

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

Arguably the hardest thing about being a Christian is not believing, worshipping, or serving. It is forgiving. Most of us can think of someone who has wounded us deeply, unfairly, and perhaps repeatedly. Yet Jesus places forgiveness at the very centre of Christian living. Why? Because forgiveness is where the gospel moves from something we receive to something we practise. It is also where faith becomes most costly and most transformative.

The opportunity to forgive, seek forgiveness, and facilitate forgiveness is never far from my daily work. As human beings, we all make mistakes, hurt others, get hurt ourselves, and sometimes find ourselves in the middle of situations we never imagined unfolding.

As a principal, I am occasionally called upon to mediate fractured relationships between students. I often sit across the room from upset children who have either been hurt or have hurt someone else, usually verbally, but sometimes physically as well. Many of these incidents are the result of accidents or misunderstandings. My role is to help each child understand empathy and recognise the impact their actions have had on others.

What continually amazes me is how quickly children are often willing to forgive. I hope that says something positive about their upbringing and the school environment in which they are immersed.

At this point, some people may be thinking, This all sounds a little too convenient for the person who caused the harm. Don't they get off too easily?

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This is where it is important to address some common misconceptions about forgiveness.

- Forgiveness is not pretending it didn't happen.
- Forgiveness is not excusing the behaviour.
- Forgiveness is not necessarily reconciliation.
- Forgiveness is releasing the right to revenge.

Peace is something we should all aspire to in our homes, communities, country, and world. Peace is often the result of one person choosing forgiveness over bitterness, collaboration over domination, and understanding over resentment.

Forgiveness is never about allowing harmful behaviour to continue. It is about addressing the behaviour, establishing healthy boundaries, and then choosing not to let that hurt define the rest of your life.

When I speak to students who are openly Christian, it is easy to bring Jesus into the conversation.

"Us Christians don't really have a choice," I tell them. "To be a Christian means to follow Jesus, and this is what He told us to do."

Of course, this can be much harder for people to accept if they do not have a Christian influence in their lives. Yet the benefits of forgiveness are not limited to Christians. Forgiveness is a gift for all humanity. That includes learning to forgive ourselves.

According to the Mayo Clinic, letting go of grudges and bitterness can make way for greater wellbeing and peace of mind. Forgiveness may lead to:

- Healthier relationships
- Improved mental health
- Less anxiety, stress, and hostility
- Fewer symptoms of depression
- Lower blood pressure
- A stronger immune system
- Improved heart health
- Greater self-esteem



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History provides us with remarkable examples of radical forgiveness.

Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison and emerged without seeking revenge against those who imprisoned him. Instead, he promoted reconciliation and nation-building rather than retaliation. He famously observed: "Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies."

Corrie ten Boom survived the Ravensbrück concentration camp, where her sister Betsie died. Years later, after speaking on forgiveness, a former Nazi guard approached her and asked for forgiveness. Despite overwhelming emotion, she made a conscious decision to extend her hand and offer grace.



Closer to home, Danny and Leila Abdallah became internationally recognised after publicly forgiving the drunk driver who killed three of their children, Antony, Angelina and Sienna, as well as their niece Veronique Sakr, in the tragic Oatlands crash in 2020. They chose forgiveness so that bitterness would not consume their surviving children and later established the annual i4Give Day.

More recently, Erika Kirk demonstrated extraordinary forgiveness following the death of her husband, Charlie Kirk. At his memorial service, she publicly forgave the man accused of his murder, saying:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do... That young man, I forgive him. I forgive him because it was what Christ did, and it's what Charlie would do."

She continued:

"The answer to hate is not hate. The answer we know from the Gospel is love, always love. Love for our enemies and love for those who persecute us."



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CONTINUED...

Yet the ultimate example remains Jesus Himself.

While enduring torture and execution on the cross, Jesus prayed for those responsible for His suffering. He did not wait for an apology, repentance, or a change of heart. He chose forgiveness in the very moment of His greatest pain.

