

LEARNING | RESPECT

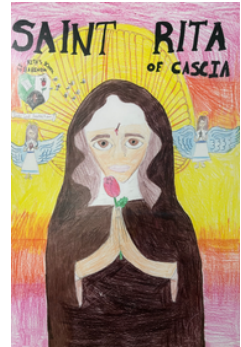


COMMUNITY | FAITH

ST RITA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL BABINDA NEWSLETTER

VISION STATEMENT

St Rita's school is a dynamic learning community strengthened by our Mercy heritage and inspired through the teachings of Jesus Christ. We are connected and compassionate to the needs of our community and are proud of our local Wanyurr-Majay culture. We engage our learners through relevant and hands-on experiences, bringing joy and confidence to learning.



FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Last week was a special week in Catholic schools across Queensland as we celebrated Catholic Education Week, shining a light on all the good that comes from our Catholic schools.

Catholic schools should be uniquely different places of education from government and independent schools. I acknowledge that, at times, this difference can appear faint. However, I believe the true beauty of a Catholic school lies in how we view the learner and in what we believe is most important to teach.

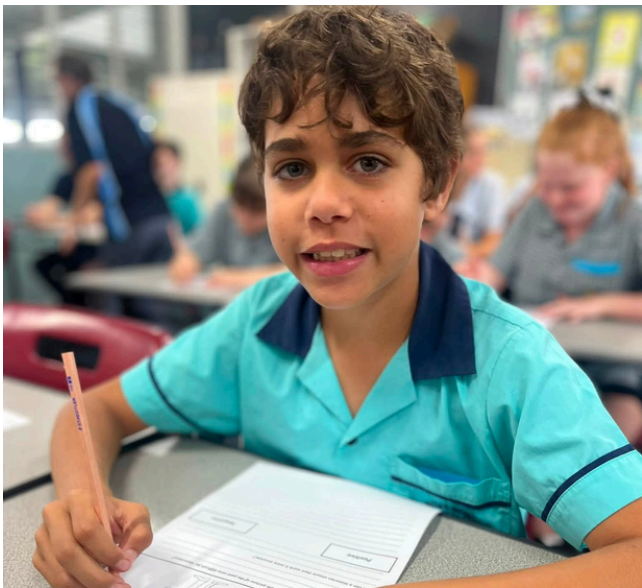
The Catholic Church teaches that every human being possesses inherent and inviolable dignity because each person is created in the image and likeness of God. Human dignity is not earned through intelligence, wealth, achievement, age, health, or social status. It is a gift from God that belongs to every person.

Knowing this as a core tenet of our faith prompts us to treat people differently—with respect, kindness, compassion, and mercy. After all, this is exactly what Christ taught us.

For me, this belief shapes how I should treat others and, as a leader, how I interact with students, staff, parents, and the wider community. Doing this with Christ-like love remains very much a work in progress.

A Catholic school seeks to view each student as a whole person, not simply as a vessel to be filled with knowledge before moving on to the next stage of life. The great Saint Augustine believed that the ultimate purpose of education was not merely the acquisition of information but the pursuit of truth and wisdom. He saw learning as a lifelong journey towards understanding God, oneself, and the world.

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For Augustine, learning was not just an intellectual exercise; it was something that should shape how a person lives. Education should help people become wiser, more virtuous, and more capable of loving what is good. That is our goal. That is what I want for the students of St Rita's.

Being a good person is more important than being a good student—although, of course, both are preferable.

When I look at the students of St Rita's, I do not first see future doctors, pilots, engineers, or teachers. While those are all admirable professions, they are not my primary aspiration for our young people. I aspire for them to become people of character: compassionate, thoughtful, and resilient individuals; brilliant parents and partners; loving sons and daughters; and active, contributing members of society.

Their occupation will always be secondary to the kind of person they become.

That, for me, is the difference a Catholic school seeks to make. We are driven by love—love of God, love of neighbour, and love of truth. We strive not only to educate minds but also to form hearts, so that our students may go on to make our world a better place.

Just as Christ taught us.

Congratulations Mrs Masina

Each Catholic education week our 30 schools in the diocese of Cairns gather to celebrate the outstanding people that make up our world-class schools. Leaders, Teachers, School Officers and Volunteers are all nominated by their peers with their entries going to a judging panel who then decides the winners.

