

PARENT HANDBOOK

2024



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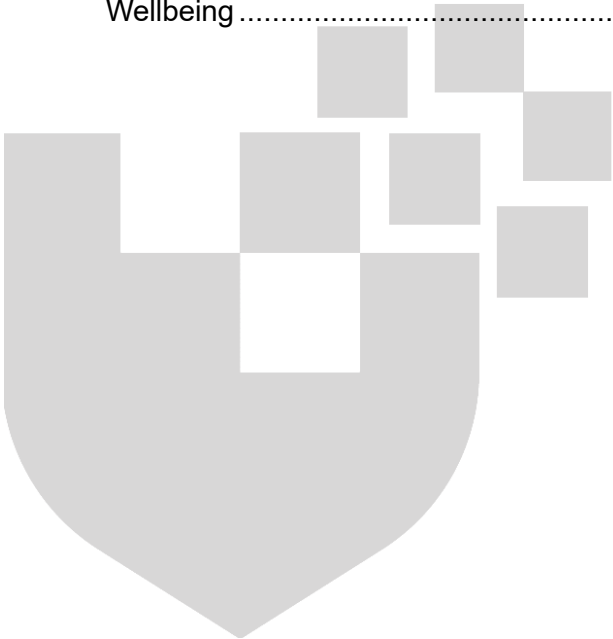
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PRINCIPAL INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Topirum Primary School Parent Handbook.

Topirum Primary School is a new school opening in 2024. It is one of 14 new schools to open in 2024 across Victoria.



My name is Marc de Ley, and I am privileged to be the foundation principal of Topirum Primary School. Previous to this, I was the principal of Courtenay Gardens Primary School, since 2020. Prior, I was an assistant principal at Lyndhurst Primary School, and I have been a teacher since 2000. Before completing my teaching qualification in 1999, I was a speech pathologist at Latrobe Regional Hospital for 7 years.

The school embraces the following School Ways of Thinking:

- ❖ We are a student-centred school
- ❖ We are an inclusive school
- ❖ We are aspirational for all of our students
- ❖ We are holistic in our educational approach
- ❖ We are contemporary in our practices

There are also our Student Ways of Thinking and Staff Ways of Thinking, you can refer to in the handbook.

As a new school, we are fortunate to have new, contemporary and state of the art facilities. In 2024, there will continue to be minor works for school completion. As well, the kinder on site will be built in 2024 and is due to open in 2025.

We have contracted a third-party provider to run our Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) service. This is DS Sports and you will find more information on them in the handbook.

I hope this Parent Handbook provides information to you to support your child whilst enrolled at the school. Please do not hesitate to contact school reception to obtain further information. Key information worthy of note are bolded in the handbook.

Also, see our school website and join our Facebook and Instagram feeds, for regular updates. All parents need to have Compass access; if you do not have this, please contact school reception.

Have a wonderful and safe 2024!

Regards,
Marc de Ley
Principal



ANAPHYLAXIS

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that occurs after exposure to an allergen. The most common allergens for school-aged children are nuts, eggs, cow's milk, fish, shellfish, wheat, soy, sesame, latex, fruit, certain insect stings and medication.

Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of a mild to moderate allergic reaction can include:

- swelling of the lips, face and eyes
- hives or welts
- tingling in the mouth.

Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, a severe allergic reaction, can include:

- difficult/noisy breathing
- swelling of tongue
- difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice
- wheeze or persistent cough
- persistent dizziness or collapse
- student appears pale or floppy
- abdominal pain and/or vomiting.

Symptoms usually develop within ten minutes and up to two hours after exposure to an allergen, but can appear within a few minutes.

If your child's doctor has diagnosed your child as anaphylactic, you must:

- obtain an ASCIA Action Plan for anaphylaxis from the student's medical practitioner and provide a copy to the school as soon as practicable
- provide an up-to-date photo of the student for the ASCIA Action Plan for anaphylaxis when that plan is provided to the school and each time it is reviewed (usually annually)
- provide the school with a current adrenaline autoinjector for the student that has not expired;
- immediately inform the school in writing if there is a relevant change in the student's medical condition and obtain an updated ASCIA Action Plan for anaphylaxis
- participate in annual reviews of the student's plan.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Anaphylaxis Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

ASTHMA

Asthma is a long term lung condition. People with asthma have sensitive airways in their lungs which react to triggers, causing a 'flare-up'. In a flare-up, the muscles around the airway squeeze tight, the airways swell and become narrow and there is more mucus.



This makes it hard to breathe. An asthma flare-up can come on slowly (over hours, days or even weeks) or very quickly (over minutes). A sudden or severe asthma flare-up is sometimes called an asthma attack.

Symptoms

Symptoms of asthma can vary over time and often vary from person to person. The most common asthma symptoms are:

- breathlessness
- wheezing (a whistling noise from the chest)
- tight feeling in the chest
- persistent cough

Symptoms often occur at night, early in the morning or during/just after physical activity. If asthma is well controlled, a person should only have occasional asthma symptoms.