Perhaps that is why forgiveness remains one of the clearest reflections of Christian faith. It is not natural. It is not easy. It is often costly.

But it is transformative.

Forgiveness does not minimise the wrong, excuse the offender, or erase the pain. It simply refuses to let the injury have the final word.

Blessings,
Michael



FNQ FUTSAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

It was a pleasure to take our Year 4, 5 and 6 futsal team to Redlynch Central Sports Stadium to compete in our very first FNQ Futsal Championships. Futsal is a fast-paced sport similar to soccer, and for all of our students, this was their first experience playing the game.

Our opening match against Mareeba State School was a thrilling contest, with a goal in the final 15 seconds proving the difference. Abel was outstanding in attack, scoring all three of our team's goals in an impressive performance.

In our second game, we came up against a very strong St Andrew's side, who claimed an 8-0 victory. Despite the result, Jack, Flynn, Michael and Ryley showed great determination and resilience, producing some excellent defensive efforts throughout the match.

Our third game against Peace Lutheran College was a hard-fought battle. The match was an arm wrestle from start to finish, with Peace Lutheran scoring the only goal of the game. Daniel was exceptional in defence, making countless crucial stops to deny opposition attacks and keep his team in the contest.

In our final game against Freshwater, the team really began to find their rhythm and showed how much they had developed throughout the day. They created plenty of attacking opportunities and played with increasing confidence. Freshwater scored a late goal to secure a 2-1 victory, while Abel once again found the back of the net. Samuel also did a fantastic job in his first-ever game as goalkeeper.

Overall, it was a terrific day of sport. The students represented St Rita's with outstanding attitude, effort and sportsmanship, and they should be extremely proud of the way they conducted themselves both on and off the court. Their efforts earned them a well-deserved slushie on the way home!

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CASSOWARY COAST NORTH ATHLETICS CARNIVAL

Congratulations to Madeline, Michael, Samuel and Abel, who proudly represented St Rita's and the Small Schools team at the Cassowary Coast North Athletics Carnival held at Goondi State School.

Our students competed against some formidable opposition from across the region and should be extremely proud of the way they represented both themselves and our school.

All four students performed admirably and showcased the values of good sportsmanship and perseverance throughout the day.

We congratulate them on their efforts and thank them for being such outstanding ambassadors for St Rita's. Well done, Madeline, Michael, Samuel and Abel!

NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

This Thursday, St Rita's will be celebrating National Science Week with a special student-led science showcase.

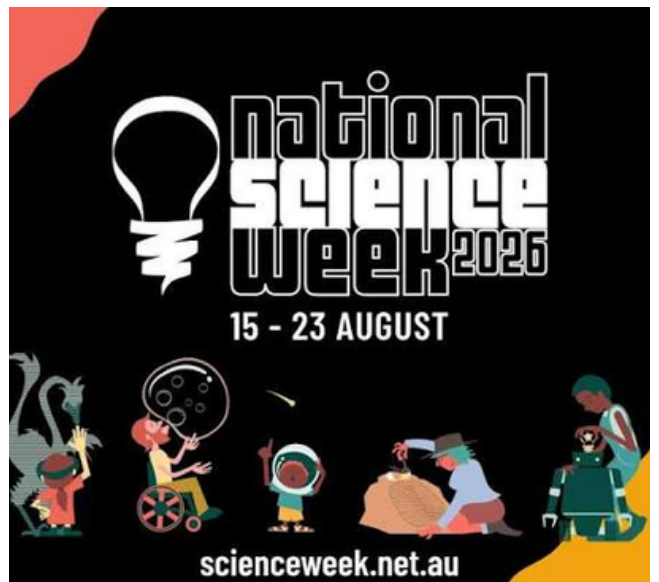
From 12:00pm to 1:00pm, our students will be hosting a range of exciting science experiments and demonstrations for fellow students, staff and families to enjoy. Between 2:00pm to 2:45pm we will be hosting an interactive Science Show.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to share their curiosity, creativity and scientific thinking while developing confidence in presenting to an audience.

