with parents/guardians, including payment requests, is fair and reasonable. Payment requests, letters or CASES21 invoices for student materials and services charges must be accompanied by the following information:

- a description of each of the three parent payment categories
- details of what parents are being asked to pay for
- that parents are required to provide essential education items for their children, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate
- the availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the principal if the parent wishes to discuss these
- a copy of the school-level policy.

Administrative and payment processes

The school-level policy should ensure that:

- administrative and financial processes are compliant with Departmental requirements such as CASES 21 financial reporting
- invoices for unpaid essential education items or optional items accepted by parents are generated and distributed on a regular basis, but not more than once a month
- only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice per year is sent to all parents/guardians
- receipts are issued to parents immediately upon payment and receipted on CASES 21

Support Options

There are a range of support options available for parents experiencing difficulty in paying for essential items including:

- the Schoolkids Bonus, which is provided by Centrelink to help with education costs and is automatically paid in January and July to eligible families and students
- access to State Schools’ Relief committee support via the principal to assist with uniforms, shoes, textbooks, stationary and software; see Financial Assistance for Families. Note: State Schools’ Relief has developed a smartphone app, vhSafely to buy and sell used uniforms, books and musical instruments; see State Schools’ Relief - vhSafely Smartphone App
- the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund, which is available for eligible families, to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities
- welfare and support agencies that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families.

Principals must exercise sensitivity to the differing financial circumstances of individual students and their families. Principals are encouraged to make decisions about how to manage non-payment of essential education items or optional items on a case-by-case basis.

Where families have difficulty making payments, principals are expected to discuss with them the range of support options available, and to negotiate an appropriate alternative arrangement, such as payment by instalments.
Principals are encouraged to explore ways to make quality second-hand books and uniforms available to parents in need.

Parents or guardians who experience difficulties providing or paying the school to provide essential education items, should be encouraged to make an appointment with the principal or other nominated senior staff member to discuss alternative payment methods.

Support materials for school use

The following document provides a range of templates for school use to support communicating with families about parent payments, see: Parent Payment Support Materials for School Use (doc - 720K)

Schools have also identified a range of good practice processes including:

- using the Department's samples as the basis to develop school-level policies and processes
- having strong relationships with local communities and organisations to source supplies at competitive prices
- purchasing second-hand text books from former students to be used as class sets.

Related policies

- Personal Devices - Parent Payments and Access

Department resources

- Answers to the most commonly asked questions about school costs for parents, see: Frequently Asked Questions
- Information on the financial assistance options available for parents and students, including the Youth Allowance Scheme, ABSTUDY and student scholarships, see: Costs and Financial Assistance
- Financial management, see: Finance
- Further support, contact the relevant regional office or the School Operations and Governance Unit - Regional Services Group via the School Policy and Advisory Guide email: requisite@edumail.vic.gov.au
- Guidelines for parent/guardian complaints processes, see: Parent Complaints

Related legislation

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Sections 2.2.4 (1), 2.3.6 (1)(c), 2.2)