



Mother Teresa Primary

creative minds - gentle hearts



— Parent Handbook —

Handbook Information

Access To Our School Site

There is one access point onto our school site on Darcy Road via Gate 3 which is located opposite Westmead Private Hospital. The electronic gates will be open in the morning until 9:30am to allow access to the Kiss & Drop area and again in the afternoon from 2:20pm.

For access to the school between 9.30am and 2:20pm you will need to call the school to gain access.

Accidents

If your child has a serious accident, we will inform you by way of your home, work or emergency contact number.

If time does not permit, the Principal assumes responsibility and seeks medical or hospital treatment immediately. If your home, work, emergency contact phone numbers or address changes please advise the School Office immediately.

Members of staff are continually updating their Emergency Care and CPR certificates, with some members holding current Senior First Aid Certificates.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sometimes sudden allergic reaction. It can occur when a susceptible person is exposed to an allergen (such as a food or an insect sting or bite).

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school that their child has an allergy and is at risk of anaphylaxis. This notification should occur either at the time of enrolment, or if the student is already enrolled, as soon after diagnosis as possible.

An ASCIA2 Action Plan for Anaphylaxis, completed, signed and dated by the student's doctor, must be provided to the school by the parent. This plan is to be updated when the doctor prescribes a new auto injector or when circumstances regarding the condition change.

You will need to provide the appropriately labelled medication(s) to the school (e.g. EpiPen®[®], Anapen®[®], antihistamine) and advise the school if your child wears a medical identification bracelet or necklace. It is also the Parent/Carer's responsibility to monitor the expiration date and to replace the medication when it expires.

Anti Bullying

The community of Mother Teresa Primary School does not tolerate bullying in any form. It is committed to developing a climate of mutual trust, respect and empathy that will contribute to a safe, caring and Christian environment which promotes personal growth, positive self-esteem and values the dignity of each person.

Any type of bullying in a Catholic school, by any member of the community, is contrary to Gospel values and the vision of the Catholic Church.

Our Police Youth Liaison Officer is Constable Chris Liplyn from the Parramatta Local Area Command and can be reached on (02) 9633 0703.

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".

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school that their child has asthma and is at risk of an attack (even in mild cases). This notification should occur either at the time of enrolment, or if the student is already enrolled, as soon after diagnosis as possible.

An Asthma Action Plan, completed, signed and dated by the student's doctor, must be provided to the school by the parent. This plan is to be updated when circumstances regarding the Asthma change.

Children need to be able to administer their own asthma (puffer) medication. It is important that they carry their asthma puffer with them at all times. If your child is not able to take their medication independently, he or she may be assisted until they are confident enough to administer it themselves. However, it is expected that students are taught to self-administer by the beginning of Year 3. Until then you will need to provide the appropriately labelled medication(s) to the school and complete the relevant forms.

Attendance

Students are required to attend school all day of every day that school is open. Regular attendance at school is essential for progress. Please send your child on time each day.

Where illness or another reason prevents a child's attendance at school, parents or caregivers are required to inform and explain the absence to teachers:

- by using the Skoolbag App
- by phoning the school or
- in writing on your child's return to school.

Catholic Out Of School Hours Care Centre (COSHC)

A Catholic Out of School Hours Care Centre (COSHC) is open on site at Mother Teresa Primary School.

The centre is run and staffed by employees of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Parramatta and delivers a high quality, consistent service for our community. For further information see www.coshc.catholic.edu.au or email COSHCMotherTeresaWestmead@parra.catholic.edu.au.

Child Protection

Mother Teresa Primary School follows the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta policies on child protection matters. If you would like to assist at school you must complete the online Child Protection Training Module. Details of this can be obtained from the school office.

For more information and to complete the training module, please see <http://childprotection.parra.catholic.edu.au/home>.

Collecting Children From School And Late Arrivals

If you need to collect your child early, a "partial absence note" will need to be signed at the office before any child can leave the school premises. The school secretaries will call your child out of class upon completion of the partial absence note.

A "partial absence note" signed by the parent/guardian is also required upon late arrival at school. Please ensure you accompany your child to the office to complete this note. To protect the students' valuable learning time, we ask parents to ensure that students are punctual to school, as children arriving late can cause disruption to the whole learning studio.

Communication

At Mother Teresa Primary we believe that effective communication between home and school is essential.

As members of a school community, we continually strive to develop open channels of communication. This can be achieved by bringing any concerns and issues related to the school, to the attention of the relevant staff member. Only when we are aware of a concern can we begin to address it in partnership. Please ring the office to make appointments with relevant staff.

We have a number of methods for communication between home and school.

