NOVEMBER 2026

THE RITA REPORT

ISSUE 11

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 enagage our learners through relevant and hands-on experiences, bringing joy and confidence to learning.



CONGRATULATIONS SRB



What a fantastic weekend it was celebrating 100 years of St Rita's Babinda.
A centenary of Catholic education is no mean feat, and it was so pleasing to see the vast number of people who made the effort to join us on Friday night and Saturday to celebrate this remarkable milestone. We believe well over 250 people attended on Saturday alone, with many gathering for Mass and the formal celebrations that followed.

During the speeches and formalities, I must admit I felt a little uncomfortable when I was congratulated for the centenary. While I understand the sentiment being the current principal, I believe the real recognition belongs to the Babinda community and the Sisters of Mercy who established and nurtured this school over the past century.
A school belongs to its community, and it is only as strong as the community that supports it. For more than 100 years, our local families have championed and supported Catholic education in Babinda. Without that unwavering commitment, we would not be celebrating this incredible milestone today.

While I have been blessed to play a small part in the history of our school, I stand on the shoulders of the many principals, staff, students, families and parishioners who have come before me and helped shape the identity and spirit of St Rita's. Throughout the weekend, I was struck by just how much this little school has meant to so many people over the years. It was heartening to see former students, staff and families reconnect, share memories and celebrate together. Most importantly, it was wonderful to see the joy that the weekend brought to so many faces.

It was also a delight to watch our current students perform for Saturday's audience. Looking so smart in their centenary shirts, they represented our school with pride and enthusiasm. I received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback about their performance, and they should be very proud of themselves.







Finally, congratulations to the Centenary Committee on the outstanding job they did in organising what was, for many, a truly memorable weekend. Events like this require countless hours of planning and dedication, and the success of the celebrations is a testament to the hard work and passion of everyone involved. As we celebrate 100 years of St Rita's, we do so with immense gratitude for all who have contributed to our story. May the strong foundations laid by those who came before us continue to guide and inspire our school community for many years to come.

SPECIAL BAPTISM EVENT

Our staff and students are very much looking forward to celebrating the Baptism of Ms Benvenuti's son, Noah, in our parish church this Friday morning.

When Sam first shared with me her desire to have Noah baptised, an idea was born that this could become a whole-school celebration. We saw it as a wonderful opportunity to gather as a school and parish community to celebrate this important milestone in Noah's faith journey. After discussing the idea with Sam, and then Fr Kerry, we were delighted to receive his support, and I am very much looking forward to seeing it come to fruition this Friday.

Baptism is the first of the Sacraments of Initiation in the Catholic Church. Through Baptism, a person is welcomed into the Church, receives God's grace and becomes a member of the Christian community. Through the pouring of water and the words of Baptism, Catholics believe a person is cleansed from sin and begins a new life as a follower of Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, moments like these provide a beautiful reminder that faith is not something learned only through lessons, but something lived and celebrated within a community. We thank Sam and her family for allowing us to share in this special occasion and look forward to celebrating alongside them as Noah takes this important first step in his faith journey.

THE RITA REPORT • SCHOOL NEWSLETTER







Our students have been learning about Baptism and the other sacraments during Religion lessons and are very excited to witness this special celebration as we officially welcome Noah into our Church community.

To make the occasion even more memorable, I have invited students to wear their best clothes to school on Friday, as it is tradition to dress respectfully for such an important celebration. Students are welcome to bring a change of clothes if they would prefer to change into casual attire after the ceremony.

To help us celebrate together as a community, I kindly ask each family to provide a small plate of food to share at our celebratory morning tea following the service.

School families and parishioners are warmly invited to attend the Baptism, which will commence at 9:30am in St Rita's Church. We look forward to gathering as a faith community to celebrate this special milestone in Noah's life and to share in the joy of this sacred occasion with Sam and her family.

SCHOOL SATISFACTION SURVEY

Earlier this year, staff, families and our Year 5/6 students were invited to participate in a survey about various aspects of our school. We were thrilled with the overwhelmingly positive feedback received.
Parents recorded 100% agreement on 10 of the 13 survey questions, while students recorded 100% agreement on 10 of the 14 questions. Staff reported 100% agreement on 18 of the 21 questions. These outstanding results reflect the strength of our school community and affirm the collective efforts of our staff, students and families in creating a positive learning environment where all can flourish.

