

## **2026 Parent Payments and Parent Payments Policy**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Merri Creek Primary School is looking forward to another great year of teaching and learning and would like to advise you of our voluntary financial contributions for 2026.

School Council has set the recommended financial contribution to \$400 for 2026, a \$40 increase per student from 2025. This is to cover further costs of upgrading end of life ICT devices and the investment in data collection and assessment systems.

In 2026, we are requesting voluntary contributions towards ongoing First Aid costs. The First Aid Nurse parent contribution helps fund a dedicated trainee nurse two days per week. This support is invaluable during busy break times, easing the workload on office staff. The nurse provides quality care for students, manages medications accurately, and ensures first aid supplies and records are kept up to date. As schools are required to report all first aid administered, the nurse also completes Department of Education documentation and logging requirements accurately and efficiently on their days of attendance.

Schools provide students with free instruction to fulfil the standard Victorian curriculum, and we want to assure you that all contributions are voluntary. Nevertheless, the ongoing support of our families ensures that our school can offer the best possible education and support for our students.

The Department of Education emphasises the voluntary nature of parent payments.

### **Impact at MCPS**

Parent/Carer voluntary contributions make a significant difference to the quality of our programs. The environment and resources that we enjoy today represent the contributions made by our parent/carers community each year.

Without community willingness to continue this financial support through voluntary contributions, we will be unable to maintain the same level that we expect for our children.

### **Request**

For those who can make contributions, we request that they make the voluntary contributions in order to support the ongoing quality programs, resources and environment we can provide for our children.

Please find attached Merri Creek Primary School's voluntary financial contributions schedule for 2026. All necessary consumable items will be supplied directly to classrooms in bulk and will be distributed to students as and when they are needed.

For further information on the Department's Parent Payments Policy please see a one-page overview attached.

Yours sincerely,

Kerri Gibson - *Principal*

Stuart Whiley – *School Council President*



| Curriculum Contributions - items and activities that students use, or participate in, to access the Curriculum   | Amount       |
|--|--------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General classroom stationery and materials</li> <li>• Art - materials</li> <li>• Science – experiment-based materials</li> <li>• Mathematics – materials</li> <li>• English – class sets, novels, readers etc.</li> <li>• Physical Education &amp; Sport – sport equipment, materials</li> <li>• Technology – materials for cooking, constructing etc.</li> <li>• Music – equipment, materials</li> <li>• Language other than English – materials</li> <li>• Sexuality Education presented by Vanessa Hamilton</li> </ul> | \$196        |
| Subscriptions, ie. Assessments, Data systems, Seesaw, Library programs, teaching and learning resources.   | \$64         |
| ICT Devices – provision and upkeep of school devices and employment of locally funded School Technician.   | \$140        |
| Swimming program – a suggested amount for this will be provided in 2026.   | TBA          |
| <b>SUGGESTED TOTAL AMOUNT</b>  | <b>\$400</b> |



| Other Contributions - for non-curriculum items and activities  | Amount    |
|--|-----------|
| <p>Merri Creek Primary School welcomes your voluntary contributions to support our families and/or school.</p> <p>In 2026, we are requesting voluntary contributions towards the First Aid Nurse. This contribution helps fund a dedicated trainee nurse two days per week. This support is invaluable during busy break times, easing the workload on office staff, and providing quality care for students.</p> <p>A suggested contribution to adequately fund the nurse is \$30 per student for 2026.</p> <p>The Building and Library Funds are tax-deductible. There is a sliding scale of a suggested contribution to the fund of your choice (Building or Library) based on combined family income as follows:</p> <p>\$100 per family for a combined income of \$75,000 and up to \$125,000<br/>           \$200 per family for a combined income of \$125,000 and up to \$175,000<br/>           \$300 per family for a combined income of \$175,000 and above</p> |           |
| <i>Equity Fund – to support our school families experiencing disadvantage</i>  | \$        |
| <i>Building Fund – a tax-deductible donation to support renovations, upgrades, and maintenance of school infrastructure</i>  | \$        |
| <i>Library Fund – a tax-deductible donation to support book purchases and other equipment that sustain the library as a valuable resource</i>  | \$        |
| <i>First Aid Nurse – trainee nurse employed part-time, two days per week</i>   | \$        |
| <b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>  | <b>\$</b> |

