ST TERESA'S SCHOOL
RAVENSHOE



PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

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Principal’s Welcome

Welcome to St Teresa's School!

Thank you for choosing our school and entrusting us with your child's education. We are honoured to partner with you in one of life's most important journeys: helping your child learn, grow and flourish.

At St Teresa's, we believe that every child is known, valued and supported. As a small school, we are proud of the strong sense of belonging and family spirit that exists within our community. Our size allows us to build meaningful relationships with students and families, ensuring that every child receives the individual attention, encouragement and care they deserve.

Our dedicated and highly skilled teachers are passionate about education and committed to helping each student achieve their personal best. More than teachers, they are mentors, role models and advocates who genuinely care about the wellbeing, learning and success of every child. We work together to create an environment where students feel safe, confident and inspired to take on new challenges.

At the heart of our school is a welcoming and supportive community founded on Catholic values. We celebrate each child's unique gifts and strive to nurture not only academic growth, but also character, faith, resilience and compassion. We want our students to develop the confidence to succeed, the courage to lead, and the kindness to make a positive difference in the world around them.

We warmly invite you to be an active part of your child's educational journey. The partnership between home and school is one of the most important factors in a child's success, and we value the relationships we build with our families. Whether it is attending school events, volunteering, supporting learning at home, or simply sharing in your child's achievements, your involvement enriches our community and helps our students thrive.

As you read through this handbook, I hope it provides a helpful introduction to our school and the opportunities available to your child. More importantly, I hope it gives you a sense of the caring, welcoming and vibrant community that makes St Teresa's such a special place.

Thank you again for choosing St Teresa's School. We look forward to walking alongside your family and sharing many wonderful experiences and achievements in the years ahead.

With every blessing,

Katrina Miller
Principal
St Teresa's School, Ravenshoe

Vision Statement

Guided by the person of Jesus Christ and inspired by the vision of St Therese of Lisieux and Catherine McAuley, St Teresa's' School strives to be an inclusive faith community, where spiritual and academic growth are nurtured through the values of love, respect, justice and compassion and where lifelong learning and service to others is valued and promoted.

Mission Statement

We strive to be a faith community through:

- Shared prayer and liturgy; celebrating the Sacraments and Liturgy of the Word.
- Nurturing every person's faith journey in the Catholic and wider Christian tradition.
- Honouring and acknowledging the charism of the Sisters of Mercy and St Therese of Lisieux.

We strive to form positive partnerships through:

- Welcoming all who seek a Catholic Education.
- Community and parent engagement.
- Open communication.

We strive to offer a holistic education by:

- Child focused learning
- Collaboration between school, parent and child
- Creating a child safe and supportive environment
- Delivering a high-quality curriculum that responds to the needs of diverse learners.
- Celebrating academic, creative and social successes.

We strive to be a community in which outreach and service are valued through:

- Encouraging students to participate through action and reflection in organisations associated with Social Justice.
- Engaging actively in Catholic Justice Teaching.

We strive to be a community characterised by a culture of reflection and renewal by:

- Forgiveness and unconditional love
- Restorative practices
- Encouraging all members to self-reflect and set goals

Information for Prep Parents



The Preparatory Year or ‘Prep’ is about preparing children for formal schooling. Research has identified the following indicators of preparedness for school which we aim to develop:

- Social and emotional competence with a focus on social learning and independence
- Health and physical well-being, particularly in making healthy choices and gross and fine motor development
- Language development and communication focusing on oral language and early literacy
- Early mathematical understandings with an emphasis on early numeracy
- Active learning processes with a focus on thinking, investigating, imagining and responding
- A positive orientation to learning.

Starting school is an important step in a young child's life. "But is my child ready for school?" is a question asked by many parents.

Children develop at different rates and learn skills in different ways. It is the school's task to respond to the needs, learning styles and rates of development of individual students. Schools plan learning experiences based on the vast array of prior knowledge and skills which students bring to the school setting. Parents, as the first educators of their children, have long since begun the educational process well before their children come to school. Specialist advice and support is available to assist parents of children with special needs in accessing appropriate educational services. Talk to the school as early as possible about access to these services if you have any developmental (physical, language, emotional or behavioural) concerns about your child.

Here is a sample of skills suitable for most children starting their foundation year of school. Starting school may be just a little easier if they have lots of opportunities to practise these skills prior to commencement. Encourage your child to attempt the things mentioned below; praise their efforts, celebrate their successes and promote resilience through persistence if initial efforts prove difficult. Don't worry if your child isn't able to do all of them and talk to your child's teacher. Together we can support and assist your child's learning.



