

***Parent
Information Handbook***

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SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

Street Address:	8 Green Street, South Johnstone, Qld, 4859
Postal Address:	P.O. Box 8, South Johnstone, Qld, 4859
Email Address:	secretary.iohnstone@cns.catholic.edu.au
School Phone number:	(07) 4064 2153
Fax Number:	(07) 4064 2766
Parish Priests:	Father Kerry Crowley
Parish Centre Phone Number:	(07) 4061 6633
School Principal:	Mrs Vicki Conomo

WELCOME

Dear Parents,

I welcome you and your family to the St. Rita's School community. I hope that your association with St. Rita's will be long and lasting, and one filled with many memorable learning experiences. St. Rita's is a Catholic Primary School catering for boys and girls from Prep to Year 7. Our mission is to provide an education where all students are valued individually.

Here at St. Rita's we are a community of faith that recognises Christ and seek to live and proclaim His Gospel message. These values combined with a comprehensive scholastic curriculum will help each child develop his/her own abilities and become a totally integrated, self-disciplined student.

All families wishing to enrol at St. Rita's are called to support the school in the development of balanced young persons who have a strong sense of value and justice through participation in the religious education programs which prepares them to become independent and confident young people eager to be life-long learners.

A Catholic education offers students a total education exposing them to life's possibilities and developing and enriching a broad base of knowledge and skills to cope with change. Our school's integrated program of spiritual, social, academic and sporting pursuits offers a 'value added' education.

We at St. Rita's, therefore, look forward to journeying with you and sharing in the education of your child/ren.

Vicki Conomo

Principal

VISION STATEMENT

Through their involvement in the Catholic Faith community, students are able to reach their full potential through the enhancement of their educational, personal and spiritual dimensions. They and the communities in which they live and study are sustained and enriched by the life-giving relationships that they develop.

(Strategic Priorities for Catholic Schooling, Diocese of Cairns 2005-09).

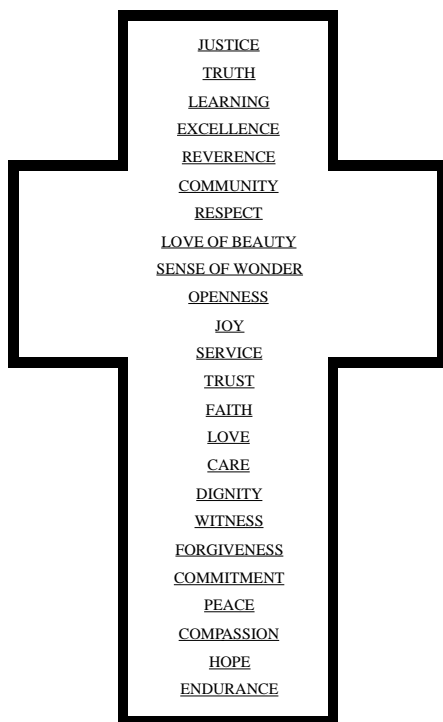
MISSION STATEMENT

St. Rita's is a Catholic School, which aims to foster the growth of each individual within a committed faith community of students, staff and parents. Our administration, organisation and curriculum reflect and teach values that recognises the life and message of Jesus Christ.

We strive to nurture the physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual development of each student.

We acknowledge the role of parents as the primary educators of their children and are prepared to support them in this responsibility. We value a cooperative spirit between the home and the school.

THE GOSPEL VALUES



SAINT RITA OF CASCIA

Margherita Lotti, St Rita, was born in 1381 near Cascia, in Umbria, a few hundred kilometres north east of Rome. An only child of ageing parents, she married Paolo Mancini. Of this union, two sons were born. When life seemed bright and secure for this young wife, disaster suddenly struck. Cascia, at this time, was a place full of factions and vendettas. Paolo Mancini became a victim of this unrest and was knifed to death. From that time Rita had to struggle to bring up her children as a single parent. Added to this, was the worry that her husband's assassins would also try to kill her two sons. She attempted to avert this by trying to make peace with her husband's enemies. Her efforts were unsuccessful and served only to alienate the Mancini family.

Soon after, both of Rita's sons died of an illness. Rita certainly knew what it was like to live with untold grief, but her suffering did not lead to despair. She was a strong and courageous woman who realised that "it is in giving that we receive". She decided that she would devote her life to serving Christ by attending to the needs of others. To do this she decided to join the Augustinian Sisters in Cascia. As an Augustinian Sister, St Rita gave herself to others. Rita entered the Augustinian Convent at Cascia in 1413. While there, she became known for her charitable works, piety and devout prayer life. After hearing a sermon on the crown of thorns, she was struck on the forehead by a thorn. Afterwards, she was left with a wound, which never healed. Towards the end of her life, as she lay ill, she asked her visiting relative to go to the house she had lived in as a young wife and bring her a rose from her garden.

This occurred up in the mountainous region of Cascia, in January in the depth of winter when the ground was covered with ice and snow. As the relative passed her house, she glanced at the garden and, to her astonishment there in the winter's gloom was one rose in full bloom. This story is a powerful image of Rita's life, spent bringing the peace and beauty of Christian love into the wintry society of strife-torn Cascia – a peace won by her great suffering, faith, courage and determination.

She died on May 22, 1457 at Cascia, Italy. She is our patron – a strong and wise woman, one who knew suffering, but was able to rise above it and bring Christ's peace and love to others.

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

St. Rita's Catholic School is situated at South Johnstone, a small country town approximately 9 kilometres from Innisfail in Far North Queensland.

In 1932, the Sisters of the Good Samaritan Order, with the assistance and foresight of Father Clancy, established St. Rita's Catholic School at South Johnstone. Lessons commenced on February 1, with an enrolment of 74 students. The Hing family home was purchased by Father Clancy to serve a dual purpose – living quarters for the Sisters above, and classrooms for the students below.

