

Hello Principals and Partners,

As we come to the end of the first month of term one, I am sure you feel like the year is in full swing and 2023 has a distinctly different feeling compared to the last two or three years.

I'd like to take this opportunity to bring you up to speed on some developments in the TheirCare world.

### Staffing and Attendances

Our Victorian attendances are continuing to improve as we move further away from the Pandemic and families return to work. We do have some schools where work from home is driving lower numbers but other schools where the attendances are bouncing back and climbing. We even have some schools that are now recording attendances above those experienced before the pandemic.

Staff engagement and shortages in the care sector (and education more broadly) are still being widely reported but we are seeing much more stability than we have experienced in recent years. Responses to job vacancies have increased (in some cases by double) compared to the late part of 2022.

Whilst this is encouraging, and many services have returned to stability, for a small number of services the increase in demand or local conditions may mean we are recruiting additional team members. Please be assured we are taking this very seriously and responding quickly.

### Your Support Team

Our support team of Area Managers and Operations Team has remained largely stable. We have only had one or two Area Manager movements in the new year. We made an investment early this year to promote one of our long term Area Managers as a further backup support so that we have additional coverage should we have a team member move on or take leave. This provides another layer of assistance to our field teams.

We are also investing in additional training on trauma informed practice Area Managers and external training for our coordinators on targeted topics relevant to them including leadership and managing behaviours.

### Fee Changes

As is our standard policy, we delay fee increases until the middle of the year. This allows families to avoid the burden of starting the year with higher charges. It also coincides with when the Commonwealth Government reindexes the Child Care Subsidy payments so it reduces any out of pocket burden on families.

It is important to note that the Commonwealth Government has recently passed the Cheaper Child Care legislation which further increases the rate of the Child Care Subsidy and extends eligibility from July 1. Rebates of up to 90% are available to families from the middle of the year.

We are conscious that cost of living increases are a burden on all families and businesses at the moment. As a result, our recommendation for fee increases will be based on official inflation figures. We will be reaching out to schools early in term two with more detail so there is ample time to present information to School Councils or ask questions.

If you are a new partnership or still in your fixed fee period, there will be no change.

### Introduction of WeCare

TheirCare is implementing our *WeCare* program in all schools from term 1 after a successful trial in 2022. The *WeCare* program has been developed to facilitate a connection between TheirCare children and their local community.

By demonstrating positive behaviour (aligned to your school values), TheirCare will make a termly donation to a local charity. This rewarding opportunity allows for children to learn about charities or local groups, get involved, and make a difference to their world.

Through the year we will encourage children and families to recommend worthy causes in your local community. We are looking at making donations across all our schools of between \$60,000 and \$100,000 each year as part of this program.

### Information Sessions

We are currently planning to roll out a guest speaker/function for Principals of our partner schools in term 2 or 3. We are exploring topics that are relevant to challenges or opportunities that you may be facing so that the sessions provide real value. We would love your input or ideas on topics or presenters. Our goal is for the sessions to be held as a morning breakfast and will also be available online for those who cannot make it in person.

The session will also provide TheirCare an opportunity to provide a quick update and to catch up. Please reach out to me ([michaela@theircare.com.au](mailto:michaela@theircare.com.au)) if you have any suggestions for topics or speakers. We look forward to providing more details early in term 2.

### Our Results

As you may be aware, we provide families an opportunity to provide feedback via our weekly surveys. A proportion of all registered families are sent surveys every week. The input provided allows us to track our performance (combined with our mentoring and customer support feedback) on a weekly basis. Any negative responses are reviewed daily by management and a senior member of our team reaches out to those providing feedback so that we can learn and address the concerns.

We currently have a **Net Promoter Score of +60**, which according to those who build these programs places us in the excellent category. Banks generally receive negative scores and anything above zero is seen as positive so we are proud of this result. However, we track results weekly so that any deviation creates a focus on what we can do better.

I was also pleasing to see that two of our services (Glen Huntly PS and Strathmore North PS) received an exceeding rating when they were recently assessed. We put in a lot of work on compliance and quality and it is recognising the work of the Educators and support staff to achieve these results.

## Edmund Rice Camps

TheirCare are proud supporters of Edmund Rice Camps who provide amazing opportunities for young people who have experienced trauma and adversity to thrive and belong.

By harnessing the power of fun, they run camps which offer a safe and nurturing environment and deliver growth opportunities to change people's lives and directly impact their resilience, self-worth and aspirations for the future.

Last Christmas, TheirCare decided to make a significant donation on behalf of all our schools to Edmund Rice Camps. This donation directly funded young people to attend the Summer Kids Camp and paid for all activities, resources and catering.

The Edmund Rice team were so thankful of the support provided.

Supporting young people is very important to all of us at TheirCare. We are so happy to have made this contribution to bring joy, happiness and a transformative experience to many in our community.



## Support and feedback

We have our Medallion Club seats available again in 2023. The seats have been used to support School fundraisers to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars. Please reach out to Steve Baldock (m. 0438 390 300, [steveb@theircare.com.au](mailto:steveb@theircare.com.au)) if you would like to take advantage of AFL games at Marvel or the MCG.

We always appreciate the support and feedback we receive from our School Communities. We are always striving to be better and to innovate in bringing high quality outcomes to your Schools. We encourage you reach out to Sonia (m. 0405 614 862, [soniaz@theircare.com.au](mailto:soniaz@theircare.com.au)), Vicki (m. 0499 994 282, [vickic@theircare.com.au](mailto:vickic@theircare.com.au)), Tash (m. 0448 265 281, [tashz@theircare.com.au](mailto:tashz@theircare.com.au)) or your area manager if you have any feedback and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible through 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Abela  
Managing Director and Founder

[michaela@theircare.com.au](mailto:michaela@theircare.com.au)

m. 0412 877 460