If your child has a diagnosis of asthma from the doctor, parents/carers must provide the school with an Asthma Action Plan which has been completed by the student's medical practitioner.

The plan must outline:

- the prescribed medication taken by the student and when it is to be administered, for example as a pre-medication to exercise or on a regular basis
 - emergency contact details
 - the contact details of the student's medical practitioner
 - the student's known triggers
 - the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an asthma flare-up or attack.
2. Parents/carers should also provide a photo of the student to be included as part of the student's Asthma Action Plan.
 3. Topirum Primary School will keep all Asthma Action Plans available:
 - First aid room
 - Classrooms

Student asthma kit

All students diagnosed with asthma are required to have a student asthma kit at school which contains:

- their own prescribed reliever medication labelled with the student's name
- their spacer (if they use one)

Student asthma kits will be stored in the First Aid room or Classroom.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Asthma Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.



ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend Topirum Primary School during normal school hours every day of each term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Topirum Primary School for particular activities.

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day. All students should attend school all day, every day when the school is open for instruction and is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

Attendance will be recorded by classroom and specialist teachers at the start of the school day and after lunch using the Compass Attendance software.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Topirum Primary School of absences by calling the school office or recording the absence on the Compass Parent Portal.

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, the office will notify parents by Compass email or telephone. The office will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Attendance Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

BULLYING PREVENTION

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:



Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct* physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct* verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *indirect* bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example, via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

Bullying Prevention

The school has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Topirum Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying.

At our school:

- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.



- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Bullying Prevention Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

CANTEEN

No Canteen will operate in 2024. The canteen space will be used by the OSHC third-party provider.

CCTV

The school, as part of its original build, has been equipped with CCTV (Closed Circuit Television). The Department of Education CCTV policy applies to its use and operation.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS CCTV Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

CHILD SAFETY

Topirum Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

The school's approach to creating and maintaining a child safe school environment is guided by our school philosophy and values.

Topirum Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable.

Every person involved in Topirum Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Child safety principles

In its planning, decision-making and operations, Topirum Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;



3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children;
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;

7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such concerns;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

CLASS PLACEMENT (FUTURE YEARS)

In term 4 each school year, teachers and staff conduct a process to make classes for the following year. This is a complex and time-consuming process. A number of factors must be taken into account for this including: class size, gender representation, academic level, behaviour concerns, friendship requests etc.

Teachers conduct a request from each student to list 5 friends they would like in their class for the following year. The school endeavours to ensure every student has at least 1 of the selected students. The school uses a computer program to assist in this process, which makes highlighting students easy to do.

The principal notifies parents that they provide any requests for class placement to be put in writing by a set date (usually mid term 4.) Requests purely for a specific teacher are not considered.

The classes are then finalised prior to the Step-Up Day in term 4, at which students meet their teacher, classmates and classroom location.

It is important for parents to note that making changes to class placement, based on parent request, AFTER the Step-Up day is very unlikely, as all the factors to make the classes have been taken into consideration already.

The final decision of class placement rests with the principal.

Repeating a year level

The school follows the Department of Education policy on student progression from year level to year level each year.



Students are retained only in exceptional circumstances where a school considers it is required for the long-term benefit of the student, for example, considering their social, welfare and academic needs.

Studies on students repeating a year level suggest that: students who repeat a year are unlikely to catch up with peers of a similar level who move on, even after completing an additional year's schooling students who repeat a year are more likely to drop out of school prior to completion negative effects are disproportionately greater for disadvantaged students, for culturally and linguistically diverse students, and for students who are relatively young in their year group.

Where a parent requests that their child transfer from one government school to another government school with the purpose of repeating a year level, the decision about which year level the student will be enrolled in rests with the principal of the enrolling school.

If a parent makes a request for their child to repeat a year level, this will be viewed with reference to the above information. The decision on whether a parent request to repeat is granted, rests with the principal.

COMMUNICATION

Regular and effective communication is vital to support each student's education and wellbeing at school.

As a general rule, the first point of contact for any queries about your child is your child's classroom teacher. You can make an appointment to see your child's class teacher before or after school, in most cases.

You can communicate with them through the Compass parent portal email. Please note, if you approach your child's teacher without notice, for example, just before the morning bell, they will not be able to speak with you at length, as their class is about to start. For any substantive discussions, a request for an appointment is best.

In some cases, the matter may need further addressing by a school leadership member, for example, the assistant principal.

COMPASS

Compass is a school management platform that allows parents and carers to access up-to-date and meaningful information about the school and your child.

Compass includes many different features, including the ability to:

- Monitor your child's attendance, and enter an explanation for absence or lateness
- Communicate with your child's teachers, and update your family contact details
- View your child's timetable and the school calendar
- Download and view your child's academic reports
- Book parent - teacher conferences

Compass can be accessed via a desktop computer website as well as a phone application.



You can download the Compass App on iOS and Android devices, simply search for Compass School Manager in the store.



