

Parent contributions

– and why every cent counts



This information has been prepared by the School Council, for the parents and carers of the Wales Street Primary School community.

At the beginning of every school year, all parents and families receive requests to pay parent contributions. But why do they apply? And how do we use the money? In this leaflet, we'll show you just how crucial your contributions are to our school community, and how every cent counts towards your children's education.

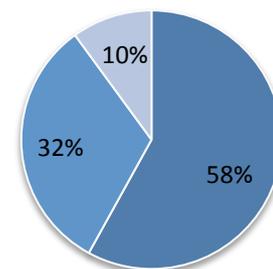
Why do we pay parent contributions?

The school receives its primary funding from the Department of Education and Training. This funding is provided as an amount per child each year and is designed to cover essential requirements associated with teaching the basic curriculum.

So why are families still asked to pay a contribution? We have hundreds of children at Wales Street, each with different needs and different strengths. The parent contributions we receive enable us to provide a truly comprehensive and enriching program for our students – with a diverse range of educational activities and opportunities – over and above those associated with the basic curriculum.

And that's why your parent contributions are so very crucial. They're not just the 'icing on the cake' – we believe they're an essential part of the cake itself.

Sources of school funding, 2017



- Government funds
- Parent contributions
- Fundraising

How is the money spent?

Government funding	The funding received from the Department of Education and Training covers staff salaries and contributes to the <i>basic</i> educational costs of programs, facilities and maintenance of buildings.
Your parent contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class sets of text books (dictionaries etc), readers, maths counters, measuring tools etc • Stationery, including pens and pencils, paper, workbooks, poster paper, sticky tape, glue etc • Learning programs such as Mathletics, Spellodrome, Reading Eggs, and the lease of computer equipment • Excursions that help to support and enrich the school program • Specialist education programs such as our art program, Italian studies, performing arts, PE • Student engagement and wellbeing programs – such as the Resilience Project and Respectful Relationships • School nurse and first aid supplies • The oval, upkeep of buildings and grounds
Fundraising	<p>Each year the school also receives funds as a result of fundraising efforts and generous contributions from within our school community. School Council, in conjunction with the Fundraising & Special Events committee, then determines how the money will be distributed. The aim is for the money to go towards the Master Plan and special purpose grants. If there is a shortfall in parent fees, however, on occasion, this money must be used to pay for school essentials.</p> <p>Over the past two years, funds raised have been put towards upgrading student toilets, painting the Wales Street building, replenishing reading books for the junior school, Great Ideas Grants, and development of the area outside the Prep classrooms.</p>

How are school fees structured?

We understand that families can at times experience a range of financial pressures for a host of different reasons. So with this in mind, you'll see on our parent contribution payment form that we split our contributions into two categories – an 'essentials' category, and a 'voluntary' category.

Essential educational items

- This contribution covers the cost associated with the day-to-day items that the school would simply struggle to function without – like textbooks, classroom supplies, and educational software.

We ask that all families pay this contribution as a minimum.

Optional extras and voluntary contributions

- These contributions cover the costs associated with providing our children with a truly enriching and well-rounded education (above and beyond the bare minimum of, for example, literacy and numeracy), as well as a safe and healthy school environment.
- They cover the computer equipment we use in classrooms, the school library, our specialist programs, and so much more.
- They cover the school nurse who tends to so many of our children every day – including emergency medical care when required, the school oval that is the epicentre of activity for scores of kids every day, and the building fund which keeps our buildings and infrastructure safe and functional.

It's not compulsory to pay these contributions, however, we strongly encourage all families to pay them if you're in a position to do so. When these contributions are not paid, we are faced with the very difficult task of deciding which aspect of our school program to sacrifice.

Paying your contributions

At the beginning of each year we send home a form requesting payment for the different contributions. (If you need another copy of this form, please request one from the office.)

You can elect to pay your parent contributions in a few different ways:

- **as a lump sum** – paid up front at the beginning of the year (or at any time if you've forgotten to make your payment this year)
- **quarterly** – in smaller instalments at the beginning of each term
- **half-yearly** – as a payment at the beginning of Term 1 and another at the start of Term 3.

What if I can't pay?

Every year, a small number of families within our community will be genuinely unable to pay their parent contributions. If you're having difficulty making payments, please do let us know. Please contact our office to make an appointment with Christian Woodcock (Principal), or Pina Ioannidis (Business Manager).

We'll be able to provide you with information on possible support options (including government assistance packages), and flexible payment arrangements. We can also go through what to do in situations where you just can't pay at all. (Any information about your financial circumstances, payment arrangements or status will be kept strictly confidential at all times.)

How do I pay?

If you haven't paid your school parent contributions yet, it's not too late. Although it helps us enormously if contributions are paid on time, we will gratefully accept late payments (in fact we'll thank you for remembering!).

Pay in person: pop into the office to pay in person by cash, EFTPOS or credit card.

Pay online via BPAY: head to your usual banking website to pay via BPAY. Contact the school office for a BPAY reference if required.

Pay online using Qkr: head to <https://qkr.mastercard.com/> to download the *Qkr! by MasterCard* app (or search on your phone) to register. Then, find WSPS and register your child(ren).

More information

If you have any queries, or if you'd like more information, please pop in to the school office for assistance, email us at wales.street.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au, or call us on **9484 3949**.