Language



- Talks to other people about familiar objects and events
- Answers and asks simple questions. Makes needs known
- Follows simple instructions
- Uses books for enjoyment or for looking at pictures
- Identifies pictures in books, magazines, on television or devices
- Uses a variety of things (pens, pencils, textas, paintbrushes, sticks in the dirt) to draw, to scribble or to write
- Joins in singing familiar songs
- Can sit quietly and pay attention for a set period of time, eg watching children's educational television programs, doing a puzzle, building with blocks, etc
- Can recognise their own name

Mathematics



- Recognises that numbers can be used to count
- Uses words like many, a lot, more, less
- Identifies things in a group that are different
- Creates patterns with beads, blocks, etc
- Sees differences in shapes
- Differentiates between opposites – up and down, under and over, in front and behind, day and night

Personal/Social Skills

- Uses the toilet independently. For example, they should be able to go by themselves, undo and do up buttons or zips, flush the toilet, wash their hands and manage the taps. (The Prep teacher will organise regular toilet breaks during the first few weeks of school).
- Can say own name and address – phone number is an added bonus • Can recognise their own hat, jumper, school requisites and other belongings. A motif or colour, as well as their name, helps young children identify their things. School bags, drink bottles and lunchboxes can often be similar to another students'.
- Adapts to unfamiliar settings and new experiences
- Can finish a task, and be able to tidy up afterwards
- Plays co-operatively with other children – shares and takes turns and respects other people's property
- Is curious about the world and participates in imaginative play
- Can share an adult's attention with several other children
- Uses words such as Thank you and Please



Physical Skills

- Uses scissors to cut along a straight line
- Enjoys a variety of indoor and outdoor play
- Can put on and take off jumpers, shoes and socks independently. Sometimes children feel too hot or too cold so they must be able to cope with jumpers by themselves. Often shoes must be taken off and put on again when playing in the sandpit or during wet weather. Lace up shoes can cause problems. Shoes with Velcro are preferable. The best way to help children learn these skills is to encourage them to dress themselves.
- Makes and designs things using a variety of materials
- Is able to feed him/herself independently. They will also need to undo a lunchbox, unscrew a drink container, unwrap their food and peel a piece of fruit
- Can get a drink from a tap

Expectations of St Teresa's Prep Children

Children who begin Prep at St Teresa's School will be expected to know how to:

- Read their own name for identification of work, belongings, etc
- Unpack a lunchbox and drink bottle and pack this away again into their school bag • Undo and do up their school bag
- Have started cutting with scissors
- Use a glue stick, pasting around the edges of paper and not just in the middle • Pack a game/activity away after use
- Know the difference between their lunch and recess snack
- Take off and put on their jumper and art smock
- Use appropriate manners – Please and Thank you
- Use the toilet and wash hands after use
- Sit quietly and listen to a story
- Take turns



Getting Prepped For Prep

1. Read to Your Child Every Day
It greatly improves their literacy, vocabulary, concentration, and imagination. Children who are regularly read aloud to become better readers and achieve better results.

2. Follow a Basic Routine
Children thrive in environments that are consistent. Having predictable morning and night routines, with a good night's sleep and healthy meals, improves behaviour and concentration.

3. Encourage Independence
Give your child age-appropriate jobs, doing things for themselves (e.g. tidy room, get dressed), for the family (e.g. refill toilet rolls, set table), and to prepare them for school (e.g. holding a pencil, colouring, using scissors).

4. Listen to Each Other
Listen when your child is telling you things, so they know they can always come to you. Encourage your child to listen. Children cannot be taught anything until they can listen.

5. Talk About Everything
This is how children come to understand and make sense of the world. By simply talking to your child, you are teaching them general knowledge, vocabulary, and correct pronunciation.

6. Check Out Developmental Milestones
Use them as a general guide to see what the average child should be doing physically, intellectually and socially. All children develop at different rates, but it is better to have concerns checked, then 'wait and see'.

7. Practise Appropriate Social Skills
It is important that your child has time to play with others, as through play they learn many important skills; skills such as sharing, turn taking, manners and problem solving.

8. How to Deal with Emotions
It's okay to have negative feelings (e.g. sad, angry, worried), but we need to teach children appropriate ways to calm down, such as deep breaths or walking away..

