Rationale:

- The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* provides for the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

School councils can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges, and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

1. **essential education items** which parents and guardians are **required** to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (e.g. stationery, text books and school uniforms where required)

2. **optional extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in (e.g. school magazines, extra curricular programs or activities)

3. **voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be **invited** to donate to the school (e.g. grounds beautification, additional computers).

Aims:

- To provide high quality learning opportunities that cater for the needs of all students.

Implementation:

- Parents and guardians are provided with early notice of requests for payment of essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions. A minimum of six weeks notice prior to the end of the previous school year should be given to allow parents and guardians sufficient planning time. Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used

- Items that students consume or take possession of are accurately costed

- Payment arrangements coincide with the timing of the availability of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) support for eligible parents/guardians and that parents are not to be pressured to sign over their portion of the EMA.

- There is a clearly articulated process for the administration of the Education Maintenance Allowance

- Administrative and financial processes are compliant with Departmental requirements such as CASES 21 financial reporting

- The school does not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment of essential education items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions
• The status and details of any payments or non-payments by parents and guardians are confidential.
• That parents/guardians are required to provide essential education items for their students, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate
• A clear description of each of the three parent payment categories
• The availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the principal if the parent wishes to discuss these
• Details of how payments or contributions will be spent by the school

Evaluation:

• This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle. School Council will review the level and purpose and costs annually.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....  May 2010