Cramped school conditions, and the need for a Parish Church forced the local community to raise funds to build on the vacant allotments between Green and Driscoll Streets; these allotments had been purchased in the 1920's. Bishop Heavey laid the foundation stone for the new church and school on November 27, 1932. After the blessing and opening ceremony on April 2, 1933, the school students moved across the road leaving the convent free for the Sisters. The new high-set building consisted of a church and two classrooms built over an open area, which was later, cemented. The students of this era often spent recess watering their horses, and then swimming in the South Johnstone River.

The church and school building served the Catholic community well for nearly forty years; however, in 1969, after much deliberation, it was decided to build a new church. A workforce, with a significant voluntary component, began construction on a site adjacent to the convent. On February 15, 1970 St. Rita's War Memorial Church was blessed and opened; thus, the school was enlarged by the conversion of the former church into two classrooms. The area below the building was enclosed to house two classrooms and a parish kitchen. Adjoining this original building, a hall was built for parish functions and school activities.

A decrease in the number of teaching sisters brought about the closure of the convent at the end of 1971. Until 1977, the Sisters travelled from the Innisfail Convent to teach at St. Rita's. The first lay principal, Mr. L. Weise, and a supporting staff, were appointed in 1978 by the Diocesan Catholic Education Office.

Over the next fifteen years enrolments dropped to the low twenties, and the issue of "closure" was raised; however, the commitment and support of the parents of the day shone through, and the doors always remained open.

Increasing enrolments of the mid 1990's urged the addition of two more classrooms and the relocation of the Pre-School over the road to the original convent building.

Towards the end of 1999, with the student body now numbering over 110, an allotment between the school and the post office was purchased; here, additional classrooms and a car park have been constructed.

In 2007 with the introduction of Preparatory year to Queensland schools, a new building was built to house the class. In 2010 with the advent of the Building Education Revolution the school secured funds that enabled them to build a large multipurpose, all-weather hall that is greatly utilised by the school and the surrounding community.

The original church and school buildings still form part of the present day school complex. The school now comprises seven air-conditioned learning areas, library, a computer centre, a learning-support room, three outdoor play areas, two multipurpose courts, a sports room, toilet and administration block, covered lunch area and spacious and well shaded oval.

St Rita's is committed to continuously updating all resources. In this technological age the school aims to provide students with the best facilities available. We take pride in being able to provide students with an environment that is conducive to learning.

We can reflect with great satisfaction on the highlights of our past, and the growth and development, which has shaped St. Rita's. With God's guidance, may we continue to live our motto – *"Forward To A Better World"*.

ENROLMENT

Parents requesting enrolment of their child should contact the Principal for an appointment.

New enrolments, registering for either the new Preparatory Year or Year 1, must meet the following Queensland Government age requirements:

ENROLMENTS FOR THE PREPARATORY YEAR

To be eligible to enrol in the preparatory year in year 2014, a child must be born between 1 July, 2008 and 30 June 2009.

Preparatory year is **NOT compulsory**. It will be offered as full-time for five (5) days per week. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, parents will be required to send their children for the full-time x five (5) days a week experience. For the purpose of enrolment, documentary evidence of the date of birth is required.

FORM OF ENROLMENT

Official enrolment forms are available from the school's office at any time. Implicit in the acceptance of an enrolment is the willing compliance by both students and parents, of the expectations and standards set by the school.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURES – OTHER YEARS

As a Catholic Primary School we are obliged, where vacancies exist, to accept children who are transferring from other Catholic Schools. However, in keeping with the enrolment policy of this school, non-Catholic students are also welcome on the grounds that they are committed to the values of the Catholic Church and are willing to take part in all school activities, including Religious Education, Class Prayer and School Liturgies.

In addition to the information contained on the enrolment form, parents should notify the school of:

1. Reports from the previous school attended.
2. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island heritage. **Funding is available for these children.**
3. Details of anything out of the ordinary in respect of the child's health e.g. any special allergies, treatment, etc.
4. Details of any medicine to be taken while at school.
5. Details of any disability, impairment or syndrome the child has.
6. Reasons why the child cannot participate in sporting activities.
7. Any reasons why the child may not be performing as well as he/she should.

It would be appreciated if parents would be quite open about these matters.

CUSTODY ISSUES

Where the school is provided with documentation regarding particular court orders that are in place, the school will make every effort to ensure that such orders are adhered to in accordance with the conditions outlined. Parents are advised that the school will under no circumstances take sides in such matters and can only act on the directions given by a court of law. It is up to parents concerned to resolve the legal aspects in such cases and to provide the school with written proof of any alterations to decisions as handed down by the courts.

PUPIL DETAILS

It is important that parents inform the school of any changes in address, contact names, telephone numbers or other particulars stated on the original Enrolment Form. This information must be given to the school as soon as a change occurs for the safety and well-being of your children.

SCHOOL FEES

As our school is part of a system, our need to charge fees arises from the policy of governments to fund significantly lower per capita grants to non-state school students compared to students at Education Queensland schools. This means tuition fees and levies must be charged, but at the same time, ensures we are able to maintain some independence as a system and achieve the ideals of the Catholic Church in operating schools.

It is appreciated that some families may face hardship in meeting these fees. It is important that families who want to access Catholic education for their children are not excluded because they do not have the means to pay fees. It is our expressed policy to assist any family in this situation. Families who will experience personal financial hardship in meeting school fees should contact the Principal to discuss fee concessions.

A student based tuition fee is set for children attending Catholic primary and secondary schools in the Cairns Diocese. These fees are fixed by the Catholic Education Services (CES) and are reviewed annually.

Accounts are sent out each term. There is an opportunity to direct debit fees. Fees can be paid weekly / fortnightly / monthly or on a term basis according to your preference. Payments should be made at the school office. School fees are due by the end of each term.

Parents experiencing financial difficulty may seek to obtain some remission of fees by contacting the school Principal. If full or partial exemption is granted, it is done only on an annual basis.

