



31 October 2023

Dear parent/guardian,

Ballarat Specialist School is looking forward to another great year of teaching and learning and would like to advise you of Ballarat Specialist School's voluntary financial contributions for 2024.

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 the best possible education and support for our students. We want to thank you for all your support, whether that is through fundraising or volunteering your time. This has made a huge difference to our school and the programs we can offer.

Within our school this support has allowed us a wider offering of subjects and special curriculum experiences; enhanced digital learning opportunities; ability to support an extensive IST team of psychologist, physiotherapists and speech pathologists.

Ballarat Specialist School is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth)* with the result that any donations made by you will be tax deductible. To be tax deductible, your donation needs to be made voluntarily. We have suggested an amount to be contributed under "Curriculum Contributions" and "Other Contributions" below, but please feel free to contribute an alternative amount. Amounts paid under "Extra-Curricular Items and Activities" are not donations and are not tax deductible.

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

Yours sincerely,

Sam Sheppard
Principal

Kerrie Franc
School Council President

Curriculum Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for items and activities that students use, or participate in, to access the Curriculum	Amount
Classroom consumables, materials & equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stationery - pens, pencils, exercise books, folders, glue sticks ● Art – paint, crayons, canvas, glitter, coloured paper etc. ● Technology – gardening tool, plants etc. ● Food tech – food ingredients such as flour, butter etc. ● Mathematics – numeracy blocks ● Sports equipment ● Sensory items 	\$20
Online Subscriptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boardmaker ● Reading eggs 	\$10
ICT Devices – provision of devices from the shared classroom sets	\$10
Communication tools – PODD books, assistive technology devices, displays, visuals	\$5
Printing and photocopying of worksheets and learning materials	\$5
Total tax-deductible Curriculum Contributions	\$50
Primary Years P-6 Camps & Excursions - Refer page 4	\$
Middle Years 7-9 Camps & Excursions - Refer page 5	
Senior Years 10-12 Camps & Excursions - Refer page 6	
Total tax-deductible Curriculum Contributions - Camps & Excursions	\$

Other Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for non-curriculum items and activities	Amount
School Sports Victoria affiliation	\$10
Sovereign Hill affiliation	\$2
Student wellbeing programs	\$10
First aid and hygiene equipment	\$8
Total tax-deductible Other Contributions	\$30

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.

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

Ballarat Specialist 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.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities	Amount
Year 6 Commemorative Top	TBA
Year 9 Commemorative Top	TBA
Year 12 Commemorative Top	TBA
School Photos – External provider	TBA
Year 12 Graduation Ceremony	TBA
Formal - Senior Students ONLY	TBA
Total Extra-curricular Items and Activities	\$

Total

Category	Total recommended amount	Total payment
Total tax-deductible curriculum contributions	\$50	\$
Total tax-deductible camps & excursions (dependant on year)	Refer Page 4,5 or 6	\$
Total tax-deductible other contributions	\$30	\$
Total Extra-curricular Items and Activities	Specific to year level	\$
	Total	\$

Payment methods

Via QKR – Refer flyer enclosed or contact the office for assistance on 5334 1302.

Via Administration office – EFTPOS or Cash or Over the phone – Please call 5334 1302.

Financial Support for Families

Ballarat Specialist School understands that some families may experience financial difficulty and offers a range of support options, including: the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) & State Schools Relief (SSR)

For a confidential discussion about accessing these services, or if you would like to discuss alternative payment arrangements, contact: Surinder Chambers Ph: 03 5334 1302

If you are experiencing hardship, please contact the Ballarat Specialist School's Wellbeing Team on (03) 53341302. The Wellbeing team across the Gillies and Norman Street Campus' can provide you with free and confidential advice on assistance for your family. Our commitment is that students don't miss out on items above due to hardship, if this applies to you please contact our team. Our team has a wide range of skills and networks that can support you in taking the steps to gain assistance in the community and can give you guidance on accessing a variety of services.