We warmly invite families to join us throughout the afternoon to explore the displays, ask questions and celebrate the amazing learning taking place in our classrooms.

We look forward to seeing our young scientists in action as they investigate, experiment and inspire others through the wonders of science.

We hope you can join us for what promises to be a fun and engaging afternoon of discovery!



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BOOK WEEK PARADE

We are looking forward to celebrating Book Week on Wednesday 27 August with our annual Book Week Parade, beginning at 9:00am.

Students are encouraged to come dressed as their favourite book character and share their love of reading through a creative and colourful costume. Book Week is always a highlight on our school calendar, providing an opportunity to celebrate the joy of books, storytelling and imagination.

We are also excited to welcome children from Babinda Kindergarten, who will join us for the parade and help make the morning even more special.

Whether your child chooses a classic storybook character, a modern literary hero, or a much-loved picture book favourite, we can't wait to see the creativity on display. Families are warmly invited to attend and enjoy this wonderful celebration of reading and literature.

We look forward to a fun-filled morning as we come together to celebrate the books and characters that inspire us to read, dream and learn.



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Our P&F Association is hard at work preparing this year's Harvest Festival Float, and we would love your support.

Volunteers are meeting at the school each Friday from 2:00pm to help bring the float to life.

Whether you can spare an hour or an afternoon, any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Many hands make light work, and your support will help create a float that our school community can be proud of.

FATHER'S DAY BREAKFAST

All fathers, grandfathers and special father figures are warmly invited to join us for our annual Father's Day Breakfast on Thursday 3 September from 8:00am to 9:00am.

Start the day with great food and great company while celebrating the important role fathers and father figures play in the lives of our students and families.

Delicious bacon, egg and hash brown burgers will be available for \$8 each.

To assist with catering, please place your order through the school office by Monday 31 August.

We look forward to welcoming our fathers and father figures for a wonderful morning of fellowship and celebration.



DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

MTSS at St Rita's Babinda: Supporting Learning, Wellbeing, and Success for Every Student

At St Rita's Babinda, we are committed to ensuring that every student is known, valued, and supported to achieve success. A key framework guiding this work is the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). MTSS provides a structured and evidence-informed approach to addressing the academic, behavioural, social, and emotional needs of all students through proactive, targeted, and responsive support.



MTSS allows us to move beyond a "wait and see" approach. Instead, we use data, ongoing assessment, and collaborative decision-making to identify student needs early and provide the right support at the right time. This ensures that every learner has the opportunity to grow, participate, and succeed.

At Tier 1, all students receive high-quality, evidence-based instruction within the classroom. At St Rita's, this includes explicit teaching practices, a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, differentiated learning experiences, and positive behaviour supports. These universal practices create a strong foundation that meets the needs of the majority of our students while fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment.

For students requiring additional support, Tier 2 interventions provide targeted assistance in specific areas of need. This may include small-group literacy and numeracy interventions, social skills programs, wellbeing supports, and tailored learning opportunities. Student progress is regularly monitored to ensure interventions are effective and responsive.

A small number of students may require Tier 3 intensive and individualised support. These plans are developed collaboratively with teachers, school leaders, families, specialists, and external agencies, ensuring a personalised approach that addresses each student's unique strengths and challenges.

MTSS and Student Wellbeing

While MTSS is often associated with academic achievement, its impact on student wellbeing is equally significant. At St Rita's Babinda, we recognise that learning and wellbeing are inseparable. Students learn best when they feel safe, connected, supported, and successful.

