



# School Council Newsletter

I'd like to kick this newsletter off by saying Thank you!

Thank you to our community for staying positive and realising that the conditions of the school won't be forever, and what we will gain will be soon erase the memory of some of the difficulties of this year.

Thank you to all the parent volunteers who took our kids on camps, attended Hoop times, District Athletics and so much more.

Thank you to our amazing Fundraising team and all their work on the Trivia Night. What an effort, what fun, what a night, what a success!

Finally, I'd like to thank all our staff for once again teaching, supporting and keeping things "normal" for our Patchies in very trying conditions. It can be easy to forget that our school is your work place and we are so grateful for you all and how you are dealing with the conditions you are currently working in.

Thank you

As we plan for the future, I invite anyone with ideas on how we can bring back to life our greeting tree area to meet me under the tree!

Tuesday 17/09 at 3pm.

For those that cannot make it, get in touch and I'll make sure you are kept up to date with developments

See you under the tree soon!

Ange





# Who are we & what does School Council do?

**President:** Ange Ellis

**Vice President:** Kate Hutchings

**Treasurer:** Linda Lee

**Secretary:** Amanda St Leger

**Fundraising:** Mikhaela Bourke

**Policies:** Kathryn James

**Staff Members:** Karen Robinson Alesha Sangster

If you have anything you would like to discuss or have raised by someone on council, please do not hesitate to reach out to Ange or any of our members via the council email address: [ange.ellis@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:ange.ellis@education.vic.gov.au) . In the meantime, please check the link below to see if your concern or issue is something school council can help with. A gentle reminder that our parents volunteer their time, and may not always be available.

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-powers-and-functions/policy>





# What does School Council do?

As school council we assist in establishing the direction and vision that the school takes. We advocate for our school and its entire community.

An example of this is, it was the was school council that advocated for the new buildings we are about to enjoy. Starting back in 2021, lobbying local MPs, arranging meetings with leadership and advocating on behalf of the community for better facilities to support our staff and our students.

*This year council have:*

- **Started the Families Supporting Families group**
- **Managed the Fundraising team and funds raised**
- **Organised the community to get involved in sports clinics for the students**
- **Planning groups to renew the Greeting Tree area**
- **Coffee catch up mornings**
- **Participated in the School Review Process**
- **Policy reviews**
- **and so much more**

We are the voice of the school and its community when they need us to be.

cont



# What does School Council do?

Unlike independent/private schools, The Patch is a government state school that relies on the Government and Department of Education for limited funding. The department provides for our staff and our buildings, but even that can be at a bare minimum.

This all leads to a gentle reminder on the Voluntary Curriculum Contributions.

It is up to council to provide the context as to why these are so important for day to day life at school.

We fully appreciate that we are in a cost of living crisis. We appreciate that the school feels a little disjointed at the moment while we endeavor to build for the future.

However, put simply without these contributions the absolute basics of the basics can be difficult to provide for.

That's why council asks that you have a read over the FAQ's that we put together earlier in the year, and once again invite you to see if there is a way you can contribute even a small amount of the suggested contributions.

We thank you for taking the time to read these and your consideration.





Dje Djeri

# Invitation to make Voluntary Curriculum Contributions

We would like to invite families to make the Voluntary Curriculum Contributions for 2024.

We often hear there is confusion around the Voluntary Curriculum Contributions so we thought we'd share some FAQs to support our families when considering the Voluntary Curriculum Contributions this year.

You can also find more information at the Victorian Government website.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/school-costs-and-fees>

Your consideration of this invitation to make a contribution this year is greatly appreciated.

## *What does the Curriculum Contributions cover at The Patch Primary?*

It's a lot of the basics that we might not think about such as art supplies, STEM needs, sports equipment, readers, Subscriptions to Reading Eggs and Mathletics maintaining our grounds and the list goes on.

Stationery is just one good example of how all students benefit. Stationery can be expensive and quickly adds up when there are extensive stationery lists provided by schools. It can also create an uneven playing field when some kids have the popular brands and others don't. The Patch Primary made a conscious decision to supply our students with the same stationery so no one feels they are missing out and parents don't need to make the end of Summer dash to Officeworks, Kmart or Smiggle to pick up the necessities. There are many other items and activities that families may not realise are covered by these contributions, that support the functions and objectives of the school, including the enhancement of student learning, equity, inclusion and wellbeing.

### *What are Voluntary Curriculum Contributions?*

In Victoria every child that attends a State run primary school such as The Patch Primary, is entitled to free teaching of the set curriculum.