9. Have Rules and Consequences
Make sure everyone knows the rules, why we have them, and what happens when they are ignored. Follow through with consequences as it's more about the certainty, rather than the severity.

10. Be a Positive Role Model
Be careful what you do and say in front of your child unless you mean it and/or want it repeated. You are their first and most important teacher, so teach them well.

Source: *www.preppingforschoolsuccess.com*

Prep - Week 1

To assist your child's transition into full time schooling, we conduct a staggered start into Prep. This enables teachers to establish routines and expectations in a smaller group setting. Half of the class will commence on the Day 1, and the other half will commence on Day 2; with the whole class coming together Day 3. An email is sent to parents advising of which day their child will be commencing.

Pick Up and Drop Off Routine

Before School

- You may leave your Prep child in the area outside the school office if you arrive before 8:20am and need to leave. Please note that there will be no teacher on duty until 8:20am. At 8:40am the first bell rings, and students are welcomed into the classroom to prepare for the day ahead and to participate in quiet activities.
- The time before school is used as conversation time for the students and provides an opportunity for them to chat with their friends and begin to settle for the start of their school day.
- We do encourage that students are not late for school as this can be disruptive to the class and may cause embarrassment for your child.



After School

- Prep students are to be collected by family members from the undercover area outside the Prep classroom. If someone unfamiliar to the class teacher has been arranged to pick your child up on an occasion, please notify the teacher of this arrangement.
- Try to be on time to collect your child from their classroom at the end of the school day, as children often experience fear and may become quite upset if they are not collected on time or are the last to leave. A quick phone call to the office, if you are delayed, will alleviate any apprehension.
- Students who catch the bus will initially be escorted up to the Bus Line where they will be supervised by the teacher on duty. If, occasionally, there is a change to the bus routine, please notify the school Office so that the bus roll can be adjusted and the teacher on duty is not looking for a missing child.

IMPORTANT: If there is a change to your child's pick up or drop off routine, phone the office and they will ensure the message is passed on. **DO NOT EMAIL YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER**, as they may not get a chance to check emails during the day.

The First Few Weeks of School

Beginning school is the signalling of one of life's biggest milestones. We all have our own personal memories and experiences of starting school and ultimately, we want the best for our children.

Prior to your child beginning school, you can build up positive images and ideas that will help the transition to be a smooth one. Visit the school and discuss what will be expected of them.

When the first day arrives, some children may be overwhelmed and teary; this is quite natural. Others will maintain a confident, resilient demeanour. The Prep teacher will assess the situation and take appropriate steps to make the transition as easy as possible for you and your child.

It is important to remember that your child may be extremely tired in the first few weeks. They may even decide that they no longer need to attend school. Ensure that your child has "down time" after school and an appropriate bedtime. This will be beneficial to their development, learning and behaviour.

Establish close links with your school community and your child's teacher. Children respond most positively when they see their parents participating in school activities and showing a genuine interest in their daily activities.

Enjoy This Time!

Share your child's transition experience with them. Encourage them to draw pictures about their time in their new classroom and perhaps ring relatives and friends to share the news!

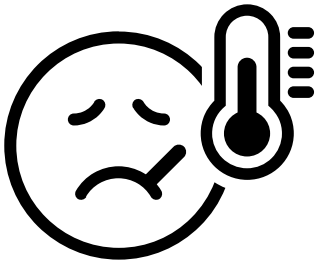
Remember to keep conversations about school positive to help your child keep the excitement until they are at school for their first day.

A-Z of St Teresa's

Here you will find an A-Z of information that will be helpful to you as a parent of a student at St Teresa's School, Ravenshoe. More information about policy, procedure and events is available on the St Teresa's website (http://www.stteresas.qld.edu.au) and the MyCE App. The school often sends emails to parents informing them of upcoming events. Please ensure you have up to date contact information.

Accidents/Illness

For injuries of a minor nature, first aid will be administered at school. If a serious illness or accident occurs, every effort will be made to contact parents. However, it may be necessary to seek immediate medical service. It is therefore **essential that school records are kept accurate**. Parents are expected to keep the school informed of emergency contact numbers and all other pertinent medical information.