- **School Tuition Fees for 2014** – Please refer to Appendix 1 (page 20).
- **Catholic Education Services Levy** – A part of our school fees goes to the Catholic Education Services (CES), which helps to pay teachers' wages and to support staff with inservice courses to keep the teaching staff up to date with current education initiatives. Every school pays a percentage of the fees collected to CES for this purpose.

SCHOOL LEVIES

- **Resource Levy/General Purpose Fee** – A resource levy of \$120.00 for Years 1 – 7 will be charged for each child enrolled at St. Rita's School during 2014. A levy of \$150 for Prep students will be charged because of increased resources used. This is payable at the commencement of the school year.

The levy is used to cover the following:

- Purchase of student texts and exercise books, workbooks and folders.
- Resources –
 - Art and craft materials.
 - Duplicating and photocopying.
 - Supplementary learning materials and teaching aids for the classroom.
 - First Aid supplies.
 - Class sets of texts for classroom teaching.

Parents must however provide their children with a pencil case, coloured pencils and pens, lead pencils, ruler, etc. These will have to be replaced throughout the year. A Calculator and Kent Set will be required for students from Year 3–7.

- **Activities Levy/General Purpose Fee** – In 2014 an activities levy will be introduced to cover the cost of known activities throughout the school year eg. sports days, swimming, and performance tours. There will be occasions when activities arise 'out of the blue' and a 'one off' payment may be asked for. This levy does not include the cost of annual school camps. The levy (amount TBA) will be charged each term as there will be a better understanding of what is happening that term.

BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE LEVY

St. Rita's School is enormously proud of what it has in terms of its quality facilities. However, it is important that as a school community we endeavour to maintain our capital assets adequately so as to maximise the economic return on the investment that has been put into this school through Government funding and the generous contribution of the wider parish and community, by having an acceptable learning environment for our children over the maximum possible period.

As such, a Building and Maintenance Levy of \$240.00 per year or \$60.00 per term is charged to each family. This is a school-based levy, which is used solely to finance long-term capital loans and up-keep classrooms and other facilities. Long-term maintenance needs include periodic replacement of carpets, re-painting, replacement of electrical fittings and plumbing and general refurbishment to ensure that what we have now is adequately maintained.

CURRICULUM YEARS P – 7

The primary school program aims at the growth and development of the total person. The school includes in its goals, not only the development of knowledge, but also the spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional skills and values necessary for participation and leadership in a rapidly changing world. At St. Rita's, the timetable is broken into five basic components:

1. Literacy Skills
2. Numeracy Skills
3. Religious Education
4. Integrated Studies, which incorporates - Studies of Society and the Environment, Science, Technology, The Arts and Health
5. Specialist Learning Areas include Performing Arts and Physical Education
6. Social and personal learning
7. Health and physical learning

Children will learn through:

- Play
- Investigations
- Real life situations
- Focused learning and teaching

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education has the most important place in Catholic Schools. All students participate in Religious Education programs, prayers and liturgical celebrations. In accordance with the Diocesan Policy, St. Rita's will follow the Religious Education guidelines from the Brisbane Archdiocese. Although faith development flows through the whole day, specific times during the week are set aside for detailed instruction.

Parents are encouraged to join with the school community as they express their commitment to God through assemblies, class and whole school liturgical celebrations.

CLASS PRAYER

A spirit of prayer is encouraged in all classrooms. Formal prayers at the level of each grade are taught as well as spontaneous prayer, which is encouraged.

RECONCILIATION

Children are given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (in school time) throughout the year. For children who have not received this Sacrament, they will have the opportunity to introduce themselves to Father.

SACRAMENTS

Children have the opportunity to participate in the Parish Sacramental Program. The Sacrament of First Reconciliation is offered to children in Year 3. The Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist are offered to children in Year 4. Parents wanting their children to prepare for these sacramental programs will be invited to enrol their child /ren in these programs. An invitation to enrol will be provided in the school newsletter. Enrolment forms will be provided to the children at school in the term prior to beginning preparation.

The preparation of children for the reception of sacraments is the responsibility of parents. It is the parents' decision whether a child is ready to receive a sacrament. To assist parents parish volunteers lead children in small groups to learn about and prepare for the sacrament. The reception of the sacrament will be offered during Sunday Mass or a non-Eucharist ceremony.

In 2014 the sacramental program is as follows:

- Sacrament of Confirmation
- Sacrament of First Eucharist
- Sacrament of First Reconciliation

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Students at St Rita's are participating in a program to promote social-emotional learning. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a process for helping children to develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. Our core purpose is to develop and enhance the student's social and emotional capabilities. These include:

- Confidence (academic, social)
- Persistence
- Organisation
- Getting Along, and
- Resilience

These are the skills and capabilities that allow children to calm themselves when angry, make friends, resolve conflicts respectfully and make ethical and safe choices.

SCHOOL CAMPS

School camps for all students Year 1 to Year 7 take place each year. Generally the lower school has a one-night experience somewhere in the Innisfail area. The middle school and upper school usually have two three night camping experience. School camps are the highlight of the year for the students. Camp locations vary each year but all have an educational grounding and costs for parents are kept to a minimum. School camps are part of the curriculum. If a child, for whatever reason, doesn't attend they must attend school.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions are important learning experiences and are part of the school curriculum. Class teachers will advise parents when an excursion is being planned. This advice will outline the nature of the activity, the time, the venue, the materials required, transport arrangements, costs and clothing requirements. Upon enrolment, all parents agree to allow their children to

participate in school-based activities. Children who are prevented from attending excursions can be disadvantaged as certain learning experiences are available only through participation in these planned activities.

SCHOOL YEAR

In accordance with the Queensland State Government Department of Education, all school programs and student assessment programs are divided into two, six monthly periods called Semesters. Semester One finishes in June and Semester Two finishes in December. Each Semester is broken into two Terms ending in April, June, September and December. Specific dates are supplied well in advance for parents' information.

