St. Theresa’s Primary School
2013
Parent handbook

St. Theresa’s Primary School
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Principal: Rob Costin
Parish priest: Fr. Barry Hughes
St. Theresa’s Primary School.

St. Theresa’s is one of two catholic primary schools in St. Theresa’s Parish in Albion. Albion is in the Western Suburbs about 20 minutes from the centre of Melbourne. The school first gained registration in February 1951 and grew quickly to be an important part of the local community.

St. Theresa’s currently has an enrolment of about 170 children. The school has seven classes catering for children from prep to grade 6. The average size of each class is around 24 children. The small size of the school has its benefits in that the whole community has the opportunity to get to know all of the other members relatively easily. The children have a special relationship with each other and the staff where they take a genuine interest in the needs and achievements of those around them.

St. Theresa’s currently has a staff of 21 including some part time staff. The staff is very committed to providing quality education for the children in a caring atmosphere which promotes all of the catholic values which our school stands for. Professional development is highly regarded and staff keep up to date with current practices and teaching.

St. Theresa’s has a diverse population. 123 families represent 19 different nationalities. Almost 53% of the children come from a home where a language other than English is spoken regularly. This represents 14 languages spoken by families. This provides for a very wide range of rich cultural experiences which the children bring to their classes. 15% of the children attend another school to study their native language or that of their parents. St. Theresa’s offers Italian, which is studied by all children as part of our normal curriculum.

At St. Theresa’s we strive to create a community where people matter and learning is valued. We endeavour to foster the development of the children as independent and responsible learners. We believe it is essential to share our Catholic Faith and traditions with all at our school.

The Religious Education Program at St. Theresa’s is a vital part of the day to day events at our school. Participation in paraliturgies, school masses, classroom prayer and sacramental programs form the basis of the nurturing of the faith, which the children bring to school. Each celebration is recognised as an important aspect of the life of St. Theresa’s School.
St. Theresa’s always tries to involve itself with the community and neighbouring schools. Children participate in programs with nearby secondary colleges as well as being involved in the local Primary School Interschool Sports program for three terms of the year. All of these activities are very valuable experiences and enable the school to make good use of resources and facilities in the area.

St. Theresa’s offers a diverse curriculum centred basically around the experiences of the children and aims to extend the learning and experience of every individual. We aim to provide a multitude of experiences covering all of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and moving into the new National Curriculum. Children also can be involved in many specialist programs offered by the school. These include Outdoor Education, School Camps, Swimming, Piano, Buddy system across the school, Interschool Sports, School Productions etc.

Pastoral care is the responsibility of all at this school. We endeavour to approach discipline with a fair and just outlook for all. Every child, parent and staff member shares in the responsibility for the welfare of others.

St. Theresa’s Primary school welcomes parents and families at all times. We see parents in partnership with teachers, in classrooms working with children, at sports activities supporting and coaching, on school camps, at cultural evenings and art shows and doing the important fundraising tasks as well as socialising. We believe as a school that the atmosphere created by the community that shares these grounds makes up the essence of the spirit which is uniquely St. Theresa’s.

Our School Motto: ‘Do Small Things Well’
2013 TERM DATES:

TERM 1:            Wednesday 30th & Thursday 31st January individual testing.
                  Friday 1st February - (Classes)    Thursday 28th March

TERM 2:            Monday, 15th April                        -     Friday, 28th June.

TERM 3:            Monday, 15th July                        -     Friday, 20th September.

TERM 4:            Monday, 7th October                       -     Friday, 20th December.

Children from Grades  Prep – 6  begin on:  Friday 1st February, 2013

From then on prep children will attend full days and have each WEDNESDAY off for 4 weeks.

* Good Friday is the 29th of March – Easter Sunday is the 31st of March.

All children from grade 1-6 will be individually tested in numeracy and literacy on Wednesday January 30th & Thursday 31st. Parents will be informed of times for this testing.

