

5th December 2024

Dear parent/carers,

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

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. We want to thank you for all your support, whether that's 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 *a wider offering of programs and special curriculum experiences and enhanced digital learning opportunities.*

All booklist supplies will be available for students in their classroom on the first day of Term 1, **Tuesday 28th January 2025**. Contributions from families are highly valued by the school and can be made through Compass, direct deposit, BPAY, credit card and EFTPOS. This can be done as a one-off payment, or through various instalments.

Any credits currently on your school account can be used for curriculum contributions or extra-curricular items and activities. Carried forward CSEF funds and School Savings Bonus funds are only able to be used for camps, sports, or excursions, please contact the school office to arrange this. Items eligible for the School Savings Bonus are highlighted under Extra-Curricular Items and Activities.

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's through financial contributions, fundraising or volunteering your time. This has made a huge difference to our school and the programs we can offer.

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

Yours sincerely,



*Jess Kelly
Principal*



*Matt McBeath
School Council President*



Year 5

Curriculum Contributions - items and activities that students use, or participate in, to access the Curriculum	Amount	Total
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>General classroom stationery items (book pack) – Exercise books, grid books, scrapbooks, pencils, markers, pens, glue sticks, document wallets, sharpener, scissors, ruler</i> <i>English – Spelling Mastery Student Workbook OR</i> <i>English – Sounds Write consumables pack (whiteboard, whiteboard markers and eraser)</i> 	<p>\$36.45</p> <p>\$29.95</p>	\$66.40
<p><i>Classroom consumables, materials & equipment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>English Fluency Resources – book boxes, document wallet take home reader (Prep – Year 3) replacement OR laminated mentor texts (Years 4-12)</i> <i>Mathematics Fluency Resources – cards, dice, counters</i> <i>Wellbeing – in class supports, displays, student clubs.</i> <i>Art – paint, pencils/crayons, coloured paper, glue sticks, art folio, resources for art presentation pieces i.e. glitter/feathers/clay etc.</i> <i>Performing Arts – Folder, Musical instruments/props etc.</i> <i>Physical Education – equipment</i> <i>Auslan – Visual aids, paper, pencils/pens</i> <i>General Studies – Consumables for Science, Humanities, History, Economics, Health</i> 	<p>\$10</p> <p>\$5</p> <p>\$5</p> <p>\$12</p> <p>\$4</p> <p>\$5</p> <p>\$3</p> <p>\$10</p>	\$54.00
<p><i>Online subscriptions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>White Rose Maths</i> <i>Numbots & Times Tables Rockstars</i> <i>Acadience (Reading)</i> 	<p>\$2.00</p> <p>\$1.00</p> <p>\$14.00</p>	\$8.00
<i>ICT devices – provision of devices from the shared classroom sets and interactive devices in classrooms</i>		\$40
<i>Printing and photocopying of worksheets and learning materials</i>		\$20
Total Curriculum Contributions		\$197.40

Other Contributions - for non-curriculum items and activities	Amount
<i>School Sports Victoria affiliation</i>	\$2
<i>Student wellbeing programs</i>	\$20
<i>First aid equipment</i>	\$4.50
Total Other Contributions	\$26.50

Tax Deductible Contributions	
<i>Library fund. A tax-deductible contribution to support the purchase of library books, bookshelves, training equipment, computer software and hardware. (Suggested - \$30).</i>	\$30.00
Total Tax Deductible Contributions	\$30.00

Total Contributions	\$253.90
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Educational items for students to own

Please note: We source our school items in bulk, free of GST and have them delivered to the school to be able to offer value, consistency, and convenience. Parents/carers may choose to make a voluntary curriculum contribution towards this, or purchase book pack supplies themselves. If you choose to provide your own booklist items, you are asked to consult with the school office to ensure your child has the correct items.

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

Armstrong Creek 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.

Extra-Curricular Items and Activities	Amount (approx.)
<i>Term 1 – Cyber safety talk (in school activity)*</i>	\$20
<i>Term 2 – Totally Random (in school activity)*</i>	\$15
<i>Term 3 – Swimming Intensive (school subsidised)</i>	\$0
<i>Term 4 – Deakin Bioscience (in school activity)*</i>	\$20
Total Extra-Curricular Items and Activities *Eligible for the School Savings Bonus	\$55

Financial Support for Families

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

SCHOOL SAVINGS BONUS

You do not need to apply for the School Saving Bonus.

