



ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK 2023

School Motto	<i>Let Your Light Shine</i>
Address	18 – 26 Church Street GYMPIE QLD 4570
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St Patrick's

Catholic Primary School GYMPIE

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October 2022

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents

May I personally welcome you and your family to the St Patrick's Primary School community. St Patrick's Primary School exists to support you as parents in the important task of educating your children. The school is privileged to be part of the partnership that will contribute to your child's holistic development.

Our Parent Handbook has been designed to inform you of the policies, practices and procedures associated with St Patrick's Primary School. It is not a document that will necessarily answer all of your questions but it will provide you with the basics. All of our staff are willing to discuss any questions or concerns you may have as they arise and provide you with more detailed information where appropriate.

An essential component of our role of educating the students in our care is to work in partnership with parents. Your children will only receive the best possible schooling when home and school work together out of common goals and principles. We encourage you to be involved in your child's education as much as you can and we welcome your involvement in the school.

I trust that your time with St Patrick's Primary School is fruitful and rewarding. I am sure that you will enjoy being part of our school community. We look forward to working with you in educating your child and in supporting all the students in our care to "let their light shine".

Life's blessings to you and your family,

Petrea Hass
Principal

VISION STATEMENT

Igniting self-belief to build a faith and hope-filled community.

MISSION STATEMENT

As a Catholic Christian community, we foster inclusion and diversity while embodying Gospel values.

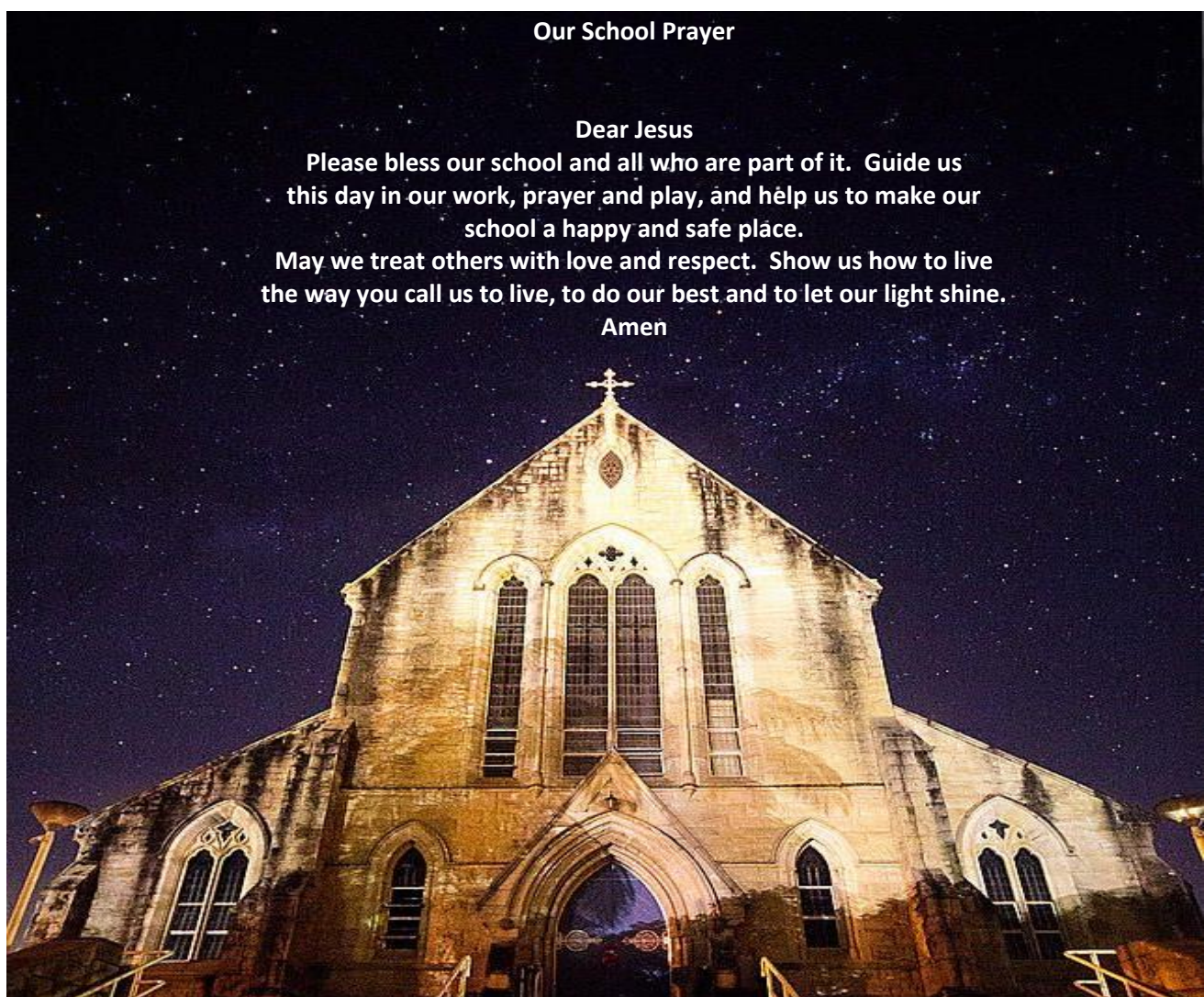
We embrace our responsibility for stewardship of our earth and its people.