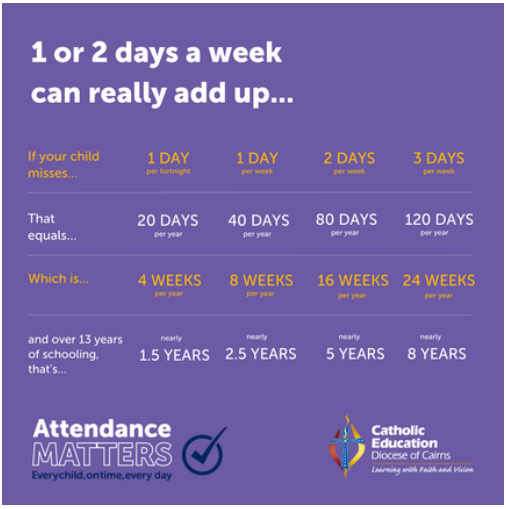
Assembly

A whole school assembly is held each Friday afternoon from 2:30pm. Celebrations of achievement, birthdays and school messages are conducted at assembly.

Attendance

The Prep year is compulsory. It is expected that all children will attend school regularly. Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children attend school every day unless you have a reasonable excuse, such as illness. Shopping trips, social occasions and family holidays are not considered reasonable grounds under the Education Act for school absences. Parents are strongly encouraged to book family holidays during school vacation periods. Please advise the school office staff if your child will be absent for any reason. You will receive an automated text message from the school seeking notification if your child is absent.

If you require an Early Departure, please contact the office to arrange this. If your child has a Late Arrival or Early Departure, they need to be signed in and out from the school office by their parent.





Australian Curriculum

St Teresa's School offers children a full-time eduation (Prep-Year 6) within a welcoming Catholic community, where learning takes place in a faith-filled and supportive environment. Our Prep program provides a strong foundation for school, using developmentally appropriate practices to support each child's social, emotional, physical, and academic growth.

Children begin school with a wide range of experiences, abilities, and interests. We build on their natural curiosity, supporting them to make sense of the world through purposeful interactions, explicit teaching, guided practice, and play. Our curriculum is designed to both challenge and support each child as they grow in confidence and capability.

Our teaching is guided by the Australian Curriculum, with learning across English, Mathematics, Science, HASS, Health and Physical Education, Technologies, The Arts, and Religion. It focuses on developing successful learners who are confident, creative, and active participants in their world, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy as the foundations for future learning.

At St Teresa's, we use evidence-based teaching practices to support student success. Each day includes a Morning Routine, a structured Literacy Block, a Mathematics Block and other key learning areas.

We are committed to providing a warm, nurturing environment where every child is known and supported. Student progress is carefully monitored, with formal reports provided each semester and opportunities for parent-teacher interviews throughout the year.



Bags

In order to encourage the development of independence, your child will be expected to carry his/her own bag to and from the classroom. It is important for children to develop responsibility for their belongings and the independence to be able to carry their bag and place it in the correct place in the bag rack.

You are asked to support us in helping your child in this area by refraining from carrying school bags for them and to also minimise any heavy 'extras' that are put into your child's bag.

Birthdays



On this special occasion you may like to send along cupcakes or cake, etc. to share. If your child has allergies to any foods that may be shared at school, please ensure that this information is provided to the school and to your child's teacher. If your child does have allergies that would prevent them from sharing in birthday celebrations at school, you may wish to send in a supply of something that they could have instead on these occasions that we can keep in the freezer or cupboard.

Books & Stationery

A booklist will be sent home at the end of the year. The booklist will give details of the items which will need to be purchased and brought to school at the beginning of the following year. Booklists can also be found on the school's website.

Carpark & Crossing

Our number one priority in the drop-off and pick-up areas is the safety of our students. It is vital that you model these safe practices with your children of all ages.

1. When parking your car, you must ensure that you park in the designated parking areas, not in the ‘drop-off’ or ‘bus zones’ .
2. When walking your child from the car you must walk along the footpath, and only cross the road at the designated crossings.
3. Please ensure your child enters and exits from the vehicle from the kerbside. If they need to enter or exit the vehicle from the roadside, they should be supervised and escorted by their parent.

Between 8:00–9:00am and 2:50–3:20pm there are crossing guards on duty at the Moffat St crossing to ensure the safe crossing of students and families. Please ensure that you follow any direction given by the crossing guards either as a pedestrian or as a motorist.



Communication

It is vital that the home/school relationship is a communicative one. Events in family life such as illness, visits of family and friends, accidents or death of relatives, friends and pets can affect their behaviour. We would appreciate the sharing of this information as it may help in understanding any changes in behaviour.

