PARENT PAYMENTS POLICY

CONTEXT
The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 ensures 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.

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 associated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) 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 which are an integral part of the SRP.

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, school excursions, school camps, 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).

Moe (Albert Street) School Council has the responsibility to develop policy and plans to allocate its overall resources – human, financial and physical – in accordance with the goals, targets and strategies outlined in its strategic plan. This includes the allocation of funding provided under the SRP, any other funding provided by DEECD and locally-raised funds.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION
The Moe (Albert Street) Primary School Council Parent Payment Policy on essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions provides for the following:

- Notice of requests for payment of annual essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions for the school year will be provided to parents in December each year but payment will not be required prior to the commencement of the following year.
- Notice of proposed optional extras such as camps, excursions, incursions and sport will be provided in February each year.
- Details of how payments requested will be spent will be provided by the school.
- Payment arrangements will coincide with the timing of the availability of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) support for eligible parents/guardians.
- The school will provide for alternative payment options and an invitation for parents/guardians to contact the principal if the parent/guardian wishes to discuss these.
- Only one request for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice will be issued.
- The school will 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 contribution.
- The school will ensure that the status and details of any payments, or non-payments, by parents and guardians are confidential.
- The school will keep parent payments to a minimum and must not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services to the student.
- The school will ensure that the Parent Payments Policy is communicated within the school and that all members of staff are familiar with and adhere to it.
- A copy of the Parent Payment Policy will be available upon request.