We inspire and develop young learners to grow and succeed as local and global citizens in a changing world.

We prioritise the dignity, safety, and well-being of each member of our community and promote partnerships with the Parish and wider community.

We value and promote an inclusive and collaborative culture.

We embrace change by creating environments that promote sustainable and innovative practices to challenge and inspire our community.



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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is a Parish school which can trace its origins back to 1872. The school provides an education founded on Gospel values that recognises and applauds the talents and potential of each and every member of the school community. The Spirit of St Patrick's Primary School is underpinned by the values of compassion, dignity, justice, community and wisdom. Our heritage is a significant part of our story that we acknowledge and celebrate through the lives and stories of our founders.

The Sisters of St Joseph arrived in 1875 and opened a school at Monkland. When it burnt down, a lay school operated for a few years. A group of Sisters of Mercy arrived in Gympie in 1879 and conducted a school in the home of a parishioner. They later opened a school with an attendance of 173 girls and 101 boys on our present site. Because of the large mining population in Gympie, numbers soared to 600 in 1897 and the present Heritage Building was constructed at a cost of 2000 pounds in 1899. The Christian Brothers arrived in 1904 and both orders operated separate schools from Grade 5 onwards. Amalgamation occurred in 1982 with the formation of St Patrick's College and St Patrick's Primary.

The dedication and hard work of these three religious orders has richly blessed our school community. Following the recently completed building and refurbishment program at the school, each building was given a name which reflects our proud tradition. The 1899 building is now named the Heritage building, two wings of the school are named MacKillop Wing and Mercy Wing, our Administration/Library/Hall building is named the Trinity building and our Prep building is named 'Gundoos Dreaming' in recognition of the significant indigenous heritage of our area.

In recent years, we have placed a major emphasis on these founders. Our challenge now is to keep our school story alive. We are all a very important part of this story and it is important to ensure that we remember those that have had the biggest impact on trail-blazing our story...our school founders

*"The Spirit of St Patrick's Primary School is underpinned by the values of **compassion, dignity, justice, community and wisdom.***

*We seek to live this Spirit in the way we **welcome, serve and inspire**".*

Each term special awards are presented to students in each class who reflect the qualities of our four School founders in their words and actions.

In Term One, students from each class receive the Spirit of Matthew Horan Award. Matthew Horan was the first Parish priest of Gympie. Father Horan was responsible for inviting the Sisters of Mercy to open a school in the Parish.

The Spirit of Edmund Rice is awarded in Term Two. Edmund Rice was the founder of the Christian Brothers.

In Term Three, the Spirit of Mary MacKillop awards are presented. Mary was the founder of the Josephite Sisters.

Catherine McAuley was the founder of the Mercy Sisters. The Spirit of Catherine McAuley Award is presented in Term Four.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is necessary for a child to be able to fully participate in the learning programs offered at St Patrick's. It is also a legal requirement. In the event of a child being absent, parents are to log the absence via the Parent Portal.

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) is an evidenced-based, organisational framework for behaviour support to enhance respectful relationships and engagement of students in their learning. The school has developed and implemented a Behaviour Matrix which provides a framework that explicitly teaches students positive behaviours that reflect our core expectations of respect, acting safely and focusing on learning in order to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment for all students and staff.

