



For The Academic Year 2015-2016 (August 2015- June 2016)

N **Trolley Bags & Heavy Bags**

We have repeatedly instructed children to only carry home the books or copybooks they need for homework or study for one evening. However, day after day, we see children coming to or leaving school with their bags full.

We put shelves in each classroom for the children's school books. Children through Year 6 will be instructed by teachers as to which books to take home. All others should remain on the shelf for the following day. Lockers are available for Year 7 – 12.

For children to develop a sense of responsibility for their book bags, these bags must be manageable. A smaller, lighter weight bag is advised. There is simply no need for children to carry all their books back and forth between school and home.

Heavy trolley bags are causing children to twist their backs for extended periods with their shoulder and arm stretched behind them just to manage the trolley bags. This potentially causes serious skeletal and shoulder problems.

If a child cannot manage their own school bag, it is the wrong style or weight for them. Parents, Drivers and Home Helpers should not feel they need to carry bags for the children. This is an indication that the bag is either too heavy or the child is not being afforded the opportunity to have or gain responsibility.

Children move too quickly when coming down the stairs. The weight of their bags sometimes causes them to lose control of the bag sending it tumbling down the stairs and jeopardizing the safety of others.

Children tend to use their trolley bags as a weapon intentionally knocking against others causing them to trip or fall down. The younger children tend to spin in circles holding on to the handle of the bag.

Although you may consider a trolley bag to be a better ergonomic choice, many schools are now prohibiting wheeled backpacks because they are a potential tripping hazard.

A big disadvantage of a wheeled backpack or trolley bag is that the bag is an excuse to lug all the books back and forth. They are generally heavier than standard back packs even when empty.

Heavy bags, overloaded with too many books, are difficult to handle getting on and off the school bus. Even if parents bring their children to school or send them with a Driver, someone has to pick up the bag to put it in the car and then to take it out again.

Regardless of whether a heavy bag is handled by the child, Driver, Home Helper or parent, anyone could suffer the effects of handling an over packed bag.

A child who feels he/she has to study from each book each and every day is a child who has too much pressure on them to study. One or two subjects a night is enough. Children need time out of school in which they can relax and enjoy their childhood.

We strongly encourage you to select an appropriately styled back pack that limits the number of books a child can carry and therefore keeps the weight at a more advisable level. Following the established guidelines for a child's book bag, the bag should weigh no more than 10 percent of the child's bodyweight and should be worn over both shoulders so the weight is distributed correctly.

School rules should be followed. The example of following rules begins with the parents. The prohibition of trolley bags in the school is not a decision taken lightly or one of no merit. This was given careful consideration. Yes, it is a change that calls for some adjustment. Years ago, there were no book bags and trolley bags as we have today. We carried our books in our arms and we certainly would never have chosen to carry them all home – everyday!

So again, there are to be no trolley bags used in the school for the new school year. We are advising you now so you do not incur the expense of buying a bag that you would have to be replaced.