Heartlinks - Newsletter

This will be uploaded to our school website fortnightly. Families will also be notified by an alert from our school App. The daily happenings of our school are given here, so that parents can share as fully as possible in all that concerns their children. The newsletter provides relevant dates, curriculum news and details of learning studio activities and school celebrations.

Skoolbag

This is a mobile app which allows the school to communicate school information directly to you via your smartphone.

School Calendar

The school calendar is available to all families. This calendar displays all significant dates and school events for each term of the school year. Any changes to dates will be updated as soon as possible to ensure the calendar is current at all times. Events are also advertised in the newsletter or via other written communications.

Appointments with Teachers

If you have any concerns about your child, an appointment should be made with your child's teacher at a mutually convenient time, either by phoning or emailing the school office. Appointments with a Learning Studio Teacher may only be held outside of school hours. If you feel the matter is not resolved or the matter is of a personal or financial nature, parents are welcome to make appointments with the Assistant Principal or Principal.

At Mother Teresa Primary, we offer a number of opportunities for parents to engage in further learning relevant to their child. These may take the form of Parent Information Evenings (PIE's) and Parent University. These opportunities are advertised, in advance, via Heartlinks and/or the Skoolbag App.

Complaints

If you have a formal complaint, please refer to our Complaints Handling Policy under '[Mother Teresa Primary Policies](#)' on the 'Policies' page on our website.

Curriculum

The learning program for students is divided into seven subjects or Key Learning Areas (KLA's). These include:

Religious Education: The Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta Religious Education program

English: Reading, Writing, Talking & Listening

Mathematics: Working Mathematically, Number, Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry, Patterns and Algebra

Science and Technology: Using Technology, Investigating, Designing and Making

Human Society and Its Environment: Social Studies

Creative Arts: Music, Visual Arts/Craft, Dance, Drama

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

Custody Information

If you have sole custody of your child/children, it is requested that you send a certified copy of a court order to the Principal.

If you delegate a friend or relative (unknown to us) to take your child/children from school for you, a phone call or a note from you advising us of this will ensure your child/children's safety.

Enrolment

Eligibility for Enrolment in a Catholic School

Children whose fifth birthday occurs on or before 31 July are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten that year. By law, all children must be enrolled in school by their sixth birthday.

However, enrolment is determined by the readiness of the individual child. Parents may be invited to arrange an assessment of readiness with their preschool and, with the Principal, be guided by professional advice in deciding the year for enrolment for your child to ensure a successful transition to primary school.

Selection Criteria

A new Enrolment Policy for Parramatta Diocesan Catholic schools has been introduced which offers Catholic families greater choice by allowing them to apply for enrolment at a Catholic school anywhere in the Diocese.

Where places are limited, priority will be given in order to:

- Catholic children who live in the local parish
- Catholic children from other parishes
- Children of families who actively participate in the life of the school and local parish community (e.g. siblings)
- Orthodox children
- Children from other Christian faiths
- Children of non-Christian faith.

Catholic schools have a strong religious dimension and people of other faiths who wish to enrol in Catholic schools should be willing to participate in the religious activities of the school. Check with the Principal of the school you are applying to.

Enrolment applications that are placed on a waiting list will expire after one year from the date of lodgement. Applicants will be notified of when the application is going to be securely disposed of.

Siblings

Siblings of children already enrolled in the school are considered by the same criteria above.

However, within each of these categories, a sibling of a child already enrolled will have preference over an applicant who does not have a sibling enrolled in the school.

Catholic Education Continuity

A child who has completed primary education in a Catholic parish-based primary school will usually be offered continuity of enrolment in a Catholic secondary school. If no places exist at the chosen school, Catholic Education's Director Performance will assist families to enrol in another Catholic secondary school in the Diocese.

Reporting To Parents

Reporting to parents supports student's learning and informs parents about their child's development. Student Learning Reports are issued twice a year. Staff report against development norms in Religious Education, English and Mathematics. Staff also report against other curriculum outcomes and Learner Qualities to formulate goals for the term ahead.

Parents are required to attend a minimum of one interview each year. Half yearly Parent-Student-Teacher interviews are available, usually at the beginning of Term 3. Appointments may also be requested at other times throughout the year.

Entrance Permits

All families will need an 'entrance permit' to gain access to our school site. These will be sent home to families. The permit shows our school crest and your family name.

Your school entrance permit, available from the school office, must be clearly displayed when entering the school in the afternoon, as only Mother Teresa Primary parents are able to enter the site from 2:20pm.

Excursions & Incursions

Excursions are a valuable tool in enhancing the teaching and learning program. Thereby all children are expected to participate in excursions. When an excursion is organised, parents will be notified of the nature and purpose of the excursion and be required to sign a permission note for their child to participate.