BOOK LISTS

At the conclusion of each year, a book list will be provided for each class so that purchases can be made in preparation for the following year. The list includes text books, stationery items and exercise books. It is requested that children come to school on the first day equipped with these requirements so that learning can commence.

BUS TRAVEL

Students enrolled in Prep to Year 6 may travel to and from St Patrick's Primary School by the bus service.

A number of bus companies provide a service for the children from Rainbow Beach, Tin Can Bay, Cooran, Imbil, Kandanga, Amamoor, Curra, Kilkivan and Gympie areas. If you wish to make use of the school service offered by these companies, you should phone the company to make arrangements (eg: pick up points, times, costs).

The address and phone number of the major company:

Polleys Coaches
Pinewood Avenue
Gympie
Ph 5480 4500

Conveyance Allowance

Some children may be eligible for a conveyance allowance to offset the cost of bus travel. Please ask the bus company when making your enquiries. An application for a conveyance allowance is made by completing the appropriate forms which are available through the school office or Maryborough Transport Office on 4121 8315.

CAMPS & EXCURSIONS

The school camp program begins with school-based experiences and leads to longer events away from the school. It also promotes the use of excursions to attractions in the local area.

Prep -Year 3 Students take part in excursions in the local area

Years 4 -6 Students participate in a 2 or 3 day camp in a variety of locations

While camps are an essential part of school life, no student or family will be placed under undue pressure regarding camp attendance or payment. Every effort will be made to encourage attendance at camps by all students but, ultimately, the final decision rests with the parents.

CHILDREN WITH HIGH SUPPORT NEEDS

When an application for enrolment of a student with a disability or high support needs occurs, an Enrolment Support Process is used. This process is devised by Brisbane Catholic Education and through it, parents, the Principal and support personnel, explore the child's needs and the school's capacity to provide a suitable learning environment for that child. An early approach to the school is appreciated if enrolment of a student with high support needs is desired, as this allows time to research all of the data needed to assist in the decision-making process.

CURRICULUM

Teachers at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School plan, teach, assess and report using the [Australian Curriculum](#) in the following learning areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- History and Social Sciences (HASS)
- Health and Physical Education (HPE)
- Languages – Indonesian
- Technologies
- The Arts

In Religious Education teachers plan, teach, assess and report using the Brisbane Catholic Education Religious Education [curriculum](#). This is organised into four related strands: *Sacred Texts, Beliefs, Church, and Christian Life*. Each strand has its own distinctive body of knowledge and skills. The Religion Curriculum P-12 is the source for all planning, learning and teaching of Religion in Brisbane Catholic Education schools.

ENROLMENT

Enrolment at St Patrick's carries a responsibility upon families to support the ethos and values of the school as outlined in the school's Vision and Mission Statements.

Conditions of Enrolment

- Acceptance of the teachings of the Catholic faith.
- Support of the programs and activities organised within the school.
- Understand that the school is dependent on the payment of school fees in order to operate adequately. (Inability to meet this commitment requires a prior arrangement with the Principal for a fee concession).
- To be available for an interview with the Principal or delegate staff member to discuss the enrolment application.
- To have children of eligible school age. (Copies of birth certificates are **necessary** for children enrolling each year).
- Will provide transfer notices for children enrolling in Years Two to Six with a copy of a current class report, any guidance reports or other relevant information.
- To have completed an Application for Enrolment Form, including a \$20 enrolment fee
- At the time enrolment is confirmed, a holding deposit of \$150.00 will be charged. This will be applied towards the first term fees.
- Children will need to be 5 by 30th June in the year they enrol in Prep and therefore they need to be 6 by 30th June in Year 1.

HOMework

At St. Patrick's School we believe that teachers and parents working closely together to provide the optimal conditions for children's learning to be most effective. The home is a rich learning environment that provides real life contexts in which children can demonstrate their attributes as life-long learners. Homework enhances the links between home, school and the community and gives parents an opportunity to become involved in school learning. Reading forms a vital part of our weekly homework tasks.

JEWELLERY

For the benefit of all students, the following guidelines are required regarding the wearing of jewellery.

- Students may wear only one stud or sleeper in each ear.
- Earrings/studs are only to be worn in the ear lobe.
- Necklaces with a simple holy symbol may be worn inside uniforms.
- No bangles/bracelets are to be worn at school.