Your child's teacher's email address is available for you to use as a convenient form of communication; it is a vital tool in helping to maintain regular contact. If you need to make an appointment to request a meeting or to inform the class teacher that your child has been unwell, please email them and allow time for a response. The school day is a very busy one and the teachers are not always able to check emails and send responses immediately, however they will strive to do so in a timely manner.

Paper copies of newsletters are not printed, so it is essential that you check your email and read the school newsletter regularly for important information. The St Teresa's School website and MyCE App also provide extensive information regarding policy, procedures and calendar events. Please ensure that you use these as the first source of information.

Drop-off Zone

A Drop-off Zone on Rankine St is designated in the lane closest to the footpath in front of the school's front office. This is a kiss and drop zone only. This allows parents to drop-off/pick-up students without the need to park and leave the car. The Drop-Off Zone is a matter of traffic law and is enforceable. The times when the Drop-Off Zone is in effect are on school days, 8:00- 9:00 am and 2:30-3:30pm. We strongly encourage parents to use the Moffat St entrance for drop off and pick up as this is more easily accessible and has a supervised crossing.

Goodbye Routine

It is very normal for a child to become upset when it is time to say goodbye to Mum or Dad. Even a child who is very excited about going to school may still feel sad when it is time to begin the day and say farewell. For most children, it is the actual farewell that makes them feel sad and so naturally the longer the farewell takes, the longer the child will be upset. Most children who are teary when Mum or Dad says goodbye settle immediately into the activities that their classmates and friends are doing as soon as their parents have gone. It is very difficult to leave a child who is crying and holding on to you tightly, it is also heartbreaking to have to say goodbye and walk away. Take the time before school begins to establish a 'goodbye' routine with your child. This might be something fun such as a cuddle, a kiss and a high-five.

Talk to your child about what this goodbye routine is and establish an understanding that once it has been done it is time for them to begin their day and for you to leave to continue with yours. Talk to your child about what you are going to be doing while they are at school so that they know where you will be and that you will be okay. Remember the power of language - rather than telling your child that you are really going to miss them, tell them that you can't wait to hear all about their day.

Try to organise some play dates before school begins to enable your child to begin to establish independence and confidence being away from you.





Handwriting

Correct letter formation is an essential skill to be taught when children are learning how to write. Incorrect letter formation and pencil grip can lead to difficulties with writing and hand discomfort in later years. Below is an example of the Queensland Beginners Script that your child will be taught at school. By following this letter formation when doing writing activities at home, you will help your child to consolidate the learning that is occurring at school and help them to correctly establish an essential life skill.



Queensland Script

- The letters are sloped
- Apart from little 'e' all letters start at the TOP!
- Only the first letter of a proper noun or the first word in a sentence is a capital.

Please discourage your child from writing all in capitals – the letters can be easier to write, however it can be a difficult habit to change if not addressed early.



Hats & Beanies



St Teresa's is a Sun Safe School. Children must wear their school hat at all times when in the sun. Please assist your child to remember to bring their hat every day; if they do not have it, they will not be able to play outside.

St Teresa's has a school beanie. Beanies may be worn during the cold Winter months. Beanies are not a substitute for school hats when playing outside.

St Teresa's school hats and beanies are available for purchase at the school office. Please clearly label your child's belongings.

Headlice

Catching head lice is unfortunately one of the pesky realities of childhood. Please check your child's hair regularly and treat if you find anything. Please note that follow-up treatment is required after initial treatment to eradicate headlice. If you do find head lice, please let your child's teacher know so that other parents can be informed to also check and treat their child's hair. This will of course be done discreetly and confidentially.





Health & Hygiene

The importance of a regular bedtime and a good night's sleep cannot be over emphasised. Plan a daily routine so that your child gets ample rest, without an afternoon sleep. A much earlier bedtime, 7:00pm, is often needed during the first year of school.

A nutritious breakfast eaten unhurriedly in a relaxed atmosphere makes for a good start to the day. Help your child to acquire the habit of being early to school, but not prior to 8:00 am. A nutritious recess snack, lunch and a piece of fruit for fruit break helps children through the day.

Encourage your child to develop general pride in their appearance and especially in their cleanliness. This is extremely important. Children who are not clean might develop social problems as a consequence that can be avoided if they are taught to take care of personal hygiene and cleanliness.