CONTINUED...

Participating parents rated the following areas at 100% agreement:

- Staff at this school are approachable.
- This school asks for my input.
- My child is making good progress at this school.
- My child's teachers provide learning experiences that engage them in their learning.
- School staff are professional in their interactions with parents.
- Teachers at this school expect my child to do their best.
- The expectations and rules are clear at this school.
- First Nations Histories and Cultures are visible and valued within our school community.
- The school has assisted me in building my understanding of the Catholic tradition.
- This school works with me to support my child's learning.

These results are something our entire community should be proud of. They highlight the strong partnerships that exist between home and school, the dedication of our staff, and our shared commitment to providing a high-quality Catholic education for every child.

Our Year 5/6 students also provided extremely positive feedback about their experiences at St Rita's.
Students rated the following areas at 100% agreement:

- My school takes students' opinions seriously.
- This is a good school.
- I am encouraged to set learning goals.
- My teachers expect me to do my best.
- My teachers motivate me to learn.
- I feel safe undertaking online activities using my school's internet.
- The expectations and rules are clear at my school.
- I experience First Nations Histories and Cultures in my learning.
- I feel connected to what I am learning in my Religion lessons.
- Prayer is an important part of our school life.
- Religious Education responds to what is happening in our world.

These results are particularly pleasing because they reflect the voices of our students. They paint a picture of a school where students feel valued, supported and challenged to achieve their best. It is encouraging to know that our students recognise the high expectations set by their teachers, feel safe and connected in their learning, and appreciate the important role that faith and prayer play in the life of our school.

While there is always room for growth and improvement, these results affirm that St Rita's is a place where students feel heard, engaged and supported in both their academic and spiritual development. We thank our students for their honest feedback and for the important contribution they make to shaping our school community.

SENIOR CAMP PORT DOUGLAS

Our senior students recently enjoyed a fantastic camp to Port Douglas, creating wonderful memories while participating in a range of exciting educational and recreational experiences. Highlights included visits to the Cairns Aquarium, Hartley's Crocodile Adventures, and the popular water park at Glengarry Holiday Park, where the students stayed during the camp.
By all reports, our students represented St Rita's exceptionally well, demonstrating exemplary behaviour throughout the trip. Their positive attitude, respect and willingness to engage in all activities were a credit to themselves, their families and our school.

CONTINUED...

A huge thank you must go to our wonderful senior teachers, Mrs Sinton and Mrs Masina, whose expert care, organisation and dedication ensured that the camp was both enjoyable and successful for all involved.

We are also grateful to the students and staff of St Rita's South Johnstone and St John's Silkwood for welcoming us and including us in this wonderful camp experience.

Opportunities such as these allow students to strengthen friendships, develop independence and resilience, and create lasting memories beyond the classroom. It was a valuable experience for everyone involved, and one that I am sure our students will remember for many years to come.

SMALL SCHOOL SWIMMING CARNIVAL

Mrs Masina and her team have been busily preparing our students for the upcoming Small Schools Swimming Carnival, which will be held on Wednesday 25 November at the Babinda Swimming Pool, commencing at 9:15am.
Our students will compete against their peers from Mirriwinni State School, Bartle Frere State School, Bellenden Ker State School and MacDonnell Creek State School. The carnival is always a fantastic day of friendly competition, school spirit and sporting achievement, providing students with the opportunity to challenge themselves, demonstrate good sportsmanship and represent their school with pride.
We are extremely proud of the effort our students have shown in preparing for the event, and we thank Mrs Masina and her team for the time and energy they have invested in developing our young swimmers' skills and confidence.

Parents, carers and family members are warmly invited to come along and support our students throughout the day. The encouragement of family and friends adds so much to the atmosphere of the carnival, and we look forward to seeing a strong St Rita's crowd cheering on our team.
We wish all our swimmers the very best and look forward to another enjoyable and successful day in the pool.