Please note that exceptions will be made in special circumstances such as "medical alert" bracelets and so on. These exceptions will occur after consultation between parents and the Principal.

LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY DEPARTURES

If your child arrives after 8.45am in the morning, they need to collect a late slip that is taken to the classroom to signify to the teacher that this arrival has been recorded correctly in the attendance register. If your child needs to leave the school grounds with a parent or other adult (already approved by parents through the school office) at any time during the day prior to the finish of school, they need to be signed out at the office. Likewise, if the student returns to school after an appointment etc, they need to be registered back into the school at the office. These procedures are put in place for the safety of your children.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The school Leadership Team consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal – Religious Education and the Primary Learning Leader.

LIBRARY

The Library is an important learning centre within the school. Fiction and information resources are readily available to students and may be borrowed at allotted class times as well as some lunch breaks. Resources are loaned for one week and we encourage the use and return of our resources by the due date. Students are allowed to borrow a set number of books depending on their year level. If more research or project books are required, this is easily arranged with library staff.

A waterproof library bag is necessary for all students as protection while transporting books to and from school and can be purchased from the school's Uniform Shop. The Library is also open during lunch breaks for students if they wish to read, use the computers or play board games.

LOST PROPERTY

A box of unclaimed items is located near the office foyer. At the end of each term this is emptied and the unclaimed items are offered to families in need or donated to St Vincent de Paul. If all items are named, it is easier to locate owners of lost property and it is much easier for students to keep track of their own belongings. This will require name tags to be sewn or ironed on to all of the children's items.

MEDICATIONS

The administration of medications at school is handled in a specific manner to protect both the teacher and the child. All medications need to be kept in the school office and should never be stored in student's bags. Parents are required to drop medications to the school office in its original packaging, with name, dosage, doctor and pharmacist information. A student medication form will also need to be completed and signed by a parent/guardian. Office staff will administer medications according to the time parents have recorded on the student medication form and will record the date and time given in the medications register kept in the office Sick Bay.

OFFICE HOURS

Office Hours are from 8:00am to 3:30pm on Mondays to Fridays. Appointment times may be made by phoning the school on (07) 5489 3200. It is preferred that appointments be made if you wish to speak with the Principal or other members of staff.

PARENT PORTAL

Our Parent Portal enables easy access to information about happenings in the school, names and contact details for staff, policy information and much more. Each Semester, student report cards are made available via the Parent Portal.

There is also a section to allow you to check the details we have recorded in our enrolment system about your children and, if necessary, advise us of any changes. It is used for notification of your child's absence from school. You can also check on information about your child's attendance, teacher's timetable and NAPLAN performance. The initial login requires you to verify your identity and setup a password. Instructions for how to do this can be obtained from the school office.

PARENTS AND FRIENDS

This Association plays a vital role in supporting the school. The school relies heavily on parents contributing their time and support towards the activities run by the P&F. Without such support our school would not be as well-resourced and families would be paying extra in fees to cover what our P&F provides.

Meetings are held twice per term and dates and times are advertised in the school newsletter. The P&F is active in supporting the endeavours of the school in relation to funding, curriculum and programs provided. The P&F conducts some major fundraising activities during the year. These activities require the support of all parents and are valuable activities in building a better school.

A P&F levy exists so all families contribute some financial support. This is paid each term with the school fees account and is presently \$110 per year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORT

All children are expected to participate in all aspects of the P.E. Program to aid in the total development of each individual child. The aim of our Physical Education Program is to promote participation, enjoyment and skills development.

The school allows opportunities for children to participate in the following sporting activities:

- Inter-house Athletics Carnival
- Gympie District Athletics
- Inter-house Swimming Carnival

- Wide Bay Representative Sport
- Lessons conducted by visiting sports specialists e.g. Tennis, AFL, Hockey and Rugby League
- Physical Education lessons
- Swimming Program for Years 1 – 6.

If children cannot participate because of medical reasons, this needs to be stated on the enrolment form or a note sent to the class teacher on specific occasions.

PRIVATE SPECIALIST LESSONS

St Patrick's Primary offers a selection of extra-curricular music activities. These activities are subject to change and will take place outside "uninterrupted teaching and learning time (9:30am-10:30am)", conducted by suitably experienced or qualified teachers. Lesson times are negotiated with students, parents and class teachers.