This year Mrs Masina was nominated, and we were thrilled that she was the worthy winner in the 'teacher' category. Her leadership and capacity to love and serve has inspired myself and others who have been blessed enough to have her influence in their lives.

Our staff and Maryjane's immediate family travelled to Cairns last Friday for this very special award celebration. Congratulation Mrs Masina, we are all so proud.

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MRS MASINA CONT...

Below is an excerpt from her nomination;

Maryjane Masina is an exceptional educator whose work exemplifies the very heart of Catholic education.

With over two decades of service, Maryjane leads with compassion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to every child's dignity and growth.

Her work has transformed learning environments through the implementation of trauma-informed practice, creating classrooms where students feel safe, valued, and ready to learn.

She responds thoughtfully to the diverse needs of her students, designing inclusive programs that support engagement, wellbeing, and success for all learners.

Maryjane's impact extends far beyond her classroom. She works in deep partnership with families, allied health professionals, and community organisations, ensuring continuity of care and opportunity for students.

Her leadership has strengthened school-wide practices, building a culture of inclusion, belonging, and shared responsibility.

In the wider community, Maryjane's service is extraordinary. Through her commitment to sport, aquatics, and access programs, she removes barriers and creates pathways for children and families to thrive.

Maryjane Masina is a remarkable example of Catholic education in action, lifting others, building community, and making a lasting difference in the lives of those she serves.



NAIDOC 2026

We were again thrilled to participate in Mudandji Community NAIDOC celebration at Bill Wakeham Park last Friday. The children loved visiting the stalls, participating in the activities and experiencing the proud indigenous culture on show.

A highlight for our school was our school captain Jessie addressing the community at the start of the event. We were so proud of the way she conducted herself and she got a rousing applause from the community that had gathered to hear her. Well done Jessie, here is her speech below;



NAIDOC DAY SPEECH BY JESSIE BURROWS

Good morning everyone,

My name is Jessie Burrows, and I am a Year 6 student at St Rita's School. I am very proud to be one of our School Captains this year, and I am honoured to be speaking with you today at the Babinda NAIDOC Day celebration.

I am also proud of my Indigenous heritage. My family is from Palm Island, and I am part of the Bwgcolman people. Our community has lived on Palm Island for generations after our ancestors were forcibly relocated there many years ago. Our history is an important part of who we are, and it is something I am proud to carry with me.

This year, being elected School Captain has been a wonderful opportunity. It has also come with a big responsibility. Part of my role is being a positive role model for younger students by doing the right thing, showing respect, and treating everyone with kindness.

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CONT...

Sometimes I feel nervous speaking in front of groups, but I have learnt that being brave does not mean you are not nervous. It means you give things a go anyway. Every time I step up and speak, I become a little more confident.

NAIDOC Week is especially important to me because it gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the opportunity to share our stories, celebrate our cultures, and speak about issues that matter to our communities. It is also a chance for everyone to come together, learn from one another, and celebrate the rich cultures that have existed on this land for tens of thousands of years.

This year's theme, "50 Years of Deadly", reminds us that young people have an important role in carrying our stories, culture and traditions into the future. It encourages us to learn from the generations that came before us while also looking ahead with hope and determination.

I would like to thank the organisers of today's celebration and everyone who has come along to be part of it. A special thank you to my family for always supporting me, and to my school community at St Rita's.

I feel lucky to attend a school where everyone is treated fairly and equally, where our culture is celebrated, and where we feel that we truly belong. That sense of belonging is something very special. As we celebrate 50 years of NAIDOC, we also celebrate the strength, resilience and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Today is a chance to come together with pride, respect and unity.

Thank you for allowing me to share a little of my story with you. It is wonderful to celebrate with you all today.

Thank you. ❤️👉👈🖤



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100 DAYS OF SCHOOL

Last week our junior class celebrated 100 days of learning in 2026. To celebrate to occasion they dressed up as '100' year-olds and took part in many 100 themed activities and also had a class party.

Thankyou to our parents for going to the effort of dressing up the children, and Ms Benvenuti, Miss Georgi and Miss Sunni for planning such a fun and engaging day.



CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Preparations are ramping up for our Centenary celebrations on the 23rd and 24th of October.

-Tickets for our Centenary Gala Ball are on sale now and can be purchased at the office. Tickets cost \$99 and admission includes a delicious 3-course meal, musical entertainment and lots of prizes.

-The centenary bake sale was a huge success. A big thanks to all who donated treats and bought the many goodies available.

-The Lamington Drive is currently underway with final orders and payments due on the 15th of August. All students would have gone home with an order form last week.

Thanks for your continued support.



PREP TRANSITION

It was wonderful to welcome our 2027 prep students for their first transition day. We will continue this program each Tuesday throughout the term. It is designed to give our future students the best possible start to school so they feel comfortable and they belong in our school surroundings.

If you know of any prospective families, please encourage them to enquire at our office.

Warm regards,

Michael Rowe
Principal

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Reading Fluency: Why Reading Every Night Matters

At St Rita's, we are continuing our whole-school focus on reading fluency because we know that strong readers become strong learners. Reading fluency is the ability to read accurately, smoothly, and with expression. When reading becomes automatic, students can focus their attention on understanding the text, thinking deeply about ideas, and enjoying what they read. Just as athletes improve through regular practice, readers become more fluent when they read frequently. One of the most powerful ways parents can support their child's learning is by encouraging reading every night, even if it is only for 10 to 15 minutes.



Reading regularly helps children:

Build their vocabulary and language knowledge.

- Improve reading accuracy and confidence.
- Strengthen comprehension and understanding.
- Develop concentration and stamina.
- Foster a lifelong love of reading.



Nightly reading also creates valuable opportunities for families to connect. Whether your child is reading independently, reading aloud to you, or listening to a story, these moments help reinforce the message that reading is important and enjoyable.

Parents often ask how they can help at home. Here are a few simple strategies:

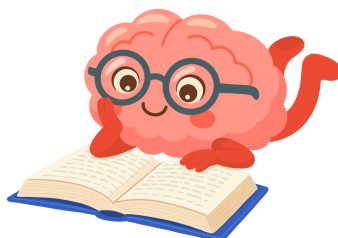
- Listen to your child read aloud and encourage them to read with expression.
- Ask questions about the story, characters, or information they have read.
- Encourage your child to reread familiar books to build confidence and fluency.
- Read to your child, regardless of their age, to model fluent and expressive reading.
- Celebrate effort and progress rather than focusing only on difficult words.

Every page read is another step towards becoming a confident and capable reader. Together, as a school and family community, we can help our students develop the skills they need to succeed not only in reading but across all areas of learning.

Thank you for your continued support in making reading a priority at home. The benefits of reading every night extend far beyond the classroom and help lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr Seuss.

Thank you
Sam Benvenuti
Deputy Principal/P-3 Teacher



COUNSELLORS CORNER

School refusal: children and teenagers

Key points

- School refusal is when children get very upset about going to school, and they won't or can't go.
- Children might refuse to go to school because of worries about leaving home, learning difficulties, social challenges or other reasons.
- The best way to get children back to school is by working with the school.
- If school refusal is related to anxiety or depression, children might also need mental health support.
- It's good to acknowledge children's feelings about school but let them know that you expect them to go back to school.



What is school refusal?

School refusal is when children get extremely upset at the idea of going to school and often miss some or all the school day. This distress doesn't go away.

School refusal can mean children have trouble going to school or trouble leaving home, so they might not go to school at all. Children who refuse to go to school usually spend the day at home with their parents' knowledge, even though their parents try hard to get them to go.

School refusal can be an issue for children in both primary and secondary school.

Signs of school refusal

If your child refuses to go to school, you might feel school nights and mornings are a 'battle of wills'.

Your child might:

- show high levels of anxiety
- cry, have tantrums, yell or scream
- hide or lock themselves in their room
- refuse to move
- beg or plead not to go
- complain of aches, pains and illness before school, which generally get better if you let your child stay at home
- have trouble sleeping
- threaten to hurt themselves.

School refusal might start gradually or happen suddenly.