DATES FOR 2014

Term 1	Tuesday 28 January – Friday 4 April (10 weeks)
Term 2	Tuesday 22 April – Friday 27 June (10 weeks)
Term 3	Monday 14 July – Friday 19 September (10 weeks)
Term 4	Tuesday 7 October – Friday 5 December (9 weeks)

Pupil free days for 2014 will be advised.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Our school works on a 28 hour teaching week, which is 3 hours longer than the nearby State School. These extra hours allow us the freedom to integrate and develop Faith Education without detracting time from other subject areas.

8.15am		Students are permitted to enter the school grounds
8.50am	10.55am	School commences
10.55am	11.15am	Morning tea break
11.15am	12.45pm	Lessons recommence
12.45am	1.25pm	Lunch
1.25pm	3.05pm	Lessons recommence
3.05pm		School concludes

BUSES

Trans North Bus Company operates services to St Rita's from Japoonvale in the morning and to Japoonvale and Innisfail in the afternoon. Transport subsidies are available on line or by contacting Trans North Buses on 40 617 944. Notification will be given through the school newsletter when they are available. Bus arrival and departure times are available from Trans North.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

School commences each day at 8.55am. Students should be at school no later than 8.50am. They should not arrive before 8.15am, unless the Principal has granted special approval.

SCHOOL DISMISSAL

School finishes at 3.05pm each day Monday to Friday. Parents who collect students each afternoon (or students travelling home alone) are asked to ensure that the school grounds are vacated as soon as possible after dismissal time. Responsibility will not be accepted for children after the last school bus leaves at approximately 3.45pm unless students are enrolled in Homework Club. Late arrivals / early dismissals must be signed in and out through the office.

ASSEMBLY

We attempt to hold a whole school assembly every second Friday morning at 8.55am, (depending of school activities), we have a small assembly in the hall where we sing the National Anthem, present awards, read the Gospel and pass on important notices. Special assemblies will be held throughout the year where the children display work on the unit that they have been working on in class. You are very welcome to attend all school assemblies (check the newsletter for details).

ABSENTEES

If a pupil has been absent from school, it is in his/her interest that the parents contact the school, either via a phone call or by a note, explaining the absence. This assists the class teacher in cases where children are suffering from some ailment, which may affect the child's performance in the classroom. During periods of long absence from school, teachers will be willing to organise work to be completed at home.

TUCKSHOP

A school tuckshop is organized and run by volunteer workers. These days have a limited lunch menu which is advertised in the school newsletter. An order form is attached to the newsletter and must be returned to the office no later than Wednesday for your child to receive tuckshop that week. Funds raised through tuckshop assist with the Parents & Friends fundraising. If you wish to help, please respond to requests in the school newsletter at the beginning of each term. The success of tuckshop depends on the number of volunteers available.

NEWSLETTER

Newsletters are published each week on Tuesdays. This keeps you up to date with information which we consider important. If for some reason you fail to get your regular newsletters please contact the school office. The parish bulletin is part of the newsletter and keeps you up to date with happenings in the wider parish community. Newsletters may be emailed on request or accessed on line on the school website www.stritascps.qld.edu.au

Any envelopes returned to school should be placed in the slot in the counter situated in the office. A basket on the counter is for permission forms and any other relevant paperwork which needs to be returned to the school.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

When your child is enrolled at school, we will seek information from you, which will enable us to act, as far as possible; in accordance with your wishes should the necessity arise. Parents are asked to fill in the Health details on the enrolment form. If there are any changes to this information during the year, a note to the Principal would be appreciated, so that School Records can be kept up to date. The school supplies First Aid Kits for teachers to deal with minor accidents, which occur in the playground. In cases of severe accidents, or sudden illness, the school will endeavour to contact parents and arrange transport, first to parents, or to the clinic/hospital, depending upon the severity of the injury or illness. If a parent is unavailable at home by phone, the school will take steps to have the ambulance transport the child to hospital if necessary.

MEDICATION

Medication at school **CANNOT** be administered to any child without the correct parental consent forms being completed. All medication will be stored in each classroom in a secure place. Medication must have attached to it a sticker from the pharmacist with the individual child's name, pharmacist instructions for administering and a use by date. Administration of all medication will be carried out by a staff member. Children ARE NOT allowed to self-administer medication. All medication must be known to staff.

HEAD LICE

The occurrence of head lice is the most common insect infestation in humans throughout the world. It is as much a social issue as a health or educational issue, and the way that it is approached can have significant influence on a student's emotional, social and educational development.

Schools have a responsibility for minimising risk to school community members of being affected by head lice while at school, but parents have responsibility for prevention, detection and treatment of head lice among their own children.

If head lice are observed in a child's hair, the parents are contacted and would be expected to collect the child and treat the condition. On discovery of infestation, parents are urged to follow this suggested treatment.

1. Kill the lice by using a proprietary shampoo/lotion e.g. KP24.
2. Remove the eggs (nits) by regular combing with a fine toothcomb.
3. Prevent re-infestation by:
 - (a) regular checking every week.
 - (b) checking and treating other family members.
 - (c) cautioning children not to use others' brushes and combs.
 - (d) wash all linen, towels, hats, combs, etc. with a germicidal solution.

Please remember head lice are nothing to be ashamed of, they love clean hair.

EXCLUSIVE DISEASES

Chicken Pox (<i>and "Shingles"</i>)	Exclude for at least 5 days from the first appearance of rash. Note - Some remaining scabs are not an indication for continued exclusion.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.
Diarrhoea (Rotavirus, Giardia, Salmonella, Cryptosporidium, Campylobacter, Shigella)	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased.
Glandular Fever	Exclusion is not necessary.
Hand, Foot and Mouth	Exclude until all blisters have dried.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice.
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary.
Herpes (" <i>Cold Sores</i> ")	Children to be excluded while the sores are weeping. Where possible, the sores should be covered with a dressing.
Impetigo (" <i>School Sores</i> ")	Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.
(<i>"Strep" Infections</i>)	Where possible, the sores should be covered with a dressing.
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days from the first appearance of rash.
Meningitis (<i>bacterial</i>)	Exclude until well.
Meningococcal Infection, Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).
Ringworm, Scabies, Head Lice	Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.
Rubella	Exclude for at least 4 days from the first appearance of rash.
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Exclude for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.

