PAY IT FORWARD (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT) FUND

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Carlton North Primary School (CNPS) will use when families seek financial support through the Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund.

SCOPE

This policy sets out the eligibility and supports students whose family are experiencing financial hardship who wish to access Extra Curricular (non-curriculum) Activities or Items through the Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund at Carlton North Primary School.

DEFINITIONS

Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund – monies donated by CNPS community to support students of families experiencing financial hardship participate in Extra-Curricular Items and Activities.

Standard Curriculum - the Victorian Curriculum F–10, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), and the Victorian Pathways Certificate. Schools must ensure that students have free access to items and activities as required for the school's delivery of the Curriculum.

Extra-Curricular - items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are optional, additional to those provided by the school at no cost to deliver the standard curriculum. Schools do not need to provide students with access to Extra-Curricular Items and Activities if payment is not received.

POLICY

The Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund is designed to support students whose families are experiencing financial hardship.

The Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund aims to support families on a case-by-case basis and provide an appropriate, achievable and family-centred response. Dispensation of the fund promotes the dignity and confidentiality of family circumstances and assures families that students will continue to be supported to access the Curriculum. It is not intended to replace the Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund or State Schools Relief. It is a finite fund that offers support in addition to these formal supports.

This may include families who possess a current government means tested concession card and those experiencing unforeseen financial hardship during the school year.

Hardship or contributing factors can include, but are not limited to:

- sudden changes such as loss of employment or illness in the family
- disruption such as family breakdown or transitional housing
- crisis events such as family violence or natural disasters
- families who sought support for other department programs, such as the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- carers or current government means tested concession card holders.
- refugee status, for example families seeking asylum who are on a Bridging or Temporary Protection Visa.

Activities and items at CNPS include the instrumental music program, extension programs, Chess Club, school photos and Year 6 celebration jumper (hoodie). Activities and items may be added to this list throughout the school year at the discretion of the school. Any additions will be clearly articulated prior to fund collection and communicated to families of eligible students.

On an annual basis with monies collected from the previous school year (January to December), the Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund will provide equal access to those community members who possess a current government means tested concession card, alongside five additional school allocations for students whose family are experiencing unforeseen financial hardship. Any unspent monies will not be accrued but will roll over to the next calendar year for re-distribution. In the event the fund is depleted of monies, CNPS is not responsible for funding any Extra Curricular (non-curriculum) Items and Activities.

CNPS will publish monies donated to the Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund on an annual basis through the Annual Report to the community, including expenditure and purpose from the previous year.

On an annual basis, eligible families will be notified of their annual access amount for each child/ren to the Pay It Forward (Community Engagement) Fund, which they can access at any time within the calendar year.

If families require financial support, they can liaise with the CNPS Business Manager.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department policies and guidelines:

- Parent Payment Policy
- Financial Help for Families
- CNPS_financial-help-for-families-schools-checklist_2025.docx
- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- State Schools Relief
- Student Scholarships
- Marrung Education Scholarships

REVIEW CYCLE (TO BE UPDATED ANNUALLY AND APPROVED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL)

This policy was created/last updated on 25/8/25 and is scheduled for review on 25/8/26