



MARLO PRIMARY SCHOOL

ABN 92 382 131 924

Principal: Paul Jorgensen
School Council: Kelly Conroy
Email: marlo.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

PO Box 64, MARLO 3888
Jorgensen St, Marlo 3888
Tel: 51548236
Fax: 51548200

25.5.2007

SUBMISSION TO THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENTS'S EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

S 159-2007 GOVERNMENT INQUIRY INTO DRESS CODES AND SCHOOL UNIFORMS IN VICTORIAN SCHOOLS

FROM MARLO PRIMARY SCHOOL COUNCIL

General response:

Marlo Primary School is a small (37 children) rural school in far East Gippsland. The school council, on behalf of the wider school community, is generally satisfied with the current arrangements regarding the wearing of school uniforms. In accordance with school council policy, all students are required to wear the designated uniform on ordinary school days, and also on official school excursions.

Parents are required to purchase uniforms for their children. These are readily available at very reasonable cost from a local supplier. Second hand uniforms are also available, and many parents pass uniforms on to others when their children leave or outgrow uniform items. The school council reviews uniform policy as needed. This is often in response to requests from parents or children to add a new item or style to the range of uniform items.

Non compliance is rare and is usually due to small domestic crises – the uniforms aren't washed or are damaged, or lost by the children. Support for compulsory uniforms is strong in the school community – most parents agree that the costs of acquiring and maintaining school uniforms is cheaper and much more practical than having to dress children in neat casual clothes each day of the week. Importantly, wearing of uniforms minimises or avoids fashion competition amongst children and thus the risk of differences in family wealth being obvious through the clothes the children wear.

Specific points:

1. Marlo Primary School supports the maintenance of current school-by-school arrangements for supply of uniforms. The school has an arrangement with a local supplier in Orbost (our nearest retail centre). This arrangement supports local commerce and works well. The school is opposed to centralised contracted supply of uniforms.
2. A broad brimmed hat is part of the uniform and must be worn during first and fourth terms when children are outside. This complies with the sun-smart policy of the school.
3. Marlo Primary School has not experienced a situation where our uniform policy has come into conflict with anti-discrimination legislation. Should such a situation arise (such as may occur if children from a particular ethnic or religious background with a

specific dress code came to the school), the council would address the matter on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the parents and attempt to come to an arrangement agreeable to both parties.

4. Application of the current uniform policy uses a common sense approach to both enforcement and exemptions. This approach is supported by the school community.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Marlo Primary School Council recommends to the inquiry that current uniform supply, usage and policy as it applies to our school should continue. In our case there are no substantial issues which require the current arrangements to be changed.

Prepared by Greg McCarthy and Stephen Henry on behalf of the Marlo Primary School Council.