Rather than collect excursion money throughout the year, the school charges an excursion fee, which is calculated on the cost of the excursions and incursions that your child will be participating in. This will be \$78 per child in 2017.

Excursions are seen as a privilege, not a right. The Principal has the discretion to withdraw this privilege dependent upon a student's behaviour prior to the excursion.

Parents who are assisting with an Excursion please visit the following website: <http://childprotection.parra.catholic.edu.au/home>.

Extended Absences In School

Application for Extended Leave from school for trips during school time must be approved by the Principal.

A letter indicating the reason and the dates must be forwarded to the Principal, giving at least four weeks notice where possible. A travel itinerary will also need to be included with your letter. Where the leave is for 5 days or more, the Principal will, where leave is granted, grant leave by providing a "Certificate for Extended Leave". An approval letter will be issued for 4 days or less. This document will need to be provided to authorities, upon request, during your travel.

Infectious Diseases

The school needs to be notified of any incidence of the following infectious diseases.

Disease	Notes
Chicken Pox	Exclude for 7 days after the first spots appear
German Measels	Exclude for at least 7 days after the first spots occur
Mumps	Exclude for 10 days from the onset of the swelling
Ringworms	Exclude until appropriate treatment has begun. If condition is not completely cured, children are allowed to attend school if infected area is covered.
Conjunctivitis (Eye Infection)	Exclude until discharge from eye has ceased
Impetigo	Exclude only if on exposed surfaces such as scalp, face, hands and legs. Children are allowed to attend school if sores are effectively covered.
Pediculosis (Lice in hair)	Exclude until hair is completely cleaned, neither nits nor lice being present. Approximately 1 day.
Whooping Cough	Isolate immediately. Exclude from school for at least 3 weeks from the onset of the whoop, until fully recovered or a medical certificate is obtained.
Scabies	Notify the school. Keep child at home until you have seen a pharmacist and begun suitable treatment. The school may ask for a medical certificate.

It is important that parents seek medical advice if an infectious disease is suspected. Many of these diseases require that the patient (and sometimes contacts at home) be excluded from school for varying lengths of time.

Medication

Staff are under no legal obligation to administer drugs or supervise the administration of drugs. The taking of medication at school should be absolutely avoided unless essential.

All medication, including 'over the counter' medication, must be prescribed by a doctor. i.e. nasal spray, Panadol, Nurofen, Calamine lotion etc. A letter from the child's doctor must be obtained outlining the dosage required and the condition being treated.

Prescription medication, such as antibiotics, does not require a doctor's letter as this authority is adhered to the medication already. Such medication must be in the original packaging.

If it becomes necessary to administer medication during school hours, a parent or their adult representative, must complete a 'Notification of Administering Medication' form (available from the school office or school's website). These forms inform the Office Staff of the type of medication to be given, dosage, time and the number of days to be administered. The forms MUST be signed by the parent, or their adult representative, thus giving the school permission to administer the medication.

Medication should never be given to a child to self administer, unless it is Asthma medication, in which case children need to be able to administer their own medication. It is important that they carry their medication with them at all times and supply the school with a current asthma plan from their doctor.

A parent or an adult representative must bring medication to the office. Medication will not be accepted from a child.

No Hat - No Play Policy

The school has this policy in place to protect the children from the harmful rays of the sun.

If a child does not have their hat on before school, at recess, lunch, or for outside activities/sports, they must sit in the shade and cannot play in the playground.

Money Sent To The Office

To assist with administration of money matters at school, you are asked to support the following procedures:

- Where possible please send the correct amount
- Please place payment in a clearly marked envelope with your child's name and learning studio, indicating for what the money is intended

Please remind your child to hand money to the Learning Studio teacher during administration time

When paying money directly to the school, a receipt will be emailed to you and the sender will be: t1sys@parra.catholic.edu.au. Bpay and Direct Debit payments will not generate a receipt.

Pupil Free Days & Staff Development Days

As education continues to change, all staff engage in regular professional development.

This takes the form of staff meetings, in-service days, release time, university courses and Staff Development Days. Each year the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta allocates 4 - 5 days per school for Staff Development Days where staff work together on professional development initiatives.

These days are pupil free days. Teachers are released from the learning studio each week to undertake learning studio administrative responsibilities and to prepare work for the children. During this time, special programs which cover aspects of the curriculum are taught.

Additionally, when a teacher is on a professional development day or an in-service course, a casual teacher is engaged to carry on with routines and the teaching program.

School Hours

Our day begins at 8:35am and ends at 2:45pm. There is a short fruit and water break during the morning session, and we ask that each child bring one small, easy to eat piece of fruit, cut in pieces.

Supervision commences at 8:05am. Students should not be onsite prior to this time. We ask that the children are picked up from school no later than 3.15pm. However, we understand that occasionally circumstances may prevent this. In the event of an emergency & you are unable to be at school by the pick-up time of 3:15pm, please call the school office.

