TOORA PRIMARY SCHOOL

INFORMATION BOOKLET

2016

From the hills to the sea, being the best we can be.

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Principal:  Mr David Tyler
Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Toora Primary School community, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you as you enrol your child and become a valued member of our learning team.

We are proud of our school and the combined efforts of staff, students and parents. By working together with shared goals and objectives we are able to provide a stimulating learning environment that supports and challenges each individual to reach their full potential. We have high expectations of each other in the areas of behaviour, quality of teaching and learning, attitudes and performance. All our decisions are based on what is best for our students.

You play a vital role in the education of your child. The importance you place on school impacts on your child’s attitude and commitment to achieve. Children enjoy having their parents involved in school activities but just as importantly need to share and practice their learning with you in the home. A positive home/school partnership leads to better school performance by children and we invite you to become familiar with your child’s new school.

We are extremely proud of our school buildings and beautiful and diverse grounds. We continue to work with our school community to improve the learning environment for students. With students, parents and staff working together we are creating and maintaining exciting and safe natural outside “classrooms” along with maintaining and expanding the use of our buildings. Our sports hall is an excellent asset for the school and the wider community for sports activities.

Respectful communication is the key to building relationships. We are a welcoming school but parents must report to reception on entering and not wander the grounds. Appointments need to be made to meet with staff as we are all heavily timetabled and finding a few spare minutes “on the spot” is rarely possible.

I trust that your association with Toora Primary School will be a happy and rewarding one.

Warm Regards,

David Tyler
Principal.
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At Toora Primary School all students will engage in high quality teaching and learning, enabling them to reach their full potential and experience success.

VALUES TO SUPPORT THIS:

- Effort and Achievement
- Respect for Self and Others
- High expectations of the whole school community
- Positive Attitude

BELIEFS & PRINCIPLES

- All students are able to learn and achieve
- Home + School + Community maximize student learning
- We learn best when we have a sense of belonging and a commitment to ongoing improvement

PURPOSE

Toora Primary school will provide a secure, motivating environment that meets the learning needs, aspirations and interests of all students supporting them to take ownership of their learning, build healthy relationships and essential learning competencies.

GOALS

Student Achievement

To improve student learning outcomes across the school, with a particular focus on writing, numeracy and interpersonal development.

Student Engagement & Wellbeing

To improve students’ resilience and wellbeing and their engagement in their learning.

Student Pathways & Transitions

To provide positive transitions and learning pathways for all students.
ENTRANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Staff resume on **Wednesday 27th January 2016**
Students in Years Prep – 6 resume on Friday 29th January 2016

Term 1: 27 January (school teachers start)  29th January  Prep-6 students commence)  to 24 March *

Term 2: 11 April to 24 June

Term 3: 11 July to 16 September

Term 4: 5 October to 20 December

* The first day of Term 1 is a student-free day in all government schools to allow for appropriate planning to take place for the arrival of students. Each year government schools are provided with four student-free days for professional development, school planning and administration, curriculum development, and student assessment and reporting purposes. The remaining three student-free days are determined by each individual school, so contact your school for details.

SCHOOL HOURS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>9:00 am to 11:00 am</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>11:00 am to 11:30 am (10:00 am Fruit and Serial class time. Students eat fruit brought from home whilst teachers read to the students or give instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>1:00 pm to 1:50 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>1:50 pm to 3:20 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bus students are supervised from 8:15 am and from 3:20 until the last bus leaves approx. 3:50 pm. Students are supervised during all breaks. Yard Duty teachers wear brightly coloured vests so are easily seen by students. Students other than bus travellers are expected to arrive between 8:40 and 8:55am for 9:00am start and to orderly leave the school premises at 3:20pm.

DISMISSAL TIMES DURING FEBRUARY FOR PREPS

In line with Department of Education guidelines during February Prep children will be coming to school for the entire day Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - remaining home on Wednesday for a "catch-up" rest day for the month.

PUPIL FREE CURRICULUM DAYS

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has mandated four Curriculum Days for 2016:

January 27th, 28th  2 days
June 1 day
November 1 day

Curriculum Days involve staff participating in whole school professional development. Parents are often invited to also participate in Professional Development.

THE HOME / SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The home / school partnership is a major feature of Toora Primary School. There are many different ways that you can support your child’s learning and be involved in your child’s school.
SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council meets monthly in the staffroom at a time and day that best suits the majority of members. The School Council is integral to the running of our school and is the decision making body. It is responsible for establishing and maintaining school policies as well as overseeing the maintenance of the buildings and grounds and the school’s finances and resources. If you would like to know more about our school, a Council member would be one person who would willingly provide information and be happy to welcome you to our school community.

In March 2016 there will be School Council elections for half of the current positions. A complete list of the new school council members will be sent out via our Newsletter shortly after 31st March. Being a member of School Council offers an excellent opportunity to become involved in decision making within the school. You are encouraged to nominate and join a dedicated team that works to make our school the best it can be for our children.

