



Kalinda Primary School No. 5121

Financial Help for Families Policy

Purpose

To ensure that families requiring financial help are aware of options and support available so that every child has access to educational opportunities and is not disadvantaged or excluded.

Rationale

The Victorian community shares a vision to build an education system that champions excellence and ensures that every child and young person has access to the opportunities to succeed in life, regardless of their background or circumstances. Financial hardship refers to the inability to pay due to financial difficulties or circumstances. This can be temporary financial difficulty due to a sudden unexpected change of circumstances; as a result of low and/or fixed income which leads to ongoing financial difficulty or a combination of low income and unexpected change in circumstances. The KPS Financial Help for Families Policy reflects a proactive strategy to discreetly support families experiencing unexpected loss, illness, job loss, relationship changes and those experiencing longer term hardship.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION THROUGH COMMUNICATION

KPS understands that at times families may experience financial difficulty or hardship and may find requests for payment challenging.

Families are encouraged to contact the Business Manager in the school office, on 9876 3289 or email kalinda.ps@education.vic.gov.au for a confidential discussion and plan of support. Families may request to discuss their circumstances with the Principal or Assistant Principal if they prefer.

STRATEGY TO SUPPORT PARENTS

Early identification is critical in supporting families to manage financial hardship. KPS may employ such proactive strategies and confidential discussions as:

Through classroom teachers:

- Monitor if students are regularly attending school and if there any unusual absences
- Monitor if students have brought lunch/snacks to school
- Observe any sudden changes to student health and wellbeing
- Assist parents from non-English speaking backgrounds with their understanding of important notices and information
- Communicate with parents/guardians any concerns and offer support in a respectful manner
- Report any concerns to the Principal/Assistant Principal
- Observe if notices for payment and permission forms e.g. for excursions, camps, activities are not returned and bring it to the attention of the Business Manager
- Encourage parents/guardians to speak with the Business Manager or Principal if there appears to be a preference to keep the student home, for reasons that may relate to hardship.

Through the office team:

- Ensure information on payment options is available, easily accessible and clearly explained to all parents so that they know what to expect and what support they can access
- Support parents/guardians from non-English speaking backgrounds with their understanding of important information (arranging access to a free translation service is available)
- Reminding families that curriculum contributions and other contributions are voluntary
- Ensure families are provided with reasonable notice of any payment requests that arise during the school year including camps, excursions and incursions - ensuring families have a clear understanding of the full financial contribution being sought
- Be sensitive to any change in personal circumstances, communicated by the parent, which may indicate financial hardship
- Ensure the status and details of any financial arrangements are kept confidential and only shared with relevant school personnel

Through the Principal, Assistant Principal and Wellbeing team:

- Ensure staff are aware of the KPS Financial Help for Families Policy
- Support families experiencing financial hardship to become aware of the support available to them
- Encourage families to feel they can approach the school to discuss their concerns and be supported in a respectful and confidential manner
- Facilitate student access to educational opportunities, so as to avoid non-participation through financial hardship.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND KEY CONTACTS

Consideration to financial hardship arrangements in respect to payment requests is provided to families experiencing long-term hardship or short-term crisis on a confidential, case-by-case basis.

Families are encouraged to contact the Business Manager in the school office, on 9876 3289 or kalinda.ps@education.vic.gov.au for a confidential discussion and plan of support, or the Principal or Assistant Principal, if they prefer.

KPS financial hardship arrangements include a proactive approach to providing support for parents/guardians experiencing financial difficulty and include:

- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- State Schools' Relief

General enquiries regarding any payment requests can be made to the office in person, by phone on 9876 3289 or email kalinda.ps@education.vic.gov.au. Our friendly staff in the office are able to assist with general enquiries.

For further information on financial help for families, please visit:
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/financial-help-families/policy>

Access the Financial Help for Families Policy

KPS Financial Help for Families Policy is available on the school website at www.kalinda.vic.edu.au or a copy may be requested from the school office.

REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

KPS School Council approves, monitors and reviews annually the Financial Help for Families Policy to ensure:

- Access, equity and inclusion
- Affordability
- Engagement and support
- Respect and confidentiality
- Transparency and accountability.

In the review process School Council will identify any factors to be taken into account, including any concerns raised by the school community and will notify any changes to the Financial Help for Families Policy annually via the school website www.kalinda.vic.edu.au and newsletter.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 01.03.2023 and is scheduled for review in February 2024.

Signed (School Council President):



Signed Shaun McClare (Principal):