GRADUATION / END OF YEAR MASS

Our Graduation and End of Year Mass will be held on Friday 27 November. The day will begin with a Thanksgiving Mass at St Rita's Church at 9:30am, where we will gather as a school and parish community to give thanks for the many blessings of the year.
Following Mass, we will share morning tea before coming together for our formal Graduation Ceremony at 11:00am in the classroom. School families, friends and members of our parish community are warmly invited to attend and join us in celebrating this special occasion.

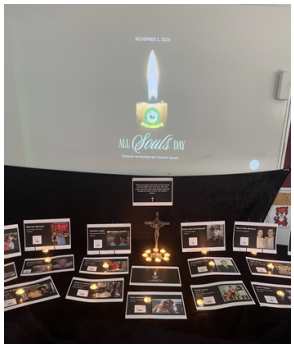
This year, we acknowledge the achievements of our graduating students, Jessie Burrows and Ryley Lock. Throughout their time at St Rita's, both students have demonstrated many of the qualities and graduate outcomes we seek to foster in all of our learners. They have contributed positively to our school community and have embraced the opportunities and challenges presented to them along their educational journey.

Graduation is a significant milestone, marking the completion of primary school and the beginning of an exciting new chapter. I look forward to celebrating this special occasion with Jessie and Ryley, and with their families, as we recognise their achievements and wish them every success for the future.

ALL SOULS DAY

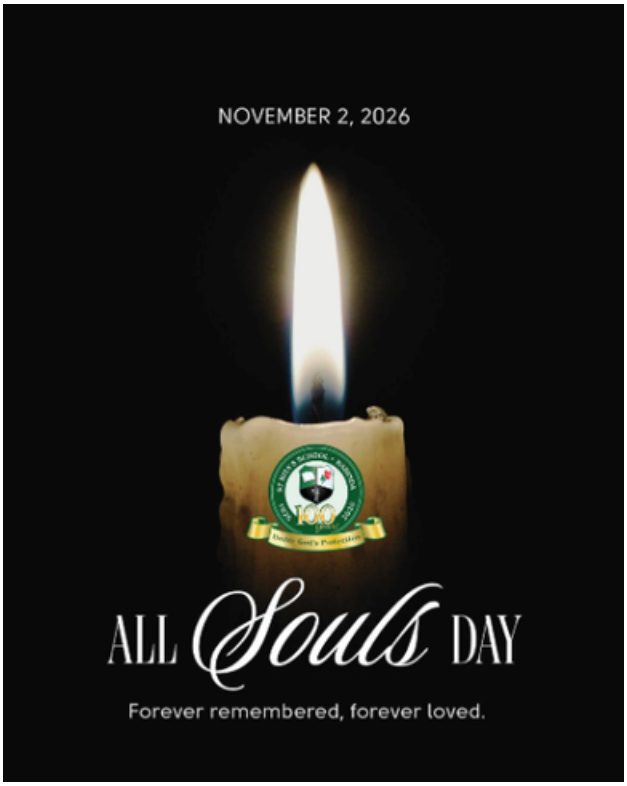
On Monday 2 November, the Catholic Church commemorated All Souls' Day, a special day dedicated to praying for all who have died. It is a time for Catholics to remember loved ones who have gone before us, entrusting them to God's mercy and giving thanks for the gift of their lives.
At St Rita's, we held a reverent liturgy to remember our loved ones who have passed away. I sincerely thank all families who contributed photos for our liturgy. These loved ones, along with all those who have died, remain in our prayers throughout November.

