Student Assistance Fund

POLICY

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Ocean Grove Primary School Student Assistance Fund is to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent any student from fully participating in the educational, social, and extracurricular life of the school community. The fund specifically aims to:

- Subsidise school camp attendance for families experiencing financial vulnerability, including targeted multi-sibling allowances (e.g., twins, triplets, or multiple concurrent school enrolments).
- Supplement government funding, such as the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), to bridge cost gaps for mandatory excursions, incursions, and swimming programs.
- Provide essential school uniform items, including standard everyday attire, specialized Year 6 jumpers and polos, House shirts, and official school bags.
- Offset staffing or operational costs to ensure all Year 6 students can attend school camps accompanied by familiar, supportive teaching staff.
- Support access to digital curriculum requirements, including the provision or loan of iPads and connectivity devices for remote learning or home study support.
- Provide discretionary emergency relief for acute, short-term financial hardship.
- Support elite level student achievement if through School Sport Victoria (SSV) pathways via the Student Assistance Fund up to $200.00

Scope

This policy applies to all registered students and their families at Ocean Grove Primary School. It governs the internal allocation of school-managed welfare funds as and when they are available, alongside partnerships with external relief organizations.

Guiding Principles

- **Equity and Inclusivity:** Every student deserves equal access to a comprehensive education and social integration, regardless of socio-economic background.
- **Dignity and Confidentiality:** All applications, discussions, and financial distributions will be handled with strict privacy to protect the identity and dignity of the students and families involved.

- **Accountability:** Financial management of the fund will follow transparent, audited Department of Education guidelines.

Administration and Governance

- **Approval Authority:** Discretionary hardship requests are evaluated and approved via a joint consensus between the School Principal and the Business Manager.
- **Record Keeping:** The Business Manager is responsible for maintaining accurate, up-to-date, and strictly confidential financial ledgers detailing all deposits, community grants, and item allocations.
- **Financial Reporting:** To maintain transparency within governance structures, the active balance and high-level summaries of the fund will be presented at regular School Council Finance Meetings for official recording and reporting purposes. Individual family names will remain strictly anonymous during these sessions.
- **Community Awareness:** The availability of the Student Assistance Fund will be promoted periodically via the school newsletter to ensure families are aware of the support channels.

Application and Request Process

Families seeking support from the Student Assistance Fund can initiate a request through any of the following confidential channels:

- **In-Person Visit:** Request a private meeting with the Principal or Business Manager at the school administration office.
- **Telephone Contact:** Call the school's primary phone line and request to speak directly with the Business Manager or Principal.
- **Electronic Mail:** Submit a confidential email detailing the request context to: ocean.grove.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

Donations and Local Fundraising

Ocean Grove Primary School welcomes contributions from community members, local businesses, or families wishing to support their peers.

- **Financial Contributions:** Direct donations can be made specifically to the Student Assistance Fund ledger. Interested donors should contact the Business Manager to arrange a secure bank transfer or receipt.
- **Equity Allocation:** Any local community fundraising explicitly earmarked for student welfare will be directed into this fund under the supervision of the School Council.

External Support and Partnerships (State Schools' Relief)

The school actively collaborates with external charity frameworks to maximize assistance options:

- **State Schools' Relief (SSR):** In addition to internal funding, the school works alongside State Schools' Relief to source subsidized uniforms, footwear, and educational items for eligible families facing adversity.
- **Accessing SSR Support:** Families do not apply to SSR directly. Instead, they should contact the Ocean Grove Primary School Principal or Business Manager. The school will assess eligibility and submit formal applications on the family's behalf to streamline the delivery of clothing or equipment.

Policy Review Framework

- **Governing Body:** Ocean Grove Primary School Council and School Principal.
- **Review Cycle:** Every 2 years to ensure it continues to meet the evolving welfare needs of the school community.
- **Last Updated:** August 2026
- This is a local, school based policy

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be made available publicly on our school website.