

march 2014

# Spirited schools



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# Shared systems to transform business



**C**AIRNS Catholic Education is investing heavily in web-based systems to operate through all its schools and colleges to improve the way information is managed.

Implementation of the suite of School Information Systems will enhance management of student enrolments, school finances, reporting systems, timetables and eventually learning management and library systems.

Deputy Executive Director of Catholic Education Services, Bill Dixon, said Cairns Catholic Education had engaged in a Shared Services Project with Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) to support learning and teaching and school information management. The project would also improve HR and payroll systems.

“We committed to this significant investment because we could see the many benefits it would bring to our schools and Cairns Catholic Education in terms of accessing data that will improve our ability to

*Improvements: Administration Officer Cathy Serafin and Principal Katrina Miller of St Anthony’s School Dimbulah, look forward to the enhancements the School Information Systems will bring to managing student enrolments, school finances and reporting systems.*

support learning and teaching.

“Fundamental business needs have driven the change, including the need to refresh or replace systems that have reached end of life or no longer meet our requirements.

“The ability to better manage information will give school staff the ability to draw rich information together about students to assist with planning and delivery of education services,” Mr Dixon said.

“It will give Catholic Education Services greater capacity to plan, analyse and forecast. It will also allow us to respond to ever increasing requests for data from State and Federal government, in a timely fashion and with reduced effort.

Mr Dixon said by partnering with BCE, Cairns was able to leverage the resources, expertise and support offered by BCE. BCE developed the systems and have been running them in their Catholic schools for the past four years.

“This is a significant undertaking by our system and there will be change and disruption, however a lot of planning and resources is going into this task to minimise that. School Information Systems is a business transformation project that will deliver many benefits.”

The rollout of the systems in the Cairns Diocese is expected to take about 18 months during this and next year.

## New opportunities for Middle Leaders under award restructure

**A** RENEWED emphasis on Catholic secondary school middle leadership in Cairns has resulted in more than 150 school leadership positions being advertised in March.

Under an industrial award restructure the existing system of Positions of Added Responsibility (PARs) in Catholic secondary schools will be replaced by a new Middle Leadership structure.

Announcing the move, Cairns Catholic Education Services Executive Director, Br Paul Hough, said the existing PAR system was established in 1992 and largely reflected a focus on tasks and administration.

“PARs served us well but it is now time to reflect the growing importance of middle leadership in schools particularly the role these leaders play in managing and leading staff,” he said.

“We see middle leadership as an area where our secondary schools can really shine, through the energy, skills and commitment of these key staff members. And in time they will be the school principals of the future.”

Br Paul acknowledged this would be the start of an uncertain period for many school staff currently employed as PARs, whom he encouraged to apply for the new positions.

“All people who are not successful in reapplying for their position are guaranteed

employment within their school. Most particularly with Year 7 joining the secondary schools next year there will be additional staff required so while some people may not get their position of responsibility, they’re certainly guaranteed a position within the school.

“Within the Diocese, once we have appointed the people in these roles to commence in 2015, we’ll offer training and support to them in the second half of this year so that they are better equipped to lead from 2015 on,” Br Paul said.

“But we also see this as a great opportunity for others considering a career in school leadership to apply for the new roles. They may already be employed at our colleges but they might also currently be anywhere in Australia and looking for a career and lifestyle change,” he said.

Br Paul has entrusted the task of overseeing the process to Assistant Executive Director Secondary School Development, Shane Hogan.

“This is one of the most exciting opportunities in education that has come along in many generations,” Mr Hogan said. “We are moving on from what was appropriate in the 1990s to how we want schools to respond to the challenges of the first half of a new century.”

He said the new Middle Leadership structure and appropriate time release attempted to come to terms with that shifting paradigm – appropriately recognising and elevating the importance of Middle Leaders to school success.

“It’s a move to add to the current role the important skill of leadership, so apart from managing curriculum or being a year co-ordinator, it’s also managing and offering active leadership to the staff – the teachers who teach curriculum – and the teachers who offer pastoral care to the students.”

Mr Hogan said the timing of the move was most appropriate with all Year 7s across all systems joining secondary schools next year.

“In terms of teaching methods for Year 7, in terms of pastoral care, in terms of an overall school curriculum program which now encompasses students from Year 7 through to Year 12; this is the ideal time to change that leadership structure and the initiatives that are given to curriculum and pastoral care.”

The award change was one that applied only to Catholic schools, he said.