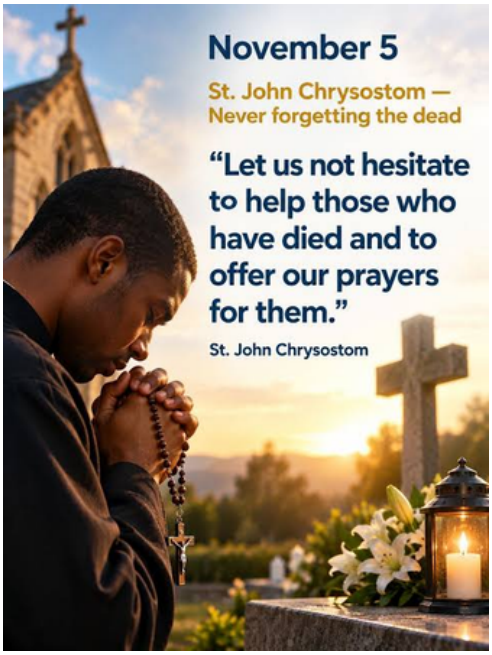
Alan Granich
Aloizy (Alec) Konklewski
Rita & Peter McIntyre
Robert Netherwood
Millicent Wright
Keith Rowe
Christopher Dobson
Christine Logan
Maureen Moriarty
Hazel & PK O'Gorman
Janice Booth
Robin Tanner
Albert & Edna Rowe
Leonardo & Angelina Pappalardo
Lilian Geary
Betty Esdaile
Charles Dibella
Laurel Cottone
Mark Netherwood
Lachlain Ryan-Cross
Dale Netherwood
Geoff Ashton
Kelvin & Dorothy Owens
Matthew Lock



This month, we remember these loved ones who have gone before us into eternal life. May they rest in the peace and love of God, and may their families find comfort in the hope of the Resurrection.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.





October 30, 2026 St Rita's Babinda

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

ST RITA'S BABINDA



Feature Story

PRINCIPAL: ST RITA'S IS HOME TO SOME OF THE FINEST TEACHERS' IN THE COUNTRY

St Rita's is truly blessed to have such an experienced, hardworking and reliable team of teachers. Our educators are world-class, and our students have well and truly won the lottery in having these exceptional women challenging, inspiring and mentoring them every single day!

Our teachers bring such a wonderful range of skills, talents and experiences to share, but what makes them truly special is who they are as people. They live and breathe the values we hold dear, modelling resilience, kindness and forgiveness in the way they teach, lead and care for others. They truly embody the Gospel values.

The purpose of a Catholic school is about so much more than academic achievement; it is about nurturing the whole person. Our teachers are deeply committed to this mission. They set high expectations for every student while taking the time to know each individual, understand their needs and genuinely care for them on a personal level. They see the potential in every young person and work tirelessly to help them grow, not just as learners, but as people.

I feel incredibly privileged to work alongside these legends. Their dedication, compassion, professionalism and unwavering commitment to our students make such a difference, every single day.

To our amazing St Rita's teachers, Renee, Maryjane, Sam and Vicki thank you for everything you do and for the incredible people you are. You truly do God's work each and every day, and our community is so much richer because of you.

Wishing you all a very happy World Teachers' Day! You are appreciated more than you know.

Mr Michael Rowe - Principal





TEACHER REPORT CARD

Teacher : *Mrs Jago*

Level : *Teacher Support*
Leader of Diversity
Choir Mistress

LEARNING	GRADE
Ability to keep track of keys	D
Mastering anything technological	C
Leading the school choir	A+
Punctuality with the school bell	D
Making sandwiches	A+
Making sure students wash their hands	A+
Enthusiasm for offering unsolicited advice to the Principal	A+

GRADING SYSTEM

A+	Excellent
A	Outstanding
B	Very good
C	Good
D	Satisfactory
F	Fair

World Friday 30 October
Teachers' Day
Teachers *Change* Lives

FEEDBACK & REMARKS

Mrs Jago has been a stalwart of St Rita's School for much of our centenary journey and continues to approach each school day with unbridled enthusiasm, positivity and dedication. Her youthful energy and genuine love of teaching are evident in all that she does, and she remains a highly valued member of our school community.
While Mrs Jago brings the vigour of someone half her age to the classroom, she occasionally faces the age-old challenge of locating her keys and continues her courageous battle with modern technology. Fortunately, she possesses one of the greatest skills a lifelong learner can have: the confidence to ask questions and seek answers. There is no mystery too great, no issue too small, and no staff member safe from a well-timed Mrs Jago inquiry.
An area for future growth would be ensuring the school bell is rung according to the timetable, rather than at the exact moment she personally decides break time has concluded.