Piano Lessons

Frances Andersen 5482 6373 or 0478 216 393 or email frankiandersen@westnet.com.au

Flute, Guitar and Ukulele Lessons

Kait Searles Kait can be contacted on Tuesday and Wednesday (5489 3200) or email ksearles@bne.catholic.edu.au

RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

Religious Education consists of two distinct but complementary dimensions, namely an educational dimension and a faith formation dimension. The first dimension, most commonly referred to as the classroom teaching of religion, is focused on Religious Education as an educational endeavour. The second dimension, faith formation, is reflected in the religious life of the school, family and parish. As a Catholic school, we aim to effectively support our students in their faith formation by providing opportunities for reflection, prayer and the liturgical life of the school. We acknowledge that the family is the first place where faith can be nurtured and strive to work in partnership with parents/guardians and our Parish community. St Patrick's has a Catholic perspective embedded through the Curriculum and Religious Life of the School. It is our intention to explicitly plan for, teach and deepen an appreciation and understanding of Catholic perspectives and these are embedded across all learning areas. At St Patrick's, we are striving to support students to flourish to be their true selves, confident about their relationship with themselves and others, creation and God. It is our goal that students ignite self-belief to build a faith and hope-filled community.

REPORTING & ASSESSMENT

Parents are always welcome to inquire about their child's individual progress by making an appointment with the class teacher. It is also expected of all staff that, if difficulties arise in a child's education or behaviour, parents are notified as soon as possible so that solutions to these difficulties may be found. Assessment is an ongoing process and is used to inform decisions teachers make regarding student progress.

Reporting to parents occurs on a formal basis twice a year. In the final weeks of Term One and Term Three, teachers will invite all parents to come to school for an interview regarding their child's progress. A Parent Information Night is held in Term One for all classes.

At the end of Semester One and Semester Two, parents of students in Prep to Year 6 will have access through the Parent Portal to a Report Card which outlines student progress for the semester.

The school also participates in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy testing (NAPLAN). This provides parents and the school with detailed comparative information on children's performance from Years 3 and 5 in both Literacy and Numeracy. Parents will receive a report outlining how their child performed compared to other Australian students at the end of the year.

ROLE OF PARENTS

We recognize parents as the first educators of their children and strive to work with parents in partnership to provide quality Catholic education for the students in our care.

At St Patrick's Primary, parental involvement is strongly encouraged. Opportunities for you to be involved in your child's education exist in a variety of forms. Volunteers will need to have completed the Student Protection and Code of Conduct Training for Volunteers and Other Personnel and have returned their completed Volunteer Registration Form to the office before volunteering at our school. This training takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

SCHOOL FEES

St Patrick's Primary School is a Parish school, staffed and administered by Brisbane Catholic Education. Finance for the running of our school comes from two sources:

- **School Fees and Levies:** The school relies on the payment of fees and levies by parents to meet its financial obligations and operating costs such as rates, insurance, electricity and phone bills, loan repayments and building maintenance. Payment can be made by cheque, EFTPOS, direct debit, direct deposit or BPay. Contact the office for further details.
- **Fundraising Activities:** Throughout the year, there are various fundraising activities undertaken in the school. These include the Parents and Friends Association activities and school activities such as free-dress days. These activities bring valuable funds into the school and enable us to provide extra resources and experiences for our students or to support others less fortunate than ourselves.

School Fee Accounts: Each term, accounts are sent home from the School Office. We would appreciate it if term accounts could be paid promptly wherever possible. Should difficulties arise regarding fees, families should make an appointment to discuss the situation with the Principal as quickly as possible so that equitable solutions can be found. No Catholic family will be denied the right of a Catholic Education because of their financial situation. Fee reductions are available by applying for a **Fee Concession** when enrolling at the school, or when financial circumstances alter. A just and equitable method is used to assist in looking at individual circumstances.

Class Levies: Money collected at St Patrick's Primary from levies assists in the purchases of consumables, classroom costs and cultural performances during the year.

Art and Craft	Class Resources
Photocopying	Religious Education
Texts/Programs	Swimming
Life Education	Cultural Activities

Building Fund: The school has commitments towards the capital and maintenance costs of its buildings. A voluntary contribution is sought from each family in the school year towards both the capital and maintenance costs the school incurs. This contribution is 100% tax deductible and your payment toward the building fund will assist us in improving and maintaining our school facilities for the benefit of all students.