State schools can set a Voluntary Curriculum Contributions amount to help fill the gap between the teaching that is provided by the Government and, what we feel is needed to support the learning. This includes items and activities that are deemed necessary to enhance the schooling experience of our students. Without these vital contributions the school would need to rely on donations and fundraising.

### *Do I have to pay the Voluntary Curriculum contributions?*

The payments are not compulsory.

### *What does the Victorian Government and Department of Education cover?*

The Victorian government and Department of Education ensure that our wonderful teachers and administration staff are paid and repairs and maintenance of our building's facilities are taken care of.

### *Do I have to pay all of the suggested amounts?*

The school has set an amount that ensures costs to parents are kept to a minimum, affordable for families and proportionate to the needs of our school. The main component is the \$330 per child. There are also additional voluntary payments for Grounds Beautification, ICT Assistance Fund, School Assistance Fund and Physical Education. Families can pay as little or as much as they can or choose to. You can also pay in instalments which can be a great way to budget over the year.

*What if our family can't afford the  
Voluntary Curriculum Contributions  
at all?*

All children who attend The Patch Primary will have the same experience and will not be disadvantaged on the basis of a payment being made. Each family's circumstances are different and can change year to year. Some years it may be possible and others it won't be, please consider what is right for your family. Payment status is not disclosed. The Patch Primary has arrangements in place support families experiencing financial hardship.  
karen.koelewyn@education.vic.gov.au

*Who can I speak to regarding these  
payments?*

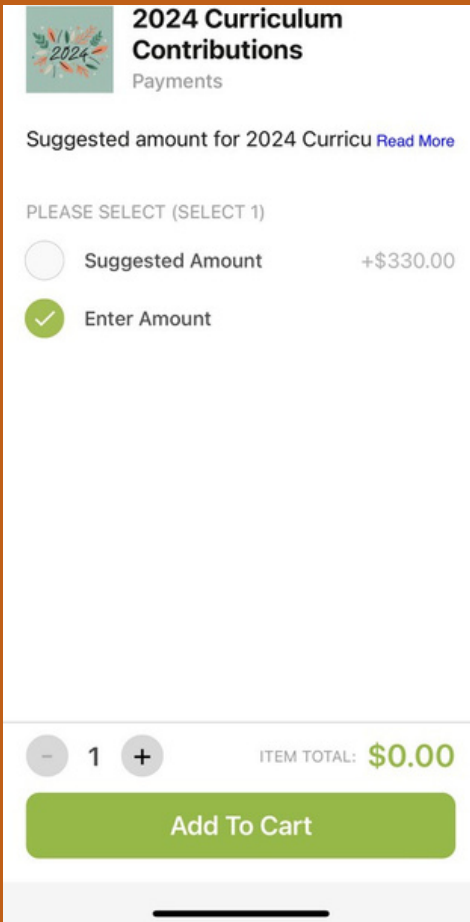
If you require more information please feel free to contact our business manager Karen in the office Monday – Thursdays and Jim is always happy to chat about options or concerns.  
karen.koelewyn@education.vic.gov.au

*How do I make a contribution?*

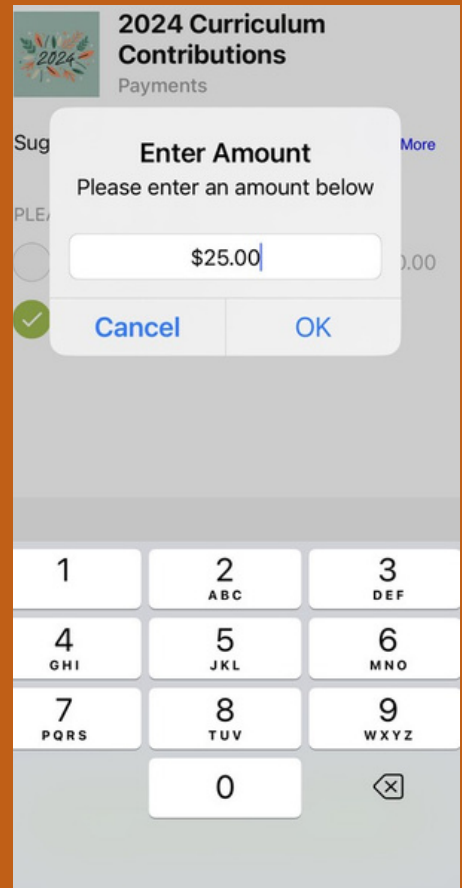
Payments are made on Qkr! via the Payments section. You will find a full list of the payment options and more details on how each payment is used by the school. Please see the pictures below to see where to make a payment and can be made weekly, monthly, or even by term instalments via Qkr! Qkr! payments are controlled by the user and will store all payment activity for future reference.