SCHOOL HOURS:

8.30am - School gates are opened and the children will be supervised in playground.

CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8.30AM.

8.45am - Bell for children to go to class.
8.55am - Classes begin.

MON - FRI:  

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3.15pm Finish. Children are dismissed from the yard and all teachers will be available to parents at this time.

***** PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE ON TIME EACH DAY *****

* Children who are dropped off in the morning should enter by the gates on Adelaide Street or Drummartin Street.

* Parents who need to come through to the office are welcome to use the front doors at any time.
SACRAMENTS:

St. Theresa’s is a catholic school and each year the children are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

- Reconciliation will be in grade 3.
- First Eucharist will be in grade 3.
- Confirmation will be held in grade 6.
  10.30am April 28th

Parents are expected to take an important part in preparing their children for the sacraments and there will be opportunities to be involved in these programs.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER:

The school newsletter is a very successful form of communication between parents and school.

The newsletter will be sent home each Monday.

It is very important that you and your child read this together.

The newsletter will also be available on the school website each Monday.
(www.stalbion.catholic.edu.au)

SCHOOL BOARD:

St. Theresa’s has a School Education Board. Parents are elected each year to be a part of the Board. The Board meets regularly to discuss educational issues and school policies and make recommendations to the Parish Priest and Principal.

INSURANCE:

All children will have limited medical accident insurance through CCI Insurance
This cost will be met by the school.
**ARRIVING LATE / LEAVING EARLY:**

Children who arrive late or need to leave early **MUST** be signed in or out at the office.

**VISITORS / PARENT HELPERS:**

All visitors to the school during school hours must be signed in and wear a badge. You must sign out when leaving. This includes all parents who help out in classrooms, tuckshop etc.

**SCHOOL ABSENCE:**

Please send a note if your child is absent from school.

If your child is away, please supply a note explaining the reason for your child’s absence. If your child is absent from school for more than a week, please ring us and let us know what is happening.

**SCHOOL FEES:**

Fees can be paid online at any time by Credit Card or by Direct Debit.

Fees can also be paid by monthly instalments using 10 envelopes from Feb - Nov.

Fees can be paid all at once, termly or as per arrangements through the office.

Envelopes are provided only to parents who request monthly payments. Each envelope is dated. Please ensure these are paid by the due date.

School Fees for 2013 will be **$760 per family**

**BOOK / EXCURSION LEVY:**

This levy covers art supplies, books, paper, classroom needs and excursions. This Levy is payable for **EACH CHILD** and is due by the end of **February**.

Levies for 2013 will be **$205 per child**

Please note that uniforms can only be purchased at the office with cash or cheque.
**MONEY / NOTES for the OFFICE:**

All money for the office **MUST** be in an envelope marked clearly with your child’s name, the amount and what it is for. The envelope with the money or any forms that need to be returned, are to be placed in the **RED** tub provided in each classroom. The **RED TUB** is then sent to the office by **9.15 each morning.**

**CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENT FUND:**

We can arrange for a Savings Account to be opened with the Catholic Development Fund in your child’s name. 
Bank books are to be handed in at the office on Wednesdays. 
This is a great way for children to start saving.

**LUNCH ORDERS / TUCKSHOP:**

We are at present reviewing the way our canteen operates and we will notify parents as soon as this is sorted for 2013.

The school has a “Tuck Shop” operating at lunchtime for a limited number of items. 
Volunteers can work in the Tuckshop for approximately half an hour on a roster. 
(It would be great if you were able to help.)

**SCHOOL UNIFORM:**

Children are required to wear the School Uniform prescribed by the school.

**WINTER UNIFORM:**

(Boys & Girls)
- School Tracksuit.
- White Skivvy or School Polo Shirt.
- White socks.
- Black Shoes.

**SUMMER UNIFORM:**

Boys: Grey shorts, school polo shirt, white socks, Black Shoes, School Hat.

Girls: School Dress, white socks, black shoes, school hat.