SCHOOL RULES – CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

In our school, I respect myself, others and the environment. All members of our community have the right:

1. To be treated with **respect**.
2. To develop his/her potential to its fullest in a positive **learning** environment free from disruption.
3. To be **safe**.
4. To work in a clean and pleasant **environment**.

To protect these rights I have certain responsibilities:

RESPECT:

1. Respect myself and others by:
 - a. Keeping ourselves neat and tidy
 - b. Wearing the required school uniform
 - c. Taking care of our bodies by eating healthily and being sun safe
 - d. Speaking politely and kindly using our manners and appropriate language
 - e. Listening to others and being sensitive to their feelings
 - f. Caring for our belongings and the belongings of others
 - g. Following instructions given by an adult or leader straight away
 - h. Allowing others the right to work or play without interruption
 - i. Keeping hands and feet to ourselves
 - j. Acting in a way that doesn't encourage conflict or violence
 - k. Treating others as we would wish to be treated

LEARNING:

2. Try to do my best and allow others to do theirs by:
 - a. Taking responsibility for our actions and learning
 - b. Allowing others to learn without interruption
 - c. Giving all learning situations the benefit of our best effort
 - d. Approaching our learning positively and with an open mind
 - e. Persisting with learning situations that may be challenging and not always easy
 - f. Following the classroom rules

SAFETY:

3. Keep my school safe by:
 - a. Working and playing sensibly and safely
 - b. Choosing not to be involved in situations of conflict
 - c. Choosing not to be involved in bullying behaviour and reporting where we see or know of bullying occurring
 - d. Staying in supervised areas unless special permission has been given
 - e. Walking on cement areas
 - f. Walking bikes into and while on the school grounds
 - g. Following bell procedures as required

- h. Following rules and procedures when using and crossing roads
- i. Remaining alert and aware of areas of traffic
- j. Wearing hats in the playground and during outside class activities
- k. Tying back or plaiting long hair
- l. Refraining from bringing personal toys and valuable items to school (unless for a specific purpose)
- m. Obeying instructions given by an adult or leader straight away

ENVIRONMENT:

- 4. Keep my environment pleasant and clean by:
 - a. Keeping our grounds and buildings neat and tidy
 - b. Keeping our books and desks neat and organised
 - c. Keeping our work and play areas a nice place to be
 - d. Taking pride in how our school looks
 - e. Keeping classrooms, library and toilets free of food
 - f. Keeping chewing gum / bubble gum out of the school

LATE ARRIVALS AND LEAVING EARLY

If a student arrives after the bell, parents must sign the attendance register on the office counter. If a student has to leave the school before the afternoon bell, the attendance register must also be signed.

APPOINTMENTS

If possible parents are requested to avoid making medical or dental appointments (except those of an urgent nature) in school time. This, we realise is sometimes impossible.

INTERVIEWS – PRINCIPAL

Parents wishing for an interview with the Principal should contact the school secretary to make the necessary arrangements.

INTERVIEWS – TEACHER

Parents wishing for an interview with the class teachers are requested to contact the teacher to arrange a suitable time, (before or after school for such interviews is preferable). The teachers are unable to arrange interviews with parents during teaching time.

INTERVIEWS – ORAL REPORTING

To supplement the Students Assessment, Oral Reporting with all families, will be arranged at the end of Term 1. During this session teachers will confer with parents regarding their child's achievements throughout the first Term. A second interview may be arranged in Semester 2 if a class teacher or parent feels it necessary.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Schools have always had a responsibility to assess the achievements of their students. The main purpose of assessment is to provide guidance of one form or another: to the students, so that he/she can identify his/her strengths and weaknesses; to the teacher, so that she/he can get to know strengths and weaknesses of each student and to assess the effectiveness of their teaching; to parents, so that they are aware of their child's progress. This also allows teachers to quickly refer students to Learning Support and outside agencies if necessary to meet the child's specific learning needs.

At St. Rita's, assessment is of a cumulative type, with evaluation taking place throughout the Semester. School reports will be issued at the end of the Semester. Oral Reporting sessions at the end of Term 1 for all students will supplement the information given on the school assessment form. Teachers will keep parents informed throughout the year if your child is having difficulty in a particular area.

Year 3, 5 and 7 students participate in National Testing Programme, (NAPLAN). These results are confidential and cannot be passed onto future schools until written parent permission is granted. Portfolios of children's work are sent home at the end of each term.

LOST PROPERTY

It is inevitable that, from time to time, children's belongings will be mislaid or lost. All found items are placed in the Lost Property Box and displayed at lunchtime. Parents should encourage children to check there when items have been lost. Parents are invited to check it at their own convenience. It is essential that all property, especially hats and jumpers, **BE MARKED CLEARLY WITH THE CHILD'S NAME**. Regular checks are necessary to ensure that the name is still visible. Items that remain in the lost property box for an extended length of time, (located at the bottom of the back stairs), will be given to the St. Vincent De Paul Society.

SECURITY

It is important that students do not bring valuable items or large amounts of money to school, as the school is not able to accept responsibility for loss or damage to these items. When bringing these items is unavoidable, it is suggested that these are left in the office during school hours for safekeeping. Mobile phones and such devices are not permitted at school and will be confiscated.

HOMEWORK

It is very important that students consolidate schoolwork by doing regular homework and revision. Home study does not consist of written work only. It generally includes the revision of past work. The school provides home reading books for each student to read. Please ensure that these are taken care of and returned to school.

In all primary grades, spelling, basic facts and reading (15 - 20 minutes) are always home study items. It is suggested that parents provide a suitable area in the home situation (away from distractions, such as TV, radio, etc.) for homework and to see that home study is carried out efficiently.

Time allotment varies with each year level and parents will be informed of expectations by the class teacher early in Term 1.

Why is homework so important?