The MTSS framework strengthens wellbeing by ensuring that students receive early support before challenges become significant barriers to learning and engagement. Through a whole-school approach, we work to create an environment where:

- *Students feel safe, respected, and valued.*
- *Positive relationships are fostered across the school community.*
- *Learning barriers are identified and addressed early.*
- *Support is responsive to individual student needs.*
- *Families are active partners in student success.*
- *Students develop resilience, confidence, and a strong sense of belonging.*

By embedding wellbeing supports across all tiers, we are able to nurture the social, emotional, and behavioural development of our students while also supporting their academic growth. This integrated approach promotes engagement, strengthens mental health outcomes, and helps students thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

Sharing Our MTSS Journey

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement and inclusive education, Michael Rowe and I have the privilege of presenting to Dr Shiralee Poed on the journey St Rita's Babinda has undertaken through the implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.

Our presentation will showcase the significant work our school has undertaken to establish a cohesive, whole-school framework that places student learning, wellbeing, and inclusion at the centre of every decision. We will share how we have worked collaboratively to build staff understanding of MTSS, strengthen data-informed practices, refine intervention processes, and ensure supports are aligned to the diverse needs of our learners.

Importantly, our presentation is not simply about a framework; it is about a school-wide journey of growth, reflection, and transformation. We will discuss the successes we have celebrated, the challenges we have navigated, and the lessons we have learned along the way.

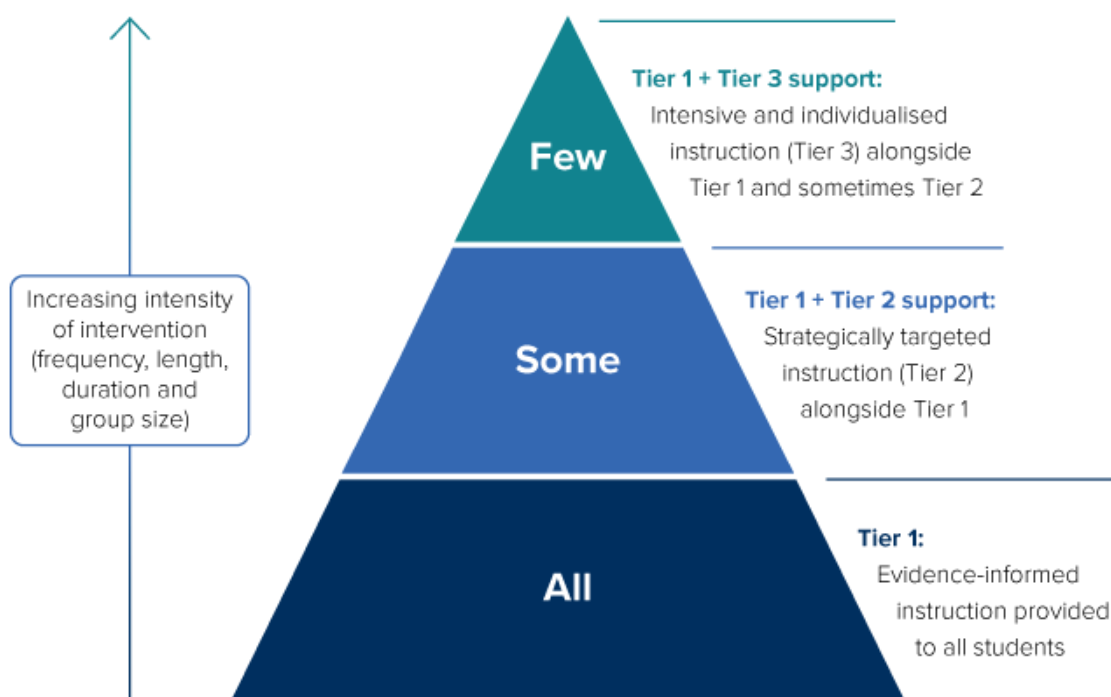
Through implementing MTSS, we have seen the power of a proactive and preventative approach. We have strengthened our ability to identify student needs earlier, respond more effectively, and create systems that promote success for all learners. Most importantly, we have witnessed the positive impact this work has had on student wellbeing, engagement, confidence, and achievement.

Our journey has reinforced the importance of collaboration among teachers, leaders, support staff, students, and families. By working together and maintaining a relentless focus on student outcomes, we are creating a culture where every learner receives the support they need to succeed.

