St. Patrick's School

16 Childers Street,
Mentone, Vic. 3194
Phone: (03) 95835033
Fax: (03) 9583 6915
principal@spmentone.catholic.edu.au

5th November, 2026

Planning for 2027: School Operations and Fees

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are looking forward to another great year at St Patrick's School in 2027, with more than 495 students across 21 classes.

To keep delivering the programs and care our families value, fees for 2027 will increase. We have worked with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), our School Business Manager and School Advisory Council to keep the increase as low as possible. It is driven mainly by the new staffing Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) and rising operating costs.

Family fees have risen by $175 to $375 depending on your family size, and student levies rise by $35 to $260 depending on Year level.

Fees for 2027 are made up of a Family Fee and Building Levy (per family) and Student Levies (per child). Both are shown in the tables below.

Family Fees & Levies	Family Fee	Building Levy	Total
1 Child	$3,035	$400	$3,435
2 Child	$3,215	$400	$3,615
3+ Child	$3,395	$400	$3,795

Student Levies	Tuition, Excursions & Stationery	Swimming / Beach Program	Camp	Sacrament	ICT Levy	Total
Prep	$660	$70	-	-	-	$730
Year 1	$660	$70	-	-	$70	$800
Year 2	$660	$70	-	$50	$70	$850
Year 3	$660	$70	-	$50	$70	$850
Year 4	$660	$70	$570	-	$70	$1370
Year 5	$660	$70	$570	-	$70	$1370
Year 6	$660	$70	$1,200	$70	$70	$2070

Building Levy

In 2025, St Patrick's School introduced an **Annual Building Levy** per family to assist with the repayment of our current school building loans. In consultation with the **School Advisory Council (SAC)** the Building Levy has been set at **$400 per family** for 2027. This annual charge will appear on the **Term 1 invoice**.

The Building Levy is reviewed each year by the SAC, taking into account factors such as projected student enrolments and the school's overall financial outlook.

The completion of our most recent building project in 2022 has provided the additional space needed to support St Patrick's continued growth and the significant increase in enrolments over the past five years. In 2027, the school will maintain a very strong enrolment of more than 495 students across 21 classes from Prep to Year 6 — an increase from 386 students in 2022.

This building project had a total cost of **$3.4 million**, with **half funded by the government** and the remaining half financed through a **15-year, interest-free loan** from the **Catholic Development Fund (CDF)**. To maintain the CDF's interest subsidy, repayments must be made on time. The Building Levy contributes directly to these repayments, in line with the guidelines set by the **Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne**.

School Camps

Camps remain an important part of life at St Patrick's School, and I am very grateful to our staff for the care and energy they put into them. For 2027, new staffing arrangements for overnight camps under the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) add approximately $140 per student, depending on the length and type of camp. This is already included in the Camp amounts in the table above. Details of each camp program will be provided closer to the time.

As a school community, we remain committed to ensuring that every child can participate in our school camp programs. Families who may experience difficulty with camp costs are warmly encouraged to speak with me confidentially.

Payment Terms

All **student levies** (including camp fees) and the **Building Levy** are to be paid by the end of Term 1.

The tiered family fee must be **paid in full by the end of Term 3.**

If a family is **leaving the school**, any applicable rebates will be calculated **to the end of the next school term**. Please note that fees are charged per full term, and partial term adjustments are not available.

Families **enrolling after the school year has commenced** are required to pay a **$50 administration fee**, along with any **student levies**, **prior to commencing** at St Patrick's School. Fees will be **charged for the full term** of commencement, and **no pro-rata adjustments** will apply.

Payment Options

St Patrick's School accepts payment by Credit Card, EFTPOS or Cash.

We also welcome online payments using the following details:

BSB: 083 347 Account Number: 681843694 Account Name: St Patrick's School

Please ensure your family name or account number is included in the reference field to allow accurate allocation of your payment.

Families may also choose to set up a direct debit plan for school fees and levies. Please contact the school office for the necessary paperwork.

Payments can also be made via the CDFpay app for your convenience.

Our commitment to supporting you

A decision to adjust tuition fees is never made lightly, nor without careful and thorough consideration of our students' needs and our school's capacity to provide an excellent education experience. We are also aware of the financial pressures that many families have experienced this year.

We are committed to supporting you through this transition. Please be assured that all existing arrangements and discounts for families holding valid cards (including Health Care Card) will continue and we will work compassionately with any family experiencing financial difficulty.

