

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

It has been a welcome return to Australian shores after an unforgettable trip to Italy with Bek. Many people have been calling it a holiday, and I don't usually correct them, but the trip was actually a Catholic pilgrimage—a spiritual journey that Catholics make to holy places to grow closer to God, deepen their faith, and seek prayer, healing, or forgiveness.



Bek and I travelled the Italian countryside and visited as many churches and holy sites as we could. For a born-and-bred Australian with very limited international exposure, it was mind-blowing. The sheer history of the places and buildings that surrounded us was awe-inspiring; the art and architecture were breathtaking, and the things we learned about the great saints were simply inspiring.

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Of course, we still experienced much of the Italian culture. I sampled a few coffees and red wines (when in Rome), had at least one gelato a day, dined on pizza and pasta, and spoke very bad Italian to the locals—so bad, in fact, that I ended up relying on thumbs up or thumbs down!



Upon reflection, it is difficult to pick a highlight, but I will say I immensely enjoyed visiting Cascia on the Feast Day of St Rita, mainly because of the connection with our school. There is a huge devotion to St Rita from people all over the world, which was very special to witness. I offered a rose at the tomb of St Rita in thanksgiving for the school in Babinda built in her honour, which has now thrived for 100 years.



As brilliant as the trip was, I am so pleased to be home—to see my children, our school children, and to be back driving on Australian roads!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms Benvenuti for filling in so well in my absence. Sam is a very talented educator and leader with so much to offer, and a big future ahead—our school is very blessed to have her.

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WORLD CUP SOCCER

I am not usually much of a soccer fan, but every four years I allow myself to get swept up in World Cup fever! Last week I ran a sweep at school, with each student and staff member getting assigned one of the 48 teams competing (go Algeria!). There will be a prize for the winner.

It is very special for Australia to compete in this event, and I hope all of our students will cheer us on. In a country that is often divided, it is great that something like sport can bring us together as we support the Socceroos. Despite being underdogs, the Australian spirit of resilience and toughness shines through, and we should be very proud to display this on the world stage.

I was rapt that we beat Turkey last weekend despite them being heavily favoured. Our first goal scorer, Nestory Irankunda, is a 20-year-old who was born in a refugee camp in Tanzania and moved to Australia as a baby. He has taken every opportunity that our great country has offered him. Through hard work, persistence, and a great attitude, he has made it onto the world's biggest stage—truly an inspiring story for our own children.



TENNIS

I would like to thank Coach Libor, who has expertly coached our children in tennis this term. Each Friday, our students have been participating in an hour of tennis coaching as part of their PE program. It has been pleasing to see their progress and enthusiasm for the game.

Our last official session will be this Friday. Thank you, Libor.

BASKETBALL

Congratulations to Abel, who made the Cassowary Coast basketball team after his tryouts in Mission Beach last week. Almost 30 children tried out, with Abel performing well enough to be selected in the final team of 10. We wish Abel all the best as he represents the Cassowary Coast at the regional championships in Cairns next week.



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ATHLETICS

Last week, a highlight of the school year was the Small Schools Athletics Carnival. Our school finished second overall—another outstanding effort by all involved. I am incredibly proud of our young athletes, who displayed great determination, teamwork, and sportsmanship throughout the day. A special congratulations to our age champions:

- Abel – Age Champion and new record holder in the Long Jump and High Jump
- Matilda – Age Champion
- Jaxson – Age Champion
- Danny – Age Champion

A sincere thank you to BSS for generously allowing us to use their facilities, and to Mr Richardson for his outstanding organisation, which ensured another fantastic carnival. We also thank the other small schools for their wonderful sportsmanship and camaraderie, which made the day such an enjoyable and memorable occasion for everyone.

Well done to all our athletes—you represented our school with pride!



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SACRAMENTS

Congratulations to Year 4 students Maddison and Madeline, who recently celebrated the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation at St Rita's Catholic Church.

We are incredibly proud of these young ladies as they take this important step in their faith journey. During the Confirmation ceremony, Maddison chose Mary as her Confirmation name, while Madeline chose Rita.

A special thank you to Fr Kerry Crowley for presiding over this beautiful celebration and for guiding Maddison and Madeline as they received these sacred sacraments.

May God continue to bless them as they grow in faith, hope, and love.



BARN DANCE

A special thanks to all who attended and helped make our Barn Dance a roaring success. It was a terrific evening, and I was very proud of the way our St Rita's students participated and led much of the dancing.

Our staff were superb once again, as were our P&F. A special mention also goes to Joe Kurucz, who cooked the BBQ for us on the night. Well done to all involved.



PREP TRANSITION

This year we have decided to start our prep transition program a term early. From Week 2 next term, our pre-prep students will join us each Tuesday for a day of school as they prepare to officially start in 2027.