PRESENT COUNCILLORS FOR 2015/2016 ARE:

**PARENT MEMBERS:**

Kelly Packham ~ President
Kathryn Brown
Tara Hollier
Rachel Lewis

**DEECD MEMBER:**

Rachel Williams

**CO-OPTED MEMBER:**

David Tyler

If you have anything you wish to discuss or have clarified please feel free to approach your School Council members.

IMPORTANT SCHOOL COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES ARE:

- BUILDING AND GROUNDS
- FINANCE
- PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION (PFA)

*Our students learning to Surf during a Shane Hogan Offshore Surf School session February 2014*
PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION (PFA)

The PFA meets in the Kitchen/Meeting room of the school stadium once a month at a designated time. All parents are invited and are very welcome to attend. Our school depends on this group because of the enormous job they do with fundraising and special events, including the Grade 6 Graduation. The PFA impacts positively on the quality of the programs we provide and their enthusiasm and innovative ideas are greatly appreciated by the school community.

LUNCH ORDERS

We operate a Canteen from the Sports Stadium each Wednesday. Lunch orders are collected on Wednesday morning and lunches are delivered to the ‘eating area’ at 1:00pm. Parents are invited to join the roster to help out in the canteen.

KITCHEN GARDEN

We utilise our Kitchen Garden produce and eggs from our Hen House in regular cooking classes to expand student involvement in the process of ‘from the garden to the table’. Your help in this endeavour would be greatly appreciated. If you can recommend recipes for this purpose we would be happy to add them to our tried and tested ones. Please let us know if you are available to regularly lead a cooking group.

HEALTHY BREAKFASTS

The school seeks funding from various sources to support our Healthy Breakfasts Program. We plan to run the breakfasts on a term basis, providing opportunity for staff, students and parents to come together to prepare and share a meal. A gold coin donation is requested to help with the cost of ingredients. We aim to support healthy decision making and to provide a range of different healthy foods for our students to enjoy.

WORKING BEES

Working Bees are held from time to time, as the need arises. These are usually for a couple of hours on a school day or over the weekend to provide opportunity for the wider school community to participate. The co-operation of parents is sought at these times. Keep your eye on our fortnightly Newsletter/Website/Facebook.
POLICIES & PROGRAMS

We have policies for key learning areas as well as Student Welfare including Sun Smart, School Uniform, Teaching and Learning, Bullying and Harassment and a Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan. Each year our Annual Report is published on the school’s website http://www.tooraps.vic.edu.au. Policy documents are also available for you to look through at any time, just ask at the office if you would like to borrow a copy. Through the Ultranet you will be able to access a broad range of information about your child’s learning and our school.

STUDENT LEARNING

You can support your child’s learning in many ways. Nurturing your child’s curiosity, talking whilst engaging in daily activities, and learning together will provide a strong foundation for your child’s school learning. Social skills are an important part of school life. Students need to understand that they must follow teacher directions/instructions during school time as we have “duty of care” and are in charge of their learning and safety.
LEARNING TO READ

Continue reading and talking with your child – immerse your child in language and share the reading experience. Parents who tell interesting stories and read interesting books to (and with) their children are giving them the best chance to become keen and proficient readers. Children learn to read in different ways, at different times, and at different rates – as is true of every other human skill. Teachers relate their teaching to each child’s individual interests, abilities, and language background. Phonics is taught along with other reading strategies.

What Parents Can Do:

• DO read aloud to your child every day.
• DO talk about a book before you start reading it to a young child. Ask older children about their current reading.
• DO buy a bed-lamp and encourage reading each night before going to sleep.
• DO praise every effort in reading, especially if confidence is low.
• DO be seen reading for pleasure yourself and making visits to the library for adult as well as children’s books.
• DON’T nag your child about reading, nor worry if the reading isn’t yet word-perfect or equal to that of some other child. Rather, pursue this basic question: Is my child finding interesting reading material, and are conditions at home favourable to reading? (TV should not be on all the time).

LEARNING TO WRITE

Drawing and scribble writing with random letters are necessary stages in the development of formal writing. To become fluent writers, children need to write regularly. The chief ‘basic’ in writing is the ability to express ideas clearly for the audience, that is, to get the message or meaning right. The secretarial skills of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar are required to enhance and support meaning making. Children are supported to reread and improve their writing.

