Our school community has continued to be strengthened through Social and Emotional Learning. We have continued to support students in their use of the 5 keys to success (Organisation, Persistence, Resilience, Getting Along and Confidence) through the ‘You Can Do It!’ program. In addition to this, ‘Blueearth’ was introduced to the school community. Through ‘Blueearth’ students enriched their Social and Emotional capabilities through physical activity. After school ‘Blueearth’ sessions were conducted and became a rich time of community gathering. St. Rita’s also acquired a grant from Telstra to support the continuation of ‘Blueearth’ in our school, which has recently been put towards the acquisition of sporting equipment.

Class Masses and Whole School Masses have continued to be a beautiful learning experience for our children. We are blessed with a very supportive Parish Priest in Fr. Grundy and the connection he has with the children at our school.

PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

What a fast, productive and busy year it has been! Once a full committee was formed it was full steam ahead. Selena Nelson was nominated into the secretary role and Laura Kirwan, the Vice Presidents position. With Paul Musumeci in the role of treasurer, a full committee was formed.

Fundraising is one of the roles of the P and F and this year was no different. Below are the major fundraisers we undertook this year:

- Easter Raffle
- $100 Boards
- Harvest Festival Clean Up
- Father’s Day Raffle
- Cent Sale with Spot Raffles
- Toy Catalogues
- Battery Muster

The monies raised from these events have gone back to the school to help make the learning for our children better. A cheque of $1363.00 was given to the school for new library books. World Feast Day was enjoyed by all the children tasting the delights of different foods from around the world and the P and F provided all the ingredients necessary for such a feast! Dance Fever, another favourite with the kids was made more affordable to all families with P and F donating $650.00 towards this event. A $750 cheque was also handed to the Principal Gavin Rick in October to put towards Educational Resources which will be implemented next year. Kyle

St. Rita’s Catholic School is a small school with a big spirit. It is a welcoming community of learners who strive to do their best in all aspects of their learning. With a strong focus on Spiritual formation in the Catholic Faith, students benefit from the explicit teaching of Social and Emotional Competencies, making them better equipped for life.

Luce came on board recently as Grants Officer and we have applied for approximately $60000 worth of funding for playground equipment and IT resources.

Another major role the P&F play in the school is parent education. This year we were privileged to have Janine Wicks come and speak to parents of St Rita’s and the wider Babinda Community on behaviour management. This was hosted by the P and F and generously paid for by the Babinda Harvest Committee. Another person we must express our gratitude to is Michael Greenwood from Gordonvale Parish who not only bid on our behalf on the purchase of a push mower, but then donated it to St Rita’s as a gift—we salute him!!!

All in all this year has been quite good for the P and F and we are looking forward to an even more productive year in 2012 with increased parental involvement and participation. So Merry Christmas to everyone and god bless you over the Christmas holidays.

Mrs Trudy Montague—President 2011

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Healthy NAPLAN results
- 4th Place in the Cairns Central Shopping Competition
- Catholic Education Week Celebrations with Southern Deanery and St Michael’s School, Gordonvale
- Recovery after Cyclone Yasi
- Formulation of a Whole School Positive Behaviour Support Framework
- Reopening of the Tucker shop—thank you Jenny Stone
COMMUNITY

A major focus on rebuilding community was embarked on in 2011. The school year began with Mr Toni Tonti as Principal who set the school up with a direction for the year. We thank Mr Toni Tonti for his leadership of St Rita’s since 2010. In April, Mr Gavin Rick was appointed Acting Principal for the remainder of 2011. He has been since appointed Principal on a permanent basis. Both teaching and non-teaching staff have worked very hard to build positive relationships with students and parents and have engaged in intensive reflective practices.

In 2011 St. Rita’s has continued to build on, and strengthen, our core values and mission. We have worked with students, parents and staff to identify what we value, students have researched the key values of the Mercy Tradition and staff have undertaken professional development to strengthen their capacity to translate Gospel Values and Catholic Identity into real, lived experiences. This focus will be core to our school in 2012. Enrolments have steadily increased from the low 30s to now over 40 and we are confident that this trend will continue.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND RELATIONSHIPS

In 2011, the school community underwent a large scale culture shift with a whole school approach to building learning relationships. The Relationships Policy which was introduced in 2010, was further developed. Whole School behavioural expectations were adopted and implemented by all staff. These were in the form of ‘The Famous Five’ rules which became a part of each classroom and sent home to be used within the family context. The staff also agreed upon a series of ‘Non-negotiable Behaviours’ which provided very clear boundaries for students.