“The unions and the employers two years ago sat down and worked this through together. It is a joint initiative by the union and the Catholic employers of Queensland



Shane Hogan

and very much supported by both.”

The positions are on the Catholic Education website at [www.cns.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cns.catholic.edu.au). Follow the ‘Employment Opportunities’ button from the home page.

*Spirited Schools* is produced by Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns.

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FRONT COVER: Ben Johnston, Natasha Lee Bow, Armindeep Singh and Trent Finta enjoying life and friendship at Good Counsel Primary School, Innisfail.

Design by Pembroke Graphics.



# Educating the heart

**F**OLLOWING on the heels of the new Australian curriculum is a new Catholic schools Religious Education curriculum, but coincidentally enough, all the schools in the Cairns Diocese are already aligned with the new program.

Rolling out this year and being implemented over the next three years, the new RE curriculum will build on - and enhance - the current RE curriculum.

"Religion is already being taught very well in the Diocese, but this is an exciting opportunity because not only are we teaching students about religion in the classroom, but there is an added focus on teaching students to be religious," said Colin Harvey, Catholic Education's Assistant Executive Director Faith and Religious Education.

"The vision of this curriculum, approved by Bishop James Foley, focuses on students' ability to articulate their faith and live it in an open and authentic way. Religious educators want to challenge students to be a religious voice in the world."

Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese are already heavily involved in social justice issues and sharing their faith, which makes the implementation and support of the new RE curriculum easy for all schools to embrace.

"I think this new curriculum is absolutely brilliant," said Luke Felstead, Assistant Principal Religious Education at St Andrew's Catholic College, Redlynch.

"We're also about educating the heart, and while we do want smart kids, we also want kids with big hearts who think of others and stand up for each other."

"The new curriculum is combining learning about sacred texts, beliefs and Church knowledge, with the lived experience of being a Christian and striving to make the world a better place."

"It's one thing to learn about and know about religion, but it's another thing to do."

"This new curriculum has been written in a similar format and organised in a similar way to all other curriculum areas, so it's really a statement that religious education as a subject has equal standing with other subjects," Mr Harvey said.

"We think it's outstanding."



“We’re also about educating the heart, and while we do want smart kids, we also want kids with big hearts who think of others and stand up for each other.”

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# Big families loving life and their Catholic schooling

“The values and teachings the children learn through a Catholic education are invaluable.”

Mum-of-five Karen Quirk has all five children at St Michael's School Gordonvale including (front) Eryn and Ryley and (back) Kyra, Rhys and Kyle.



**T**ANIA Gilbert starts her job at 5am and works 14-15 hours a day, seven days a week. She is passionate about her role, is constantly making vital decisions and is responsible for overseeing all of her charge's projects successfully.

With that drive it's easy to assume Tania is an executive in the corporate world, but the 32 year old has an even tougher job. She is a mum of six children, all under the age of 13.

With five children enrolled at St Clare's Tully and one in Good Counsel College in Innisfail, Tania is a firm believer in the value of providing a Catholic education for her children.

“My husband Stuart and I are both practicing Catholics and we wouldn't have it any other way,” she said.

“Even if we weren't, the values and teachings the children learn through a Catholic education are invaluable. I wish I could have gone to a Catholic secondary college.”

Tania starts her day at 5am and tries to be in bed by 8.30 every night, not long after her six children – Stuart, Monique, Angus, Julie, Charlotte and Hamish. She also volunteers at St Vincent de Paul, is the parish's sacramental co-ordinator and co-ordinates the school's fete.

She ferries her children to ballet, cricket and swimming throughout the week and on weekends and, in between all this, has gained her Certificate 4 in Christian Theology while

studying at home.

“I do get asked if I'm sane,” she laughed. “But it's just our life; it's just normal.”

“I was married at 18 and a lot of people didn't think it would work, but I wouldn't have it any other way.”

“But, yes, I do get exhausted at times. And I do pray to help me get through the day some times.”

Another ‘Super Mum’ who values a Catholic education for her children is mother-of-five Karen Quirk.

Karen is another early-riser and super-organised mum. Her five children – Kyra, Rhys, Kyle, Ryley and Eryn – are all under the age of 12 and attend St Michael's School in Gordonvale.

“I just love the Catholic school's beliefs and morals,” she said. “The direction they give students really impresses me.”

Karen is juggling school, sports and after-school activities with her part-time job as a hairdresser, working from home in her hair salon. Her husband Wayne has just started working out of town, leaving her to manage on her own. But she does get her reward.

“I get every third week off when he gets home, and he takes over and does the running around,” she said.