Using the app you can:

- View the school news feed
- Receive messages from the school
- View your child's timetable and the school calendar
- Book parent-teacher conferences
- Add Attendance Notes
- View academic reports

It is very important that you have Compass Parent Portal access for your child or children at the school. The parent portal log in details are given for new enrolments at the school. For existing parents, if you are not on Compass or have difficulties accessing it, please see the school reception.

The principal/reception team often send important messages/reminders as a notification in the news feed of the phone app. This comes to your phone as a notification. Having the phone app is the best and easiest way to get up to date information from the school. Teachers and grade levels also use this feature.

COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

The school welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Complaints Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

CROSSINGS & TRAFFIC SAFETY

As a new school in 2024, the City of Casey has provided initial advice on school drop off/pick up, traffic management and road safety. This was sent out to parents as the beginning of 2024. As the roads are continuing to be upgraded, the principal will continue to liaise with the City of Casey Road Safety Education Office and provide regular updates to parents.



Please note that any crossings are not manned by school staff. On days of early school finish and curriculum days, the crossings may not be manned. It is parental responsibility to ensure students get to and from school safely.

CURRICULUM DAYS

The school has 4 allocated school-based curriculum days per year. A curriculum day is a pupil-free day. Typically, staff are participating in professional learning on a curriculum day. It is not a day off for teachers and staff.

The OHSC service offers care on curriculum days. Curriculum days will be communicated to parents through the Compass Calendar and newsletter.

Curriculum Days for 2024 are:

- Monday 29th January
- Friday 26th April (day after ANZAC day public holiday)
- Tuesday 25th June {Parent -Teacher Interviews Day}
- Friday 2nd August

*Please note the Department of Education also provides 1 further day titled 'Teacher Professional Practice Day,' as a curriculum day- the date not allocated as yet.

CUSTODY RESTRICTIONS

The school needs to be informed of any custody restrictions or intervention orders against members of your family/other persons in regard to your child/children.

A copy of any court orders or legal documentation must be given to the office.

Please note, any restriction on a child's parent must be supported by legal/DFFH (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) documentation.

The principal or assistant principal can be contacted to discuss any matters.

DATES

School term dates for 2024 are:

Term 1: Tuesday 30th January (Grade 1-6) to Thursday 28th March

- Monday 11th March - Labour Day public holiday

Term 2: Monday 15th April to Friday 28th June

- Thursday 25th April- ANZAC Day public holiday
- Monday 10th June – King's Birthday public holiday

Term 3: Monday 15th July - Friday 20th September

Term 4: Monday 7th October – Friday 20th December

- Tuesday 5th November - Melbourne Cup public holiday



Please note that the last day of term for term 1, 2 and 3, the school day finishes at 2.30pm.

On the last day of term 4, the school day finishes at 1.30pm.

DOGS AT SCHOOL

The school is not a public place, and the principal has the authority to permit or decline entry to school grounds and impose conditions of entry.

To ensure that our school remains a safe and inclusive place for everyone, pet dogs are not permitted on school grounds under any circumstances.

Our school community is diverse, and may include people that are allergic or uncomfortable around dogs. We are also conscious of the health hazards that may be posed by dogs. We ask that families please leave their pet dogs at home or safely tether them outside school grounds when attending our school or school events.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The school has an emergency management plan (EMP) in place as required to ensure staff can effectively respond to emergencies and incidents, as required by the Department of Education.

Each room location around the school has an evacuation diagram for all staff to refer to and follow in case of an evacuation.

As part of the EMP, practice evacuations (also known as evacuation drills) are held periodically through the year to inform students and staff of the required procedure.

For your information, the following are the key evacuation types and locations:

EVACUATION (on-site)- All students and staff evacuate to the school oval.

EVACUATION (off-site)- All students and staff evacuate to the Smiths Lane Hub venue. {For this evacuation drill, parents/carers will be notified in advance.}

LOCK DOWN- All students and staff remain in their indoor locations with doors locked.

SHELTER IN PLACE- All students and staff relocate to the school gym.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

Some students are assessed and reported against the EAL Victorian Curriculum, instead of the English Victorian Curriculum. This is typically for students for whom English is not their first language and they have recently moved to Australia.

When students are at the age-appropriate level in their English skills, they then transfer to the English Victorian Curriculum.

ENROLMENT

Compulsory schooling for students aged between 6 and 17 applies to all schools including mainstream, specialist, and government English language schools or centres.



Eligible children and young persons have the right to be admitted to their designated neighbourhood government school, regardless of capacity.

A student's designated neighbourhood school is generally the school that is nearest the student's permanent address as determined by the school zone.

The Find My School website (<https://www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au/>) provides guidance on which school zone a student's permanent residence is located within.

For enrolment, please contact school reception to make an appointment with the principal. Following an enrolment meeting and school tour, the enrolment paperwork needs to be completed with reception.

Enrolment paperwork required:

- Student name contained in the documents supporting their admission; primarily the birth certificate.
- An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register
- Proof of residence

For enrolments of students outside the designated neighbourhood zone, please contact the school office.