**SPORTS UNIFORM:**

White shorts, school polo shirt, white socks, hat, runners. 
(Boys / girls)

School Bag, Summer Dress, Polo Shirt and Track Suits, Polar Fleece Jacket and Polar Fleece Vests are ordered through the school. Please obtain order forms from the office and drop in for collection later. The rest of the uniform can be purchased at any available store.

**RUNNERS:** These must **ONLY** be worn on Physical Education days or Sport Days. 
You will be notified what days these will be.
HATS: School hats are essential for **ALL CHILDREN** and staff in term 1 & 4 as part of our SunSmart Policy. We have a No Hat No Play Policy in term 1 & 4.

**PLEASE PUT A NAME ON ALL ARTICLES OF CLOTHING, YOUR CHILD’S BAG, LUNCH BOXES, DRINK BOTTLES, ETC.**

A lost property bin is situated in the Sick Bay. Please check there if your child has lost something.  *All named clothes or items will be quickly returned to their owners.*

**LIBRARY BAG:**

All children **MUST** have a library bag to borrow books from the school library. This is very important to help us maintain our resources in good order.

**SCHOOL EXCURSIONS:**

School excursions are a very important part of our school curriculum.

A permission note will be sent home for all excursions involving long distances from the school. Children will **NOT** be able to attend without written permission.

A general permission form will go home to gain your consent for local excursions which occur on a regular basis. i.e. walk around the block, Inter School Sports.

Parents are welcome to attend most excursions as organised by the teachers. Please note that numbers are often limited and all parents may not always be able to attend.

**SAFETY:**

It is **IMPORTANT NOT TO DOUBLE PARK** when you are picking up or dropping off your children. **IT IS DANGEROUS** Children must only get out of properly parked cars. Teachers will monitor this after school.

When dropping children off and picking up children, parents **MUST NOT** use the **STAFF CARPARK, this is a dangerous place for children and not to be used.**
All gates leading to the school will be locked at 9.10am each morning and unlocked at 3.00pm each afternoon. This is for the safety of all children.

During school hours 9.10 – 3.00pm all visitors must enter through the front door, sign a visitors book and collect a visitors badge. Visitors MUST sign out on leaving.

Please make sure you use the crossing in Adelaide Street.

INJURY / SICKNESS:

Parents / Guardians will be notified as soon as possible in the event of injury or sickness whilst your child is at school. It is essential that we have up-to-date medical information as well as sufficient reliable contact phone numbers. Medical forms will be sent home to help with this information.

MEDICINES AND TABLETS:

Children may not keep tablets and medicines with them or in their bag. The school cannot let children take medications without a written note from home showing the dose and when it must be taken. Medicines will be kept and administered from the office.

Unwell children should remain at home until they are fit for school.

Children who use asthma inhalers should have their name on them and keep these with them at all times.

DENTAL SERVICE:

The Dental Service is free for your child /children if you have a Health Card.

For Non Health Card holders, there is a fee of about $25.00 per child (maximum $100 per family) which includes a dental check up and all general dental treatment.

Treatment is provided by appointment at: Footscray Dental Care
2 Geelong Road,
Footscray 3011 (Melway Ref: 42 C3)

To find your nearest School Dental Service Clinic please call: 1300 360 054
**IMMUNISATIONS:**

New enrolments require an immunisation certificate issued through MediCare offices as part of our enrolment procedure.

**All children require this to enrol.** These are available from MediCare Office after your child has completed all of their immunisations, and should be delivered to school with your enrolment.

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**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:**

The staff at St. Theresa’s considers parental involvement an integral part of the education of the children.

Our experience and current research has proven that the benefit of parental involvement is very valuable to all concerned, particularly the children. The children see both teachers and parents working together for their benefit and therefore, develop positive attitudes towards school.

Parents who have worked in our classes have commented that they now have a better understanding of how their children learn and feel more confident about helping their children at home.

