

Annual Report

2018

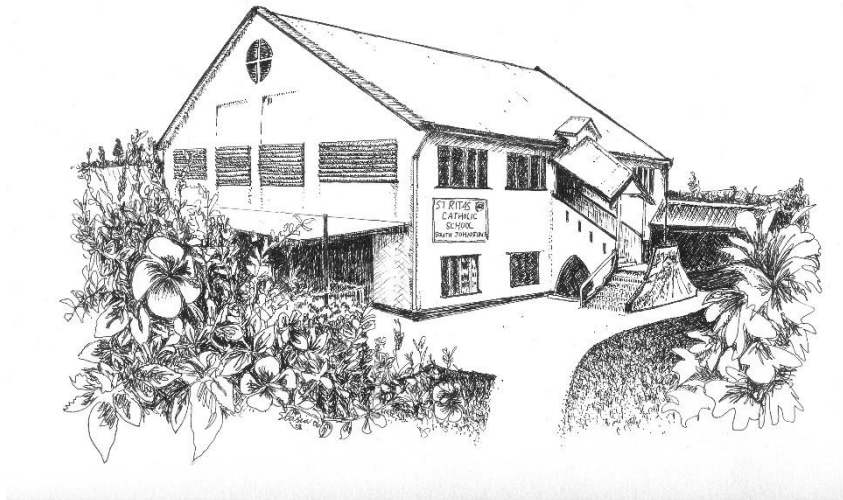
VISION STATEMENT

At St. Rita's we believe in:

- The partnership of parents, teachers, students, parish and wider community is enriched by our Gospel values and our faith.
- Encouraging risk taking and offering challenging opportunities to enhance success for all in an ever-changing world.
- The development of the whole person academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually using Jesus as the perfect example.
- Accepting the differences and valuing the opinions of others in a safe, caring, loving and learning environment.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Because of this vision we will aim to foster the growth of each individual within a committed faith community of students, staff and parents. Our administration, organisation and programs reflect and teach gospel values. 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 we are prepared to support them in this responsibility. We value a cooperative spirit between the home and the school.



About our School

South Johnstone is a small rural township situated 100 km south of Cairns and 9 km south-east of Innisfail. St Rita's caters for students from Innisfail, Kurrimine Beach, East Palmerston, Mena Creek, Mundoo, Moresby, Mourilyan and South Johnstone. We are a small school providing a Catholic education in a rural setting.

The township of Innisfail has a Catholic Secondary School (Good Counsel College) and a State College. Within 10kms of South Johnstone there are numerous State Primary Schools, as well as Good Counsel Primary School.

Agricultural industries and support services are predominant in the local area. It is these industries that are the primary source of employment for the families with children attending school at St Rita's.

The school opened in 1932, operating from the building adjacent to the school in Green St, which presently hosts a long-running playgroup and regular church meetings. The school moved across the road in 1933 to where the present building is situated. The Sisters of Good Samaritan staffed the school up until 1977 when the first lay principal was appointed. From this time, to the present, solely lay people have staffed the school. The face of the school has changed over time, with the addition of new classrooms, a purpose built Prep facility and state-of-the-art undercover multi-purpose hall. Recent additions include the building of a staff room, meeting room and toilet facilities.

St Rita's is proud to be a community school, with a reputation for having a strong family focus. St Rita's is blessed with a committed Parents and Friends Association. The hardworking P&F provides much needed financial support through various fundraising ventures. The P&F also assist with organizing social activities that aim to bring families together. New families have commented on how welcoming the parent body is and how the support that is offered helps them to make a smooth transition into school life.

A team of devoted teachers staff St Rita's. They range in age and experience, many having worked at the school for over a decade. However, they all share a passion for education and a commitment to Catholic ethos. The staff works together within a professional learning community, sharing their knowledge and supporting early career teachers. A team of vastly experienced school officers supports the teachers. Our school officers are vital to the day to day running of our school. Working in classrooms, administration, the library and with those students requiring extra support as well as extension. The staff is aware that they are educating students for a rapidly changing world. Therefore, the teachers and school officers are constantly searching for new learning opportunities to help them meet the diverse needs of their students.

School Annual Improvement

Priority 1: Optimal Learning and Wellbeing for all students

By the end of 2018: 90% of students in Prep to be at level 6 or above.

90% of students in Year 1 will be at level 15 or above.

90% of students in Year 2 will be at level 22 or above.

These targets are informed by CES benchmarks.

Strategies and resources implemented

- * Embed Best Practice documentation into all school planning
- * Whole school approach to Morning Routines by beginning of Semester 2.
- * Provide class teachers with additional release time to work with PLT Leader once every 2 weeks. Teachers to be given extra release time each week.