EXCURSIONS

Teachers, including specialists, may organise incursions or excursions as part of their learning program throughout the year.

You will be notified of any of these, and for off-site events, your consent will be required. These events typically incur a charge for transport/entry costs etc.

No camps are planned for 2024. The principal will review this for 2025.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Camps and Excursions Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

FIRST AID

Students who are unwell should not attend school.

If a student becomes unwell during the school day they may be directed to the First Aid room and monitored by staff. Depending on the nature of their symptoms, staff may contact parents/carers or an emergency contact person to ask them to collect the student.

It is important that a parent/carer or emergency contact is available during school hours for contact and pick up if required.

First aid management

If there is a situation or incident which occurs at school or a school activity which requires first aid to be administered to a student:

- Staff who have been trained in first aid will administer first aid in accordance with their training. In an emergency, other staff may assist in the administration of first aid within their level of competence.



- In a medical emergency, staff may take emergency action and do not need to obtain parent/carer consent to do so. Staff may contact Triple Zero “000” for emergency medical services at any time.
- If first aid is administered for a minor injury or condition, Topirum Primary School will notify parents/carers by sending a communication via the school Compass parent portal.
- If first aid is administered for a serious injury or condition, or in an emergency, school staff will attempt to contact parents/carers or emergency contacts as soon as reasonably practical.
- If a student is suspected to have had significant contact with their head e.g. hit head when fell off the monkey bars, the parent/carer will be contacted as a matter of routine precaution. It is advised that the parent/carer then have the student reviewed by a medical practitioner.
- If staff providing first aid determine that an emergency response is not required but that medical advice is needed, school staff will ask parents/carers, or an emergency contact person, to collect the student and recommend that advice is sought from a medical practitioner.

In accordance with guidance from the Department of Education, analgesics, including paracetamol and aspirin, will not be stored at school or provided as a standard first aid treatment.

Ambulance cover for your child is highly recommended.

Please note the staff managing first aid at the school are not trained nurses or doctors.

FOOD (EATING TIMES)

Parents need to provide a morning snack and lunch for their child each school day.

Students will be given time in class to eat lunch (10 minutes).

For both recess and lunch, students can take food outside, but not any wrappers/food packaging. These need to be placed in the bins inside. We encourage parents to provide food/snacks without wrappers (nude food) when possible.

Food sharing is not permitted, as students may have allergies to certain foods.

The school requests that nuts and nut containing foods be minimised, as this is a likely cause of allergy and anaphylactic reaction.

HEAD LICE

Head lice definition:

Pediculosis or 'head lice' are small, wingless insects that live, breed and feed on the human scalp. They cannot transmit any infectious diseases. Direct contact is required for transmission from person to person, where head lice crawl from head to head.

Parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice.

Responsibilities include:



- not sending their children to school with untreated head lice
- using safe treatment practices which do not place their child's health at risk
- regularly checking for lice or eggs in the hair of their child and other household members
- notifying the school if their child is affected and when treatment commenced

When a student is identified with live head lice, the school will inform their parent/carer that their child has head lice and exclude the student from school until after treatment has commenced.

The school will alert parents or carers of an infestation, of the same class, and use discretion to avoid identifying individuals when informing the school community.

Visual head lice checks can be undertaken without physical contact and do not require parent/carer consent.

Head lice inspections involving the physical examination of a student can be made by people authorised, such as the First Aid Officer, with written parental consent.

The Head Lice Parent Consent Form is given to parents at enrolment, and is in effect throughout the entire primary school period.

If a parent wishes to withdraw consent, after it was given, please contact the school reception.

HOMework

Homework tasks are set by your child's class teacher/grade level in line with the following principles:

- Set homework that is curriculum-aligned and appropriate to the student's skill level and age
- Ensure homework tasks are purposeful – this means they are deliberately designed and planned to support student learning (so, they are not 'busy work' or where students 'finish off' work they did/could not complete in class)
- Assess homework and provide timely and practical feedback
- Ensure the amount of homework set supports a student to engage with a range of recreational, family and cultural activities outside of school hours
- Offer opportunities for families to engage in their children's learning.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Topirum Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

Topirum Primary School is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.



Topirum Primary School acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community, and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Topirum Primary School, we value the human rights of every student and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

The school aims to have events throughout the year that embrace inclusion and diversity. This includes Harmony Day and Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

Government school education in Victoria is secular. Government schools must not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect and must be open to adherence of any philosophy, religion or faith. All school staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors must abide by this overarching principle of secularity.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Inclusion and Diversity Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Primary schools are settings where there can be an increased risk for transmission of certain infectious diseases. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 are followed.

An **Infectious Diseases Exclusion Table**, provided by the Victorian Department of Health exists and can be accessed on the school website in the 'policy,' section.

As a parent, if you become aware of your child becoming a case or contact, as per the table, please notify school reception as soon as possible.

On occasion that the principal suspects a condition, you will be immediately notified to collect your child from school and seek medical advice on the matter.

LIBRARY

As a new school in 2024, we are excited to establish an engaging and well stocked library for our students. This will be an ongoing process through 2024.

