VERMONT SOUTH SPECIAL SCHOOL PARENT & CARER 2024





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WELCOME

Welcome to Vermont South Special School (VSSS). I am delighted that you have chosen VSSS as the school for your child. I trust that your child will have a safe, happy and healthy school life while they are with us. Our school caters for the needs of children aged 5 to 12 years, with an IQ in the range of 50 to 70. All our students have additional needs and we are committed to providing educational programs that support your child to reach their personal best.

Our small class sizes enable us to provide a calm, secure and nurturing environment where we really get to know and understand each child. Our qualified Special Education teachers and our Educational Support staff are highly skilled in supporting students with additional needs.

The school is divided into four sections: Foundation, Junior, Middle and Senior. Placement in a section is based on factors such as age, social compatibility, developmental level and student numbers.

We are fortunate to have a wonderful school culture where staff care about the students and their families, and about each other. I very much look forward to interacting with you and your child during the coming years. Please do not hesitate to call the school, or arrange an appointment if you have any concerns. Our friendly office staff are always happy to answer your calls on 9802 8199.

Jane Kenderson

Jane Henderson Principal January 2024



STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Vermont South Special School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.



VISION

Our vision is to empower students to reach their personal best

MISSION

Our mission is to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education

OBJECTIVE

Our objective is to stimulate students to learn in a vibrant, nurturing, educational environment, which provides for individual needs, whilst supporting the whole school community in a climate of mutual respect and trust

VALUES

LEARNING, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, RESILIENCE

We are learners

We respect ourselves and each other, and understand that our attitudes and behaviours have an impact on the people around us

We are responsible and we take care of our school and the property of others

We are resilient and persist even when things are difficult

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

Children need support and encouragement to help them adjust to the school environment. It is important to allow your child to become as independent as possible, encouraging the performance of those tasks which are within their capabilities.

The following suggestions may assist you and may also highlight aspects of school organisation with which you are unfamiliar.

- Ensure that all possessions are clearly named and easily recognisable by your child
- Encourage your child to look after their own belongings
- Help your child practise putting on and fastening jackets
- Help your child practise putting on and taking off jumpers
- Help your child practise putting on and taking off shoes and socks
- Help your child practise opening and closing food containers and water bottles
- The wearing of school uniform is compulsory. Please send a warm coat during cold weather
- Students need to bring a snack, lunch and water bottle each day. Drinks in glass containers are not permitted. All students eat lunch under adult supervision. Students are encouraged to bring a "Rubbish Free Lunch", i.e. lunch box with no wrappings
- The Department of Education & Training (DET) does not insure private property brought to school by students and no responsibility is **accepted for loss and/or damage**. Electronic devices (mobile phones, iPad, iPod, DS, etc.) and possessions used by students on the bus to and from school will be kept safely in the front office or by the class teacher. Such belongings can only be used by students whilst travelling to and from school. Mobile phones are not permitted to be used or in a student's possession whilst at school. All mobile phones will be stored securely

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE (OSH CLUB)

If you would like to use before and/or after school care, please contact the school office so that your enquiry can be passed on by the school to the provider. OSH Club is at Livingstone Primary School and the kids are taken to/ picked up from VSSS.

HOLIDAY PROGRAM

'TheirCare' is the Holiday program provider. This is held on the school premises. Information about the program and the booking process is sent out to parents prior to the holidays. Enrolment for the program is completed with TheirCare.

TERM DATES 2024

Students start on Tuesday 30th January 2024.

Foundation students do not attend school on the first four Wednesdays of Term 1: Wednesday the 31st January, 7th, 14th and 21st and 28th of February.

TERM DATES 2024

Term 1: 29 January to 28 March (students start on the 30st January)

Term 2: 15 April to 28 June

Term 3: 15 July to 20 September

7 October to 20 December

CURRICULUM DAYS 2024

Monday 26th February Friday 22nd March Friday 13th September Friday 20th December

DAILY TIMETABLE

The daily timetable provides students with dedicated learning blocks and regular play and movement breaks. Eating occurs inside classrooms, with no sharing of food.

