



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Please find below information related to the 2021 Parent Payments for Ferntree Gully North Primary School as discussed and ratified at the October School Council Meeting.

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides that instruction in the standard curriculum program is delivered free to all students in Victorian Government schools; this is referred to as 'free instruction'. The Act also grants School Councils the power to charge fees for goods and services to support the delivery of free instruction and to raise funds. Please note that none of the money contributed to our school by parents pays for the staffing of the school and it is used for the goods and services that support the delivery of instruction by Department of Education employees.

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities related to the Victorian Curriculum and senior secondary certificates such as VCE, VCAL and VET in Schools programs.

The Department of Education and Training Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools policy provides advice on the different types of payments that schools can request from parents and outlines the procedures and protocols schools must adhere to. This policy is available from the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide (www.education.vic.gov.au/spag).

There are three areas for which parents may reasonably be requested to make a payment or contribution:

Essential Education Items: are those items, activities or services that are essential to support student learning of the standard curriculum. These are items that the school considers essential for all students and which students take possession of. Parents may choose to provide the items themselves or buy the items from the school where practical and appropriate.

Student requisites:

This covers the cost of classroom materials, including all specialist classes that your child will participate in 2021 and will supplement the DET funds provided for these purposes. (eg; exercise books, paper, pens, pencils, ruler, scissors, craft materials etc) The items purchased with your funds will be ordered in bulk at wholesale prices and will be distributed in a starter pack (Grades 1-6) once payment is received and the remaining of the supplies will be distributed to the students throughout the year. Please note Prep students are NOT supplied with a "starter pack". Prep materials are supplied in the classroom.

\$60.00 per Student

Curriculum Requisites:

A successful and strong curriculum is vital at FGNPS. To maintain and improve the quality and range of the learning programs for your child these additional funds are essential and will supplement the DET funds provided for these purpose (eg software programs, program licences, curriculum packages, etc)

\$170.00 per Student

Optional Education Items: are those items, activities or services that are offered in addition to or support instruction in the standard curriculum program. These are provided on a user-pays basis so that if parents choose to access them for students, they are required to pay for them (for example school magazines, Year 6 jumpers or extracurricular programs or activities)

Voluntary Financial Contributions: Parents and guardians are invited to donate to the school for a general or specific purpose, eg school grounds projects, library fund or for new equipment. Some Voluntary Financial Contributions are tax deductible.



Grounds and Facilities Fund:

These funds are used to manage and maintain the school's grounds and facilities. DET funding is heavily supplemented by the school to ensure that our grounds and facilities continue to be maintained in a safe and optimal condition. It supports the work of the Buildings & Grounds committee to improve grounds at working bees. In 2020 these funds contributed to projects such as new fencing and shaded work/play areas. In 2021 we will continue work on fencing and maintaining pathways and surfaces throughout the school.

It is suggested that a voluntary contribution of \$50 to the Grounds and Facilities fund would allow these projects to proceed.

Library Fund*

These funds are used to enhance the reading resources in the library by providing a wide variety of appropriate book collections and sets, purchase book shelves, training equipment and computer software and hardware.

It is suggested that a voluntary contribution of \$50 (tax deductible) to the Library fund would allow the purchase of these products to continue.

School assistance fund**

This is a new opportunity for parents to support others within the school. This is entirely a voluntary option. These funds will be used to support other families should they suffer hardship. Contributions may be used to assist families with the payment of school or uniform costs. If you would like to contribute please indicate the amount.

Please note these donations will be confidential.

*** This contribution is tax deductible.**

**** This fund is to provide essential education items or optional items for families at our school unable to purchase these items due to demonstrated financial hardship. Your contribution helps to ensure that all our students have the option of attending school camps and excursions and have the items they need for school.**

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children are provided with essential education items. The school makes every effort to keep the costs of items that need to be purchased at a minimum and can do so with the ability of bulk buying.

The School Council of Ferntree Gully North Primary School has made a considerable effort to ensure that the 2021 Parent Payment schedule is fair and equitable, allowing for the variety of as many family circumstances as practicable. If you have difficulty making payments, please contact our Business Manager, Skye Thornton, to discuss possible support options and payment arrangements. Any information about your financial circumstances, payment arrangements or status will be kept strictly confidential.

CompassPay

Ferntree Gully North Primary School has now moved to full use of Compass for attendance, excursions, incursions, camps and course confirmation and payment. For anyone who would like the option, a payment plan has been established within Compass that sets out payments as follows:

Charge Date	Charge %
04/12/2020	15%
05/02/2021	15%
05/03/2021	15%
09/04/2021	15%
07/05/2021	15%
04/06/2021	15%
16/07/2021	10%

This payment plan has been extended from last year to accommodate more families, however, if you do not feel this accommodates your situation please arrange a time to meet with Skye Thornton in the office.



Book packs will be available by Friday 4th December 2020 and full payment or confirmed payment plan for all charges is preferred by this date. Arrangements for the collection of books will be confirmed closer to this date depending on COVID-19 restrictions. The school office will also be open on Wednesday 27th 2021 for those families wishing to pay and collect their children's books before the school year commences on Friday 29th January 2021.