What Parents Can Do:

• DO encourage your child to write often, either handwritten or computer, to friends and relatives, and also to write in a personal and/or family journal.
• DO respond to the message or story of your child’s writing, rather than mark out spelling errors (though help when your child asks for a spelling).
• DO provide a quiet place for writing, away from the noise of TV. Ask what is happening in school writing. Do some writing yourself. Invite your child to add to letters or emails that you write to relatives. You may wish to become a note-writing family, and leave notes around for one another.
• DO help your child to turn stories and other writings into ‘books’ by stapling them into brightly illustrated covers.
• DON’T get upset if the teacher hasn’t marked out every error. Often 4-5 corrections are done in teacher-pupil discussion of the errors that are currently meaningful to your child. It is just as meaningful to have discussed it either with the teacher or a friend. Pursue this basic question:

Is my child writing a good deal and writing with interest? (Writing here means the ability to compose ideas in sentences and paragraphs, that is, written expression. Handwriting is a different skill.)
LEARNING TO SPELL

Spelling needs to be related to writing. Children get impressions of spelling from reading, but it is writing that obliges them to look into words to see precisely how they are spelled. Every writing time is a spelling time. It is equally important your child becomes a “risk taker” willing to use a wide range of words that reflects the extent of their vocabulary. Being overzealous and pointing out every spelling mistake will restrict your child’s willingness to do this. Writers usually don’t like to stop and check doubtful spellings while they are composing their ideas, preferring to do such checks when they revisit their writing to improve it. Soundwaves is a word study program used throughout the school to extend student vocabulary, improve spelling skills and expand their understanding of how words work.

What Parents Can Do:

- **DO** show that you care about spelling. Within the family, frequently ask, “Who knows how to spell…?” And advise: “You won’t feel right about the spelling of some words till you’ve written them down to see how they look – or made absolutely sure by looking them up in a dictionary.” Also, find and play language and spelling games.
- **DO** look for and point out similarities and patterns, for example, “hike and bike have the same pattern.”
- **DO** keep in mind that your child’s improvement as a speller is best looked after by daily writing and reading together with a growing habit of self-correction of spelling, along with the learning of Soundwaves word lists.
- **DO** encourage the LOOK-COVER-WRITE-CHECK method. LOOK at the word and say it softly. COVER the word and visualise it (see it in your mind). WRITE from memory. CHECK …and repeat the steps if the attempt was incorrect.
- **DO** provide your child with a small dictionary or a small book they may record words meaningful to them, and encourage the looking up of spellings.
- **DON’T** make spelling very difficult, for then it will work against your child’s desire to write. Rather, pursue this basic question: Are conditions at home favourable to writing and reading, with my child showing a regard for spelling and readiness to carry out self-correction in any writing that is intended for an audience?
HANDWRITING

We teach Victorian Cursive Script and we ask that you become familiar with this style of writing as shown on the next page. It is important that students learn and practise correct starting points and formation. When showing children how to write please use lower-case letters and upper-case letters appropriately.

Please encourage your child to recognise his/her name in Cursive Script.

**Lower Case**

Lower case letters are used for all writing other than when a capital letter is required for correct punctuation.

```
abcdefgihij
klmnopqrst
uvwxyz
```

**Upper Case**

```
ABCDERFGHIJ
KLmnopqrstuvwxyz
```

When showing your child how to write their own name please use lower case letters:

Christopher  Kate  Surname
LEARNING MATHEMATICS

Today's emphasis is on problem solving and understanding mathematical processes, as well as speed of calculation and learning by heart. Maths sessions require children to use objects (concrete materials) as they work through exercises and problem solve; in this way children discover the connection between mathematical concepts and the calculations people need to make in the real world. We use the Nelson Mathematics Program tailored to meet the needs of individual children. Children do still learn 'tables'; but the emphasis is on understanding and practising these calculations in real life situations. We strive to develop in children a positive attitude toward mathematical inquiry and mastery of skills and processes.

What parents can do:

- **DO** show your regard for the practical usefulness of maths - and never say to your child, 'You're just like me; I was never any good at maths!'
- **DO** try to develop your child's sense of number, size (length, height, width, volume, area, mass/weight), and time. Find maths everywhere!
- **DO** involve your child in real-life calculating around the home - counting change, adding up bills, measuring, estimating, and so on.
- **DO** encourage older children to take up hobbies that require 'hands on' mathematical skills and a sense of spatial relationships, for example, making models, assembling kits, Lego, pattern blocks.
- **DO** have a calculator in the house and introduce games that lead to the discovery of some of the fascinating properties of number.
- **DO** understand that a great deal of the school mathematics curriculum is hands on. “Show me how you solved that.” What you see in your child’s maths book is a small part of the program.
- **DO** ask your school principal to organise an evening at which modern school approaches to maths are explained to parents.
- **DON'T** think mathematics is either a mystery or a textbook exercise; it is about solving problems in the real world. So pursue the basic question: 'Am I seizing every opportunity to use maths around the home, in play and in real situations, measuring and calculating whenever a need arises?'

Learning to read/write/spell/maths – Adapted from "Parents' Guide to the Basics" and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development documentation.
NATIONAL/ VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS (AUSVELS)

Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) has been replaced by AUSVELS which is very similar to VELS. Teaching and learning programs at Toora Primary School encompass the three core interrelated Strands outlined in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s framework. Each of the Strands has a number of components called Domains which are listed below.