Children who are not going on the bus should be picked up at 3:05pm.

| Time | Activity |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 8.40 | Drop off |
| 8:55 | Classes start |
| 9:15 – 10:05 | Session 1 |
| 10:05 – 10:55 | Session 2 |
| 10:55 – 11:10 | Morning tea |
| 11:10 – 11:25 | Morning recess |
| 11:25 – 12:15 | Session 3 |
| 12:15 – 1:05 | Session 4 |
| 1:05 -1:35 | Lunch eating time |
| 1:35 – 2:05 | Lunchtime play |
| 2:05 – 2:55 | Session 5 |
| 2:55 – 3:05 | Pack up & bell |
| 3:15 | Buses leave school |

EXCURSIONS AND CAMPS

Excursions into the community are held regularly throughout the year for all students. Excursions provide students with the opportunity to generalise the skills they are learning at school. They also provide experiences for students to use in their writing.

The school operates three mini-buses, which are owned by the school. They are used to transport small groups of students on excursions. A bus is hired when large numbers of students are taken on excursions and camps.

CURRICULUM and PROGRAMS

CURRICULUM & THERAPY

All planning is based on the Victorian Curriculum Levels A — D and Foundation to Level 3. Each child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with specific goals. Students are provided with a rich and diverse learning program that includes English, Maths, Personal and Social Capability, Science, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Physical Education. Senior, Middle and Junior students participate in the "Healthy Kitchen", the canteen and recycling programs. Junior and Foundation students participate in a range of therapy programs including "Ready, Steady, Go", "Magic Muscles" and Bike Ed. The speech therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapist provide targeted classroom instruction for students in the Foundation, Junior and Middle sections. They also work with small groups of students throughout the school.







SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) at Vermont South Special School establishes and maintains a positive and safe learning environment that enhances our school culture. Students are taught the expected behaviours in all areas of the school, and they are rewarded for demonstrating these throughout the day.

The benefits of SWPBS are that it:

- builds a positive culture and promotes social and academic success
- explicitly teaches appropriate social skills to all students
- identifies and prevents problematic behaviour in its early stages
- uses data to access and improve the culture of our school

BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

The school rules have been decided upon by the staff, with input from the students, to ensure that the school is a happy and safe environment for everyone. At all recess and lunch breaks, as well as bus times, staff are on duty to help any student in need of assistance and to ensure any problems are dealt with. Parents are contacted if their child is repeatedly not following the expectations. Individual behaviour support plans are drawn up to assist the student to acquire the skills necessary to behave in a more socially appropriate manner.

We have four behaviour expectations (or rules):



The students are encouraged to follow the school rules. When a student is following the rules they are given a ticket identifying that specific rule and praised. These tickets are collected over the course of the week and a reward, e.g. a milkshake, is given to the students whose ticket is randomly selected. All the tickets are put into a prize tank located in the foyer of the school. When the tickets reach a specific mark on the tank there is a whole school reward, e.g. special lunchtime activities. Students are also rewarded with a wristband for receiving 50 tickets for any one of the school rules, and a wrist band for receiving 25 ticks for following the rules at home.

COMMUNICATION

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency information is kept for each student. This enables the school to contact families in case of an accident or illness. Please inform the school immediately if your home, mobile or business number, email address or emergency contacts change. It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school of any relevant information regarding custody and access rights that could affect your child's security.

ABSENCES

If your child is absent for any reason please inform the school immediately via the Sentral app, email or phone, and state the reason for your child's absence. If the school is not contacted by 10:00 am on the day of the absence, you will be notified by SMS. This is important to ensure the safety of your child. This is a government requirement and a school policy. Regular attendance is encouraged, however, if your child is sick please keep them at home so that they can rest and recover. This also avoids the spread of infection in the school.

ATTENDANCE

TBC

LATE ARRIVAL & EARLY PICK UP

Or school day starts at 8.55am. If your child is late to school for any reason, please bring them to the office and sign them in. A staff member will take your child to their classroom. If your child must leave early, please let the school know via the Sentral app, email, phone or your child's communication diary. Come to the office to collect your child and sign them out.

SENTRAL APP

One way we communicate with parents is through an app called Sentral. You will receive information on how to use this app at the beginning of the year.

THERAPY APPOINTMENTS

Parents and carers are required to email the school to take their child out of school for external therapy, including date and time.

EMAILS

You can contact the school or your child's classroom teacher via email. Your classroom teacher will give you their email address. Please do not expect a response outside work hours.