Teaching staff engaged in a reflective process called ‘Classroom Profiling’, collecting valuable data on teacher and student behaviour. This data has informed decision and practices in the school. Data collected in Term 4, when compared to Term 2 has shown a dramatic improvement in the quality of learning at St Rita’s.

The Parent Community, as well as all staff and students were invited to embark on a review process of the school. This involved the identification of core values and the re-writing of the School Vision and Mission Statements. These will be adopted and will form the basis of the community in 2012.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum development at St Rita’s has been strong in 2011. With the leadership of Mrs Bernadette Anthony and Mrs Lyndal Rick as Literacy Enrichment Teachers, the staff developed the new English Program to be implemented in 2012. In 2011 the HPE Program was also written as was the revision of the Science and Maths programs.

St Rita’s is well positioned for the introduction of the Australian Curriculum, particularly in English, Maths, Science and HPE.

Teachers are planning thoroughly to meet the educational needs of the students. The 2011 NAPLAN results were pleasing all round and the analysis has been completed and targets set for 2012.

The children benefited greatly from the enhanced Curriculum experiences throughout the year including: Author/Illustrator in residence for Literacy Numeracy week, Dance Fever, Jump Rope for Heart, Swimming Program, Maths Road show at St Michael’s and Catholic Education Week celebrations at St Michael’s with Under 8s Day.

The Literacy Enrichment Teacher and Curriculum Support Teacher provided modeling in classrooms and specific PD to up-skill teachers. These include;

- Teaching Grammar and Punctuation
- Shared and Guided Reading
- Reading Analysis for assessment
- Implementation of First Steps in planning and practice
- Reading comprehension strategies (First Steps)

The acquisition of quality resources to support learning and teaching has continued. Guided Reading Resources were purchased by P&F for students in the early years and middle primary for use in the explicit teaching of reading skills and in shared reading experiences. The purchase of the new PM Benchmark Kit (2nd edition) provides teachers with a more up to date resource to assess the progress students have made in reading and comprehending.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

St Rita’s school has enjoyed the facilities constructed with funds from the Federal Government’s Building the Education Revolution initiative. The Library extension and the undercover area were completed and are well utilized. As a result of Cyclone Yasi, minor repairs to the school occurred and a new shade sail erected over the Junior Playground. Works have also commenced on providing water proofing to the Undercover Area and Senior Playground equipment.

While the old Junior Playground is being temporarily repaired, Grants are being sourced to provide much needed new playground equipment for the Junior School. We hope for this to occur in 2012.

The St Rita’s Primary School Maths Curriculum Document was adjusted to meet the requirements of the Australian Maths Curriculum, which commences 2012. Teaching staff were given time to be guided through the Australian Maths Curriculum to familiarise themselves with the differences between it and the current CES Maths document.

The St Rita’s Primary School Science Document was adjusted to meet the requirements of the Australian Science Curriculum, which commences 2012. New resource documents written by the Australian Academy of Science (Primary Connections) has been purchased by the P&F. These documents are written in line with the Australian Science Curriculum.

The Health and Physical Education and Technology Documents were also developed and are ready to be implemented in 2012.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION and SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

In 2011 St. Rita’s has continued to build on, and strengthen, our core values and mission as a Catholic School in the Mercy Tradition. We demonstrated the Mercy value of compassion through reaching out to those in need through fundraising. The St. Rita’s community supported Caritas through money lines, the Caritas Cafe and the ‘Bug your teacher’ dress up day. The senior students also explored the Mercy value of justice through investigating and sharing their knowledge of fair trade throughout the Lenten period. During Mission Month in October students became more aware of others needs globally.

More recently the students and their families have supported our local community through the ‘Minnie Vinnies’ appeal, bringing in lots of pantry goods.

Staff continued on the journey of Professional Development with a major session on the use of Scripture with Kevin Treston as well as regular sessions on Prayer and Liturgy.