Students will be able to borrow books from the school library to take home and read with their families on a weekly or fortnightly basis, depending on the age of the student. We aim to provide students with access to a range of books to engage them as readers and allow students to find different authors and genres of interest to them.

There will be a notification process for overdue library books. Families will be responsible for the cost of replacing any lost library books.

Library Bags



Does my child require a library bag?

All students purchase a 'Library Bag' as part of the uniform purchase list.

For students in prep, grade 1, grade 2	The purchased school logoed Library Bag is used for take-home reading books and printed notices. We recommend students also have a separate library bag. This can be any bag- see picture below for ideas. This allows for students to bring home the larger sized picture story books from the library and makes it easier for students to return their library books weekly.
For students in grade 3, grade 4, grade 5, grade 6	The purchased school logoed Library Bag can be used for any take home readers, printed notices and borrowed library books. (Not required to purchase a separate library bag.)

LOST PROPERTY

Lost student property, often clothing/hats can be a common issue. **It is vital that student clothing is labelled with your child's name.**

The school will develop a process to manage lost items in 2024.

MEDIA CONSENT (PHOTOGRAPHING, FILMING & RECORDING OF STUDENTS)

During the school year there are many occasions and events where staff may photograph, film or record students participating in school activities and events. We do this for many reasons including to celebrate student participation and achievement, showcase particular learning programs, document a student's learning journey on excursions, sports events, communicate with our parents and school community in newsletters and social media.

At the beginning of the school year, you will receive a **Media Consent Form** outlining the circumstances of this. This is an OPT-OUT form- you only return it if you wish to not grant consent for one or both of the following categories:

- Use or disclosure within the school community
- Use or disclosure in publications/locations that are publicly accessible e.g. social media, Youtube

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

If a student requires medication, Topirum Primary School encourages parents to arrange for the medication to be taken outside of school hours. However, the school understands that students may need to take medication at school or school activities.

Authority to administer

- Parents/carers will need to arrange for the student's treating medical/health practitioner to provide written advice to the school which details:
 - the name of the medication required
 - the dosage amount
 - the time the medication is to be taken



- how the medication is to be taken
- the dates the medication is required, or whether it is an ongoing medication
- how the medication should be stored.

In most cases, parents/carers should arrange for written advice to be provided in a Medication Authority Form which a student's treating medical/health practitioner should complete.

Parents/carers can contact the school reception for a Medication Authority Form or access the form on the school website- 'Parents' section.

For most students, Topirum Primary School will store student medication at the First Aid room- cabinet, and includes named containers.

Topirum Primary School will not

- In accordance with Department of Education, store or administer analgesics such as aspirin and paracetamol as a standard first aid strategy as they can mask signs and symptoms of serious illness or injury
- Allow a student to take their first dose of a new medication at school in case of an allergic reaction. This should be done under the supervision of the student's parents, carers or health practitioner
- Allow use of medication by anyone other than the prescribed student except in a life threatening emergency, for example if a student is having an asthma attack and their own puffer is not readily available.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Administration of Medication Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

MOBILE PHONES

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Topirum Primary School during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted by the principal.

Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

Students bringing a phone to school for use out of school hours must hand the phone in at the office at the beginning of the day and then collect it at the end of the day on their way home.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Mobile Phones Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

MONEY

Students are encouraged to give any large amounts of money brought to school to their class teacher for safe keeping. The school is not responsible for any lost money by students.



NEWSLETTER

A fortnightly newsletter will be provided to members of the school community via the school website. This will be established term 1, 2024.

OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

DS Sports is the provider of Topirum Primary School's OSHC service. The service will be based at the school.

To access the service you must register initially for the service.

To do this, go to the DS Sports website - Topirum Primary:

<https://www.dssports.org/topirum-primary-1>

After you have registered, you can then book your child as needed.

The service will operate before school from 6.30am to school starting time (8.45am) and after school from school finishing time (3.15pm) to 6.30pm. It will include vacation care (during school holidays) and school curriculum days.

For further information about the service and costs etc. please see the DS Sports website contacts.

PARENT- TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Twice yearly, parents have the opportunity to meet with their child's class teacher as follows:

Getting to Know You Interviews- held in Term 1.

These meetings allow parents and teachers to meet to discuss the child's learning background and other factors that will support the child's learning. It is not a reporting based meeting.

Parent-Teacher Interviews- held at the end of term 2.

These are meetings that enable parents to gain an understanding of their child's learning progress so far that year. Parents would already have the semester 1 report provided. Progress, goals and strategies to assist can be discussed at this meeting.

The assistant principal oversees these interviews and provides information and booking processes, prior to the set dates.

PHOTOS

Formal school photos are held every year. Parents can purchase portrait packages from the photographic company- Advanced Life Photos.

DATE FOR 2024: Tuesday 7th May.

POLICIES

The school operates under a wide range of school policies. Many of these are determined by the Department of Education and individualised for the school. Many policies also need school council approval.