STUDENT DIARIES

Student diaries are provided and allow for two way conversation between home and school. Each student is provided with a school satchel for their diary, library book and any notices. Please check your child's satchel every day. If this is lost, it will need to be replaced at your expense.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

The school newsletter is emailed to parents and carers every Wednesday. The newsletter is also available on the Sentral app. It is important that you read this as it contains up to date information and dates.

CANTEEN ORDERS

Lunch orders are available once a week on a Wednesday. The menu is published in the school newsletter. Orders must be in on Monday. Late orders cannot be accepted. Orders can be written on an envelope or lunch bag and clearly marked with your child's name, class, lunch pack number and money (exact if possible). Lunch orders are prepared by senior students as part of the Healthy Kitchen program.

LOST PROPERTY

If an item of clothing is lost, please contact your child's classroom teacher via email, the diary or the Sentral app. Only named items can be returned.

STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP (SSG) MEETINGS

SSG meetings are held early in Term 1 and at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. The Term 1 SSG meeting is an opportunity for you to inform the teacher about your child and to discuss priorities and potential goals for your child. Written goals are sent home before the end of Term 1. The SSGs in the middle and at the end of the year provide the opportunity to discuss your child's learning progress. If you wish to see your child's teacher at other times, please feel free to contact the school to arrange a convenient time.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS / CARERS TO ATTEND SCHOOL EVENTS

Information night

Information night is an opportunity to meet the staff who will be working with your child, meet other parents, find out more about the programs offered and ask any questions.

Open mornings and morning teas

These provide an opportunity to see your child in their classroom setting and enjoy morning tea with other parents.

Parent Workshops

These provide opportunities for parents and carers to gain an understanding of curriculum areas, and the developmental stages of learning. We aim to provide you with strategies and resources that assist with your child's learning.

Other Special events include:

Meet and Greet (a morning tea for new parents)
Biennial Twilight Carnival
Biennial Harmony Day celebration and family picnic
Biennial Concert
Book week celebration
Athletics Day
Family Picnic and Carols night

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council provides a vital link between parents, teachers and the community. The School Council has two meetings each term, held on a Monday night at 7:00pm. These dates are published in the school newsletter. The School Council is made up of three staff members and six parents. Office bearers are elected from these nine members and include the Executive Officer, President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. School Council elections take place at the Annual General Meeting held in February and the names of the elected members are published in the school newsletter.

The following is a summary of the School Council Powers and Responsibilities:

- Determine the education policy of the school within the guidelines issued by the Minister of Education
- Conduct an annual public meeting
- Elect office bearers
- Report annually to the school community
- Meet at least twice a term
- Ensure all records are kept at school
- Approve the annual finance budget
- Monitor the expenditure of school monies
- Ensure money is properly expended and accounted for annual audit
- Allow the use of school buildings by outside bodies
- Enter into contracts with the approval of the Minister
- Keep buildings and grounds in good order
- Recommend improvements and extensions
- Stimulate interest in the school
- Raise funds
- Conduct recreational and social events

FUNDING, PAYMENTS, POLICIES, ENROLMENT & TRANSITIONS

FUNDING

Program for Students with Disabilities

The 'Program for Students with Disabilities' allocates funding to government schools according to the perceived additional needs of children. Assessments are conducted in order to apply for such funding. All students will have the same assessments again, towards the end of primary school so that the Department of Education can determine what level of funding will be appropriate for Secondary School. Some students may need to have assessments earlier, if requested by the Department of Education. Please contact the school with any questions on 9802 8199.

Camps, Sports & Excursion Fund (CSEF)

The CSEF payment is provided to eligible families to help cover the costs of school excursions, camps and sporting activities. If you hold a current health care card, your child may be eligible for the annual payment of \$125 per student. The CSEF payment is paid to the school and contributes to costs related to your child's camps, sporting activities and excursions. Please obtain a form from the office.

PAYMENTS

Parent Voluntary Contributions

Vermont South Special School does not charge scheduled school fees, but rather relies on voluntary contributions from parents. These voluntary contributions are tax deductible and parents will be issued with a receipt to claim a tax deduction. The money contributes to the cost of student supplies such as books, pencils, glue, etc. and other costs such as the Healthy Kitchen Program, grounds' maintenance, insurance, and the running costs of our school buses.