Strand 1 Physical, Personal and Social Learning

Domains
- Health and Physical Education
- Personal Learning
- Interpersonal Development
- Civics and Citizenship

Strand 2 Discipline based Learning

Domains
- The Arts
- English
- Languages Other Than English
- The Humanities (Economics, Geography, History)
- Mathematics
- Science

Strand 3 Interdisciplinary Learning Strand

Domains
- Communication
- Design, Creativity and Technology
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Thinking.

As students progress through Primary School, they move through various levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Attributes of the Successful Learner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Preparatory Year</td>
<td>Beginning learners develop social skills such as understanding classroom behaviour and making connections between school and home. Through curiosity and encouragement, they take an interest in learning, begin to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills and develop some simple technical and coordination skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Years 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Learners begin to organise ideas, use language to work with peers and master basic literacy and numeracy skills. They begin to develop an awareness of other groups, cultures and times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Years 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Learners become more persistent and prolific in their learning and develop confidence through using specific skills. They are able to participate in discussion about ideas, beliefs and express informed opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Years 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>Learners become more complex thinkers and are able to apply problem-solving strategies. They are able to participate in and lead small group activity and learn more deeply by undertaking more extended projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual Learning Plans are prepared by classroom teachers to cater for students who are progressing quickly through a level and for students who require more time to consolidate concepts and skills.

EXTRA CURRICULA ACTIVITIES

PARENT PAYMENTS

The School Council has maintained the Annual Parent Contributions for 2015 at $150.00 per child. Parent Contributions are used to help meet the cost of classroom supplies, class sets of equipment, books, resources and cultural performances. The aim is that the only extra costs to be borne by parents shall be excursions, sporting trips, and camps. The school heavily subsidises these costs.

SWIMMING / AQUATIC EDUCATION

The Annual Aquatic Education Program is held at the Toora Swimming Pool during first and fourth terms. The first term program focuses on competitive strokes and preparation of students in grades 3-6 for the interschool swimming sports and Water Safety for Grade 1 & 2.

The fourth term program is devoted to the P-6 Aquatic Program focusing on participation, recreation, water safety and water skills.

Detailed information and permission notes will be sent home in the newsletter. We are fortunate to have qualified AUSTWIM staff who have major roles in conducting these excellent programs.
CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

We endeavour to provide opportunities for students to develop independence and life experiences designed to broaden their horizons. Valuable personal and interpersonal learning occurs during these activities, as well as discipline based learning (English, Mathematics, Humanities, Science, the Arts). Each year Junior School students participate in a long day excursion and day camp. Grade 3-6 attend a three day (two night) camp. The students will be attending the Philip Island Camp in 2016. Depending on the learning objectives of specific activities and the needs of the students, parents may be asked to attend camps and excursions as volunteer helpers.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD SETTLE INTO THEIR NEW SCHOOL

We request that you support your child to become independent in relation to school procedures as soon as possible. Staff members are on yard duty before school and during the recess and lunch breaks. It is important that students are given opportunity to bond with their peers and teachers as quickly as possible. Parents can support this important development by their positive attitude to school and demonstrated confidence that their child will enjoy their day by their words and actions. Actions include supporting your child to take responsibility for their belongings and allowing them to place their school bags in the designated area, naming their belongings; ensuring children arrive before the bell; returning all notices punctually and becoming part of the school community.

We encourage parents to farewell their child/ren at the gate in the mornings and leave promptly allowing children 10-15 minutes to establish a play routine for the day and to become comfortable in their school environment when the 9 o’clock bell rings. It is important to consider the needs of the children, often parents stay longer in the belief that their child will settle easier but experience shows this is not the case. Initially the Prep/1 teacher will greet the children at the gate to provide extra support. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development clearly states that parents are not free to wander the school grounds as a safety precaution. All visitors including parents must report to the administration office upon entering the school premises.
PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST DAY

Please ensure that your child visits their new school before formally starting as a student. Show by your words and actions that you are sure that school is a happy place. Spend time in casual conversation with your child, talking about the importance of school and how to be a successful learner. Remind them that they will be in a group situation and must follow teacher instructions.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Our school has a School Council endorsed compulsory uniform policy as well as a Sun Smart policy. All students are required to wear a brimmed hat in the yard during Term 1 and Term 4; if students do not have their hat at school they are required to remain under the shade of the building visible to yard duty staff.

What is the school uniform?

The uniform colours are white, light blue and navy blue. The clothing worn to school should be predominantly blue and not contain any logos other than the school official logo. Regardless of fashion trends it is important that items fit the children and that trousers are not worn too long as this can be very dangerous. The school has an emblem/logo. Small cloth logo badges are available from the school at a cost of $2.60. Ideally a school badge should be attached to a jumper, windcheater or t-shirt. Most of the uniform is designed to be worn by both girls and boys. There is no set summer or winter uniform. Students are encouraged to wear uniform items in which they feel most comfortable. The uniform is designed with due regard to the health and safety of the students. In regards to footwear students are expected to wear shoes or sandals, which have appropriate protection for toes and heels. Please label all uniform items with your child’s name.

