

Dear parent/guardian,

Balwyn Primary School is looking forward to another great year of teaching and learning and would like to advise you of Balwyn Primary School's voluntary financial contributions for 2025.

Schools provide students with free instruction to fulfil the standard curriculum requirements and we want to assure you that all contributions are voluntary. Nevertheless, the ongoing support of our families ensures that our school can offer a high-quality education and support for our students. We want to thank you for all your support, whether that is through fundraising, parent voluntary contributions or volunteering your time. This has made a huge difference to our school and the programs we can offer, and we are committed to providing not only exemplary academic outcomes but also opportunities to develop the whole child. A diverse range of reading material and equipment to support our music, health and physical education and language programs has been purchased.

Within our school this support has allowed us to offer enhanced curriculum and learning experiences to students that are above and beyond the requirements of the standard curriculum and what is provided for by Government funding. We have provided access to a rich and diverse range of high-quality resources and digital learning opportunities, positively impacting our student outcomes.

Continuous upgrades across the school in 2024 have contributed to regenerating play spaces and beautifying the grounds. A skilled Landscape Architecture company that specialises in education settings has begun the process of providing a 5-10 year masterplan for our school with input from students, families and staff included. Continual repair and maintenance of our playgrounds, shade sails and sports equipment has included over \$35,000 in upgrades and \$7,600 in maintenance to ensure we comply with the highest possible standard of safety.

Grounds maintenance support has funded: the entirely revamped front of school and Amphitheatre area (\$30,000), the provision of softfall mulch for safe playground use (over \$6,700), regular maintenance of our school grounds through contracted services and updated line markings for student recreation.

Generous donations to our Library and Building Funds from our community have also enabled:

- Purchase of library books at approximately \$8,000
- Enhancement of our school buildings to maintain a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment for our students, achieved through painting, updated infrastructure and repairs.

Additionally, we have installed a new projector for the hall at \$15,000, and we have also upgraded the backup power for our servers at a cost of over \$5,000.

In 2025, we will be upgrading our school hall staff with \$50,000 raised by the 2024 Carnival contributing to the cost with the remaining 50% supplied by the school.

School Council has included a voluntary financial contribution request on behalf of State Schools' Relief, which is a not-for-profit organisation that supports the needs of underprivileged Victorian government school students by providing school uniforms, shoes and educational resources. We hope that the school community will continue to support this initiative as they did so generously in 2024.

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

Yours faithfully,



Olivia Richards

Principal



Chris Williams

School Council President

Curriculum Contributions - items and activities that students use, or participate in, to access the Curriculum	Amount
<p style="text-align: center;">PREP</p> <p><i>Classroom consumables, materials & equipment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationery items bought in bulk for student use: including exercise, writing & scrap books, document wallets, glue sticks, pencils & sharpeners, pencil cases, crayons, Story Books, scissors, display books and 1 pair of noise limiting headphones (\$110) • Art – materials dependent upon focus of units of work e.g. clay, glazes, mosaic pebbles, felt, textiles, sculpture wire, mini canvases, balsa wood, paint, coloured paper (\$14) • English – reading materials for classroom and home use (\$45) • Mathematics – classroom numeracy kits (\$25) • Science – equipment and materials for hands-on experiences (\$7) • Sports – equipment to ensure access to a range of physical activities (\$14) • LOTE – hands-on materials and resources to enhance the language program (\$7) • Music – musical equipment and resources to provide opportunities to make and perform music (\$15) • ICT and eLearning - The school has a significant commitment to providing students with consistent and reliable access to technology via the upgrading of our fleet of student devices to new iPads, all with keyboard cases, access to television screens and Apple TVs and the use of new management software called JAMF. (\$190) 	\$427
<p><i>Prep Online Subscriptions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunshine Online (\$5.10) 	\$5.10
<i>Printing and photocopying of worksheets and learning materials</i>	\$16
<i>Swimming and water safety program: entry and transport. Contributions will be requested closer to the date.</i>	TBA
<p><i>Whole school events</i></p> <p><i>Events will be released on Compass closer to the dates.</i></p>	TBA