# EXAMPLE OF A MONTHLY PAYMENT

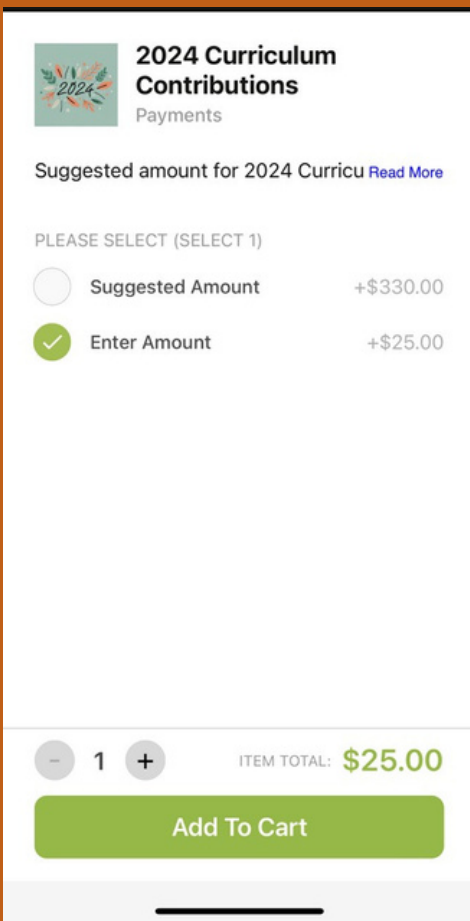
Step 1. Choose a student profile in the school payments section on QKR! and then tap on Curriculum Contributions



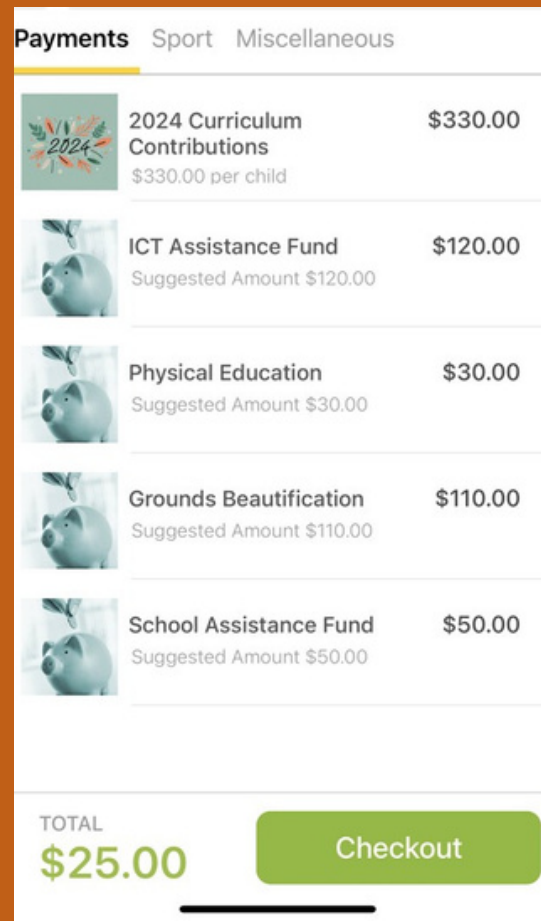
Step 2. Enter any amount you wish.



Step 3. Add to cart



Step 4. Then hit checkout!







# Social Media @The Patch



We understand that not everyone has a social media account or even wants one! And those that do, know just how good a social media detox can be for the soul every now and then. However, it does prove to be a fast way to get information out to our community when needed, or if you need to find something fast.

Obviously the first point of information is Compass. Please make sure your email is up to date with Kim in the office.

The school has a Facebook page run by the staff

[The Patch Primary School | Facebook](#)

We also have a family's page. Please be aware that this is run by parent volunteers. There is no staff involvement. It is a good place to ask for playdates, check in the files section to find lost newsletters or information, find out about a free dress day or for any other community information sharing.

Please ensure when inviting a family member to join that they answer the security questions and please familiarise yourself with the group information.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/familiesofthepatchps>