Students are expected to wear their uniform each school day. If students are at school out of uniform they will be loaned uniform items for the day. Occasional ‘Out of Uniform’ days are declared, usually for fundraising, special events, or as a special class treat.

Where to obtain the uniform

Items may be hand-made or purchased through the school or from various commercial outlets. A number of second-hand uniform items are usually available at the school. A uniform order form is included with this booklet.
LOST ITEMS

The school makes provision for the return of lost property and uniform items that are labelled with the child’s name. It is the responsibility of parents to clearly label the property of their child. The school will not accept responsibility for lost or damaged personal items of students. At the end of each term lost property is disposed of (often to the Toora Op Shop). Student belongings are not covered by DEECD/School Insurance.

PERSONAL GOODS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL AT OWNER’S RISK

Private property brought to school by students is not covered by the school’s insurance, nor is the school or Department of Education and Early Childhood Development responsible for any loss. Students are encouraged not to bring their own toys to school.
STUDENT HOUSES

AGNES (DARK BLUE) and FRANKLIN (LIGHT BLUE)

We have two House Teams at Toora Primary School and these are named after two important local rivers. Siblings are usually in the same House. A points system operates within the school. Students receive points for effort and achievement in all areas, including sport. Students may earn extra points for their house in many different ways, for example:

- Working really hard
- Cleaning up the classroom, artroom or other area at school
- Demonstrating a school value – Effort & Achievement, Respect for Others, High Expectations of the Whole School Community, Positive Attitude
- Good listening
- Wearing full school uniform
- Entering the class quietly, on time, and ready to learn.

Year 6 students are invited to nominate for leadership positions, including that of House Captain at the beginning of the year. All students participate in the electoral process.
HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Healthy relationships between home and school are crucial to the positive development of your child at school. Confidentiality and mutual respect are fundamental to communication. Whenever issues or concerns arise it is important that staff and parents have open, honest and respectful communication in which a full understanding of occurrences can be gained. In this way informed decisions can be made and consensus reached. Each Student has a diary/communication book that travels to and from school daily for notices, queries, questions or concerns etc. This has proven a quick, effective method of ongoing communication. Appointments to meet with staff can be made via the communication book.

CHANGES OF INFORMATION

If you have a change of address, phone number or any other information that the school needs to know, please inform us as soon as possible so that our records can be updated. This is extremely important for the health and safety of your child. Life experiences have the potential to impact on your child at school, for example changed work arrangements of parents, death or illness of a loved one, so please inform your child’s teacher or principal so that we can be supportive of your child. Your privacy will be maintained but it is recognised that changes at home or school can be unsettling for children and therefore we value communication between the home/school.

NEWSLETTERS – WEBSITE – EMAIL - FACEBOOK

We are very proud of our students and programs and use the fortnightly newsletter as a means of keeping you informed of the happenings in our school. We also like to include appropriate local information. Di Walker, our Business Manager, coordinates the articles submitted and publishes the school newsletter every second Thursday. If your child doesn't initiate handing the newsletter to you, please ask them for it. Spare copies are always available at the office. Remember to regularly visit our school’s website. You are most welcome to email us at school at any time. Website: www.tooraps.vic.edu.au Email: toora.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au Facebook: look us up on our Facebook page ‘Toora Primary School’.

PARENT / TEACHER INTERVIEWS, INFORMATION SESSIONS, STUDENT REPORTS

Early in the school year you will be invited to a parent teacher interview. This is an important sharing time for you and your child’s teacher. Your child’s teacher will explain the organisation of the class, outline class expectations and the curriculum objectives of the year. A handout outlining these areas will be sent home prior to the interview. You will be provided opportunity to share your expectations for your child’s learning. We have high expectations of students and challenge students to always do their best. Working together we can be successful. Parents who demonstrate that they value home reading and other homework tasks are supporting students to achieve highly by modelling behaviours and attitudes that motivate students to want to learn.

COMPASS is used to inform students and parents of student progress and achievements of specific learning task. Parent / teacher / student interviews are held at the end of first semester. This interview provides a further opportunity for the sharing of information between school and home and to expand on COMPASS communication. Teachers report your child’s development against the AUSVELS. Year 3 and 5 students will participate in the National Assessment Program, Literacy and Numeracy tests during May 2016. These reports will be sent home as soon as they become available.