Have your child develop the habit of carrying a handkerchief or tissue. For health reasons, it is important that parents remind children when noses need blowing and show them the correct use of a handkerchief/tissue.

If you have any doubts at all about your child's eyesight or hearing, make an appointment for an assessment by an optometrist, child health nurse or doctor as soon as possible. Parents are encouraged to have their child's hearing and eyesight checked before starting Prep.

Immunisation boosters for common childhood illnesses should have been received in the pre-school year. It is important to have a record, throughout school life, of the date of your child's last tetanus injection.

Continue your teaching of basic safety habits. Don't overlook the dangerous practice many young children have of putting "foreign bodies" in their mouths, nostrils and ears.

In accordance with Health Department regulations, children with infectious diseases must NOT come to school for certain specified times.

In cases of minor ailments, parents may use their own judgement about attendance. Children who become sick at school during the day will be allowed to rest quietly in sick bay while parents are notified by telephone. In the interests of limiting the spread of disease, please keep your children home if they are obviously unwell and they can be cared for in a more comfortable and comforting environment.

iPads & Laptops/Chromebooks

Your child will be learning through many different contexts during their time at school; Chromebooks and iPads will be used as teaching, learning and sharing devices in some of those contexts.

Students will be taught the basics of using devices – power on/off, swiping through screens, opening apps, handling and safety etc. We also promote cybersafety and responsible digital citizenship in school and strongly urge parents to educate themselves and monitor children's digital usage.



Library

We are very fortunate to have access to a wonderful library here at St Teresa's, and our students visit the library to borrow books every week. Parents reading to and with their children is an important time for bonding with your children and encouraging a love of reading. Both picture books and home reading practice books will be sent home.

Please help your child to remember to bring their library bag on their borrowing day so that they can borrow books, as unfortunately borrowing cannot occur without the correct bag to keep the books safe.

Lunch Boxes

Lunchtime is a big event at school. To encourage safe and healthy habits, we ensure that all children sit to eat their food; this provides a nice environment to be able to enjoy their food and the company of their classmates.

Little fingers are still learning how to open packets and wrapping; please ensure that you do not send tins or anything else that might be dangerous or difficult to open.

As we do not have heating available for lunches, please ensure that your child's food does not require heating, and also that the lunch is packed with a freezer block to keep it cool and fresh.



Students may bring any suitable lunch box to school. We recommend an insulated "esky-style" lunch box, such as the one pictured, as it helps keep food cool throughout the day and can also double as a seat.

Talk to your child about what foods they might have at each break and allow them to choose from the lunch box during the day just as they will when they are at school. Ensure that your child is able to open his/her own food packages. It is helpful to make a little scissor-cut in food items such as muesli bar wrappers and other prepackaged foods to assist your child to break open the plastic packets. Also encourage your child to approach a familiar adult to ask for help to open food when they are unable. Once school begins, encourage your child to put left-over food back into their lunch box so that you know what they have eaten for the day.

We encourage a range of healthy eating choices, minimising prepackaged snack foods. Some lunch box ideas:

- Fresh or tinned fruit. Dried fruit is sticky and high in sugar, so only offer these occasionally or as part of a meal
- Try vegetable sticks with dips or a small container with mixed vegetables such as cherry tomatoes, and snow peas
- Include a variety of breads and fillings. Try bread rolls, flat bread, focaccia, crispbread, rice or corn cakes. Try fillings such as vegemite, cheese, tuna, egg, cold lean meats, grated carrot, avocado and lettuce
- Include a small drink of water or milk (freeze overnight) wrapped in a cloth in the lunchbox.
- Fruit yoghurts should stay cool in an insulated lunchbox.
- Cheese and grainy biscuits – either prepackaged or your own homemade version.
- Fruit muffins and cakes are a great way to include more fruit and vegetables. Try sultana, carrot, zucchini, banana or pumpkin.

St Teresa's is a NUT AWARE school. Please avoid including nuts or nut spreads in your child's lunch.

PLEASE LABEL ALL CONTAINERS with your child's name.





Medication

St Teresa's School is a NO paracetamol and analgesic school; this means we do not store or administer these over-the-counter medications to young people or staff without the appropriate completed forms. Young people who require medications for the treatment of short-term illnesses and infections with antibiotics, etc. need to have correct paperwork completed by the parent/family giving specific details about the medication. All medication must have a Pharmicist label on it.