As we share our story with Dr Poed, we hope to demonstrate how MTSS has become a catalyst for strengthening equity, inclusion, and excellence at St Rita's Babinda. While our journey continues, we are proud of the progress we have made and excited about the opportunities ahead as we continue to refine and strengthen our practices.

At St Rita's Babinda, MTSS is more than a framework. It is a commitment to ensuring every student is given the opportunity to flourish academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. By combining high-quality teaching, targeted intervention, and a strong focus on wellbeing, we are building a school culture where all students can experience success and a genuine sense of belonging.

Sam Benvenuti



COUNSELLORS CORNER

Causes of school refusal

There can be many reasons for school refusal. For some children, school refusal might be linked to worries about leaving home, anxiety, depression, learning difficulties, social challenges or negative experiences at school.

School refusal can happen at the same time as or after:

Stressful events at home, school or with peers

Moving home

Problems with a teacher

Family and peer conflict

Bullying or teasing

Low academic results

Starting or changing schools

By not going to school, a child might be able to:

- avoid scary things – for example, tests, certain teachers, tuckshop and so on
- get out of social situations with peers or teachers
- keep an eye on what's happening at home – for example, if a family member or pet is ill.

Understanding your child's school refusal

The first step to working on school refusal is to understand the issue from your child's point of view. This means you can go to the school with useful information.

Identifying why your child is having trouble going to school

- Talk with your child about school and why they don't want to go. Try to find out whether your child is having problems with peers, teachers or trying to avoid something. For example, 'If you could change one thing about school, what would it be?'
- If your child finds it hard to talk about the problem, ask your child to rate each part of the school day – for example, the bus ride, classroom, specialist classes, teachers, peers and break times. Younger children might find it easier to tell you how they feel by pointing to symbols like sad faces or smiley faces.
- Think about whether there's anything happening at home that's making it hard for your child to leave and go to school. For example, have you had a death in the family or recently moved house? Is your child worried about someone or something at home?

Finding solutions to school refusal

- Help your child to use a problem-solving approach for things that make it hard for them to leave home or go to school.
- Tell your child you're going to work together with their school to help them go to school.
- Talk with your child about seeing a counsellor if they feel they can't manage their worries or fears about school.

It's important for your child to go to school while they're getting help with the issue that has caused the school refusal. When your child goes to school, it builds their confidence and resilience. It keeps your child connected with learning, and it's important for social development. It's often easier for children to return to school if they haven't been away from school for too long.

(From Raising Children Network)