Mr Michael Rowe Principal



TEACHER REPORT CARD

Teacher : *Ms Benvenuti*

Level : *Junior Teacher*
Leader of Learning & Teaching
Deputy Principal

LEARNING	GRADE
Keeping calm in the classroom	A
Ability to complete a Master's Degree	A+
Ability to remain in the correct timezone EST	D
Ability to tun into part time DJ in the classroom	B
Being on time for staff meetings	A+
Ability to juggle motherhood & teaching	A+
Speed of packing up on Friday afternoon	A+

GRADING SYSTEM

A+	Excellent
A	Outstanding
B	Very good
C	Good
D	Satisfactory
F	Fair

World Friday 30 October
Teachers' Day
Teachers *Change* Lives

FEEDBACK & REMARKS

Ms Benvenuti is an outstanding teacher whose calm and nurturing presence creates a classroom where every child feels valued, supported and inspired to learn. The students in her care adore her warm manner and her remarkable ability to remain composed, regardless of the situation. Sam demonstrates an exceptional work ethic, successfully balancing the demands of motherhood and teaching while simultaneously undertaking a full-time university study load.

I congratulate Sam on attaining her Master of Wellbeing this year, an achievement that reflects her commitment to lifelong learning and her dedication to enhancing the wellbeing of those around her. Her determination, resilience and professionalism make her a highly valued member of the St Rita's community.
For future growth, Sam could improve by ensuring her clock is set to Queensland time rather than NSW daylight saving time.

Mr Michael Rowe Principal



TEACHER REPORT CARD

Teacher : *Mrs Sinton*

Level : *Upper Years Teacher*
Part time Uber driver
Water slide specialist

LEARNING	GRADE
Ability to laugh at everything	A
Driving a people mover	A+
Ability on Water Slides	B
Attending school events	A+
Parenting four teenagers (incl twins)	A+
Calling students 'darlings'	A
Enthusiasm for storytelling about young Mrs Masina	A+

GRADING SYSTEM

A+	Excellent
A	Outstanding
B	Very good
C	Good
D	Satisfactory
F	Fair

World Friday 30 October
Teachers' Day
Teachers *Change* Lives

FEEDBACK & REMARKS

Mrs Sinton has been a breath of fresh air since joining the St Rita's team this year. She is a firm but fair teacher who has quickly earned the respect and affection of both students and staff.
Mrs Sinton has a genuine soft spot for all her students, many of whom are regularly reminded of this through her affectionate use of the term "darling."
At school camp she demonstrated an impressive ability to enjoy the water slides even more than the students themselves, setting a benchmark that may never be surpassed.
Outside of school, Mrs Sinton serves in the important role of part-time Uber driver, dedicated to transporting her busy family (and sometimes staff) to the countless sporting events, activities and commitments that fill their calendar.
An area for future growth may be accepting that not every school activity needs to be treated as an opportunity to out-fun the students.

Mr Michael Rowe Principal



TEACHER REPORT CARD

Teacher : *Mrs Masina*

Level : *Upper Years Teacher*
Resident DJ
Swim Instructor

LEARNING	GRADE
Ability to keep track of phone and keys	C
Sending emails at 3am on a weekday	A
Volunteering for anything and everything	A+
DJ ability at school dances	A+
Being on time for staff meetings	C
Ability to juggle motherhood & teaching	A+
"The Look" effectiveness	A+

GRADING SYSTEM

A+	Excellent
A	Outstanding
B	Very good
C	Good
D	Satisfactory
F	Fair

World Friday 30 October
Teachers' Day
Teachers *Change* Lives

FEEDBACK & REMARKS

Mrs Masina has enjoyed an exceptional year in the classroom, culminating in her well-deserved recognition as the recipient of the DOCEMUS Award for Outstanding Teacher in the Diocese of Cairns. This prestigious honour reflects the passion, professionalism and dedication she brings to her vocation each and every day.

Mrs Masina has a unique gift for keeping the staff entertained through her colourful storytelling and the many adventures she experiences away from school. Her energy, humour and zest for life contribute greatly to the positive culture of our school community.

For future growth, I encourage Mrs Masina to explore the concept of sleep. While there is little evidence that she currently participates in this activity, it is believed that adequate rest may assist her in fitting even more achievements into her already impossibly busy life.