Other Contributions - for non-curriculum items and activities	Amount
<i>First aid equipment</i>	\$14
<i>School grounds maintenance and improvements: provision of a safe and attractive environment for students through maintenance of synthetic turf and irrigation, inspection and management of trees, upkeep of softfall mulch and engagement of a gardening contractor.</i>	\$70 per family
<i>Parent Communication tools – Compass</i>	\$11 per family
Total Other Contributions	\$95

Tax deductible contributions

Building fund. A tax-deductible contribution to support renovations, upgrades, and maintenance of school infrastructure. Please nominate the amount of your donation.	\$
Library fund. A tax-deductible contribution to support book purchases and other equipment that sustain the library as a valuable resource. Please nominate the amount of your donation.	\$
State Schools' Relief. A tax-deductible contribution to a not-for-profit organisation that supports the needs of underprivileged Victorian government school students by providing school uniforms, shoes and educational resources.	\$

Educational items for students to own

Parents are requested to send with their child on the first day of the school year:

- A named long-sleeved and waterproof art smock. Please ensure the size is big enough to go over the school uniform. We recommend a smock that pulls over the head for ease and has elastic cuffs.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities – provided on a user-pays basis

Balwyn Primary School offers a range of optional 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 and are advertised to the relevant levels via Compass as they become available.

The cost of extra-curricular items and activities will be advised throughout the year.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities	Amount
Optional Prep activities: Prep breakfast, excursions, incursions, guest speakers.	TBA

Financial Support for Families

Balwyn Primary School understands that some families may experience financial difficulty and offers a range of support options, including:

- the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- State Schools Relief (SSR)
- Payment plans for Extra-Curricular Items and Activities
- Access to second-hand uniforms

Parents who are experiencing hardship at any time are encouraged to contact Cynthia Stan (Business Manager), Karen Butler or Duncan Wise (Welfare Assistant Principals), or Olivia Richards (Principal) on **(03) 9836 7121** or email: balwyn.ps@education.vic.gov.au to arrange a time for a confidential discussion about accessing these services.

For a confidential discussion, or if you would like to discuss alternative payment arrangements, contact:

Cynthia Stan (Business Manager)

Ph: 03 9836 7121 | **Email:** balwyn.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Total

Category	Totals
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Curriculum Contributions	\$
Other Contributions: <i>(Non-Tax Deductible)</i>	\$
<i>(Tax Deductible)</i>	\$
Extra-Curricular Items and Activities	Advertised as available.
Total	\$

Payment methods

The school's preferred payment method is via Compass. However, BPay, cash or cheque payments may be arranged by contacting the school office on (03) 9836 7121.

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 Payments Policy and Guidance, Financial Help for Families Policy, and any other relevant information.

Headphones for Students – Recommendations and Regular Checking

Selecting new headphones:

Selecting headphones is a very important decision. Some headphones can produce sound that can be quite loud which may be difficult for children to easily control. It is also important to note that headphones have a finite life span and will degrade over time.

When picking new headphones for your child to use, we recommend the following:

- Over ear headphones are preferable – bud earphones/headphones can fill up with wax or other material and may be difficult for children to use easily.
- Volume limited headphones – this helps reduce the risk of the volume getting too high.

Foundation (Prep) will have a set of headphones included in their Curriculum Contributions – Classroom Consumables.

Checking existing headphones for student re-use (Years 1-6):

Balwyn Primary School promotes the re-use of headphones when still in good working order. It is however important that parents and children (where possible) check headphones regularly to ensure they are in full working condition.

If you or your child notice something unusual about the sound coming through the headphones, check them carefully and consider a replacement. Please check with your child on a regular basis on the sound quality of their set-in use at school and if in doubt the headphones should be taken home by your child for an adult to check the quality.

Some signs that the headphone might need replacing are:

- crackling sounds coming through one or both sides of the headphones and/or
- sound disappears and reappears whilst using the headphones from either side and/or
- moving the cable causes sound to be lost or crackling to be heard and/or
- visible damage to wire (cables) to headphones (i.e., splitting, or exposed wires).

Please ensure your child's headphones are clearly marked with the child's name. It may be helpful for you to record the year of purchase and the dates that they are checked.

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) 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.