Students with significant medical conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, and anaphylaxis will have an individual Health Management Plan. The plan will be provided by the child's doctor who will communicate details of the medical condition and the individual's plan to the school. A copy of the plan will be held at the school.

No medications, except for anaphylaxis medications, will be stored in classrooms. All other medications will be stored in the Administration Office and only administered by an authorized staff member, where it will be documented in accordance with the Medication Administration (Routine and Emergency) & Management of Health Conditions Guidelines.

Meetings

If you have concerns or queries, or just want to catch up with your child's class teacher, you are very welcome to arrange a time to meet with them.
During the year you will also have opportunities for formal Parent/Teacher interviews to discuss your child's progress in Term 1 and Term 3.

MyCE App

All information about your children is available on the MyCE (My Catholic Education) app. Through the app you will have access to your children's report cards, absence notifications, school newsletters, notices and permission forms, PTO (Parent Teacher Online – app to book parent-teacher interviews) among many other features. It is accessible from any digital device. Should you have any difficulty in accessing the MyCE app, please contact the office staff for assistance.



Parent Helpers

Parents are vital assets to any class and parent helpers can contribute so much to the life of the classroom. If you are interested in assisting in your child's class, or anywhere in the school, please advise the teacher.

Volunteers are required to complete the Volunteers Online Training before commencement. They must also hold a current Volunteer Working With Children Blue Card. This also applies to any parent who will be working with children other than their own.

All visitors to the school must sign in at the front Administration Office. Class teachers will advise session times in which parent helpers would be of most benefit to the class and you will be invited to add your name to the roster if you wish.

Reading

St Teresa's follows the Science of Reading approach, with a strong focus on the "Big 6" of reading: oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Home readers will be sent home regularly and are best read each night to support your child's development. In the early years, teaching focuses on building strong foundations in phonological awareness, decoding, and phonics. As students progress through the upper years, the focus shifts to developing comprehension skills and making meaning from increasingly complex texts.



Religious Education & Spiritual Development

In addition to academic skills, our programs are designed to help children realise that they are part of creation and learn to live by Gospel values, especially respect, reverence, care and justice.

The aim of our Religious Education Program is to (in partnership with parents):



- Give children a sense of God in their world
- Help children discover God's love for themselves
- Develop a positive sense of self-worth and self-esteem
- Shape attitudes of love and respect for self and others
- Learn the value of sharing with others
- Develop a positive attitude toward religion and Catholic teachings and traditions

We aim to achieve this through creating an environment of Christian love and understanding – a safe place where children can explore and experience elements of faith.

The best way you can help your children with their spiritual development is to be living examples of what you want for them. Through this example, you will be building the framework of experience which our teachers will reinforce and build upon.

How Can I Be Involved?
There are a number of students, now at St Teresa's, who come from other faith traditions. We also have students who have little or no knowledge of faith. As a school, we celebrate this openness and diversity, whilst sharing our Catholic perspective, traditions and liturgical celebrations.

We encourage those who do attend Mass or a church service with your child to sit where your child can see and participate and enable your child to see your involvement and commitment to your FAITH.

Through the Mass/Liturgy, children learn:

- To join their hands – a special sign we are going to talk to God
- The Sign of the Cross – begins and ends any special prayer
- To say the "Our Father" (the special prayer Jesus taught us)
- How to kneel and stand for prayers and Church conduct

Throughout the year, the school will be attending various Masses: for Feast Days (Special Saints Days), liturgical seasons (eg. Ash Wednesday/Lent) and beginning and end of year celebrations. Your child will also participate in liturgies and prayer. They may be asked to take part in some small way (carrying a candle, reading a basic prayer). Your interest and commitment in this area would be most appreciated.

Praying With Your Child

The following are examples of basic prayers you may like to say with your child.



Morning

God our Father, help us today in all that we do and say. Amen.

Meal Time

Thank you God for those who care for us and provide us with this food we are to eat. Amen.

Night Time

God our Father, thank you for all the good things that have happened today, for the things I have learnt, the people who have helped me and the things I have seen. Amen.

Thank you Prayer

Thank you God for the beautiful sun that was shining today. Thank you for my friends; we had so much fun today. Thank you God for my family who love and care for me. Amen.

Help Prayer

Dear God, please help me to be the best person I can be. Help Grandma to get better quickly. Please God look after my goldfish that died. .....Amen.

Formal Prayers

Children can also be encouraged to say with you (they will gradually learn the whole prayer) the “Our Father” and “Hail Mary”.