(From Raising Children Network)

Yours in Counselling,
Kind regards,
Carmel





Students of the week



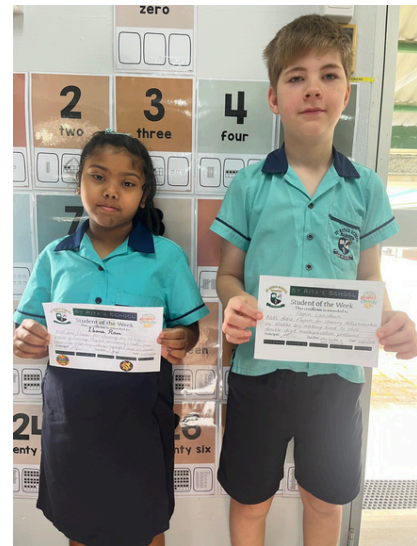
WEEK 2

Reyne	Reyne, I have loved seeing you set a goal to be organised and making sure you put your best efforts in your school work. It was wonderful to see you experiment with punctuation.
Flynn	For showing determination in maths by working hard to solve double-digit multiplication problems.

WEEK 4

Ileana	Well done, Ileana for showing the St Rita's values of Learning, Respect, Community and Faith. You show a love of learning: always respectful and inclusive.
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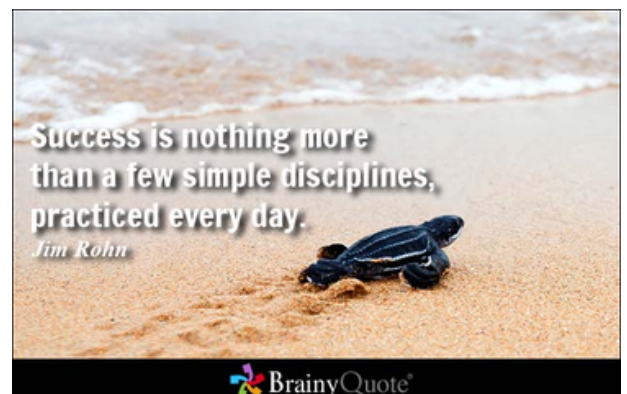
HAPPY BIRTHDAY



DANNY FOR TURNING 9 ON THE 3RD OF AUGUST
ABEL FOR TURNING 11 ON THE 4TH OF AUGUST

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BOYS!

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



BrainyQuote

DATE CLAIMERS

TERM 3 2026

Tuesday 4th August	• Pre Preps today • Music with Miss Jenni • Dance with Miss Sian
Wednesday 5th August	Yr 4/5/6 boys Futsal at Redlynch Central Sports Stadium Depart 8:40am
Tuesday 11th August	• NQ Photography – whole school photos. • 8:35am Student photos • Pre Preps today • Music with Miss Jenni
Wednesday 12th August	Dance with Miss Sian
Wednesday 19th	Dance with Miss Sian
Thursday 20th August	VPG Parent workshop in Library 9:15am Navigating screen time with Alana
Friday 21st August	National Day of Action against Bullying QPS to talk with the students 10am
Wednesday 26th August	Final dance with Sian - SHOWCASE
Thursday 27th August	Book Week Dress-up parade, favourite book character 9am
Thursday 3rd September	Father's Day – P&F Breakfast 8am
Friday 4th September	STUDENT FREE DAY

2026 TERM DATES

TERM 3	Monday 13th July - Friday 18th of September 2026
TERM 4	Tuesday 6th October - Friday 4th of December 2026

VPG



EVERY FAMILY

NAVIGATING SCREEN TIME

Topics to Be Covered in This Workshop

- Creating healthy and positive screen time for children
- Addressing challenges and concerns surrounding screen time
- Being a positive role model for our kids in relation to screen time

Thursday 20th Aug
9:15am - 10:45am
St Rita's School, Babinda
\$ FREE

Bookings Preferred
Contact:
 alana@vpginc.com.au
 0419 964 205

BABES IN ARMS WELCOME

Find us on  **@EveryFamilyCassowaryCoast**

VPG
 An Australian Government funded children and parenting initiative by VPG
 www.vpginc.com.au/everyfamily

Lowveld

MUNRO THEATRE



Fri 7, Sat 8, Sun 9 Aug	7:30 pm Adults at Kids price	M
Supergirl More Information		
Fri 14, Sat 15, Sun 16 Aug	7:30pm Adults at Kids price	M
The Odyssey More Information		