1. It encourages independent learning skills, which are so important for later schooling.
2. It establishes good work habits. A regular and consistent approach to study prevents last-minute panic.
3. Homework, which involves practise and revision of what is known, helps to consolidate learning. Students need to exercise skills that are already acquired.

Homework tips for parents

1. Help your son or daughter to find a quiet place where noise is not intrusive, lighting is adequate and where there is a suitable surface for spreading out books and papers.
2. There is no ideal time. However help your child establish a time when he or she can work best and keep this time consistent so that a routine develops.
3. Balance the amount of time spent on homework with other needs such as sport, having fun, watching a television program and spending time with the family. Alienation from school can grow if your child never seems to be finished with homework.
4. Provide support for project work by helping to find materials such as books, maps and pictures.

5. Take an interest in what homework is being given and discuss this with your child. Frequent checking of assignments keeps parents aware of progress.

Home reading

The school has spent a great deal of money to ensure that a variety of books are available for our home reading programme. Students **MUST** read a reading book from this stock as part of their reading homework. Books from the town library or from home will not be accepted as homework reading.

BOOK CLUB

The school participates in the Scholastic Book Club scheme. Brochures outlining details of the books, their appropriateness for the child's reading level and interests, are sent home to enable appropriate choices to be made and order forms completed. Orders must be handed to the office in an envelope with the correct money or cheques made payable to the school by the due date. Two Book Fairs are held during the school year.

LIBRARY

All children are encouraged to borrow books from our school library. We ask for your co-operation in ensuring that the books borrowed are looked after and are returned on time. Each class has one library session per week. The lending period for books is one to two weeks. It is expected that books damaged or lost through careless handling, will be replaced by parents. It is asked that in all year levels, children have a library bag to protect books when borrowing.

SCHOOL BANKING

School banking is carried out **each Wednesday**. A basket is left on the counter in the office for the collection of bank books. One of our administration staff take the bank books to the post office in South Johnstone to be processed. New Dollarmite accounts can be opened through the Commonwealth Bank.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

An instrumental music programme is run for students from Years 4-7. An instrumental teacher from Good Counsel College visits the school on Wednesday each week for students wishing to learn to play the guitar, drums, flute, saxophone, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, tuba, baritone or percussion. Some instruments can be hired through the school for \$20 per year. Students are welcome to purchase their own instrument. Lessons are taken in small groups at a cost of approximately \$13.00 per lesson (TBA 2014 fees). Parents are responsible for purchasing music books and other consumables. Enrolment forms are available from the school office.

TECHNOLOGY

The role of Technology within education is a growing area, which is shaping culture and transforming society as a whole. Important to the task of providing a holistic education is the very real need for schools to empower learners as critical users, consumers and creators of Technology. There is no doubt that the expansion of knowledge is ongoing and access to Technology is essential for effective lifelong learning. Catholic education has a duty to help learners shape the future in a socially just and life enhancing way. Here at St. Rita's School, we endeavour to provide all students with very real and significant opportunities to learn about and to be effective users of Technology. Computers are networked and have internet access, which is an important learning and research tool for students. All class rooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Class, individual and family photos are taken each year. Parents who wish to purchase photos must order and pay for them before they are taken. Details are sent home as soon as they are received from the photographer. The date for school photos for 2014 is 5th February. Every second year a whole school photo is also taken and orders can be made through the office.

SPORT

Organised games are a regular and important part of our school curriculum and every child is encouraged to participate to their capacity in school sport. An inter-house sports day is held in Term 3 between house teams, Palmerston and Fitzgerald. In Term 3 selected students participate in the Jim Graham Cup (football) and the Mary Mills Cup (netball).

Sports uniforms will be worn every Tuesday and Friday as physical education sessions will be conducted on these days. The school takes part in all Silkwood/Mena Creek Sport's Association activities including - soccer, netball, softball, t-ball, athletics, cricket and cross-country. We confidently anticipate your support in encouraging your children to take part.

In 2012 we trialled Friday sport with the Innisfail Association Schools for upper classes and hope to continue this in 2013. For the last two years we have taken a team to the FNQ Futsal championships in Cairns which has proven highly successful.

SUN SAFE POLICY

At St. Rita's School, we have a **'No Hat, No Play'** procedure to reduce the risk of sun related skin damage. This applies to all playground activities including physical education lessons, sports activities, etc.

SWIMMING

Swimming sessions for the students are held for one hour a day in 4th term at the Innisfail pool over 5 days. Lessons will be taken by the teachers and parents promoting water confidence, awareness and safety. It is important to realise that students will not learn to swim nor receive intensive stroke correction during the lesson time available. There will be a cost involved in swimming for pool entry and transportation.

PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

St. Rita's Parents and Friends Association is comprised of parents and friends who wish to support the vision and function of the school. Each parent is invited to join our P & F Association in order to become actively involved in their child's education. In this school, the P & F Association is not seen as just a fund-raising body, but as an open forum where topics relevant to our school, our children and our community may be raised. Each term the P & F attempts to organise one social event and one fund-raising event.

St Rita's P & F Association prides itself on the contribution it makes annually via financial support to allow the school to purchase up to date resources.

Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month, at the school, starting at 7:30pm and finishing at approximately 9:00pm.

PARENT LIBRARY

An expansive selection of parent education books are available at the school office for parents to borrow. This collection has been put together with the assistance of the P & F Association and aims to support parents with helpful reading materials about raising children.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

A school uniform is important in creating school spirit and bonding the students as a group. It is expected that the correct uniform be worn every day and that students be neat in their dress and appearance. It is expected that all parents will support the school's requirements that full and correct uniform be worn at all times. Any deviation from this should be explained, in writing or a phone call, to the school office. **ALL** items of clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name.

The following applies to all children in Prep to Year 7 in regard to general presentation and jewellery.

Hair – Long/shoulder length hair must be tied back or plaited as it discourages head lice and is a recommended practice by Peninsula Health.

