

November 2023

*Dear parent/carer,*

### **Voluntary Financial Contributions 2024 – Upper School**

Southern Autistic School is looking forward to another great year of teaching and learning and would like to advise you of Southern Autistic 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.

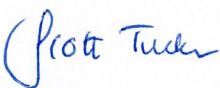
Within our school this support has allowed us to provide students with a wide range of resources and initiatives outside the standard curriculum, including:

- Enhanced Wellbeing Support (eg Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Mental Health Practitioner, Psychologist, Tutors and an Inclusion Outreach Coach)
- Communication tools and technology devices (provision and upkeep)
- Upgraded facilities and grounds (eg swimming pool upkeep, playground enhancement)
- Digital and online subscriptions for learning and student/parental communication tools
- Specialist programs

Southern Autistic 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,



**Scott Tucker**  
Principal



**Rochelle Pettit**  
School Council President

<b>Curriculum Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for items and activities that students use, or participate in, to access the Curriculum</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Upper classroom materials & equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom shared stationery, paper, posters/charts, craft items, cooking items, classroom libraries, readers, sensory items (\$50)</li> <li>Visual Arts consumables (\$7)</li> <li>Music (\$6.50)</li> <li>Bike Ed, STEAM, Media, PE (\$35)</li> <li>Excursions/Incursions (\$43)</li> <li>Provision and upkeep of school devices, peripherals and ICT (\$12.50)</li> <li>Digital and Online subscriptions for learning eg Essential Assessment Numeracy, Handwriting without Tears, BoardMaker (\$13)</li> </ul>	\$167
<b>Total tax-deductible Curriculum Contributions</b>	<b>\$</b>

<b>Other Contributions – suggested tax-deductible contributions for non-curriculum items and activities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Student and Parent Communication Tools eg SeeSaw and Compass	\$9
Enhanced Student Support (Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy consumables)	\$13
First aid equipment	\$6
School buildings and grounds maintenance and enhancement	\$
<b>Total tax-deductible Other Contributions</b>	<b>\$</b>

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

Southern Autistic 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.

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

<b>Extra-Curricular Items and Activities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Blackwood Camp (Dates and classes attending will be advised when camps are finalised and will be payable via Compass at that time)</b>	\$225
<b>Total Extra-curricular Items and Activities</b>	



### Financial Support for Families

Southern Autistic 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) support is available for uniforms/footwear (via the School Wellbeing Team)

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

Jeanette Winnell, Finance Manager

Ph: 03 9563 8139 | Email: [Jeanette.Winnell@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jeanette.Winnell@education.vic.gov.au)

### Total

Category	Total recommended amount	Total payment
Total tax-deductible contributions	\$195	\$
Extra-Curricular Items and Activities	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$195</b>	<b>\$</b>

### Payment methods

Southern Autistic School's preferred method of payment is via the Compass Parent Portal. Payment option can be in full or by regular payment which can be set up in the Compass Parent Portal. In Term 1 2024, the school will upload the voluntary contributions listed in this letter to the Compass Portal. Parents can choose to alter the suggested voluntary contribution amounts. Alternatively, contributions can be made via the school office EFTPOS (between 8.00am and 4.00pm, Monday to Friday) or via direct deposit:

CBA  
 BSB: 063 144  
 Account Number: 1008 3680  
 Reference: Student Full Name

### 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.