Primary – Prep to Year 6 Camps & Excursions

Camp & Excursion Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for items and activities that students participate in, to access the Curriculum

Prep Bacchus Marsh Inclusive Playground Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$35 \$10 \$28 \$73	Year 1 Geelong Inclusive Playground Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$50 \$10 \$28 \$88
Year 2 Werribee Zoo Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$50 \$10 \$28 \$88	Year 3 Melbourne Aquarium Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$55 \$10 \$28 \$93
Year 4 Melbourne Museum Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$60 \$10 \$28 \$98	Year 5 Kryal Castle Camp - Overnight Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$79 \$10 \$28 \$117
Year 6 Kryal Castle Camp – 2 nights Christmas Celebration @ FARM Cinema excursion Total	Amount \$86 \$10 \$28 \$124	<p style="text-align: center;">Please Note:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Planning for these excursions begins in Term 3 with the aim of occurring during Term 4.</p>	

The Primary School has a focus on guiding students to understand the world outside of school. This includes knowing what attractions are in their local town as well as visiting attractions within close proximity to Ballarat. To link these excursions to the curriculum, students focus on content that is relevant to the excursion they will participate in, allowing for connections to be made between the curriculum, classroom work, and real-life experiences.

As student's progress through Primary School, they participate in a variety of excursions that provide them with more opportunities to develop their independence, culminating in an overnight camp within Ballarat and its surroundings.

Your contribution towards these activities helps us to ensure they are engaging and enjoyable for all students.

Middle - Years 7 to 9 Camps & Excursions

Camp & Excursion Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for items and activities that students participate in, to access the Curriculum

Year 7	Amount	Year 8	Amount
Creswick Log Cabin Camp- Overnight	\$180	Eureka Skydeck- Melbourne Excursion	\$74
Christmas Celebration @ FARM	\$12	Christmas Celebration @ FARM	\$12
Cinema excursion	\$30	DOXA Camp Malmsbury - Overnight	\$120
Total	\$222	Total	\$206
Year 9	Amount		
Cave Hill Creek Camp- Overnight	\$151		
Geelong Leisure Link Excursion	\$59		
Christmas Celebration @ FARM	\$12		
Total	\$222		

The Middle School's aim is to provide students with meaningful activities that promote the development of lifelong friendships and memories, in an environment outside of the classroom. Each event offers students the chance to practice life skills, improve cooperation and teamwork, resilience, self-belief and further build a sense of belonging.

Students will engage in learning experiences that create a link between the content and the excursion that will take place, making meaningful connections between classroom-based learning and the outside world.

Your contributions will support these activities and ensure that every student can fully enjoy their experience in Middle School.

Senior - Years 10 to 12 Camps & Excursions

Camp & Excursion Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for items and activities that students participate in, to access the Curriculum

Year 10	Amount	Year 11	Amount
Camp – Year 10 Overnight	\$130	Camp – Year 11 Overnight	\$80
Community Engagement Activities	\$25	Community Engagement Activities	\$25
Christmas Celebration	\$16	Christmas Celebration	\$16
Excursion (Animal Experience)	\$25	Excursion (Animal Experience)	\$25
End of Term Lunches x 3	\$20	End of Term Lunches x 3	\$20
Total	\$216	Total	\$166
Year 12	Amount		
Camp – Year 12 Two Nights	\$139		
Community Engagement Activities	\$25		
Christmas Celebration	\$16		
Excursion (Animal Experience)	\$25		
End of Term Lunches x 3	\$20		
Total	\$225		

The Senior School focus on preparing students for life after school; our aim is to broaden students' post-school options. As part of a community engagement program students participate in a range of activities in the local community that promote student engagement with school and build positive relations with local organisations. Students are offered excursions throughout the year that occur in the wider community (outside of Ballarat, for example, Melbourne, Geelong).

Camps are organised and facilitated in order to ensure all students are able to participate in the experience with their peers in a way that caters for their needs. Whilst camps have an overnight aspect, there is always the opportunity for students to participate for the day only (this usually aligns with usual school hours). During these activities students are provided with opportunities to practise life skills in a supportive environment, including but not limited to maintaining personal hygiene, budgeting and traveling safely. Students will develop their interpersonal skills through associating and spending time with their peers.

As a mini-school, students participate in an end of year lunch together. This 'Christmas Lunch' occurs during the final week of November where the students enjoy a hot lunch and celebrate the learning that has taken place throughout the year. Students also have an end of term lunch, which incorporates an assembly in the form of a celebration of learning across VPC (Victorian Pathways Certificate) and VET.

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.