Credit card payments via Compass is our preferred method of payment however Bpay remains a payment option and all family Bpay reference numbers remain the same as 2020. If you choose to pay via Bpay, please print off and complete the course confirmation documentation. Should you require a copy of your statement showing your Bpay reference, please contact the office.

Please note:

Additional school charges may arise during the year for things such as camps and excursions. Families will be notified with enough time of these expected costs. We will also be running our swimming program for Prep – Grade 4 in term 4 of 2021. Previously the cost of the swimming program has been \$95 per student.

Those families with eligibility for Camps and School Excursion Funding (CSEF funding) can utilise this support for these costs. Information about eligibility for CSEF and for which school things it can be used can be found using your Compass login under the Community menu in School Documentation. Please contact the Office if you require more information. Note the application form must be returned strictly by the due date to ensure the funding is received and allocated against your child's name. Families will be informed of the dates for CSEF 2021 applications once the Department of Education and Training have notified schools.

Please note if you have previously applied for and received CSEF funding for a specific child, you don't need to apply for 2021 funds. Your application and allocation of funds will automatically be processed in 2021, as long as your family is still eligible. It is important to note, however that if you have a new child starting in 2021 you will need to apply for 2021 funding for that child.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss your circumstances and the options available to you, please contact the school to make an appointment. Hard copies of any of the above information can be obtained by contacting the office.

Yours Sincerely,

Sue Dean
PRINCIPAL

Gareth Whitten
SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Essential student learning items

Item	Specifications	Cost	✓
Student Requisites	This covers the cost of classroom materials, including all specialist classes that your child will participate in 2020 and will supplement the DET funds provided for these purposes. (eg; exercise books, paper, pens, pencils, ruler, scissors, craft materials etc) The items purchased with your funds will be ordered in bulk at wholesale prices and will be distributed in a starter pack (Grades 1-6). Please note Prep students are NOT supplied with a "starter pack". Prep materials are supplied in the classroom.	\$60.00 per Student	
Curriculum Requisites	A successful and strong curriculum is vital at FGNSP. To maintain and improve the quality and range of the learning programs for your child these additional funds are essential and will supplement the DET funds provided for these purpose (eg software programs, program licences, curriculum packages, etc)	\$170.00 per Student	

Voluntary financial contributions

Item	Amount (please nominate how much you would like to donate per family)
<p>Grounds and Facilities Fund* These funds are used to manage and maintain the school's grounds and facilities. DET funding is heavily supplemented by the school to ensure that our grounds and facilities continue to be maintained in a safe and optimal condition. It supports the work of the Buildings & Grounds committee to improve grounds at working bees. In 2021 we will continue work on fencing and maintaining pathways and surfaces throughout the school. <i>It is suggested that a voluntary contribution of \$50 per family to the Grounds and Facilities fund would allow these projects to proceed.</i></p>	\$
<p>Library Fund* These funds are used to enhance the reading resources in the library by providing a wide variety of appropriate book collections and sets, purchase book shelves, training equipment and computer software and hardware. <i>It is suggested that a voluntary contribution of \$50 per family (tax deductible) to the Library fund would allow the purchase of these products to continue.</i></p>	\$
<p>School assistance fund** This is a new opportunity for parents to support others within the school. This is entirely a voluntary option. These funds will be used to support other families should they suffer hardship. Contributions may be used to assist families with the payment of school or uniform costs. If you would like to contribute please indicate the amount. <i>Please note these donations will be confidential.</i></p>	\$

* This contribution is tax deductible.

** This fund is to provide essential education items or Optional Items for families at our school unable to purchase these items due to demonstrated financial hardship. Your contribution helps to ensure that all our students have the option of attending school camps and excursions and have the items they need for school.



CAMPS SPORTS & EXCURSION FUND INFORMATION

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions.

Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. \$125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students, with \$225 per year paid for eligible secondary school students.

Payments are made directly to the school and are tied to the student.

In 2021 the program will again be promoted to families via school newsletters and websites.

To be eligible for the fund, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- a) Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be the holder of a Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder, OR
- b) Be a temporary foster parent, and;
- c) Submit an application to the school by the due date.

Parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above.

CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validating with Centrelink on either the first day of term two or term three.

The amount payable for eligible primary and secondary students is:

- \$125 for Primary school students.
- \$225 for Secondary school students.

CSEF payments are for the application year and cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

The CSEF system only allows one application per student. Parents in shared custody situations are encouraged to make decisions as to who applies for the CSEF. Schools should not be put into the position of arbitrating in decisions such as this.

If the parents cannot decide between themselves who should apply, they should be encouraged to resolve the dispute through the Family Court, or contact the Department's CSEF Helpdesk for more information on Ph: 1800 060 970.

Schools are required to use the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) payment for expenses relating to Camps, Sport and/or Excursions for the benefit of the eligible student. Some common examples of school-organised programs for which the CSEF payment may be used include:

- School camps/trips
- Swimming and other school-organised sporting programs
- Outdoor education programs
- Excursions/incursions

The CSEF payment cannot be used towards voluntary school charges, nor towards books, stationery, school uniforms, before/after school care, music lessons, school graduations or productions etc.

Parents and guardians will be notified when NEW application forms are available for 2021.