Parents can access policies by requesting them from the school office or visiting the school website- 'Parents' tab.

PRIVACY

The Department of Education (the Department) values your privacy and is committed to protecting the personal and health information that schools collect.

On enrolment, and during the ordinary course of a student's attendance at a school, schools will collect information about students and their families for the following purposes:

- educating students
- supporting students' social and emotional wellbeing, and health
- fulfilling legal obligations, including duty of care, anti-discrimination law and occupational health and safety law
- communicating and engaging with parents
- student administration
- school management
- supporting policy in relation to student education and wellbeing.

If this information is not collected, the school may be unable to provide optimal education or support to students or fulfil legal obligations.

For example, the school relies on parents to provide health information about any medical condition or disability that their child has, medication their child may take while at school, any known allergies and contact details of their child's doctor. If parents do not provide all relevant health information, this may put their child's health at risk.

Our school also requires current, relevant information about all parents and carers so that schools can take account of safety concerns that affect their children. Parents should provide schools with copies of all current parenting plans and court orders about or that affect their children and provide updated copies when they change.

When parents enrol their child in primary school, they will be asked to provide personal and health information in several ways, including via the Enrolment Form, the School Entrance Health Questionnaire (SEHQ) and the Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) Transition Form.

The Enrolment Form is used to collect information that is essential for the purposes listed above, and requests information such as:

- Emergency contacts – Individuals parents nominate for a school to contact during an emergency. Parents should ensure that their nominated emergency contact agrees to their contact details being provided to the school and that they understand their details may be disclosed by the Department if lawful, e.g. in the case of emergency communications relating to bush fires or floods.
- Student background information – Information about country of birth, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, language spoken at home and parent occupation. This information enables the Department to allocate appropriate resources to schools. The Department also uses this information to plan for future educational needs in



Victoria and shares some information with the Commonwealth government to monitor, plan and allocate resources.

- Immunisation status – This assists schools to manage health risks and legal obligations. The Department may also provide this information to the Department of Health and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to assess immunisation rates in Victoria, but not in a way which identifies students.
- Visa status – This is required to process a student's enrolment.

School staff will only share student and family information with other school staff who need to know to enable them to educate or support the student as described above. Information will only be shared outside the school (and outside the Department) as required or authorised by law, including where sharing is required to meet duty of care, anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety, and child wellbeing and safety obligations.

The information collected will not be disclosed beyond the school and Department without parent consent unless such disclosure is lawful.

When a student transfers to another school (including Catholic, independent and interstate), personal and/or health information about that student may be transferred to the next school.

Transferring this information is in the best interests of the student and assists the next school to provide the best possible education and support to the student.

To update student or family information, parents should contact the school reception.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Privacy Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

RECEPTION (SCHOOL OFFICE)

Reception hours are 8.20am to 3.40pm school days.

The reception team are often busy at certain times of the day, especially at the start of the school day and at the end of the day.

Please note that requests to speak to staff members is not always immediately possible, as teachers are usually teaching.

A message can be taken to be passed on to the staff member. The reception team will request the nature of the inquiry or purpose of the meeting or phone call request, including the person's name who is making the request.

REPORTS

The school provides two comprehensive written reports on student learning performance; the first at the end of term 2, which reflects on progress across semester 1; and the second at the end of term 4, which reflects on progress across semester 2.

Student performance against the Victorian Curriculum is provided for key learning areas, such as English and Mathematics.

The reports are provided to parents through the Compass Parent Portal.



Please note, students who enrol at the school in term 2 or term 4, are unlikely to get a formal report for that reporting period.

Also note, that extensive student absences from school, can impact the capacity and reliability of reporting.

RESPECT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

All staff at Topirum Primary School have a right to a safe and supportive work environment.

Topirum Primary School expects that all parents/carers and visitors to our school behave in an appropriate and respectful manner to school staff at all times.

There will be a zero tolerance approach to any aggression, intimidation, threats or harassment of school staff, by any means (e.g. in person, by phone, by email, on social media etc). These behaviours may lead to exclusion from school grounds and school activities.

The principal may report aggressive, intimidating, threatening or otherwise inappropriate conduct to Victoria Police. The Department of Education may also take legal or other appropriate action against community members or parents/carers who pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of school staff.

Trespass

- Government schools are not public places and there is no general right for the public to enter school land at any time.
- Parents and carers ordinarily have an implied licence to enter school land but that might be temporarily withdrawn if their behaviour threatens the safety of staff or students.
- Where it is necessary to protect the safety of staff or students at the school, a principal may provide a verbal warning directing someone to leave the school.

For more information on Trespass, see the Department of Education Trespass policy.

School Community Safety Order

There are 2 types of orders that principals and other authorised persons can issue to prohibit or limit different types of behaviours – ongoing school community safety orders (ongoing orders) and immediate school community safety orders (immediate orders).