For some students we regularly hold Support Group Meetings/Care Meetings in which individual learning programs are established and reviewed. Throughout the year parents and teachers initiate meetings as needs arise. Informal communication is ongoing. Staff and parents may seek assistance from School Support Services for individual students. When doing so parents are required to complete a consent form that remains active until the needs of the student have been met or the parent decides support is no longer required. It is important that these forms are returned promptly to school as the demands on School Support Services staff is always high; eg: (Speech Pathologists, Psychologists, Social Worker)
HEALTH AND SAFETY

LUNCH / PLAY LUNCH

Children eat lunch and play lunch under the supervision of yard duty teachers. Lunch is between 1:00pm and 1:50 pm. Be aware of what is a reasonable amount of lunch and play lunch for your child, and how long it will take your child to eat. As part of our school Health Program we encourage children to eat nutritious lunches and snacks. Students may return their lunch and play lunch containers to their bags after eating, with teacher consent. Teachers supervise the yard during all play periods. Teachers wear brightly coloured vests for visibility. Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds without written authority from their parents. Students who go home for lunch require a permission note and need to sign out when leaving the school, and sign in on their return. The lunch book is kept on the counter in the office.

TRAVELLING TO AND FROM SCHOOL - WALK / RIDE

It is important that students learn the road rules so that they can safely walk or ride to school. You may wish to organise a Walking Bus to promote supervised walking to school. Research indicates that children under the age of 9 cannot gauge distances accurately, so riding alone on the road is not recommended. Children must wear helmets if they ride scooters or bicycles to school.

The school has a bike rack for children to park their bicycles and scooters during the day. However, we are unable to take responsibility for the safety of their bicycles. This area is out of bounds during the school day. Students are invited to keep their helmets inside during the day.

Students are required to leave the school grounds promptly and in an orderly fashion at the end of the school day. If your child is being collected from school before home time please notify the class teacher via your child’s diary/communication book or school office. The adult collecting your child must sign the book at the school office before leaving. Parents are asked to provide written authorisation to their child’s class teacher on any occasion when they:

- Wish their child to be allowed to leave school during school hours with any persons other than themselves.
- Do not wish their child to travel home by school bus if that is what they normally do.

BUS

To assist orderly dismissal at the end of the school day and to support students’ growing independence and organisational skills, we request that you wait for your child/ren at the gate.

At the end of the school day a teacher supervises bus children until the three buses have collected our students. Permission to travel on school buses needs to be obtained from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Forms are available via the school office. South Gippsland Secondary College is responsible for bus coordination. Students bypassing their nearest school are required to seek special permission to do so from Region and pay the required fee. Bus students are supervised from 8:15am – 3:50pm. All other students are supervised between 8:40am and 3:20pm. It is important to supply a note for the bus teacher when bus students are not travelling by bus at the end of the school day.

Students are required to behave safely on the school buses. If students engage in inappropriate behaviours on the bus they will be issued a formal warning. If inappropriate behaviours continue students may be suspended from bus travel - this is at the driver’s discretion and for the safety of all bus travellers.
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors, including parents are required to sign in on arrival at the school, and on departure. This is a Department of Education & Early Childhood Development requirement. The Visitors Book is located on the counter in the General Office. Please note that there is NO PARKING in the bus area of Gray Street between the hours of 8:15 and 9:00 am and 3:15 and 4:00 pm. This is an important safety regulation and needs to be adhered to.

ILLNESS

When students are sick parents can make it easier for them to return to school by:
- sending a note
- attending to homework and home reading routines.

Parents are required to send their children to school every day unless:
- your child is too sick or injured to go to school
- your child has an infectious disease (Exclusion table attached)
- the principal is provided with any other genuine and acceptable reason for absence.

Teachers are required to mark the attendance roll twice daily, morning and afternoon. At the end of each week the data is recorded on the administration computer and sent electronically to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Melbourne.

Student absence fits into the following categories:
1. Illness / Injury
2. Truancy – Your child is absent from school without your knowledge
3. School Refusal – Your child does not want to attend school, even though you have tried
4. School Withdrawal – Your child does not attend school with your permission.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development considers more than ten days away from school in any one year to be a concern, impacting negatively on student learning. Please notify us of all student absences, either by note, phone call or in person. It is important to us and it is also a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development requirement.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS SICK?

Sick children should stay at home where they can rest and be monitored. Infections spread rapidly and specific illnesses have set time periods that children must stay away from school. A table showing this information is included. If the children cannot cope with the normal classes and recesses because of sickness, they should not be at school. A note should be sent informing the school of the reason for a child's absence. Children who become sick at school are placed in a first aid area for observation. If the child is not well enough to return to class, the parent will be notified and the child collected from school.

If a child comes home and parents have not been notified, the parent should contact the school immediately.

It is important that you notify us of all students’ absences, either by note, phone call or in person, this is a Department of Education & Early Childhood Development requirement.
ABSENCES / PUNCTUALITY – “It’s Not Okay to Be Away!”

Apart from times of illness, it is important that children attend school every school day and arrive in time for a nine o’clock start. You may wish to access “It’s Not Okay to Be Away” resources developed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Gippsland, and published on the website http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/attendance

Below are aspects we particularly wish to share with you.

Why “It’s Not Okay to Be Late to School”

Students being late to school can have an effect on the teacher, other students in their class and themselves in the following ways.