The school day begins with certain routines and activities e.g. prayer, roll call etc. so it is essential that children arrive at school by 8.35am. The school grounds are open to pupils from 8.05am each morning and remain open to pupils until 3.15pm each afternoon. At all times outside these times, from Monday to Friday, the school grounds and buildings are out of bounds. Parents are requested to make arrangements for before and after school care if your child will arrive prior to 8.05am or be picked up after 3.15pm.

School Uniforms

The Uniform is as follows:

Summer Uniform (Worn 1st and 4th Terms)	
BOYS	GIRLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White short-sleeve shirt with crest Navy shorts Navy socks Hat Black shoes (those which can be polished – no joggers or skate shoes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer dress White socks Hat Black shoes (those which can be polished – no joggers or skate shoes)
Winter Uniform (Worn 2nd and 3rd Terms)	
BOYS	GIRLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White short-sleeve shirt with crest Navy shorts/navy long pants Tie Jumper Bomber jacket (optional) Hat Black shoes (those which can be polished – no joggers or skate shoes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter tunic & tie White long-sleeve shirt Navy tights/white socks Jumper Bomber jacket (optional) Hat Black shoes (those which can be polished – no joggers or skate shoes)

HAT MUST BE WORN ON THE PLAYGROUND AT ALL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

All socks must cover the ankles

Unisex Sport Uniform	Winter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sport shorts Sports polo shirts Girls (white socks) - Boys (navy socks) Joggers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracksuit top Tracksuit pants Red long-sleeved t-shirt Girls (white socks) - Boys (navy socks) Joggers
SPORT UNIFORM DRESS UNIFORM	Worn on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday Worn Monday and Friday

Jewellery

Girls are permitted to wear plain, simple jewellery i.e. small gold or silver stud earrings or sleepers. For safety reasons, it is preferred that studs are worn. Only one stud per ear lobe is permitted. No other piercing is allowed. Chains or necklaces can be worn with a religious symbol (e.g. crucifix). Costume jewellery, bracelets and bangles are not permitted.

Hair Cuts

Haircuts are to be appropriate for school (NO MULLET, SPIKING, RAT'S TAILS, ZIG ZAGS or RAZORING). Children with hair longer than collar length are to have it tied back with the hair accessory in school colours. Hair is not to be coloured for either boys or girls.

Serious Incident And Procedural Fairness

The principles on which we base our behaviour management practices at Mother Teresa Primary demonstrate procedural fairness. We believe that procedural fairness is a basic right of all children when dealing with school authorities. We apply the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.

When it is necessary to investigate a serious incident or serious disciplinary situation, the following will be implemented:

- A member of the leadership team will investigate the situation, and then report findings to the Principal, both orally and in written form
- Students involved are also entitled to be heard by the Principal and have the right to an unbiased decision
- After considering (a) and (b) above, the Principal will then decide on an equitable course of action e.g. time out away from learning studio or a behavioural contract which will be written and signed by the Principal, teacher, parent and student
- At all times, the Catholic Education Office Parramatta Diocesan Policy '[Suspension, negotiated transfer and exclusion of students in Catholic Systemic Schools](#)' will be followed

The following principles of procedural fairness underpin the Serious Incident procedure to ensure all incidents are addressed appropriately:

- all situations will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner
- confidentiality will be observed
- the procedure will be conducted in a manner that is respectful of all parties
- all situations will be addressed in a timely manner.

Sickness At School

If a child is sick at school:

- The student will be sent to sick bay for assessment by qualified First Aid officers
- Parents will be contacted if it is deemed that student should go home
- If parents cannot be contacted then the nominated emergency contact person will be contacted
- The student must be picked up as soon as possible to minimise cross infection or if student needs medical attention
- The school will always act in the best interests of the child

In the event that urgent medical attention is required and the parent or carer is unreachable, the school will call an ambulance.

Many of the staff at Mother Teresa Primary are, at least, 'Emergency Care' trained. Staff are also required to obtain CPR training annually; and Asthma and Anaphylaxis training every two years.

Student Photos

At times, student photos are used in articles about school events. Parents give their permission as part of the enrolment process.

If you do not want your child's photo published, please indicate this to the Principal in writing.

Student Support Team

At various times throughout their schooling, students may need assistance in learning.

The Student Support Team provides support to these students in a variety of ways. Some of our work includes assisting students in the Learning Studio, working with teachers to develop appropriate learning tasks, assisting parents to access support from appropriate outside agencies and arranging assessments through the Catholic Education Office and other agencies.

The Student Support Team work in consultation with the Principal, Assistant Principal and School Counsellor.