December 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians

Attached to this letter is your child’s booklist for the 2016 school year and a Voluntary financial contribution for an upgrade to student playground projects. Previously we have asked for a voluntary curriculum levy of $50 per family, which is no longer asked for.

School Councils are responsible for developing and approving a school-level parent payment policy that is compliant with the Department’s policy. If you would like a copy please follow the link on the school website, www.sydenham.vic.edu.au

There are three areas for which parents may reasonably be requested to make a payment or contribution:

- **Essential education items** which parents/guardians pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate (for example, stationery, text books; photocopying/printing (when the school is providing a photocopied text instead of requiring a text book to be purchased and the students take possession of the item eg. Assignments).

- **Optional education items** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents/guardians may choose whether their child accesses or participates in (for example, mathletics, reading eggs, incursions, excursions, camps or extracurricular programs or activities); and

- **Voluntary financial contributions** which parents/guardians may be invited to make a voluntary donation to help support the school in developing playground projects.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children are provided with essential education items. The school makes every effort to keep the cost of items that need to be purchased at a minimum. Parents/guardians also have the option of providing essential education items themselves. If you choose to do this you must consult with the school so that your child has the correct items. There may be some items or services you cannot purchase yourself.

Bulk Classroom Requisites - These supplies are essential to classroom learning and enrich the children’s experiences. We ask parents to assist with the purchase of these materials by contributing $70.00 per student. If you would like an itemised list please follow the link above.

Included on the booklist is a charge for Mathletics and Reading Eggs (Digital Package).

Over the past few years ‘Mathletics’ has had a positive effect on students’ number skills. The students who use the program regularly have improved their addition, subtraction and
‘times tables’ knowledge significantly. Students compete in a number skills game online with children all over Australia and in some countries overseas. The students love the program and it has great educational value.

The school is able to offer students 24 hour access to this program at a cost of $8.00. If you were to purchase Mathletics out of school it would cost you $99.00. More than 3.5 million students around the world use Mathletics. It covers State and National Curriculum with over 1000 learning activities and weekly reports email to parents.

Reading Eggs is an online reading program that makes learning and practicing essential reading skills a fun and motivating experience. Students and teachers will have access to over 2000 titles which can be read at home and school. Positive reinforcement is motivating students as they earn eggs for reading books, writing stories, completing comprehension quizzes and playing learning games.

The classroom teacher will supply your child with their individual password.

Also, included on the booklist is a charge for a Student Diary which students’ have used over the past few years but has been paid separately from the booklist. The School Diary is specifically designed and printed for our school. It is not available to be purchased anywhere else.

The diary (A4 size) will be used for recording dates, daily reading signatures, notes and other communication to parents. It also provides relevant website addresses and useful learning support resources.

The diaries will support the school home partnership and will be an important part of school life for your child. There will be other features of these diaries that are not available in commercially produced diaries.

The staff and School Council are very aware of the financial pressures on families and thus we have endeavoured to maintain costs to the barest minimum. A range of support options are available to parents who have difficulty making payments include the State Schools Relief Committee support, Saver Plus (www.bsl.org.au/services/money-matters/saver-plus/#c476) and CSEF – Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund.

Families who do not have an immediate capacity to pay are also able to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the school. Should you require information about financial assistance please contact the Campus Principal.

Please complete the booklist online by 31st December to ensure delivery before the beginning of the school year and to receive the cheaper packing and handling cost of $8.95 per family.

We look forward to working with you next year to support your child’s development in 2016.

Yours sincerely

Glenn McGarigle Tanya Seath
Principal School Council President