Latecomers:
- miss out on talking to their teacher before school
- miss out on playing with other children before school
- miss out on organisation time, for example getting their workbooks and pencil case from their tub and setting up their table for the day
- miss out on roll marking, lunch orders being sent out and taking monies and notices to the office – and their lunch orders and notices often stay in their school bag
- miss out on learning time when they take their lunch order and monies or notices to the office
- miss out on hearing what’s happening for the day
- are often unsure about what they have to do in the lesson
- can arrive at the classroom, find that their class has moved and then waste time wandering around the school searching for the group
- miss out on literacy and numeracy time
- find learning becomes disjointed and difficult
- are failing to take responsibility for their learning
- tend not to see being late as a problem
- are often unapologetic to the teacher and the class
- distract other students when they arrive.

Teachers:
- need to repeat instructions and / or find extra sheets or materials before late students can begin working
- need to give late students extra attention so that they know what has happened or what the class is doing
- can be expected by the parents of latecomers to be available although teaching has begun
- have to find time to communicate their concerns to parents about unexplained absenteeism and late attendance by phone, a note or a meeting after school.
Why “It’s Not Okay To Be Away”

When students stay away from school their learning and friendships are affected, their learning can become disjointed and difficult.

Students who stay away from school:

- miss the introduction of new work
- fail to complete work
- miss revision
- miss maths, reading and spelling tests
- miss homework explanation and worksheets
- fall behind with their learning
- develop disjointed home-reading routines
- develop inconsistent homework returns
- may lack confidence and feel embarrassed because they cannot do work the class has been studying
- feel left out from class discussion when they have missed a special class activity and cannot do the associated work
- miss specialist lessons because these lessons only occur once a week and so, for example, art work is not completed or is rushed in order to finish in the limited time available, physical education skill work is not practised, library work is not completed and library skill information is missed
- miss notices and newsletters
- miss celebrations, for example student of the week, class awards, excursions, school visitors, assemblies and special activities
- can find it difficult to break into established friendship groups and develop good friendships with their peers
- can develop a poor attitude towards school believing “I won’t miss much if I’m not at school”
- fail to realise that the teachers and students miss them.

SAFETY

Please help us to keep your child safe by ensuring that he/she knows:

- His/her full name and address.
- To travel directly between home and school.
- To walk, not run, across roads.
- To stop, look and listen before crossing the road, then to walk straight across.
- To cross roads at marked crossings where they exist.
- To walk on the footpath.
- Not to play on roads.
- Never to run from behind parked cars.
- Never to accept rides from strangers.
- Never to stop and talk to strangers.
- Never to bring articles that may cause accidents at school.
- To report to a staff member or the school office if concerned about any matter.
- It is asked in the interests of non-violence that children do not bring toy guns to school.
STUDENT WELFARE

KidsMatter is a flexible, whole-school approach to improving children’s mental health and wellbeing for primary schools. It can be tailored to schools' local needs.

Through KidsMatter, schools undertake a two-to three-year cyclical process in which they plan and take action to be a positive community; one that is founded on respectful relationships and a sense of belonging and inclusion, and that promotes:

- social and emotional learning (including evidence-based social and emotional learning programs)
- working authentically with parents, carers and families
- support for students who may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

When schools take on KidsMatter, they build on the work that they are already doing in these areas.

HEAD LICE

Unfortunately Head Lice continue to be a problem within schools. The control and management of head lice infections is a shared responsibility between home and school.

We ask that you:

- Regularly inspect your child’s hair to look for lice or eggs and regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary.
- Comb out all treated eggs.
- Ensure your child does not attend school with untreated head lice.
- Use safe treatment practices which do not place your child’s health at risk.
- Notify us if your child is affected and advise when the treatment has started.
- Complete the enclosed consent form giving the school permission to conduct head lice head inspections for the duration of your child’s schooling at Toora Primary School.

We will:

- Regularly provide helpful information about managing head lice.
- Conduct visual checks – no physical contact is made and parental consent is not required.
- With parental permission authorised staff will conduct head lice checks.
- Notify you via the newsletter when head lice are active.
- Notify you personally if lice or eggs are detected in your child’s hair.
- Request that students with lice be collected from school and return once treatment has commenced.
DENTAL HEALTH

The SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE provides dental treatment and dental health education for school children. It provides general dental care to children every two years while children identified with a greater need may be seen more often.

Who provides treatment?
Dental therapists provide general treatment and more complex care is performed by a dentist. Specialist dental care is not provided but referral to dental specialists can be arranged.

What does it cost?
If you hold a valid Department of Social Security Health card the service is FREE. Non-cardholder’s pay a nominal fee per child (maximum of $100 per family), which includes a dental check-up and all general treatment. Payment cannot be claimed through private health insurance.