Yours in Counselling,
Kind regards,
Carmel





Students of the week

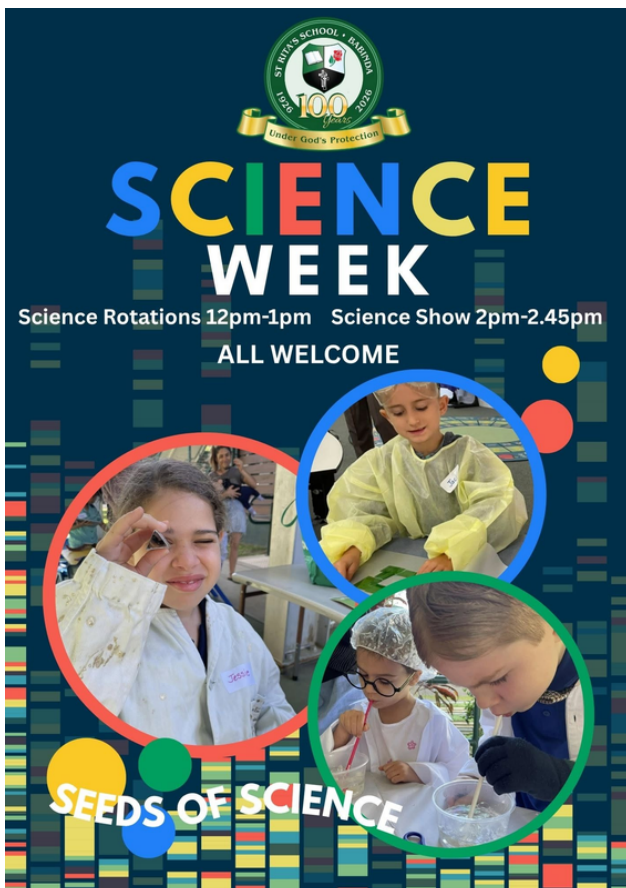


WEEK 6

Maddison	For demonstrating great focus and enthusiasm when beginning your science research. You made a fantastic start and should be proud of your efforts.
Madeline	For demonstrating great focus and enthusiasm when beginning your science research. You made a fantastic start and should be proud of your efforts.
Levi	Levi, I have loved seeing you grow in confidence with your learning. It was wonderful to see you not just complete the work, but to use your think aloud strategies as well.



QUOTE OF THE WEEK



DATE CLAIMERS

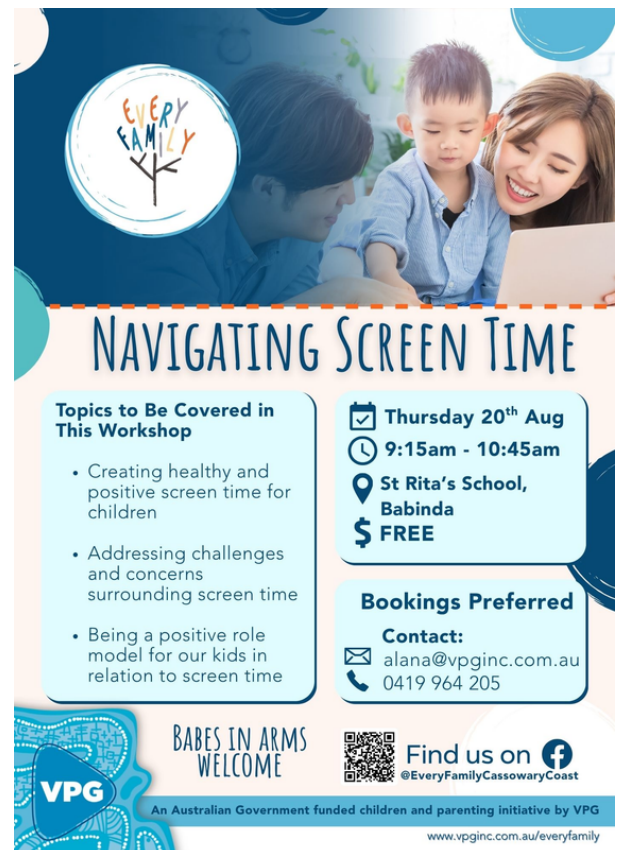
TERM 3 2026

Wednesday 19th	Dance with Miss Sian
Thursday 20th August	VPG Parent workshop in Library 9:15am Navigating screen time with Alana Science Week activities from 12pm
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
Tuesday 1 st September	No music with Miss Jenni
Thursday 3rd September	Father's Day – P&F Breakfast 8am-9am
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

VPG

An Australian Government funded children and parenting initiative by VPG

Find us on @EveryFamilyCassowaryCoast

www.vpginc.com.au/everyfamily



ST RITA'S SCHOOL PRESENTS

Harvest Festival Trivia Night

PAGES COME TO LIFE! BABINDA Harvest Festival SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 9
7:00PM

TABLE BOOKINGS \$10 PP

RAFFLES | LUCKY DOOR PRIZE | BEST DRESSED TEAM

REGISTER AT
4065 9580

MUNRO THEATRE



Babinda Munro

PICTURE THEATRE

FUTURE SCREENINGS

Fri 21, Sat 22, Sun 23 Aug	7.30pm Adults at Kids price	M
Spider-Man: Brand New Day		More Information
Fri 28, Sat 29, Sun 30 Aug	7.30pm Adults at Kids price	M
Holy Days		More Information