Ms Benvenuti will lead this program to ensure our newest students have the best and most settled start possible.

Prep interviews have started this week. If you know of any prospective families who may be considering our school, please encourage them to arrange a tour and see the many wonderful opportunities we have to offer.

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CONGRATULATIONS

We are so proud of Mrs Masina on receiving a nomination for the Spirit of Catholic Education Awards. As we all know, Maryjane is a fantastic and dedicated educator who regularly goes above and beyond for our students. It is wonderful to see her efforts recognised. The final winners will be announced during Catholic Education Week in Week 3 next term. Go Maryjane!



SAFE TRAVELS

We wish Mrs Kurucz the very best as she travels to Canada to meet her newest grandson, Grady. While she is away, she will be replaced by Sarah Kistle from Catholic Education Cairns. Welcome, Sarah.



FAREWELL

Sadly, we farewell two St Rita's families at the end of this term. We say goodbye to the Townson family, who joined our school in 2023 and have been warmly embraced by our community. Kurtis, Loclan, and Matilda all thrived at our school and achieved many successes during their time here. I wish them, along with Justin and Sonne, all the very best for the future—you will be greatly missed.

Jaxson Carrigan will also be leaving us as his family relocates further south. Jaxson started with us in Prep in 2022, and I will never forget his interview—Liam and Samantha lovingly introduced him and mentioned his strong number skills. Jaxson then spent the next 20 minutes proudly counting backwards from 200, which was very impressive!

We wish Liam, Jaxson, and Willow all the very best for their move and hope it brings many blessings to your family.



DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Pre-Prep Transition Program Term 3

We are excited to welcome our future Prep students to our **Pre-Prep Transition Program** next term! This program is designed to build confidence, independence, and a love of learning as children prepare for their journey into “big school.” It will run from Week 2, Tuesday until the end of Term 3.



What Happens Each Session?

Each Tuesday session follows a consistent routine to help children feel safe, settled, and ready to learn:

- Welcome & routine activities (prayer, songs, roll marking, calendar)
- Literacy rotations
- Numeracy rotations
- Snack time and social skills development
- Perceptual Motor Program (PMP)
- School readiness focus
- Story time and reflection

What Will Children Learn?

Our program is aligned to the **Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)** and supports:

- A strong sense of identity
- Building relationships and social skills
- Developing wellbeing and confidence
- Becoming active learners
- Growing communication skills

Weekly Highlights

Each week focuses on a key developmental area:

- **Week 1:** Getting to know school – routines and belonging
- **Week 2:** All about me – identity and confidence
- **Week 3:** Colours and shapes
- **Week 4:** Feelings and friendships
- **Week 5:** Animals and vocabulary building
- **Week 6:** Numbers everywhere
- **Week 7:** Letters and sounds
- **Week 8:** Patterns and problem solving
- **Week 9:** Getting ready for big school



Learning Through Play

Children will engage in a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities, including:

- Recognising and writing their names
- Counting, sorting, and early number work
- Exploring letters and sounds
- Participating in movement and obstacle courses
- Practising social skills like sharing and turn-taking
- Building independence with school routines

Building School Readiness

Throughout the term, children will practise important school skills such as:

- Packing and unpacking their bags
- Following instructions
- Working independently
- Asking for help
- Participating in whole-group activities

These experiences help ensure a smooth and confident transition into Prep. All 2027 preps are invited, if your considering St Rita's for your child, we would love you to come and have a tour, and find out about all our wonderful school has to offer.

Thank you
Sam Benvenuti
Deputy Principal/P-3 Teacher



ST RITA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

TRANSITION TO PREP PROGRAM

FOR ALL CHILDREN STARTING PREP AT ST RITA'S IN 2027

FROM TUESDAY JULY 21ST 2026

JOIN US

ENROL NOW!

PLEASE VISIT- WWW.STRITASBABINDA.QLD.EDU.AU > ENROLMENT
SCHOOL TOURS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME - CALL (07) 40659580 TO BOOK A TIME.
EVERY DAY IS AN OPEN DAY | WE WOULD LOVE TO MEET YOU.