Who can use this service?
All primary school children, concession card holders and their dependants in year levels 7-8. Dental care is also available to Concession cardholders and their dependants in year levels 9-10 at your local community dental clinic.

How do you access the service?
Toora Primary School is contacted by the School Dental Service with information to put in our school newsletter, which will provide information for you. We will also be issued with consent forms for every child. If you require further information, please contact our Regional Office on 03 5127 4563

HEALTH AND MEDICATION

Please notify the school if your child suffers from a serious medical condition (including asthma) which could require emergency attention, or requires ongoing medication. A Management Plan needs to be completed and authorised by you and/or your child’s doctor. Asthma Management Plan proformas are available from the school office. Written permission from parents must accompany all medication. Medication Permission Forms are available from the school office. Medication must be clearly labelled with:

- Child’s name
- Name of medication
- Time for the medication to be taken by your child
- Dosage required.

Parents also need to ensure that:

- Written authorisation for the teacher to be handed to the office first
- Medication is current – expired medication will not be accepted
- Their child is aware of when they must take their medication (training them to take some responsibility for this).

SCHOOL NURSE

During the Prep Year the children will be checked by the school nurse. The school may also refer students to a number of support services and will obtain permission and information from you before doing so.
## INFECTIOUS DISEASES: Exclusion from School

Parents frequently ring seeking information on how long children must stay away from school when suffering from certain diseases. The following table indicates the minimum period of exclusion from schools and children service centres required for infectious diseases cases and contacts as prescribed under Regulations 13 and 14 of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001 - Schedule 6. If your child is unwell please keep them at home to ensure the health of other children in the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease or Condition</th>
<th>Patient shall be excluded from school</th>
<th>Exclusion of Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chickenpox</td>
<td>Until fully recovered or at least one week after the eruption first appears</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>Until discharge from eyes has ceased (acute infectious)</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate</td>
<td>Domiciliary contacts excluded until investigated by the medical officer of health or a health officer of the department and shown to be clear of the infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giardiasis (diarrhoea)</td>
<td>Until diarrhoea ceases</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis(infectious hepatitis)</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection, or on subsidence of symptoms</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
<td>Until recovered from acute attack</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetigo(School sores)</td>
<td>Until sores have fully healed. The child may be allowed to return provided that appropriate treatment has commenced and that sores on exposed surfaces such as scalp, face, hands and legs are properly covered with occlusive dressings</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leprosy</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Until at least 5 days from the appearance of rash or until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection</td>
<td>Non-immunised contacts must be excluded for 13 days from the first day of appearance of rash in the last case unless immunised within 72 hours of first contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningococcal infection</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection</td>
<td>Domiciliary contacts must be excluded until they have been receiving appropriate chemotherapy for at least 48 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>Until fully recovered</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediculosis(head lice)</td>
<td>Until appropriate treatment has commenced</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertussis(whooping cough)</td>
<td>Until 2 weeks after the onset of illness and until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection</td>
<td>Domiciliary contacts must be excluded from attending a children's services centre for 21 days after the last exposure to infection if the contacts have not previously had whooping cough or immunisation against whooping cough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poliomyelitis</td>
<td>Until at least 14 days after onset of illness or until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringworm</td>
<td>Until appropriate treatment has commenced</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotavirus (diarrhoea)</td>
<td>Until diarrhoea ceases</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubella</td>
<td>Until fully recovered or at least 5 days after onset of rash</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scabies</td>
<td>Until appropriate treatment has commenced</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiglla (diarrhoea)</td>
<td>Until diarrhoea ceases</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streptococcal infection (inc. Scarlet fever)</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trachoma</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate has commenced</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
<td>Until receipt of a medical certificate from a health officer of the department that the child is not considered to be infectious</td>
<td>Not excluded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HEALTH AND SAFETY

Your child has the right to feel safe and be protected whilst at school, so we ask that you report any concerns to your child’s teacher or directly to the school’s administration. **Please note that it is not your right to question or discipline any other child while they are within the school grounds or buildings or under our duty of care.** Any action of this sort will only result in further problems with the parents of that child, the school, and at times, the Police.

AMBULANCE COVER AND INSURANCE

If students require transportation by ambulance, it is the responsibility of parents to cover the cost incurred. This may be very costly if parents do not have Ambulance Membership. Schools are not able to provide cover for this. Similarly, students are not insured for injuries at school, and medical expenses are not covered.

TOORA PRIMARY SCHOOL’S ESSENTIALS:

**COURTESY**
- Communicate respectfully
- Allow and give no put downs
- Suspend judgements
- Accept where others are at

**COOPERATION**
- Cooperate in good faith
- Aim for consensus decision-making

**RESPECT**
- Be respectful
- Confront problems respectfully
- Respect confidentiality

**RESPONSIBILITY**
- Act with integrity and professional responsibility
- Adopt a sense of responsibility within and for the school community

Maintain a sense of humour!

*We trust that you and your family will enjoy being part of our school community.*