POLICIES

All Policies are on the VSSS website. If you would like a hard copy of a policy, please contact the office. You will be notified by email when policies are updated.

LOST LIBRARY BOOKS

Please contact the school if you are unable to locate a library book that your child has borrowed. If the book is lost or has been damaged beyond repair you will be charged a payment of \$10 to go towards the purchase of a replacement book.

TRANSITIONS

VSSS assists with the student transition from VSSS to Secondary School. Please call the school if you have any concerns or questions.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

HEALTH CENTRE

The health centre is open from 8:40am to 3:10pm each day and is staffed by a nurse. The nurse administers medication, first-aid, and coordinates the medical needs of students. Please contact the school to discuss any medical issues with the school nurse.

MFDICATION

All medication administered regularly at school requires a Medication Authority form to be completed by the parent and doctor. These forms are completed at enrolment, at the start of every year, and when there is a change in medication. It is essential to provide the school nurse with all information regarding medication and notify the school immediately in writing, of any changes to medication. All medication, with the exception of asthma reliever medication, must be handed to the bus supervisor and not transported in your child's bag. The bus supervisor is responsible for delivering the medication to the school office.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Medical conditions such as asthma, epilepsy and anaphylaxis require care plans to be completed before a child can attend school. These plans need to be updated every year. Families will be contacted by the school nurse at the beginning of each year if care plans need to be completed or updated. Immunisation forms must also be provided on enrolment.

SWIMMING - EPILEPSY AND ASTHMA

Students attend a week long swimming program each year at an external swim centre. Any student who has **epilepsy** requires a medical certificate, which must be renewed annually, to participate. If the student's doctor recommends individual attention, the parent/carer must attend and is responsible for supervision. A medical certificate or note is required when exclusion is necessary. Parents/carers of students who have **asthma** must provide written consent for their child to participate in the swimming program. Students with asthma may require medication before and during a swimming lesson, as swimming is regarded as a strenuous activity.

DENTAL EXAMINATIONS

Smile Squad is the Victorian Government's School Dental Program which provides free dental care. This is a yearly service.

FLU VACCINATIONS

Flu vaccinations are provided annually and free of charge for students by Whitehorse Council. Details will be in the school newsletter when dates are confirmed.

SUNSMART POLICY

Hats are part of the school uniform and are required to be worn from mid-August to the end of April and whenever the UV levels reach 3. It is also expected that parents/carers will apply and/or supply sunscreen for their child to ensure adequate protection during the school day. Sunscreen will be applied by staff, if requested. If your child is allergic to any brand, it must be noted in his or her emergency information.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: Instructions for control, exclusion of patients and contacts from the school

The following table provides the criteria for exclusion from school due to infectious diseases. A 'contact' means a child of school age living in the same house as the patient.

| Disease or Condition | Exclusion of Cases | Exclusion of Contacts |
|--|--|---|
| Chicken Pox | Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunized children, but may be less in previously immunized children. | Any child with an immune deficiency (e.g. leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded. |
| Conjunctivitis | Until discharge from eyes has ceased. | Not excluded. |
| Covid19 | Refer to Victorian Government Guidelines | 1800 338 663 |
| Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection | Exclusion is not necessary | Not excluded. |
| Diarrhoea | Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours. | Not excluded. |
| Diphtheria | Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later. | Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Chief Health Officer. |
| Glandular fever | Exclusion in not necessary | Not excluded. |
| Hand, Foot and Mouth disease | Until all blisters have dried. | Not excluded. |
| Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib) | Exclude until at least 48 hours after initiation of effective therapy. | Not excluded. |
| Hepatitis A | Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness. | Not excluded. |
| Hepatitis B | Exclusion is not necessary. | Not excluded. |
| Hepatitis C | Exclusion is not necessary. | Not excluded. |
| Herpes (cold sores) | Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing where possible. | Not excluded. |
| Human immuno- deficiency virus infection (HIV) | Exclusion is not necessary. | Not excluded. |

