



PRINCIPAL'S END OF YEAR REPORT 2013

2013 started with an enrolment of 121 students, in 6 classes from Prep to Year 7. We started the year with 67 families. We farewelled the Tyson and Abberdan families and welcomed the Kenny and Maund families to end with 67 families. Staff remained constant with Leanne leaving just after Easter to give birth to Noah. Sandy joined us in Leanne's place. It has been a year of celebration with the birth of a baby and two weddings of staff members. We also welcomed Grayson Mueller into our school family.

Our first Parents & Friends Meeting was held on February 18th. Projects for 2013 were discussed and Office Bearers for the year were elected.

Special thanks to our Parents & Friends Executive for 2013.

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| ○ President | Jade Buchanan |
| ○ Vice president | Jenni Taylor |
| ○ Treasurer | Blaise Cini |
| ○ Secretary | Moara Crowley |
| ○ Fundraising committee | Jo Spry, Collette Ross, Liz Keough |
| ○ Grants co-ordinator | Jenni Taylor |
| ○ Tuckshop Convenor | Lina Calleja |
| ○ Grounds and Maintenance | Paul Taylor & Anthony Calleja |

St. Rita's prides itself on being a school with a great community atmosphere. The role of the P&F is to forge the relationship between parents and school. St. Rita's P&F has a lengthy history of working hard for the school and for this I extend my heartfelt thanks. Your involvement, dedication and support allows us to afford our students the high quality of resources they have available.

Many thanks to all who have worked in any way. The old adage "When the going gets tough the tough get going," sits well with our P&F. People are not afraid to get their hands dirty, and the bank balance of the P&F from the beginning of the year when you generously donated \$22 000 for the cabling upgrade, to now is testimony to this. The quality of events co-ordinated by the P&F, have patrons talking about them for some time particularly Mother's Day Morning Tea and Melbourne Cup. I often hear the comment from ex St Rita's parents that Mother's Day Morning Tea is never the same anywhere else.

Although the battery muster has had it hiccups this year it has continued to be a very profitable, effortless fundraiser securing approx. \$7000 again in 2013. The collection continues and I urge everyone to keep their batteries ready for the start of 2014 or drop them off at the Buchanan farm over the holiday period. Thanks Craig and Jade for once again allowing us to use their farm as a drop off point.

I would like to thank the P&F for all their hard work. It has been extremely gratifying to see so many new parents become involved this year and others who have stepped up to take up various behind the scenes rolls.

Although Fr Kerry has not been able to attend all of our meetings, we appreciate how busy he is and I thank him for his involvement and commitment to our school, and his hands on approach. The children have enjoyed his regular visits for liturgies, masses, reconciliation and just class visits.

St. Rita's has continued to grow in 2013. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful with our block grant application and have not heard about the gambling benefit grant, however, we were able to undertake certain projects.

COMPLETED PROJECTS - 2013

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| ▪ Internet upgrade | ▪ BGA application |
| ▪ Library refurbishment | ▪ Server upgrade |
| ▪ Car park line marking | ▪ Painting upstairs |
| ▪ Remodelling learning support room | ▪ Office re-structure |
| ▪ New printers | ▪ Reconfiguration of Prep shed |

SOME PROJECTS ARE STILL IN THE PIPELINE

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| ▪ Erection of covered walkway to the back gate, the plans of which should be decided on in the next week or so to enable us have construction completed over the school holidays | ▪ The announcement of a \$37 000 school support grant in 2104 to which we have to decide priorities as the money must be expended in 2014. |
| ▪ Painting of the demountable now that it seems it will be staying with us and also the western classrooms. | ▪ New school website |

Thank you to Anthony and Paul for continuing to carry out maintenance issues for me. Once again I have only had to ask and the jobs have been completed. Paul has recently installed curtain rods in the western classrooms to help with our lockdown procedure. He reconfigured and cleaned the prep shed. A priority now is to clean the front of the big hall which has become very mouldy in recent months. Many thanks to Mear's Construction, who have donated the use of their cherry picker to assist in this job.

To Les Cavanagh who has each week put the school newsletter onto the school website thank you. With only just a few finishing touches I am hoping that our website will be launched before the end of school. If not it will be all systems go for next year. This has been an enormous task. I thank Andrea Devaney, our Curriculum Support Teacher and Andrea Gregory from CES for their assistance.

Thank you to Lina and her willing band of helpers who have run a very profitable tuckshop this year. I know the service is truly appreciated by the parents. Next year let's see if we can have more volunteers to run this valuable service.

To all the parents in general who have given only a small piece of their time and energy to help out around the school, from Under 8's day, reading, cooking, sports, walk-a-thon, camps and excursions. Thank you. It is because of your commitment we are able to offer our children a significantly broader range of curriculum experiences.

Homework club has run successfully again in 2013. Working parents have found this service invaluable. It has also helped parents who were having difficulty getting their children to do homework. Negotiations are still under way re kindergarten. Kevin Malone only emailed this morning saying it will be back on the table early 2014. Part of this arrangement for viability would be the re-opening of OSHC

To the wonderful staff of St Rita's, who have continued to do a fantastic job, I thank you. The students at St Rita's certainly benefit from the extra things they do. The children have benefitted once again from having the 6 classes and this will also continue in 2014. Class structures for 2014 will be the same as 2013. Mrs Bufe and Mrs Devaney will be teaching the Year 3/4 class in a shared position, Mrs Bufe for four days a week and Mrs Devaney for one. I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Shane Rossi as Peta's replacement whilst she is on maternity leave. Shane is a local boy who has been living in England for the last 6 years and mid year returned with his young family to live in Australia. He is currently employed at Goondi State School on a contract. Our enrolment numbers for 2014 will be approximately the same as 2013.