Jewellery – One pair of sleepers/studs in ears only. Chains and rings should be kept at home and not be worn to school. Signet rings may be worn. Watches are allowed. A chain with a religious medal/cross is allowed. No other form of jewellery is to be worn.

GIRLS

DAY UNIFORM Sky blue blouse (poplin monti blue) with waistband (school office)
Navy skort (school office)
White socks
Black Shoes

SPORTS UNIFORM Sport's shirt (school office)
Tuesdays/Fridays Navy skort / Navy sports shorts (school office)
White socks
Sandshoes

HAIR TIES / SCRUNCHIES White, Navy, Sky Blue or Black (school office)

BOYS

DAY UNIFORM	Sky blue shirt
	Navy shorts (long or short legs)
	Navy socks
	Black shoes
<u>SPORTS UNIFORM</u>	Sport's shirt (school office)
Tuesdays/Fridays	Navy sports shorts (school office)
	White socks
	Sandshoes

Navy school jumpers are available from the school office.

Clarification of the girl's blouse: To create a sense of continuity the following stipulations need to be adhered to:

- poplin monti blue material
- blue buttons
- Peter Pan collar
- pocket with pointed bottom
- band on sleeve
- length of blouse to cover the top of skort by no less than 5 cm.
- band width on blouse of 4cm
- yoke on back of blouse
- two pleats on back and front of blouse

HAT A blue wide brimmed hat or legionnaires hat is part of the Day and Sport's Uniform and must be worn to school each day. No hat - No play - is a firm school policy (no exceptions allowed). These can be purchased from Innisfail Custom Clothing or a royal blue hat can be purchased and a school badge sewn onto the front.

There are a few stipulations that must be pointed out for those purchasing or making uniforms.

- All uniforms are required to have the badge sewn on. Badges are available at the school office for \$4.50 each.
- I ask that parents make the effort to purchase black shoes. Sports shoes can be worn on Tuesdays and Fridays with the sports uniform.
- All navy options are to match the navy example in the front office. Girl's navy skorts or skirts can be made from mechanical stretch, cascarilla or gaberdine navy material.

The girls blouse, skort and shorts, and the boy's sports shorts are available from the school office. Innisfail Custom Clothing will also stock some of our uniform options. Materials can be purchased from Pic Nic's Country Craft. If your child wears an odd size, uniforms can be personally made by contacting Jan Parsons on 40 613 130.

Should you have any further enquiries please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Volunteers have a significant role in the work of the school. Volunteers have an integral part to play in providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young people.

- Volunteers are expected to follow the principles of:
 - Safety
 - Respect
 - Support
 - Ethical Communication
 - Ethical Conduct
- Volunteers should think and act safely:
 - Put safety first in all activities.
 - Follow the safety procedures outlined in the school's operational guidelines, to the best of your ability, as outlined in the volunteer induction process.
 - If a direct threat is identified, assist in the evacuation of the area and/or situation as quickly as possible.
 - Work only according to your level of competency. Contact and report to school administration when confronted with a situation which you are unable to contend with or is beyond your role and responsibility.
- Volunteers should treat students and staff with respect:
 - Respect the rights of individuals and maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
 - Treat everyone with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility.
 - Assist in the creation of an environment free of fear, harassment, racism and exploitation.
 - Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of others although you may not always agree.
 - Take instruction from and not obstruct the responsible staff member in any way in regards to the execution of their duties.
 - Report any illegal activity to the school's administration or school protection contact.
- Volunteers should use communication skills when engaging with students:
 - Acknowledge the needs and concerns of the individual.
 - Practise effective listening (e.g. ask open questions; be alert to non-verbal communication; stay calm and relaxed).
 - Be aware of the young person's physical space.
 - Be aware of your own body language.
 - Be judicious in making physical contact with young people.
 - Stay calm and relaxed.
 - Be clear and consistent.
 - Use non-discriminatory respectful and non-judgemental language.
 - Seek advice whenever appropriate.
 - As a volunteer, you must follow all instructions from the staff and school administration. You should **NOT** engage directly with media representatives, but refer all enquiries to school administration.
- Volunteers must not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products while on duty (all Catholic schools and colleges are smoke free).
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Verbally harass or abuse any person or use profanity while volunteering.
- Utilise your position as a volunteer to take advantage of any young person.

Any breach of this 'Code of Conduct' will be dealt with by the School Principal in the first instance.

MEDIA

Throughout the school year students take part in various activities where photos are taken to record the event. Occasionally these are used in school promotions through our local newspaper, on the school web site and the diocesan newspaper (issued each term)

It is imperative that the Media and Communications Consent Form on Page 8 of the Application for Enrolment Form be completed and signed to indicate that consent is or is not given.

Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns

2014 TUITION FEES

The approximate cost of a Catholic primary school education over a 40 week school year is \$35.00 per week (or \$26.90 per calendar week). For a secondary education, the approximate fee ranges from \$57.80 per school week (\$44.45 per calendar week) for lower secondary to \$70.85 per school week (\$54.50 per calendar week) for higher secondary.

School Fees also comprise levies, which vary from school to school, and may include items such as a Building Levy, Subject Levies and General Purpose Levy. Levies in secondary colleges add approximately \$25 to \$30 per week. These approximations are before Subsequent Child and Rural Location discounts.

Discounts apply for families with more than one child attending Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns. In primary schools, a 27% discount on tuition fees applies to the second child, a 46% discount for the third child, and up to a 77% discount for the seventh child.

In Catholic secondary colleges, a 15% discount on tuition fees applies to the second child, 30% to the third child, and up to a 70% discount for the seventh child. Families with children at both primary and secondary Catholic schools also receive a discount even though the children are at two different Catholic schools.

Ten primary schools in the diocese and two secondary colleges attract a further discount because of their rural location and/or having limited access to a Catholic secondary college.

Please refer to the Explanatory Notes below, to assist with calculating fees from the **2014 Per Student Tuition Fee Schedule**, overleaf.