| Impetigo | Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing. | Not excluded. |
|--|---|---|
| Influenza and influenza - like illnesses | Exclude until well. | Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer. |
| Leprosy | Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer. | Not excluded. |
| Measles | Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash. | Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case, or received NHIG within 144 hours of exposure, they may return to school. |
| Meningitis (bacteria) | Exclude until well. | Not excluded. |
| Meningococcal infection | Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed. | Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy. |
| Molluscum contagiosum | Exclusion is not necessary | Not excluded |
| Mumps | Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner). | Not excluded. |
| Pertussis (whooping | Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of | Contacts aged less than 7 years in the |
| cough) | cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment. | same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment. |
| Poliovirus infection | Exclude for at least 14 days after onset. Re-admit after receipt of a medical certificate of recovery. | Not excluded. |
| Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice) | Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced. | Not excluded. |
| Rubella (German measles) | Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash. | Not excluded. |
| Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) | Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced. | Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer. |
| Shiga toxin or Verotoxin productin Escherichia coli (STEC or VTEC) | Exclude if required by the Chief Health Officer and only for the period specified by the Chief Health Officer. | Not excluded. |
| Streptococcal infection, (including Scarlet Fever) | Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well. | Not excluded. |
| Tuberculosis (including latent tuberculosis) | Exclude until receipt of medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious. | Not excluded. |
| Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever) | Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer. | Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer. |

STUDENT TRANSPORT

Families who live within the designated transport area may choose to have their child transported to and from school by contract buses provided by the Department of Education & Training (DET). It is the responsibility of each bus company to provide a supervisor on each bus. All parents will be given information regarding the bus route and pick up times pertaining to their child. School buses depart between 3:05 pm and 3:15 pm in the afternoon. Students alight from and board transport under the supervision of teachers. Buses cannot be diverted from the approved route.

It is the parents' responsibility to notify the bus company and the school if their child will not be at the bus pick up point. If buses are late, please contact the transport company concerned, rather than the school. Crown Coaches 9845 1455 Quinces 8506 2700

It is the responsibility of parents to make arrangements for their children to be met at the bus stop each afternoon.

If parents, carers or nominated adults are not at the stop to meet a student, or if the bus is not met further along the route, the bus company will contact the school as the first option, and then the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) or the local Police Station to care for the student.

Children will only be handed over to a person whose name has been provided to the bus company. Please inform the school office if your nominated pick up person changes.

All questions and requests regarding bus transport must be via the school office Changes to bus runs can only be arranged through the school office (9802 8199)

QUINCES 8506 2700 Mt Evelyn, Mulgrave, Sherbrooke, Warrandyte bus runs

CROWN 9845 1455 Bayswater, Boronia, Kilsyth, Lilydale, Milgrove,

Ringwood, Rowville, Warburton bus runs

TRANSPORT DISCIPLINE POLICY

When the behaviour of a student is such that the health and safety of other passengers on that bus are at risk the following procedure will apply

- Parents will be notified of the problem immediately
- A repeat of such behaviour will necessitate further consultation with the Principal or Assistant Principal. At this time the Principal or Assistant Principal will notify parents of their child's suspension from bus travel, and the period of the suspension. During this time there will be discussion with bus companies and parents
- At completion of the suspension period the student will automatically resume travel on the Department of Education & Training (DET) provided transport
- A further notice of this behaviour will necessitate a meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal, bus company and parents/carers at which all parties will be informed as to the reasons for the following action
 - The student will be suspended from travel for an indefinite period and this will be reviewed on a regular basis with consideration for passenger safety being of paramount importance.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The School Council approves the compulsory wearing of school uniform. Combinations of the following may be worn:

Tops: Short sleeve polo shirt with logo

Long sleeve polo shirt with logo Navy blue windcheater with logo

Bomber jacket with striped trim and logo

Blue and white checked dress

Bottoms: Navy blue shorts

Navy blue track pants

Footwear: White or navy socks

Any covered toe shoe, including runners

Hats: Navy cloth sun hat

A uniform list is available from the office and items can be purchased by contacting the office.

| Photo | Description | Cost |
|--|--|---------|
| The state of the s | Polo shirt (short sleeve) with logo | \$35.00 |
| <u>v</u> | Polo shirt (long sleeve) with logo | \$35.00 |
| ×. | Windcheater with logo | \$35.00 |
| | Bomber jacket with logo | \$50.00 |
| | Navy track pants with a rib trim and double knee | \$30.00 |
| A | Navy shorts | \$25.00 |
| | Microfibre hat | \$10.00 |
| 100295 | School bag with logo | \$45.00 |