Ongoing orders may be made for any period up to a maximum of 12 months and can prohibit or limit a person from:

- entering or remaining on any school-related place of the relevant school
- approaching, or causing another person to approach, within 25 metres of any staff member or class of staff members within or outside of any school-related place of the relevant school
- contacting any staff member or class of staff members
- using or communicating on a communication platform owned, controlled by, or established in relation to the relevant school.



RIDING A BICYCLE TO SCHOOL

Parents/carers are responsible for their children travelling to and from school.

Children under the age of 12 may ride on footpaths, as can a supervising adult. They are required to give way to pedestrians and to wheel their bicycles over pedestrian and children's crossings.

Children aged 12 years or older are required by law to ride on the road.

Road safety authorities recommend that children under the age of 9 are supervised by an adult when riding on the road. Depending on their cycling skills and experience, some children over this age may still require supervision.

The school provides a bike storage facility (between the school gym and library buildings). Bicycles left overnight/weekends are not the responsibility of the school.

Helmets

Parents and students should be reminded that the law requires that all cyclists wear an approved bicycle helmet. Approved helmets have the Australian Standards Mark TM (AS/NZS 2063) and will be marked as suitable for cycling.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our school council has twelve members and meets at least twice each school term. It is elected by the school and auspiced under the Education Act (1958).

It is made up of parent representatives, DE (Department of Education) representatives, including the principal, and co-opted representatives (members of the general public or local businesses, service clubs, etc).

The major responsibilities of school council include:

- **representing** the school and its community in reaching agreement with the DE on the school strategic plan
- **determining** the education policy, goals and priorities of the school within the framework of the school strategic plan and state-wide guidelines
- **approving** the school budget, which includes school generated funds and any sponsorship arrangements, consistent with the school strategic plan
- **entering** into contracts for purposes consistent with the school strategic plan
- **maintaining** and improving buildings and grounds
- **reporting** annually to the school community and to the DE
- **making** a recommendation to the DE on the appointment of the school principal
- **authorising** the employment of non-teaching staff and any staff for short-term projects
- **developing** the school's Dress Code

School council is a wonderful opportunity to make a positive contribution in the school community.

As a new school in 2024, joining the school council presents an excellent opportunity to shape the direction and culture of the school.



For more information about school council or becoming a member, please contact the principal.

SCHOOL HOURS

8.30am school gates open

8.45-9.35am session 1

9.35- 10.25am session 2

10.25 – 10.55am recess playtime

10.55 - 11.45am session 3

11.45 - 12.35pm session 4

12.35 – 12.45pm lunch eating time inside

12.45 - 1.35pm lunch playtime

1.35 - 2.25pm session 5

2.25 – 3.15pm session 6

3.45pm school gates locked

STUDENT ACCIDENTS

The Department of Education does not provide personal accident insurance or ambulance cover for students.

Parents/carers of students, who do not have student accident insurance/ambulance cover, are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including the cost of ambulance attendance or transport as well as any other transport costs.

STUDENT PROPERTY

Private and personal property brought to school by students or visitors is not insured and the school does not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage.

This can include mobile phones, calculators, toys, sporting equipment and cars parked on school premises. As the Department does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and has no capacity to pay for any loss or damage to such property, students and staff should be discouraged from bringing any unnecessary or particularly valuable items to school.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Personal Property Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

SUNSMART

Excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

UV radiation:



- cannot be seen or felt
- can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
- can pass through light clouds
- varies in intensity across the year (highest in Victoria from mid-August – end of April)
- peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

Students are required to wear school approved hats when playing outside during the recommended sun smart period throughout the year. In this period, hats are also to be worn for excursions and other outdoor activities.

The school has outdoor areas covered providing shade.

Students without a hat for recess/lunch play during the sun smart period.

For students without a hat, they will be required to stay in the shaded areas located near Learning Community A and B.

Sunscreen

The school encourages students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours according to manufacturer's instructions.

Students are responsible for applying sunscreen to themselves. Teachers can remind students to apply sunscreen.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The school implements the Victorian Curriculum as set by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

The following are the learning areas covered:

- English
- Mathematics
- Health and Physical Education
- Science
- Technologies
- The Humanities
- The Arts
- Languages (deferred for 2024)

More information is available on the school website.



Further information is available in the Topirum PS Curriculum Framework Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

Please see the information on the school website for the prep to school transition process for 2025.

TRANSITION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR GRADE 6

Grade 6 students on completing grade 6, are enrolling in secondary school. The Grade 6 teacher oversees the placement process of students in government secondary schools.

Parents enrolling in a non-government school must conduct that process themselves.

Usually in term 2, you will be notified to begin this transition process.

UNIFORM

Noone are the official suppliers of the Topirum PS school uniform.

You can access more information from their website:

<https://noone.com.au/school/topirum-primary-school/stores>

Shop address:

One Centre Square Complex Shop 6/45 Siding Avenue Officer Victoria 3809. Items will also be available for purchase online.

The school uniform is compulsory for all students.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Student Dress Code Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

State Schools Relief (SSR)

State Schools' Relief is a not-for-profit organisation that improves the lives of tens of thousands of disadvantaged Victorian students, and their families, each year.