Explanatory Notes

- **To calculate tuition fees payable the following is necessary;**

- a) Determine number of students per family attending Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Cairns.
- b) Identify that column in Per Student Tuition Fee Schedule (top of schedule).
- c) Identify annual fee per student from that column for each level of education the students are receiving. That is Primary, Middle School, Lower Secondary or Upper Secondary.
- d) If the students are attending a 'Country Discount' school the annual fee per student is the fee per student after country discount.

- **Examples of tuition fee calculation for different scenarios of family structure are:**

- **2 Student family with both students in Primary School**

- a) From the column '2 students in Parish & Diocesan Schools' the annual fee per student is \$1023.
- b) Annual tuition fees for this family structure is \$1023 per student times 2 students. Total tuition fees payable of \$2,046.

- **3 Student family with all students in Primary Schools**

- a) From the column '3 students in Parish & Diocesan Schools' the annual fee per student is \$757.
- b) Annual tuition fees for this family structure is \$757 per student times 3 students. Total tuition fees payable of \$2,271.

- **2 Student families with 1 student in Primary and 1 student in lower secondary**

- a) From the column '2 students in Parish & Diocesan Schools' the annual fee for the primary student is \$1023 and the annual fee for the lower secondary student is \$1,965.
- b) Annual tuition fees for this family structure is \$2,988 (\$1023 + \$1,965).

- **3 Student families with 1 student in Primary, 1 student in lower secondary and 1 student in upper secondary**

- a) From the column '3 students in Parish & Diocesan Schools' the annual fee for the primary student is \$757, the annual fee for the lower secondary student is \$1,618 and the annual fee for the upper secondary student is \$1,984.
- b) Annual tuition fees for this family structure is \$4,359 (\$757 + \$1,618 + \$1,984)

Catholic Diocese of Cairns 2014 Per Student Tuition Fee Schedule

TUITION FEE PER STUDENT							
Number of Students in Parish & Diocesan Schools							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PREP & PRIMARY - YEARS P-7	No additional charge for 4 or more siblings						
Discount Percentage	0%	27%	46%	59%	68%	73%	77%
PREP & PRIMARY - per week (40 wks)	34.99	25.57	18.92	14.22	11.35	9.46	8.11
PREP & PRIMARY - per term	349.91	255.68	189.20	142.15	113.52	94.60	81.09
2014 - PREP & PRIMARY - per year	\$1,400	\$1,023	\$757	\$569	\$454	\$378	\$324
<i>LESS COUNTRY DISCOUNT @ 10%</i>	<i>-140</i>	<i>-102</i>	<i>-76</i>	<i>-57</i>	<i>-45</i>	<i>-38</i>	<i>-32</i>
2014 - PREP & PRIMARY AFTER COUNTRY DISCOUNT	\$1,260	\$919	\$681	\$512	\$410	\$342	\$293

2014 - MIDDLE SCHOOL (St Andrew's College Years 6 & 7)	\$1,710	\$1,291	\$1,019	\$764	\$611	\$509	\$437
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LOWER SECONDARY - YEARS 8-9

Discount Percentage	0%	15%	30%	48%	58%	65%	70%
LOWER SECONDARY - per week (40 wks)	57.80	49.13	40.46	30.35	24.28	20.23	17.34
LOWER SECONDARY - per term	578.00	491.30	404.60	303.45	242.76	202.30	173.40
2014 - LOWER SECONDARY - per year	\$2,312	\$1,965	\$1,618	\$1,214	\$971	\$809	\$694
<i>LESS COUNTRY DISCOUNT @ 10%</i>	<i>-\$231</i>	<i>-\$197</i>	<i>-\$162</i>	<i>-\$121</i>	<i>-\$97</i>	<i>-\$81</i>	<i>-\$69</i>
2014 - LOWER SECONDARY AFTER COUNTRY DISCOUNT	\$2,080	\$1,769	\$1,457	\$1,092	\$874	\$728	\$624

UPPER SECONDARY - YEARS 10-12

Discount Percentage	0%	15%	30%	48%	58%	65%	70%
UPPER SECONDARY - per week (40 wks)	70.85	60.22	49.60	37.20	29.76	24.80	21.26
UPPER SECONDARY - per term	708.50	602.23	495.95	371.96	297.57	247.98	212.55
2014 - UPPER SECONDARY - per year	\$2,834	\$2,409	\$1,984	\$1,488	\$1,190	\$992	\$850
<i>LESS COUNTRY DISCOUNT @ 10%</i>	<i>-\$283</i>	<i>-\$241</i>	<i>-\$198</i>	<i>-\$149</i>	<i>-\$119</i>	<i>-\$99</i>	<i>-\$85</i>
2014 - UPPER SECONDARY AFTER COUNTRY DISCOUNT	\$2,552	\$2,168	\$1,785	\$1,339	\$1,071	\$893	\$76 5

Schools Qualifying as Country Discount

St Joseph's School, Atherton
 St Michael's School, Gordonvale
 St John's School, Silkwood
 St Clare's School, Tully

St Rita's School, Babinda
 St Augustine's School, Mossman
 St Rita's School, South Johnstone
 Saint Stephen's College, Mareeba

St Anthony's School, Dimbulah
 St Teresa's School, Ravenshoe
 Sacred Heart School, Thursday Island
 Mount Saint Bernard College, Herberton

In addition to the above schools the 2014 Tuition Fee Schedule applies to;

Our Lady Help of Christians School, Earlville
 St Thomas's School, Mareeba
 Mother of Good Counsel School, North Cairns
 St Joseph's School, Parramatta
 St Augustine's College, Cairns

St Therese's School, Bentley Park
 Holy Cross School, Smithfield
 St Gerard Majella School, Woree
 Good Counsel School, Innisfail
 St Mary's College, Woree

St Francis Xavier's School, Manunda
 St Andrew's College, Redlynch
 Good Counsel College, Innisfail
 St Monica's College, Cairns



**Catholic
 Education**
 Diocese of Cairns

Learning with Faith and Vision