She's also up early to make the lunches and get the children organised, has a system for homework and school items, takes her children to football and swimming, has a super-organised laundry system for all

their school clothes and even agrees to sleepovers at her house.

“We'll have one big sleepover where each of the kids has a friend over, so our sleepovers usually include 10 children.”

Crazy and busy as her household is, Karen loves her large family.

“They're normal kids; they squabble a lot but cuddle as well,” she said. “But they look out for each other, stick up for each other and care for each other.”

“I wouldn't change it for the world.”

Rhonda Dooley, a Mareeba grandmother, contributes financially to ensure all her grandchildren are educated through Catholic schools. She currently has eight grandchildren enrolled in St Thomas's School and St Stephen's Catholic College in Mareeba and St Augustine's College in Cairns.

“I can't say enough about how good the Catholic schools are,” she said.

“I believe they give students a really good grounding with Christian morals and Christian values.”

“You really can't get anything better.”



Above: Tania Gilbert is surrounded by children (front) Hamish, Charlotte and Angus and (back) Monique and Julia. All six of her children are enrolled in Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese, including Good Counsel College student Stuart (missing from photo).

OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

“I like the discipline and ethos of Catholic schools. It supports what I try to do at home.”

*Justine Hind, Parent & School Secretary, St Michael's School, Gordonvale*

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Helping hand: Counsellor David Manners at work at St Andrew's Catholic College, Redlynch.

## A door that is *always* open

**N**O matter what is going on in their lives, whether it is a school concern, family problem or social issue, all students in Catholic schools have someone trustworthy they can turn to for help.

Recognising that students today face bigger life challenges than ever before, Catholic Education has ensured school counsellors have a strong presence in every school.

"The provision of regular counselling services in our schools has been in response to increasing needs for student support," said Jennifer Rockley, CES Student Services Manager.

"There has been a change in our society with more breakdowns in nuclear families and, as families have to live away from other members of their extended family, they do not necessarily have a lot of support, so a school counsellor is a support to students and families."

All secondary colleges in the Cairns Diocese have full-time counsellors while each primary school has a counsellor who regularly attends each school.

The numbers of counsellors has increased dramatically over the last decade, recalled psychologist and St Andrew's Catholic College School counsellor David Manners.

"The number of counsellors has grown with the need."

Alyce Cahill, a counsellor at St Michael's Gordonvale and Our Lady Help of Christians Earlville, said the problems students talk about aren't always just about school.

"There are lots of different circumstances," she said. "Some students could be struggling with home issues, parents' separation, social issues or grief and loss."

The school counsellor's door is always open for students, parents, grandparents and the school community to discuss any concerns. In addition, counsellors often give class talks on various subjects like bullying, self-esteem and social media concerns.

If a problem seems serious, the school counsellors have relationships with a number of different external services and psychologists to whom they can direct the student or family for extra support.

"We'll do whatever we can to help them," Ms Cahill added.

A school counselling career involves guiding and helping students during difficult times, which can sometimes pull at the heartstrings of the counsellors themselves.

"You try not to take it home with you, but sometimes you can't help it," Mr Manners said.

"But, we're lucky because we have a huge network of support for counsellors at Catholic Education Services.

"And we've had some great success stories."

## School fees – an investment in your children's education

**O**NE of the joys of adulthood is that as soon as money begins to pool in a bank account, a bill will arrive to account for it. And the older we get, the more bills we accumulate.

Mortgages, rates, car rego, health insurance, electricity, water, home and car insurance, credit cards, phone and internet, and, of course, for Catholic school families, school fees.

There will always be a tendency to regard school fees as a more "discretionary" payment than perhaps the Ergon or Telstra bill but in fact it affects your most precious investment – your children's future.

This is even more important when it is remembered that Catholic schools operate with 10 per cent less income than state schools and a huge 30 per cent less than independent schools (MySchool/ACARA data). School fees paid by families account for about 20 per cent of the income for Catholic schools.

Catholic Education Services Executive Director Br Paul Hough said setting fees for Catholic schools was

about finding a fine balance between providing a quality education and keeping it affordable for most families.

"Families are our partners in all this and they can assist by paying their fees, in full and on time," he said.

"But we will continue to make alternative and confidential arrangements for families in genuine financial need – no child will ever be denied a Catholic education because their family is unable to afford the fees," he said.