Library Fund: The Library Fund is a voluntary contribution which parents are encouraged to make each year. This contribution is 100% tax deductible and goes towards the provision of resources for our School Library and the purchase of technology resources.

SCHOOL HOURS

TIME	
8.40 am - 10.40 am	Session 1
10.40 am - 11.05 am	First Break Play
11.05 am - 11.20 am	Supervised Eating
11.20 am - 1.20 pm	Session 2
1.20 pm - 1.40 pm	Second Break Play
1.40 pm – 1.50 pm	Supervised Eating
1.50 pm – 2.55 pm	Session 3
2.55 pm	5-minute bell for preparation for end of school day
3.00 pm	Music plays signalling end of school day

Playground supervision begins at 8:15am. Parents are asked to deliver children to school after this time. Each morning children are to go to the area in front of the Trinity Hall. At 8:15am they take their bags to their classrooms and then return to the playground until 8.35am. Before and After School Care and Vacation Care is available for those families requiring additional outside school hours supervision.

STUDENT SUPPORT

If you have any concerns about your child, or if you would like to inform us of any needs or requirements your child has, the first thing to do is to communicate with your child's class teacher. Our staff spend a great deal of time with your child during the day. By sharing your concerns, knowledge or questions with the teacher you can provide valuable information about your child's needs. Just by discussing strategies and being consistent between home and school you may be able to address these concerns for the benefit of your child. This can often be enough to improve the situation.

At St Patrick's we also have a team of people who work beyond the classroom to provide support and investigate questions that parents or teachers may have about a child.

This **Student Support Administration Team** consists of:

- Mrs Petrea Hass (School Principal)
- Mrs Jacqui Winmill (Assistant to the Principal: RE)
- Mrs Karen Holmes (Guidance Counsellor)
- Mrs Kym Thomas (Primary Learning Leader)
- Mrs Chrissi O'Connell (Support Teacher: Inclusive Education).

TUCKSHOP

The tuckshop operates each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Parents place orders via the Qkr! App. The menu can be located on both the school website and the Parent Portal.

UNIFORMS

Our school uniform is a visual symbol, to the people in our community, of who we are and where we come from. When the school uniform is worn it reflects on the child personally, their family and St Patrick's School in the manner it is worn. We encourage all students to wear the correct items of the uniform and ask parents to be supportive of this in the way children are dressed for school each day. A note is required if an incorrect piece of uniform is worn.

The following relates to what children wear:

- Hats are compulsory. The children wear our school reversible bucket hat. Our school policy is No Hat, No Play.
- Casual sun-safe clothes are worn on special occasions. This will be given prior mention at Assemblies and through newsletters.
- Fingernail polish should not be worn to school.
- Hair below the shoulders should be tied back.
- Blue hair ribbons/bands/scrunchies are to be worn by the girls.

	BOYS	GIRLS
SUMMER	Knitted Polo Shirt Navy Dress Shorts Short White Socks (<i>not ankle</i>) Plain Black Leather Shoes/Joggers	Knitted Polo Shirt Navy Skorts Short White Socks (<i>not ankle</i>) Plain Black Leather Shoes/Joggers
WINTER	As Above PLUS Plain Blue Tracksuit (with the school badge) or School Jacket	As Above PLUS Plain Blue Tracksuit (with the school badge) or School Jacket

SCHOOL SHOES: Plain black polished shoes or black joggers (no colour inserts) – basketball boots, high ankle boots, canvas shoes, suede shoes and other sporting shoes are NOT part of the uniform and are NOT acceptable.

SCHOOL SOCKS: Boys **and** Girls – plain white short socks

PLEASE NOTE: SHORTENED CUT-OFF SOCKS OR SOCKETTES ARE NOT PERMITTED.

The Uniform Shop operates from the Tuckshop. Current operating times are:

Monday: 9.00am-1:30pm

Wednesday: 8:30am-1:30pm

Variations to these times are advertised in the school newsletter.



WEBSITE

We have a school website for the convenience of parents and the wider community. The site contains important information about the school and data which is relevant to parents. Parents can access the site by visiting www.stpatrickspsgympie.qld.edu.au