I would like to thank Angela for stepping into the role of APRE in 2013, following Peta's request for a year's break to continue study and plan her wedding. Angela will not be continuing in the position next year, with Mrs Kenny taking on the role in a part-time position. Denise in her performing art role will bring a wealth of knowledge to the position.

I would also like to thank the ancillary staff, Santina, Jenni, Sandy, Maria, Jo, Sarina, Grandma Beth and Judy for their tireless work behind the scenes to help with the effective running of administration, the library and classrooms. Your efforts are gratefully appreciated.

Once again Denise has accomplished great things with the children in Performing Arts lessons. They entertained patrons at Mother's Day Morning Tea as well as shortly at our annual Christmas concert.

Donna and Dot have helped children with areas of learning difficulties throughout the year. Many hours have gone in to tailoring lessons to aid children improve their learning. Thank you to Andrea who has ensured that curriculum standards are maintained and to the high standard we are used to. The staff has been involved in many planning sessions with her throughout the year, and now for the rollout of the Geography curriculum in 2014.

Following the release of the 2013 NAPLAN results, plans have been put in place for intervention in the new year. On attending the Naplan analysis day with Andrea our children have compared favourably with those schools across the diocese and state.

YEAR 3: 100% at or above benchmark in all area

YEAR 5: 100% at or above benchmark in all areas except Maths where there were 98%

YEAR 7: 100% at or above benchmark in all areas

As well as being a time of celebrating our success and short comings it is always a time when we celebrate the lives of 15 wonderful children who shortly will walk through the gates of St. Rita's as students for the last time. Some of these children have been with us for 8 years some have joined us on the way.

To our Year 7 students -

- Esen Abraham
- Marc Camuglia
- Ethan Darveniza
- Nicholas Henson
- Declan Ross
- Logan Buchanan
- Jade Schroeter
- Natasha Burns
- Lauren Dalla Vecchia
- Jacquelyn Macauley-Knowles
- Hannah Spinella
- Connor Van Haaren
- Tyarne Stanley
- Olivia Zahra
- Tashana Morales

From the original group of 13 who began Pre-School in 2006 together with myself and Mrs Duncan, Miss Gangi and Miss Jeanette 7 remain; Marc, Ethan, Esen, Nicholas (who left and came back), Logan who joined us during preschool, Lauren, Tyarne (who left and came back).

In 2007, Tayah Hopkins-Masina left for Mt Surprise and Nicholas went touring Australia. In 2008 Kate Boevink and Hannah Spinella joined us from GPCS, Eli Hunter came from Weipa and James Stephensen moved to Yungaburra. In 2009 Jadzia Dalamaras joined us from Mourilyan, Tashana Morales came from East Innisfail and Olivia Zahra from Goondi, Drew Milevskiy joined us from Weipa and Jade Schroeter joined us from TAS, Keanu Tuart left for Gladstone and Jamie George left for TAS. In 2010 Aiden Cini left for Townsville and Samuel Sciacca went to Smithfield. In 2011 Declan Ross and Connor Van Haaren came from Mundoo, Kate Boevink went to Charters Towers, Lachlan Ah Shay went to GPCS and Eli Hunter went to Darwin. 2012 Drew Milevskiy went back to Weipa and Jadzia Dalamaras went to GPCS. Natasha Burns and Jacquelyn Macauley-Knowles joined us from Mena Creek. In 2013 Nicholas Henson re-joined the group.

I am deeply honoured to farewell them from the school when it was me who welcomed them into the school in pre-school. Over the years I have watched them grow into the wonderful children they have become, in partnership with the teachers who have nurtured them over the years. I recently wrote in their Graduation Book:

To the graduating class of 2013: You are part of St. Rita's history being the last ever Pre-school class. You hold a special place in my heart in that you were also the Cyclone Larry Kids who wanted to take me home because my house was destroyed. I will always remember you for that. I wish you all the success in the world for the future. Remember the lessons and values you were taught whilst at St. Rita's and do not be a stranger.

As well as farewelling the Year Seven students, sadly we have to say goodbye to families. Some have had a long association with St Rita's. This year we farewell from our school, three families who conclude their association with St Rita's. Paul and Tanya Dalla Vecchia, (12 years) occasions will not be the same without Tanya's sense of fun, I am told though she has planned a fitting hurrah. Jade Schroeter's parents Andrew and Sarah. (5years) Steve and Stasia Abraham, (10 years) Stasia has been the driving force over the past few years behind our big wins at the Peninsula Rugby Union trials. She is also the artist of the mural on the front stairs of the building Sadly due to circumstances we also farewell Rob and Michelle Zahra (Michelle having given time as treasurer of the P&F, Matthew Morales and Celeste Richard. I wish all these families the best for the future. Each and everyone of you will have many stories to tell about your time at St. Rita's. We thank you for being a valued part of our school community. Your footprints will be forever embedded in the history of our school.

Please attempt to join one of the many Christmas celebrations that are offered in all parishes wherever you may be at that time of the season. It is good to remind the children of the true meaning of Christmas and the person who was the ultimate gift to us.

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve - Tuesday, 24 December

Innisfail ~ Vigil 6.30pm (family mass); Midnight Mass (Christmas Carols 11.30pm)

Christmas Day - Wednesday, 25 December

South Johnstone ~ 7am; Innisfail ~ 9.00am

Once again I would like to give you my heartfelt thanks for all your support during 2013. I look forward to working with you and your children in 2014. I hope you all have a happy, safe and Holy Christmas.

A REMINDER THAT THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IS TUESDAY, JANUARY, 28TH, 2014.

Please take the time to glance over the 2013 Year in Review that is a comprehensive list of school activities. New parents to the school are amazed at the vast range of activities accomplished by such a small school.

God bless

Vicki Conomo - (Principal, 2013)