



“Small School, Big Opportunities”  
Cooperation, Kindness, Resilience, Respect

## Tarwin Lower Primary School

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# Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund Policy

### **Introduction**

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom.

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund is provided by the Victorian Government to ensure that no student will miss the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the outdoors; excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works and sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are part of a healthy curriculum. The Department of Education and Training (the Department) administers the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities. Although administratively the fund is received through the school, the full amount is intended for the benefit of the eligible student.

### **Expenses for which the Camps, Sports and Excursions Funds should be used:**

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

Schools will need to communicate with eligible parents/guardians to advise how the school intends to allocate the CSEF payment for the benefit of the eligible student. The CSEF payment cannot be used towards voluntary school charges, not towards books, stationery, school uniforms, before/after school care, music lessons, etc.

### **Eligibility**

This section explains the criteria used to determine a student’s eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

#### **Criteria 1 - Eligibility**

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) on the first day of Term one, or;
- b) on the first day of Term two;
  - Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder, OR
  - Be a temporary foster parent, and;
  - 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

## **Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria**

School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and 17 years of age inclusive. For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and 18 years inclusive. CSEF is not payable to students attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooled, or TAFE.

### **Eligibility Date**

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

### **Term one Validation**

If the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validates on the first day of term one, the application will be processed and payment will be made to the school from March onwards.

### **Term two Validation**

If the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validates on the first day of term two, the application will be processed and payment will be made to the school during term two.

### **Payment**

This section details the payment amount under the CSEF.

The amount payable for primary and secondary students is:

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

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth.

### **Payment Timing**

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school of the eligible applicant(s).

Schools are able to enter application information onto the online CSEF web system from term one each year.

CSEF payments are remitted directly to schools and commence from March each year. Payments to schools will continue throughout terms one and two for additional applications added to the system. CSEF payments are for the application year and cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

### **How the CSEF will be paid**

Schools enter the parent/legal guardian's information from the application form onto the online CSEF web system.

CSEF payments are made directly to schools from March onwards each year.

### **Applications**

This section explains the processes for parents or legal guardians and schools to follow when applying and administering the CSEF.

Each year the online CSEF web system is open for schools to enter applications from the start of term one.

### **CHANGED CSEF APPLICATION PROCESS**

The requirement for parents/legal guardians to complete and submit a new application form each year has been removed. This change has been made to simplify the application process for parents/legal guardians and reduce the administrative workload for schools.

Parents/legal guardians are only be required to submit a CSEF application form to the school in following circumstances:

- Parents/legal guardians applying for CSEF for the first time - i.e an application form was not lodged with the school the previous year **OR**
- Changed family circumstances e.g change of custody, change of name or CRN, or a new sibling(s) commencing at the school.

For parents/guardians who are not required to lodge a CSEF application form, schools are able to rollover/copy the existing application on the CSEF system from the previous year to the current school year.

CSEF applications are subject to audit by the Department to ensure adherence with the policy. According to the Public Records Office document storage and retention policy, CSEF application forms are to be retained by schools for a minimum of seven years.

### **Shared custody**

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**

Schools must ensure that all applications are entered onto the CSEF web system for payment. Schools will be able to accept and process applications into the CSEF web system until the end of term two.

Eligibility are subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card successfully validating with Centrelink on the first day of term one or two. The validation occurs automatically through an interface between the CSEF system and Centrelink.

Schools should copy or sight the concession card to ensure that the parent's name and Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) matches the Centrelink database.

### **Communication**

Schools have primary responsibility for communicating the availability of the CSEF to their school community.

Schools are required to advertise the CSEF at their school and provide application forms to parents and legal guardians.

### **CSEF Expenditure**

Schools are accountable for ensuring the CSEF payment is allocated towards camps, sports or excursion expenses for the eligible child. The CSEF cannot be used between siblings, except where a student leaves the Victorian education system.

Schools will need to communicate with eligible families regarding how the school intends to use the CSEF payment to assist the eligible child.

### **Acquittal**

At government schools, the CASES21 system allows CSEF expenditure to be allocated against eligible students' expenses.

At government schools, when a CSEF payment is deposited into the school's high yield account, run the process to receipt the CSEF payment against the family account. The family statement has a column indicating CSEF receipts. Schools can then allocate the CSEF payment to the appropriate camps, sports and excursion costs.

### **Students changing schools**

The school that the student is enrolled and attending on the February census date (28 February 2017) is the school that should process and receive the CSEF payment.

If the student transfers to another Victorian school, the default position is that the value of any unspent portion of the CSEF should follow to the student's new school, so that the student has access to the full value of the payment\*.

However, if the unspent portion is of a minimal amount, the schools may agree that the funds are not transferred as long as the new school commits to provide the student with assistance to the value of the unspent amount.

\* In the government sector, a funds transfer would typically require the initiating school to create a CASES21 Family Payment and then arrange for the unspent portion to be transferred to the new school via a bank transfer or cheque payment.

### **Students leaving the school system**

If the student leaves the Victorian school system, the CSEF payment will remain with the school and may be used towards the expenses for other family siblings, or school-incurred costs associated with operating camps, sports or excursion activities for students.

### **Remaining funds**

Any remaining portion of the CSEF not expended by the end of the school year may be carried forward by the school towards the following year's camps, sports and excursions expenses for the eligible child.

### **REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION**

This policy was last updated on **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018** and is scheduled for review **every three years**.

*This Policy does not have to be approved by School Council.*