Issues such as poverty, neglect, family illness, abuse and homelessness continue to affect many Victorian families. SSR provides government school students with new uniforms, footwear and educational resources, including learning devices. We work side by side with all Victorian primary, secondary, specialist and language schools to ensure that any students facing hardship have the necessary items they require for school.

SSR applications for uniform items can be made for your child, if needed. Please contact school reception to assist with this application.

VISITORS

The school strives to create an open and inclusive school community and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations.



Topirum Primary School is not a public place. The principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with our school's Statement of Values, Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct, all available on the school website.

From time to time, different members of the public may visit our school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- Parents
- Volunteers – see our school's Volunteers Policy for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development
- Public officials (e.g. Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business e.g.: uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies
- Talent scouts
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (e.g. Worksafe inspectors, health officers etc)
- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Topirum Primary School are required to report to the school reception on arrival (see exceptions below in relation to parents/carers).

Visitors must:

- Record their name and purpose of visit on the Compass Kiosk in the school foyer.
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce their valid Working with Children Check where required
- Wear a visitor's lanyard
- Return to the office upon departure and sign out.

Parent visitors:

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent or carer may want to speak to or see their child at school, during school hours.



If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents or carers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

We also ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day.

All parents or carers who visit our school during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick-ups and drop offs or for specific school events (e.g. parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

Other visitors:

All business operators, tradespeople and other visitors attending the school to conduct work must report to the school office upon arrival for instruction and follow the sign in procedure outlined above.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Visitors Policy, available at the school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

VOLUNTEERS AND PARENT HELPERS

At Topirum Primary School, volunteers will be welcome to assist in the learning of students and activities of the school.

For parent/carer classroom volunteers, there will be an induction process to complete prior to being authorised as a parent/carer classroom volunteer. This process will be initiated in term 1 2024. At this time, if you are interested in being a classroom volunteer, please notify school reception, and we will let you know when the induction session is scheduled.

Please note the following, regarding the need to have a Working with Children Check (WWC):

- Volunteers who are not parent/family members of any student at the school are required to have a WWC Check if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.
- Parent/family volunteers who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving direct contact with children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is not participating, or does not ordinarily participate in, the activity.
- Parent/family volunteers who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- Parent/family volunteers who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

All WWCs will need to be presented at school reception, where a copy will be taken and stored for school records.

To obtain a WWC and for more information, go to the Victorian Government Services Victoria website.



WAYS OF THINKING

At Topirum Primary School, there are 3 sets of Ways of Thinking that support the school mission and vision and guide our approach. These are:

School Ways of Thinking

- We are a student-centred school
- We are an inclusive school
- We are aspirational for all of our students
- We are holistic in our educational approach
- We are contemporary in our practices

Staff Ways of Thinking

- Be professional
- Be open to learning
- Be collaborative
- Be reflective
- Be yourself

Student Ways of Thinking

- Have a go
- Try your best
- Be kind
- Think of others
- Be a determined learner

WEBSITE

The Topirum Primary School website was launched late 2023 and provides lots of information. In particular, the 'Parents,' tab will be helpful.

Website address:

topirumps.vic.edu.au

WELLBEING

Wellbeing is an important aspect of child development. Students deserve to feel happy and safe whilst at school. A child's positive wellbeing, including resilience, will enable them to maximise their learning potential.

The school will implement the following whole school approaches to wellbeing:

- Daily use of Circle Time as an inclusive and wellbeing focused activity.
- A Restorative Practices approach to resolving issues and conflict.
- Implementation of the Respectful Relationships curriculum program, as mandated by the Department of Education.

Some students may need further support for wellbeing. This may include:

- Referral to external agencies for support



- An individualised plan i.e. Individual Education Plan

For further information on wellbeing and mental health supports, as may be needed for your child, please contact school reception.

Student Behaviour

We see all behaviour as communicating a need or want. We acknowledge that our learners will all make mistakes as they develop their social-emotional skills, and to these we take an educative response to reteach appropriate behaviours.

At Topirum Primary School students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

The school will implement as a whole school:

- Behavioural Expectations- displayed in all classrooms
- Behaviour Continuum- outlining the steps to manage poor behaviour
- Time Out- for serious or repeated breaches of expected behaviour, a teacher may give a student a Time Out. This will mean the student misses part (up to half) of a lunchtime, and is supervised inside by a teacher. Parents/Carers are notified if their child is given a Time Out through the Compass Parent Portal.
- Suspension from school- for serious misbehaviour the principal/assistant principal can issue a suspension. This means the student cannot attend school for specified days. Parents are typically notified directly by phone call if this is done.
- Expulsion from school.

Further information is available in the Topirum PS Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, available at school reception or from the school website 'policy,' section.

PLEASE NOTE THIS PARENT HANDBOOK IS CONTINUALLY UPDATED AS NECESSARY DUE TO NEW INFORMATION, CHANGES IN POLICY OR OTHER CHANGES. THEREFORE, THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET IS UP TO DATE AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: JANUARY 2024