Mr Michael Rowe Principal

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL



The Quiet Power of Determination and Resilience: Building Character for Life
A Message to Our School Community

In education, we often celebrate visible achievements. High grades, academic awards, sporting success, and outstanding performances are all worthy of recognition. These accomplishments reflect effort, learning, and growth, and they should certainly be celebrated.
However, some of the most important things our students gain from their educational journey cannot be measured on a report card.

Long after students have forgotten a test score or assignment mark, they will carry with them the qualities they developed throughout the process. Determination, resilience, perseverance, courage, integrity, and self-belief are the characteristics that shape who they become as adults.

More Than Talent, More Than Luck
Many people assume that success belongs to those with the greatest natural ability. Yet experience consistently teaches us something different.
Success is rarely the result of talent alone. More often, it is built on determination, the commitment to continue moving forward despite challenges, and resilience, the ability to recover, adapt, and grow when things do not go as planned.
Whether in classrooms, workplaces, families, or communities, those who thrive are not necessarily those who encounter the fewest obstacles. They are often those who learn how to navigate obstacles when they arise.

The Importance of Challenge
One of the greatest lessons we can teach our students is that struggle is not the opposite of success. In many ways, struggle is part of the journey toward success.

Students develop resilience when they:
- *Attempt challenging tasks.*
- *Learn from mistakes.*
- *Persevere after disappointment.*
- *Accept feedback and continue improving.*
- *Try again after setbacks.*

These moments can be uncomfortable, but they are also where some of the deepest learning occurs. Every challenge overcome adds another layer of confidence. Every obstacle faced and navigated successfully strengthens a student's belief in their own capabilities.

Character Before Achievement
A grade is a snapshot.
Character is a lifelong companion.
At times, students may receive results that do not reflect the effort they invested. They may experience disappointment when goals are not achieved immediately. Yet these experiences often provide opportunities to develop qualities that are far more valuable than a single academic outcome.
As educators and parents, we want our students to achieve academically. However, we also want them to become young people who:
- *Show integrity when no one is watching.*
- *Demonstrate perseverance when tasks become difficult.*
- *Treat others with kindness and respect.*
- *Respond to setbacks with courage.*
- *Continue striving towards their goals despite obstacles.*

These traits are not simply important in school. They are essential for life.

Preparing Students for an Uncertain World

Life beyond school will inevitably contain challenges. Careers will require adaptability. Relationships will require patience and empathy. Personal goals will require persistence and hard work.

The students who navigate these challenges successfully may not necessarily be those who received the highest grades. Often, they are the students who learned how to keep going when things became difficult.

Determination teaches students that meaningful goals are worth pursuing.

Resilience teaches students that setbacks do not define them.

Together, these qualities create individuals who can face uncertainty with confidence and continue moving forward when circumstances become challenging.

Celebrating Growth, Not Just Achievement

At our school, we celebrate achievement, but we also celebrate the qualities that make achievement possible.

We celebrate:

- *The student who continues practising after making mistakes.*
- *The student who demonstrates courage in trying something new.*
- *The student who perseveres through challenges.*
- *The student who encourages others despite facing their own difficulties.*
- *The student who chooses effort even when success is not immediate.*

These are the moments that build character.

These are the moments that shape future leaders, professionals, parents, and community members.

The true purpose of education extends beyond preparing students for exams. It is about preparing them for life.

Grades have value, but they do not tell the whole story. The determination to persist, the resilience to recover from setbacks, and the courage to keep growing are qualities that will continue to serve our students long after their school years have ended.

Success is not measured solely by marks or awards. It is measured by the type of person a student becomes through the journey.

As a school community, let us continue to encourage our young people to strive for excellence, embrace challenges, and understand that their character, perseverance, and resilience may ultimately be their greatest achievements.

"A grade may open a door, but character determines how far a person walks through it. Determination and resilience ensure they keep moving forward when the path becomes difficult."

Kind regards,
Sam Benvenuti









COUNSELLORS CORNER



Self-care for parents and caregivers

Caring for the Carer: A Parent's Guide to Self-Care

What does self-care really mean? Put simply, self-care is any activity or practice that you choose to do to help keep your mind, emotions and body healthy. It helps you handle the stress of everyday life and bounce back from hard times.