Throughout the school year there are many opportunities to become involved. The school runs regular Activity Days, where parents are invited to work with groups of children. Excursions are an important part of curriculum and parents are encouraged to join us.

Staff are keen to involve parents in working within classrooms in many different areas, for example, maths and language group work.

If you are interested in being involved in any way please approach the teachers and you will be welcomed with open arms.

Participation is not only achieved by helping in classes.
By taking time to read information, answer notes, talk to your children about school you are helping them understand that what happens at school is important. We hope you can really work with us to develop a very positive attitude to school life.

Communication and co-operation between staff and parents is the key to successful education.

Parents may also wish to be involved in our Fundraising Committee which works to support the school.

**WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK:**

It is now the law that any person who works with children requires a Working with Children Check.

We advise that ALL parents obtain this check by applying through the post office.

You will need this to have any involvement with your child at school. Please consider this important matter as we would love to have you involved with your children at St. Theresa’s

**WORKING BEES:**

The school will run occasional working bees where we ask your help in different projects to support our school and keep it well maintained for your children.

**TECHNOLOGY:**

St. Theresa’s values the contribution that current Technology can make to your child’s education. We endeavour to provide access to up to date technology and computers so that all competent with this children will have access to children will be encouraged curriculum areas.

All classrooms are fitted with interactive data boards to enhance children’s learning.

Children are not permitted to use Mobile phones etc at school and these will be kept at the office for the children during school hours. Our policies regarding the use of technology are detailed and available on our web site. These policies are reviewed and altered regularly to keep in line with current good practice.

**LITERACY:**

Children consistently have a two hour literacy block every day covering reading, writing and oral language skills. Parents are encouraged to attend training sessions at the school to enable them to help in the classrooms with this program.
We offer Reading Recovery as an extra strategy / program in grade one made available to some children who may benefit from the extra support in reading. This is offered on a needs basis to grade one children.

**ARTS:**

We acknowledge the importance of the arts. We regularly involve children in Art Shows, School productions / Concerts. This is an exciting and valuable part of school life. We have a visual Arts specialist, Music lessons are a part of the normal program for all children and private piano lessons are available for an extra cost during school time.

**INTERSCHOOL SPORT:**

Grade 5 and 6 participate regularly against other local schools in sports activities. This includes summer and Winter sports as well as Cross Country Running and Athletics. On some occasions we involve grade 4 children.

**SWIMMING PROGRAM:**

St. Theresa’s will be involved in swimming programs throughout the year for all grade levels where possible. This is always subject to booking availability and costs.

All children should take advantage of this program as it is an important part of the curriculum. Swimming will be in term 4 in 2013 at Maribyrnong Swim centre.

**OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM:**

St. Theresa’s is committed to its outdoor Education Program. Activities will vary each year.

This program includes:  
P/1 Late stays at school  
2 Overnight stays at school  
3/4/5/6 Camping at outside venues.

Once again all children should be able to participate in this important program. The program differs from year to year depending on the makeup of the classes.

Parent support is always welcomed at these activities when possible. Parents are usually required to support our school camps and are welcome to contact teachers to be involved.
**ASSEMBLY:**

We have assembly at school 2.30 pm in the Multipurpose room every second Friday. Parents are very welcome. The assemblies are conducted by the children each week and this is advertised in the newsletter weekly.

**INSERVICE / SCHOOL CLOSURE DAYS:**

Each year the school will usually have five inservice days. There will be no school for the children on these days. You will always be notified in advance of these dates.

**ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING:**

School Reports will go home twice a year, in July and December.

**PARENT / TEACHER INTERVIEWS:**

Opportunities to meet with your child’s teacher will be held in Term 1, 2 & 4.

- Term 1 will be a grade level meeting.
- Term 2 & 4 – individual parent teacher interviews.

- Our school policy invited you to contact your child’s teacher at any time throughout the year to support their learning. Please take advantage of this offer at any time.