- STUDENT CENTERED/CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION ✓
- AFFORDABLE FEES \$120 PER CHILD/PER TERM ✓
- SMALL CLASS SIZES CATERING TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS ✓
- AN EXPERT TEACHING TEAM THAT KNOW YOUR CHILD ✓

(07) 4065 9580 | SECRETARY.BABINDA@CNS.CATHOLIC.EDU.AU | WWW.STRITASBABINDA.QLD.EDU.AU



ST RITA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

COME JOIN US @ ST RITA'S

FOR PREP 2027 STUDENTS

EVERY TUESDAY OF TERM 3 FROM THE 21ST OF JULY
+ EXTENSIVE TERM 4 PROGRAM

8.35-1.30PM- CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

- LITERACY
- NUMERACY
- DEVELOPMENTAL PLAY
- SOCIAL SKILLS

***CHILDREN MUST BE ENROLLED AT ST RITA'S FOR 2027 TO REGISTER IN THIS PROGRAM**

PLEASE REMEMBER

- WEAR SUNSMART CLOTHING ✓
- BRING LUNCH & A WATER BOTTLE ✓
- BRING A SPARE CHANGE OF CLOTHES ✓

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COUNSELLORS CORNER

Understanding Grief and Loss for Children (Part 2)

What can you do to help?

Here are some tips to help you support a child who is experiencing grief and loss:

- Offer support, reassurance and comfort
- Find time to do enjoyable things together
- Acknowledge or help them name or identify their feelings
- Let them know they are loved and will always be cared for
- Assure them that what's happened is not their fault
- Help them create a diary, memory box or special book to remember the person
- Maintain normal routines to help them feel secure
- Let them know that it's ok to play, be happy and have fun
- Allow them to ask questions and talk about their loss as much as they want to
- Encourage them to talk to a caring adult if they feel uneasy talking to you
- Provide clear and age-appropriate answers to their questions
- Keep things as familiar as you can (school, pets and household possessions)
- Talk about your feelings and how you've been coping with them
- Try to include them in decision-making when it directly affects them
- Inform the school of what's happened so they can provide additional support
- Tell them that it is ok to be happy when they have a good memory of the person
- Help them find ways to express their feelings through play, writing, drawing, music
- Encourage them to spend time with friends



Talking to children about grief and loss

Breaking the news about a death to a child is never easy, but it's important they know and feel heard and supported by you in the process. Here are some tips to help:

- Try to be as honest and open as possible about what has happened
- Use age-appropriate language so it's easier for them to understand
- Use concrete words – for example, say 'died' or 'death'
- Avoid using euphemisms like 'gone to sleep' or 'passed away'
- Listen to them - it's ok not to have all the answers right now
- Answer the questions you can in a calm and consistent manner
- Be patient – they may need to hear the answers several times to process it
- Use storybooks, toys and play to help explain what has happened
- Let them know that they can talk to you at any time
- Ask another trusted adult to talk to your child if you feel too distressed
- Encourage them to express their feelings by sharing your own feelings

Sometimes your own grief will make it difficult for you to support your child. It can be helpful to make time to look after your own wellbeing and seek support when you need it.

Help

Encourage the child in your life to contact Kids Helpline if they need some extra support to cope with their grief (Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800). You may find talking to somebody outside of the situation helpful. You could try calling Parentline in your state or territory to discuss your concerns (Parentline: 1300 30 1300).

(Information from Kids Helpline)



Students of the week

WEEK 6

Danny	For showing enormous improvement in his reading fluency! Practising every day makes you a better reader!
Ileana	You have been a delight to have in our classroom. You are kind and compassionate to those around you. Each day you come to school with a bright smile and positive attitude.

WEEK 9

Jaxson	For the effort you gave and achieving age champion at the Athletics Carnival
Loclan	Demonstrating wonderful leadership at the Athletics Carnival
Daisy	For the great way you have settled back into school life and have participated in lessons.
Jessie	Demonstrating wonderful leadership at the Athletics Carnival



DATE CLAIMERS

TERM 3 2026

Friday 17 th July	Cairns Show Public Holiday
Tuesday 28 th July	Catholic Education Week Mass - Innisfail
Tuesday 11 th August	School Photos
24-28 August	Book Week

TERM 4 2026

21-23 October	5/6 Camp - Port Douglas
23-24 October	St Rita's Centenary Celebrations



BIRTHDAY WISHES



CONGRATULATIONS TO
MADDISON (14TH) & MICHAEL
(4TH) WHO BOTH CELEBRATED
BIRTHDAYS EARLIER THIS
MONTH.

2026 TERM DATES

TERM 1	Wednesday 28 th January - Thursday 2 nd of April 2026
TERM 2	Monday 20 th April - Friday 26 th of June 2026
TERM 3	Monday 13 th July - Friday 18 th of September 2026
TERM 4	Tuesday 6 th October - Friday 4 th of December 2026

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

Second chances are not
given to make things right.
But are given to prove that
we could be better even
after we fall.

LOVED

MUNRO THEATRE



FUTURE SCREENINGS

Fri 19, Sat 20, Sun 21 Jun	7.30 pm Adults at Kids Price	M
The Devil Wears Prada 2		More Information
Fri 26, Sat 27, Sun 28 Jun	7.30pm Adults at Kids price	PG
The Sheep Detectives		More Information