The four domains of stress and self-care

We usually feel stress in four different ways, also called domains:
1. Physical - stress can affect your body. You might sweat, feel dizzy, get a headache, or notice your heart beating faster.
2. Mental (Psychological) - stress can affect your thinking. You might find it hard to concentrate, feel confused, make more mistakes or be more distracted.
3. Emotional - stress can affect your feelings. You might feel frustrated, moody, angry, worried, or even unsafe.
4. Behavioural - stress can change how you act. You might sleep poorly, lose patience more easily or avoid certain tasks.
If we make time for regular self-care, we are better prepared to handle stress when it comes. It's like building your own "self-care armour" to protect you during tough times.

Let's build your self-care plan

A good way to start your self-care plan is to look at what you already do to look after your overall wellbeing. This can help you see what's working well and what areas might need a bit more care or attention.
Some ideas to get you started are:

- Listen to a new podcast
- Spend time with animals
- Enjoy a meal outdoors
- Complete a 20-minute workout on YouTube in your loungeroom
- Listen to rainforest sounds on your phone at bed time
- Press mute on that group text that has been causing you stress
- Write down three things that made you smile today
- Do some deep breathing
- Go outside at night and stargaze
- Go to bed an hour earlier
- Create a playlist of your favourite music
- Work in the garden

Why don't you take a few minutes now to note down some of your own ideas, to start creating your self-care plan?
(Adapted from Qld Health; Chn's Health Qld 2025)

Yours in Counselling,
Kind regards,

Carmel



HAPPY BIRTHDAY







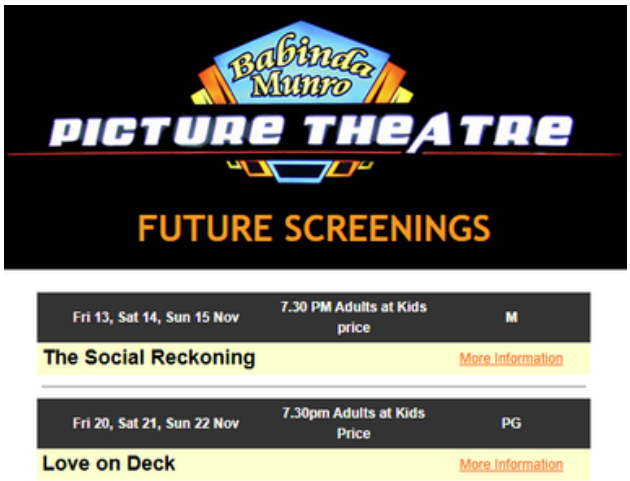
Samuel	August 31
Reyne	September 21
Madeline	October 1

DATE CLAIMERS

TERM 4 2026

Wednesday 11th of November	Remembrance Day
Friday 13th of November	Noah's Baptism
Tuesday 17th of November	Final pre-prep day
Wednesday 25th of November	Swimming Carnival
Friday 27th of November	End of Year and Graduation Mass
Friday 4th of December	Last day of the school year

MUNRO THEATRE



QUOTE OF THE WEEK



Students of the week

WEEK 4 TERM 4

Prep-1-2-3	Congratulations P-3 students for your outstanding enthusiasm, commitment, and joyful participation on our Centenary celebrations. Your beautiful singing and positive spirit helped make this special occasion memorable for our school community.
Year 5/6	Well done Year 5/6 for demonstrating fantastic teamwork, resilience and positive behaviour throughout camp. You embraced new experience, supported one another and made the most of every opportunity.



WEEK 6 TERM 4

Stanley	For showing enthusiasm when learning about seahorses! Keep up the great learning Stanley!
Danny	For showing enthusiasm and improvement when reading his fluency passage! Keep on reading Danny!
Jack	For demonstrating outstanding effort and creativity in crafting an engaging news feature article that vividly recounts the highlights and memorable moments of school camp.
Eyvi	Well done for demonstrating fantastic independence, problem solving and tent set-up and pack-up skills at camp. Your patience, behaviour and willingness to try new things were outstanding.