The Department of Education would have sent an email to you in November 2024 with your \$400 School Saving Bonus. You will be able to access it via an online system.

You can decide how to best use the School Saving Bonus for your family's needs. You can choose how to allocate the \$400 in the online system.

The bonus can be used towards 2025 school costs, which may include:

- camps, trips, excursions and incursions
- swimming and sporting programs
- outdoor education programs
- graduations
- school uniforms
- textbooks (*Armstrong Creek School do not require students to purchase textbooks*).

The bonus can be used at the school's approved textbook or uniform suppliers either in-store or online, or through State Schools' Relief. The list of suppliers may include a school uniform or bookshop. Any amount that you choose to allocate to textbooks and uniforms will be valid until 30 June 2025. It will then transfer to your child's school account for future activities.

Funds will roll over for use in future years if it is not all spent in 2025.

CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

Parents/carers who hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent can apply for CSEF which provides the school with \$125 per primary student or \$225 per secondary student to cover the costs of excursions, camps, and sporting activities. Please collect an application form from the school office if you hold an eligible pension or healthcare card.

CENTREPAY (via Centrelink)

Centrepay is a voluntary bill-paying service which is free for Centrelink customers. Use Centrepay to arrange regular deductions from your Centrelink payment. You can start or change a deduction at any time. **The quickest way to do it is through your Centrelink account online.** You can use Centrepay to pay bills and ongoing expenses like accommodation, education and employment, health, financial products, legal and professional services, utilities, travel, and transport, as well as other household costs.

Other ways to start deductions: A Customer can set up a Deduction in a number of ways:

- via their Centrelink online account via MyGov
- using the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app
- by contacting the Department, or



- by providing a Deduction Authority to a Centrepay approved Business (Armstrong Creek School) to manage their Deductions via Centrelink Business Online Services (CBOS). The minimum Deduction amount for Centrepay is \$10.

Go to humanservices.gov.au/Centrepay for more information.

UNIFORM SUPPORT – State Schools’ Relief (SSR)

State Schools' Relief (SSR) is an autonomous, charitable organisation that assists Victorian government school students who are experiencing financial disadvantage because of short-term crisis or long-term chronic need. SSR is supported by the Department to assist with uniforms and other essential items for students who need assistance to continue their education.

Short-term crisis and long-term chronic need are the primary qualifying criteria for support from SSR, including refugee status, homelessness, family violence, house fire, natural disaster, financial hardship, illness, and emergency.

SSR assistance will be provided by either direct supply of uniform items or uniform vouchers for redemption from school uniform suppliers.

Please contact the office if you require this support. Every Prep and Year 7 government school student who is a recipient of the CSEF automatically qualifies for a school uniform pack voucher from State Schools Relief (SSR).

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

Lucy Fitzgerald or Kim McCauley

Ph: 03 5218 5100 | Email: armstrong.creek.school@education.vic.gov.au

Total Contributions

Category	Totals
Curriculum Contributions	\$197.40
Other Contributions	<i>(Non-tax deductible)</i> \$26.50
	<i>(Tax-deductible)</i> \$
Extra-Curricular Items and Activities	\$ 55.00
Total	\$ 278.90

Payment methods

COMPASS

Compass is the main platform at Armstrong Creek School for communication, reporting, and event management. In preparation for 2025, families will be able to access booklist items and other contributions through Compass. There are a number of payment options on this platform:

- One-off payment for all contributions
- Flexible payment arrangements. Parents may choose to contribute flexibly across the year. To support our planning and administration,
 - monthly payments starting in January – October 2025 or
 - semesterly payments January and July 2025 or
 - termly payments January, April, July, October 2025.

Flexible arrangements in Compass are provided as the result of community consultation requesting easy ways to make flexible payments. They are voluntary and can be altered/cancelled at any time.

When contributions are made available on the Compass system, you will see an alert on your dashboard. By clicking the alert, you will be taken to the confirmation page. Select your chosen option and proceed through the prompts.

Any payments towards the Library Fund are tax deductible, and a tax invoice can be provided by the school.

BPAY

All ACS families have an allocated BPAY number. If you are unsure of your reference number, please contact the office on (03) 5218 5100 and they will be able to assist.

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.

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.