We are here to answer any questions you may have, and I warmly invite you to contact me directly to discuss your family's specific circumstances. You can call the school office on (03) 9583 5033 to make a time, or email me directly at principal@spmentone.catholic.edu.au. All conversations are confidential.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Berlingeri

Pat Berlingeri
Principal
St. Patrick's School

MACS Frequently asked questions

School fees

1. Why are the school fees changing?

Catholic schools are funded through a combination of government funding and parent fees.
As government funding does not meet the full cost of providing Catholic education, fees remain an important part of funding teaching, learning, student wellbeing and the day-to-day life of our school.
For 2027, MACS has set fee guidelines in response to significant cost pressures, including higher operating costs and the new cost of salary and conditions improvements under the new enterprise agreement (EBA).
We know any fee increase affects family budgets, which is why we are committed to keeping fees as affordable as possible.

2. What support is available for my family?

As a Catholic school, we are committed to ensuring that financial hardship does not prevent a family from participating fully in our school community. We recognise that circumstances can change, sometimes unexpectedly.
Please contact the school Principal - **Patrick Berlingeri** for a private and confidential conversation about your circumstances.
Concessional fees and other fee-support arrangements may be available, including for eligible Health Care Card holders. We will work with families respectfully and sensitively to understand what support may be available.

Class size and structures and student learning

3. Is our school changing class structures?

No. Our school class structures will remain as they are for 2027 e.g. 3 straight classes for each year level - Prep to Year 6.

4. Why is the school increasing class sizes?

MACS planning guidelines ask schools to work towards an average class size of around 25 students across the school. Moving towards this average helps us use staffing resources sustainably while maintaining the programs, support and teaching quality our students need.

5. Will larger classes impact on my child's learning or the attention they receive?

Class sizes within this range are consistent with those used across Victorian education systems and are not expected to affect student learning and flourishing. Educational research consistently shows that class sizes within this range preserve student achievement and individual progress.
In our classrooms, what matters most is high-quality teaching, purposeful lesson planning, and the connection our teachers build with every child.

This adjustment allows us to keep our tuition fees manageable while ensuring our classrooms remain well-resourced environments where your child receives personal attention, care, and encouragement to flourish.

Staffing changes

6. What staffing changes will be occurring in 2027?

Our staff are central to the life of St Patrick's School, and we recognise that changes to roles and responsibilities can affect people who have made a valued contribution to our community.
Throughout our planning, our goal has been to direct the school's resources to where they will make the greatest difference to your child's education e.g. Intervention programs if required or break out groups using all available staff.

For 2027, we have worked hard to maintain staffing arrangements broadly consistent with those in place during 2026. This has been made possible largely through our strong and sustained enrolment numbers. There will naturally be some changes, with some staff considering retirement or extended leave, while others will return from leave in varying capacities.
We remain committed to valuing and supporting our educators. Our 2027 staffing arrangements will enable us to maintain well-supported classes, invest in high-quality teaching and continue the programs and support that help every student learn, grow and flourish, all while ensuring the school remains financially sustainable into the future.

Tiered family fee structure

7. What is a tiered family-fee structure?

Catholic schools receive government funding on a per-student basis. The funding model assumes that a school will also receive a parent contribution for each enrolled child.
Under a flat family-fee model, the same tuition amount is charged whether a family has one child or several children at the school. This can create a gap between the funding a school needs for each student and the fee income it receives.
A tiered structure brings fee arrangements closer to the way school funding is calculated, while continuing to recognise the additional cost for larger families through lower fees for younger siblings.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS)

8. Who is MACS?

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) is responsible for almost 300 Catholic primary and secondary schools, educating more than 120,000 students across the Archdiocese of Melbourne.
As one of the fastest-growing education systems in Victoria, MACS supports schools to provide high-quality learning, strong wellbeing support and faith formation for the growing number of families choosing Catholic education each year.

9. What is its role in our school?

The role of MACS is to oversee a system of almost 300 schools educating nearly 120,000 students, ensuring Catholic education remains strong, sustainable and accessible for generations to come.
When MACS was established, it reflected the reality that Catholic education had grown beyond what individual schools could reasonably manage alone.
Today's schools operate in an increasingly complex environment, requiring expertise in governance, educational improvement, workforce planning, child safety, finance, infrastructure and compliance.
A coordinated system enables schools to focus on what matters most: delivering an outstanding education centred on faith and the flourishing of every student.

10. What are the benefits of being part of MACS?

The strength of being part of MACS is that schools retain their local identity and leadership, while drawing on the support, resources and shared responsibility of a much larger Catholic education community.
Over the past two years, MACS has implemented its Vision for Instruction and Vision for Engagement strategies to strengthen learning and wellbeing outcomes across the system. These reforms are helping schools deliver the high-quality educational experience that families increasingly expect and value.
We are proud that more families are choosing Catholic education and recognise the value our schools provide to students and their communities.