| Extra-Curricular Items & Activities  |
|--|
| <p>Merri Creek Primary School offers a range of items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are above and beyond what the school provides to deliver the curriculum. These are provided on a user-pays basis.</p> <p>No payment is required for these items or activities at this time – permission forms and payment requests will be sent out to families throughout 2026.</p> |
| <i>Optional After School Music program. (If your child participates in this program, there is a \$70 administrative levy payable and termly payment to the music tutors.)</i>  |
| <i>Optional Year 6 Hoodies</i>   |
| <i>Optional Whole school photos</i>  |
| <i>Optional Years 3/4/5/6 school camps</i>   |
| <i>Optional Years 4/5/6 swimming and athletics carnivals</i>   |
| <i>Optional Years 4/5/6 District and Division Sports competitions</i>  |
| <i>Optional Years 5/6 Sports Gala Day</i>  |
| <i>Other optional excursions to be scheduled</i>   |

### **School Saving Bonus (SSB)**

The School Saving Bonus was a one-off support payment for Victorian students in 2025. Any unspent SSB funds remaining from previous years will carry forward with students/families each year.

For more information regarding the status of your SSB, or what the funds can be used for, please contact the office at [merri.creek.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:merri.creek.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

### **Additional financial support for families**

Merri Creek Primary School understands that some families may need additional financial support and offers a range of options, including:

- Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply for the Camp, Sports, and Excursions Fund. This provides \$400 per year (from 2026) for eligible primary school students. Application forms are available from the school office.
- The School Council has an Equity Fund to support families in need.
- Families are welcome to make payments by instalment.

For a confidential discussion about accessing these services, or if you would like to discuss alternative payment arrangements, contact Cynthia Stan, Business Manager, 9481 0177 or [merri.creek.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:merri.creek.ps@education.vic.gov.au) or Kerri Gibson, Principal.

### **Payment methods**

- *CompassPay*
- *EFTPOS – come into the office or pay over the phone.*
- *Cash*

### **Refunds**

Parent requests for refunds are subject to the discretion of the school and made on a case-by-case basis. Refunds will be provided where the school deems it is reasonable and fair to do so, taking into consideration whether a cost has been incurred, the Department's Parent Payment Policy and Guidance, Financial Help for Families Policy, and any other relevant information.

# PARENT PAYMENTS POLICY

## ONE PAGE OVERVIEW



### FREE INSTRUCTION

- Schools provide students with free instruction and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the school to fulfil the requirements of the Curriculum. This includes the Victorian Curriculum F-10, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) including the VCE Vocational Major and the Victorian Pathways Certificate.
- Schools may invite parents to make a financial contribution to support the school.



### PARENT PAYMENT REQUESTS

Schools can request contributions from parents under three categories:

**Curriculum Contributions**  
Voluntary financial contributions for curriculum items and activities which the school deems necessary for students to learn the Curriculum.

**Other Contributions**  
Voluntary financial contributions for non-curriculum items and activities that relate to the school's functions and objectives.

**Extra-Curricular Items and Activities**  
Items and activities that enhance or broaden the schooling experience of students and are above and beyond what the school provides for free to deliver the Curriculum. These are provided on a user-pays basis.

- Schools may also invite parents to supply or purchase educational items to use and own (e.g. textbooks, stationery, digital devices).



### FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES

- Schools put in place financial hardship arrangements to support families who cannot pay for items or activities so that their child doesn't miss out.
- Schools have a nominated parent payment contact person(s) that parents can have a confidential discussion with regarding financial hardship arrangements.



### SCHOOL PROCESSES

- Schools must obtain school council approval for their parent payment arrangements and publish all requests and communications for each year level on their school website for transparency.