Seasons of Our Church

You can help your children to be aware of and understand the seasons of the Church. Lent: Time to get ready for Easter. Try to be the best people that we can be. Easter: We remember how much Jesus loved each of us.

Advent: Time to get ready or waiting for Christmas.

Christmas: Time when we remember the birth of Jesus.

Responsible Behaviour

At St Teresa's School we aim to foster positive behaviour and to encourage responsibility through restorative justice. Students are taught and supported to be responsible for their choices. They are positively acknowledged for demonstrating the St Teresa's values. If a pattern of poor behaviour choices emerges, parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the class teacher to plan for the child's success in this area. Parent input is highly valued in situations where the child requires assistance to make consistently good choices.

Support for student behaviour and engagement is underpinned by evidence-based, whole school approaches that promote positive behaviour and engagement. The recommended approach used by schools in the Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns is the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS-E) framework.

Key features of the school's implementation of MTSS-E are elaborated in the school's Whole School Behaviour Support Plan. One aspect of this Plan is the St Teresa's Behaviour Matrix, which provides a common language for staff, students and parents, so that expectations are clear.



School Support Services

Students at St Teresa's School are supported by a range of Catholic Education Services specialist staff including a speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, and psychologist. These specialists visit throughout each term to support the classroom teachers. They provide advice and adjustments to support students. Through parent and teacher consultation, there is a referral process for students to access these services. They do not provide individual therapy. Private therapy, if required, would need to be sought outside of the school.

We also have a school counsellor who works within our school setting two days per week. The school counsellor forms a part of the Diverse Learners Team along with the Leader of Diversity, Assistant Prinicpal - Catholic Identity and Principal. Through referrals to this team, student support plans are developed and reviewed.

School Uniform

Please refer to St Teresa's uniform policy regarding the uniform requirements for our students. If your child is unable to wear a particular item on a school day, please notify your child's class teacher. If your child is out of uniform and your child's class teacher has not received information as to why, a uniform notification card will be sent home for you to read, sign and return.

School uniforms are available from the school including the school hat, jumper and beanie.

For younger children, Velcro fastenings on shoes are not only quick and easy but also boost children's confidence as they are able to dress themselves. Tying shoelaces requires many fine motor skills and good hand/eye co-ordination. Many children at Prep age are not quite ready for this. Keep practising tying shoelaces at home, but keep in mind that Velcro fastenings are the most appropriate choice for school shoes at this stage.

Items of clothing and accessories can go missing easily, so we recommend that you regularly check the name labels on your child's items to ensure that they are easy to read and that your child has not accidentally collected someone else's belongings. Lost property is held at the school office, so please call in and have a look if your child has lost something.

The St Teresa's school uniform consists of:



Blue St Teresa's school collared shirt, black shorts or skort.

Navy blue school socks (plain) and black lace up or Velcro school shoes (velcro is advised for younger students)

During the cooler months the uniform can include a plain navy-coloured cardigan or sweater; plain navy-coloured track pants.Girls may wear plain navy-coloured ribbed stockings or tights. A school beanie is available from the office for purchase.

Spare Clothing

We ask that you keep a spare set of underwear and shorts (clearly labeled) in your child's bag in case it is needed.

We endeavour to ensure that appropriate cover is used for particularly messy activities, however sometimes accidents do happen.

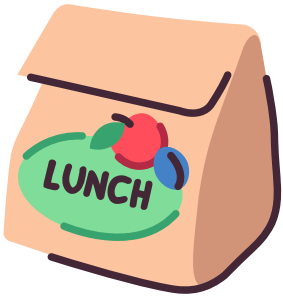
Toys at School

Any toys or other personal items should not be brought to school as they can be easily lost or damaged. There are many resources available for the students to use both in class and at break times, so it is not necessary for children to bring in their own items from home.



Tuckshop

Tuckshop is available for lunch orders on Fridays. Please write your child's name, class and tuckshop order on their tuckshop bag or a brown paper lunch bag to ensure it is sent back to the correct class. Please include the correct money. An updated menu will be provided at the beginning of each year. Your child will still require fruit for fruit break.



Our Tuckshop is run entirely by volunteers. If you are able to assist with Tuckshop, please see out Administration Officers.

Wet Weather

Raincoats rather than umbrellas are the best protection from wet weather conditions for students in Prep, both in terms of remaining as dry as possible, and for safety purposes.