- * The Junior Primary PLT to focus on reading
- * Synthetic Phonics to be taught in Prep and Year 1
- * Planning for and embedding differentiated practice in reading, with emphasis on those above standard.
- * All teachers to develop, communicate, assess, feedback and redevelop individual SMART learning goals for each student in their class in the area of Reading. (VL, see progressions). Students and parents will be aware of these ongoing learning goals.

Priority 2: Optimal Learning and Wellbeing for all students

By the end of 2018 90% of students in Years 3-6 to have an effect size/growth equal to or greater than the normed sample (ACER) and equal to or greater than the Australian mean (NAPLAN).

Strategies and resources implemented

- * Embed Best Practice documentation into all teacher planning
- * Whole school approach to Morning Routines by beginning of Semester 2.
- * Provide class teachers with additional release time to work with PLT Leader once every 2 weeks.
- * Upper school PLT Team to develop shorter term smart goals around reading (extending average and above average students in reading).
- * Planning for and embedding differentiated practice in reading, with emphasis on those above standard.
- * All teachers to develop, communicate, assess, feedback and redevelop individual SMART learning goals for each student in their class in the area of Reading. (VL, see progressions). Students and parents will be aware of these ongoing learning goals.

Priority 3: To build a Culture that Promotes Learning

By the end of 2018 students will be able to communicate the values of the St Rita's Way and have an understanding that these values originated from the Good Samaritan Charism.

Strategies and resources implemented

- * Jenni Williams to provide SEL workshop to staff in O Week as well as introducing Second Steps resource.
- * Donna Curzon (CST) to become the SEL coordinator
- * Staff to receive training in Circle Solutions
- * Staff to receive training in Essential Skills in Classroom Management
- * CST and 1 classroom teacher to be trained as classroom profilers
- * Full implementation of SBSS
- * Mark Davidson 'Tips for Building Positive Relationships' Workshop in February.
- * All classrooms to have a 'Calming Corner'
- * Explicitly teach at the beginning of the year, and reinforce each term as required, the core values of St Rita's Way.
- * All staff at St Rita's to refer to the core values of St Rita's Way continually and consistently when interacting with our community stakeholders.
- * Invitation for a Good Samaritan nun to come to school/parish
- * Class awards aligned to Values of St Rita's Way.
- * Extra day release per term for APRE to work with Education Officer- Mission and Identity to explore opportunities for staff, students and our community to understand and ways to embed the Good Samaritan Charism

Areas of growth

1. Priority 1

2. Priority 2 has been
3. Priority 3 has

Characteristics of Student Body

- Student Enrolment – 122 (63 Boys and 59 Girls)
- Verified students - 5
- Indigenous - 8
- NCCD - 16
- Catholicity – 46.8%
- Attendance – 92.5%
- ICSEA - 1013

Cultural diversity

- Fijian
- Czech
- Thai
- Indian
- New Zealander
- Australian

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

At St Rita's, we believe that preparing students for an unknown world, requires courage and energy, because student needs have changed so drastically. Literacy and numeracy will always remain the keystones of curriculum. Reading and writing have not been replaced by the new technologies. However, there are new literacies connected to information technology and communication, which we have now included in our whole-school curriculum plans and teach explicitly. Information is everywhere and is instantly accessible. Therefore, research skills have become vital. Teaching students to find, analyse and use information responsibly is vitally important. Technology has also allowed our students to access their learning in new ways. In keeping with our school motto, "Forward to a Better World", we want to ensure that our students leave, fully equipped to tackle the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Religious Education is a highly valued Key learning Area at St Rita's. Whole school and class liturgical celebrations are a significant element of the religious education program at the school.

At St Rita's we are committed to effectively delivering the Australian Curriculum to our students. This means ensuring that our teachers receive quality professional development and that our resources are current. This allows our teachers to ensure that each student is being taught the knowledge and skills that they need in a way that suits their specific learning style.

Extra Curricular Activities

At St Rita's we offer a diverse range of extra curricular activities to allow students to pursue their special interests. These include:

- Australasian Schools Competitions: Computers, Science, Mathematics, English and Spelling
- Teams for sporting events such as football, athletics, futsal, soccer, softball and netball

- Sport coaching sessions - Netball, Cricket Australia, NRL development, Tennis
- Instrumental Music
- Wonder of Living Program
- Mary Mills Cup
- After School Sports Programs such as Auskick
- Chess competition
- Handball competition
- Student vs. Parents sporting activities
- Reader's Cup
- Under 8's day
- Read to Me Day - Tully
- Bravehearts
- Show displays
- Camps and excursions

Social Climate

At St Rita's we are determined to help each student achieve his or her full potential. We acknowledge that each child is truly unique and therefore learns in different ways and at different speeds. Every effort is made to cater to each student's individual needs.

