PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS ARRANGEMENTS – INCLUDING VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear parents/carers,

This letter provides information about voluntary contributions you can make to support Bell Primary School for 2027 and other payments you can choose to make.

Victorian government schools provide free instruction. This means all students have free access to all items, activities and services that schools use to deliver the curriculum, including reasonable adjustments to support students with disability.

Some families choose to make a voluntary financial contribution to support the school, and we are very grateful for this support. Making a voluntary contribution is your choice. There is no expectation or pressure for families to contribute.

Bell Primary School offers a range of items and activities that are additional to the free instruction provided to all students at our school. Financial help is available for extra-curricular items and activities if you are experiencing financial hardship (see further details under Financial Help for Families in the attached information). For a confidential discussion about how to access the financial help available, please contact: Jessie Storm – jessie.storm@education.vic.gov.au or (03) 9480 5622.

If you need an interpreter, please contact 03 9605 3053 and give our school's phone number – (03) 9480 5622. An interpreter can help you speak with us. This service is free. For more information, please see How to use an interpreter to contact your school.

For more information on the Department of Education's Parent Contributions policy please see the information attached. You can read the full policy at Parent Contributions: Policy | education.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Heywood

Principal

Charles Beaton

School Council President

BELL PRIMARY SCHOOL 2027 PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS ARRANGEMENTS

Voluntary contributions

If you are the carer of a student in out-of-home care or hold a financially means-tested card (such as a healthcare card), please ignore the invitation to make voluntary contributions.

We encourage any family experiencing financial hardship to contact the school for information about the financial help available for extra-curricular activities like camps and excursions.

Voluntary contributions	Suggested amount – parents can contribute more or less	Amount
Voluntary Contributions to enhance our school's range of programs, resources, and environment.	$198.90	$[parent to complete]
Voluntary – Grounds fund: an additional contribution to support grounds maintenance and enhancements. This contribution type is not tax-deductible.	*$100*	$[parent to complete]

Tax-deductible voluntary contributions	Suggested amount – parents can contribute more or less	Amount
Voluntary - Building fund: a tax-deductible contribution to support renovations and upgrades of school infrastructure.	*$100*	$[parent to complete]
Voluntary - Library fund: a tax-deductible contribution to support library maintenance and enhancements.	*$30*	$[parent to complete]

Extra-curricular items and activities

Bell Primary School offers a range of optional items and activities that are additional to the free instruction provided to all students at our school. Accessing these items and activities does require payment, but financial support is available (see further details under Financial Help for Families below).

Example extra-curricular items and activities include:

- optional activities, camps, excursions and additional programs
- individual and class photos
- special event items such as graduation hoodies, polos and mementos

We have provided indicative annual costs of known extra-curricular items and activities below.

Payment for extra-curricular items and activities with a confirmed cost can be made now or later. Payments can also be made via instalments.

Please contact the school for advice on financial help available for extra-curricular items and activities.

Extra-curricular items and activities	Indicative annual cost	Confirmed cost (where known)	Parent/carer to complete
Year level camp (Year 4-6)	**~$450 - 650**	**TBD**	Payment via Compass
Excursions/incursions	**~$40 - $250**	**TBD**	Payment via Compass
Swimming & Water Safety Program (Prep – Year 5)	**$100 - $110**	**TBD**	Payment via Compass
School photos	**~$35 - $65**	**N/A**	Payment to provider
Year 6 graduation hoodies, polos, and mementos	**~$16 - $120**	**TBD**	Payment via Compass
Opt-in extracurricular lessons (instrumental music, dance, performance, coding)	**Determined by provider/s**	**N/A**	Payment to provider

Learning materials for students to own

Booklist items:

You can choose to buy learning materials for your child to individually use and own. These items can be bought from any supplier.

Bell Primary School has an arrangement with the following supplier for the materials that you can buy: COS (Complete Office Supplies).

If you do not buy these items, your child will still be provided with what they need, however they may not be provided with these items to own, or keep, on an individual basis. If you wish to buy items through the supplier, please see recommended list available on our website.

If you would like to buy items to own that are not from this supplier, you can use the recommended stationery list as reference or contact the school for further information about specifications of that will be used.

Financial help for families

Bell Primary School understands families can experience financial difficulty. Help is available, including:

- **Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund** – this program provides funding for eligible students, including those in out of home care, and holders of eligible financially means-tested cards (such as health care cards), to attend activities like camps, sporting activities, excursions and incursions that are offered on a user-pays basis.
- **Affordable School Uniforms** - delivered by State Schools Relief, this program helps cover costs such as school uniforms, shoes, and other essential school items where families are experiencing financial hardship or short-term crisis.
- Payment plans for Extra-Curricular Items and Activities such as camps and excursions
- Second-hand uniform store (open twice weekly – see newsletter for details)

Applications for support from the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and State Schools Relief are submitted by the school - please contact us to discuss these and other financial help.

For a confidential discussion about how to access financial help, please contact:

Jessie Storm
Ph: 03 9480 5622 | Email: jessie.storm@education.vic.gov.au

Payment methods

All school payments and voluntary contributions are made through the Compass Action Centre which will be available for 2027 contributions from Term 1, 2027. This platform supports Visa and MasterCard payments.

If you want to make voluntary contributions throughout the year, you can:

- decide when to make each contribution
- choose the amount of each contribution.

If you would like to pay for extra-curricular items and activities through instalments, you may select the payment plan option when processing payment and permission for your child to attend specific events, such as camps or excursions, throughout the school year.

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 of Education's Parent Contributions policy and guidance, Financial Help for Families policy, and any other relevant information.

Parent Contributions policy

Information for families

FREE INSTRUCTION

Schools give students free instruction in the curriculum. This includes:

- Free access to all items, activities, and services that schools use to deliver the curriculum, including reasonable adjustments to support students with disability.
- The Victorian Curriculum F-10, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) including the VCE Vocational Major, and the Victorian Pathways Certificate.
- Free access to all subjects, including elective subjects.
- Free access to select-entry and accelerated programs.

FAMILIES CAN CHOOSE TO CONTRIBUTE

Schools can invite two types of voluntary contributions:

Voluntary contributions	Tax deductible contributions
Used towards enhanced educational programs and school environment, and additional resources and opportunities offered by schools	Used towards building and/or library fund (for those schools who have such funds)

Schools must advise the carers of students in out-of-home care and parents and carers who hold a financially means-tested card (such as a healthcare card) that the invitation to make voluntary contributions does not apply to them.

In addition, schools can invite parents and carers to pay for optional:

- Extra-curricular items and activities that go beyond the curriculum - for example, school photos, some excursions and some camps.
- Learning materials for students to individually use and own - for example, textbooks, stationery, and in secondary schools only, digital devices. If these items are not bought or provided from home, schools will provide students with free access to what they need for curriculum delivery.

FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES

Each school has a contact person who can discuss with parents and carers the financial supports that are available.

Schools must publish their Parent Contributions arrangements on their school website, along with a link to the department's Parent Contributions policy.