



CO CURRICULAR PROGRAMS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

RATIONALE

Northcote High School is committed to providing students with a range of educational experiences which recognise the significance of learning beyond the classroom.

School councils are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – essential education items, optional education items and voluntary financial contributions.

Co-curricular programs (specifically the Instrumental Music Program) are considered to be **Optional education items** or non-essential materials and services. Optional education items are those that are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and which are offered to all students. These optional extras are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents and guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them)

AIM

The Northcote High School Co-Curricular Programs Financial Management Policy exists to:

- Recognise the importance of effective processes, planning and financial management in relation to co-curricular activities/programs to mitigate financial risk and liability to the school
- Clearly define the financial expectations of families related to the enrolment of students in co-curricular programs at NHS and management of any outstanding payment of fees, ensuring co-curricular programs are not at the liability of the school
- To provide opportunities to all students wanting participate in co-curricular programs and providing families experiencing financial difficulty alternate methods of payment for co-curricular program fees through access to payment plans and other funding

GUIDELINES

NB: The term co-curricular programs includes the hire of school equipment (specifically instruments)

Enrolment

- Prior to enrolling in co-curricular programs students and their families are explicitly informed that NHS co-curricular programs operate on a user pays basis
- During the enrolment process of co-curricular programs families are required to make payment for the program cost in full or alternatively arranging a structured payment plan with the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator. (Refer to the payment plan section of the policy for further information)
- Families experiencing financial difficulty are encouraged to inform the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator of their situation during the enrolment process so support can be provided. Refer to the NHS Financial Hardship Policy for further information
- Students enrolling in co-curricular programs after the first day of Term 1 are required to make the full annual program payment. Students enrolling after the last day of Term 1 will be charge the annual program payment on a pro rata basis



Withdrawing Enrolment

- Students wishing to withdraw enrolment from co-curricular programs are to inform the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator as soon as possible including their date of withdrawal
- Before withdrawing from the program students are responsible for ensuring all school or hired equipment is returned. If equipment is not returned or lost the family may incur additional charges made payable to the school
- Any refunds for co-curricular program fees are considered by the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator and Business Manager and contingent on the basis that the school does not incur any liability for the withdrawal of a student enrolment from the program. Refer to the NHS Refund Policy for further information
- Where co-curricular program fees are paid in full, refunds may be considered by the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator and Business Manager and refunded on a pro rata basis.
- For families making payment of co-curricular programs via payment plan, any outstanding term balances must be paid in full prior to withdrawing enrolment and all other scheduled payments may be cancelled after consultation with the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator and Business Manager

Payment Arrangements

- Families are provided information regarding due dates for payment of co-curricular programs and payment methods during the enrolment process
- Payment for co-curricular programs can be made via Compass or in person at the General Office (Cash, Cheque or EFTPOS)
- All families are provided with the opportunity to enter a payment plan for the full payment of co-curricular programs
- Receipts will be issued to families immediately upon making payment
- All credit card and payment arrangements are kept in a secure place and confidentiality maintained

Payment Plans

- Payment plans are scheduled over 8 to 10 monthly payments and managed via Compass. Families wanting to request a personalised payment plan must speak with Co-Curricular Program Coordinator and Business Manager
- Families entering payment plans are provided with the scheduled dates for debit of payments
- Families making payment for co-curricular programs via a payment plan are required to ensure there are sufficient funds for payments to be debited on the scheduled dates
- Families are responsible for informing the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator if there are any changes to their situation, including updating of card details, insufficient funds or to request a reschedule of payment
- If there are multiple (more than two) failed payment plan payments and families have not informed the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator of their situation the student may be withdrawn from the co-curricular program or unable to attend the program until payment is made



Financial Management of Co-Curricular Programs

- The Finance Team will operate and code all revenue and expenditure for co-curricular programs back to Department of Education and Training Cases21 Finance. The Department of Education and Training CASES21 Accounting software package is to be reconciled with co-curricular program budgets each month
- The NHS Finance Sub Committee of School Council will have a standing item on their meeting agenda regarding the financial management of NHS co-curricular programs and any fundraising activities and budgets associated with the co-curricular programs
- Minutes of these meetings and any documentation detailing the financial management of co-curricular programs are tabled at School Council
- The Business Manager and Co-Curricular Program Coordinators are in constant communication to ensure any liability to the school is reduced, ensuring outstanding fees are paid and management of program budget
- The Co-Curricular Program Coordinators with the support of the Accounts Receivable Officer are responsible for following up and ensuring co-curricular program fees are paid (including the monitoring of payment plans)

Managing Outstanding Fees

- Co-curricular programs operate on a user pays basis
- Payment of co-curricular program payments are monitored closely by the Co-Curricular Program Coordinators and Business Manager
- Should payment of co-curricular programs continue to not be paid or refused the Co-Curricular Program Coordinator in consultation with the Business Manager and the Finance Sub Committee of School Council have the right to withdraw any student from the program effective immediately

EVALUATION

Policy to be reviewed annually under the guidance of the Finance Committee and ratified by School Council. All policies are evaluated in line with DET guidelines and policies and NHS values.