Though we are small, our size is not a weakness, but one of our greatest strengths. Students learn to "pitch in" and help out around the school and to assist with younger students as a part of our "buddy" program. We enjoy seeing younger siblings in and around the grounds before they join their big brothers and sisters at school when they start Prep. We also love hearing about past pupil's adventures and successes long after they exit the front gates for the last time. In essence, St Rita's is a small school with a very big heart.

Parent Engagement

Parents at St Rita's are recognized as the first educators of their children and as such are encouraged to participate wherever possible:

- Class Information Afternoons
- Parent Education, eg Wonders of Living, Maggie Dent
- Parent Teacher Interviews
- Parent invitations to classrooms as helpers or visitors
- Parent invitations to school assemblies and liturgies
- Parents vs. Students sporting activities
- Parents and Friends Association
- Combined Schools' Board
- Playgroup
- St. Rita's Feast Day
- Mother's Day Morning Tea

- Grandparents Day (Prep)
- Oral and Written Reports - interviews
- Naidoc Activities
- Camps/Excursions
- Sports days
- Under 8's Day
- Christmas Concert

Parent Satisfaction

In the annual school satisfaction survey parents rated St Rita's school highly across 7 key areas which included Catholic Ethos, Student Protection, Improvement Processes, Leadership, Bullying and Behaviour Management, Learning and Teaching, and Resources. The overall satisfaction score was 82% or 4.12 out of a total of 5. The top 3 reasons for school selection were school reputation, size of the school and classes, and location.

From the survey almost 92% agreed that St Rita's School had a good reputation in the local community and 94% agreed that they would recommend St Rita's school to others. 92% agreed that children at St Rita's are encouraged to reach their true potential. 94% agreed that the staff of St Rita's are accessible, respectful and respond promptly to concerns. 92% of parents agreed that the P&F Association is effective in the work it undertakes.

Major Professional Development Initiatives

Staff have been involved in professional development opportunities covering:

- OWHS - keeping up to date with policies and procedures to ensure the safety of themselves and others eg. fire equipment training, back care, evacuation procedures, risk assessments etc.
- Student Protection- keeping teachers abreast of legal and protection issues, to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.
- Disability Standards Training
- Literacy Writing Focus
- Visible Learning Practices
- Maths coaching
- APRE Focus Days
- TREWTH conference
- NAPLAN Analysis
- Administration Officer's PD
- Consistency of Teacher Judgement - engaging teachers in a process of assessing student work consistently within the school community and across schools within the Diocese.

- Information and Communication Technology - teachers use computers extensively to assist planning, communication and reporting. Training is provided to ensure ICT skills are at an appropriate level.
- Restorative Practices workshop (Real School Australia partnership)
- Get Reading Right PD
- PLT Training
- Language PD - 7 Steps to Writing Success.

Staff Satisfaction

In the annual school satisfaction survey staff rated St Rita's school very highly across 7 key areas which included Catholic Ethos, Student Protection, Improvement Processes, Leadership, Bullying and Behaviour Management, Learning and Teaching, and Resources. The overall satisfaction score was 89% or 4.44 out of a total of 5.

100% of staff agreed that St Rita's is a welcoming and caring community where everyone is treated with respect. 95% of staff agreed that St Rita's School encourages students to develop a love of learning. 95% of staff agreed that the staff have real job satisfaction in their current position while 100% agreed that they are provided with the relevant training/professional development to do their job well.

How non-attendance is managed by the school

Parents are to contact the school on the morning of non-attendance by phone or e-mail. If contact has not been made, a message will be sent to parents advising them of their child's absence and asking them to contact the school. If the child is absent for a period of time without notification or a pattern of non-attendance is recorded the parents are contacted to discuss any issues or concerns regarding the student.

Student Satisfaction

In the annual school satisfaction survey students from year 5 and 6 were surveyed across 7 key areas which included Catholic Ethos, Student Protection, Improvement Processes, Leadership, Bullying and Behaviour Management, Learning and Teaching, and Resources. The overall satisfaction score was 80% or 4.02 out of a total of 5.

89% agreed that prayer is an important part of what is done at St Rita's. 93% agreed that the school encourages them to help other people. 89% agreed that the school rules at St Rita's are fair and consistent while this same number of students agreed that they get on well with the other students at school. 96% agreed that they are encouraged to do their best while 93% agreed that when they have a problem with their learning their teachers will help them. No students who were surveyed indicated that they felt unsafe at school.