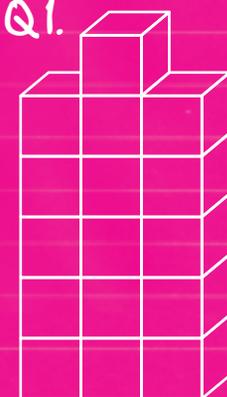
Br Paul said schools were now more active in their efforts to collect school fees, including the engagement of fee collection agencies, and, in extreme circumstances, the cancellation of enrolments.

"We make no apology for this because we do not believe that those who do the right thing and pay their fees should be, in effect, subsidising those who don't," he said.

"Luckily we are only talking about a minority of families that we have to chase up," he said. "The very great majority of our school families are active and enthusiastic supporters of their children's schools."

## Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

Q1.



Carl builds this 3D object using 16 cubes.

He then paints the outside faces of the object including the base.

How many cubes have only 2 faces painted?

Answers on back cover

© ACARA 2012

# Shaping lives, Catholic or not

**T**HERE'S been a large increase in student numbers across the Catholic schools in the Diocese, which doesn't surprise Br Paul Hough, CES executive director.

"We've had a 2.8 per cent increase in our student numbers, which was more than any other Diocese in Queensland," he said.

"It's happening in response to a need. It's a demand that's been driven by the community."

There are over 10,700 students, 800 teachers and just as many support and non-teaching in the Diocese's 26 schools and colleges, and the school community is still expanding.

"Our growth means we're looking at Mount Peter, in the southern outskirts of Cairns, and Weipa as the next possible extensions of our Catholic education services," Br Paul said.

"Many of our schools have waiting lists at the moment, and that's a further indication of the popularity of our schools."

The increase in enrolment is not only because the schools have outstanding educational programs but also because they have welcoming communities that foster spirituality.

"I think people choose a Catholic Education these days because they see the schools are well run, have discipline, have good values, the right attitude and family spirit," Br Paul said.

"There's a sense of inclusiveness that welcomes parents, students and staff to be part of a joint effort to give students the best education possible."

Br Paul believes every child deserves a good education, and the Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese welcome everyone with open arms, Catholic or not.

"Catholic schools are there for families and students who embrace the values and teachings of the Catholic faith regardless if they are Catholics or not," he said.

"A lot of people who I've spoken to who aren't Catholic but have a Catholic education say it was a very formative part of their lives; they look back at it with fondness in terms of how it shaped them."

Br Paul's passion is to make sure any child doesn't miss out on a strong and values-based education.

"If you come from a poor family, have a disability, come from a rural or Indigenous background or have been disengaged from education and want a second chance, there are means to make it happen," he said.

"We don't want to have any barriers to students getting a Catholic education.

"It is one of the best things we can do for them."



“Catholic schools are there for families and students who embrace the values and teachings of the Catholic faith regardless if they are Catholics or not.”

“I think people choose a Catholic Education these days because they see the schools are well run, have discipline, have good values, the right attitude and family spirit.”



“There's a sense of inclusiveness that welcomes parents, students and staff to be part of a joint effort to give students the best education possible.”

## OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

“The Catholic education environment at St Stephen's encompasses a well-disciplined, respectful, humble, Christian place to learn, with fantastic staff to learn from.”

*Mark Letcher, Parent,  
St Stephen's Catholic College,  
Mareeba*

## Enrolment Policy

When demand for enrolments exceeds available places, schools are guided by their enrolment policies. These policies, whilst unique to each school, are based upon the Cairns Diocesan Catholic Education Enrolment Policy, which states that enrolment priority is given, in order, to:

- Those who participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist
- Catholics who commit to the values of the Catholic church
- Siblings of existing students
- Participating members of other Christian churches
- Christians who commit to the values of the Catholic church
- Those not affiliated with any Christian church, who commit to the values of the Catholic church

# Off to a flying start



Thanks to funding assistance from the State Government's *Flying Start* program, Catholic secondary colleges have been able to build and renovate for the new influx of students. But it's not all about the building works.

"While we have added a new building and refurbished other rooms, we are also preparing staff, parents and the current Year 6 and 7 students," Mr Keenan added.

St Augustine's College is expecting 125 Year 7 students.

"We have a huge building project going on, partially funded by *Flying Start*, to accommodate the extra classrooms," said Principal Br Darren Burge.

"Like other secondary colleges, we've been spending quite a lot of time planning this transition and ensuring all the students' needs are covered."

Some colleges, like Mount St Bernard College in Herberton and St Augustine's, will also have additional boarding facilities in place.

St Stephen's Catholic College Mareeba is also expecting a large number of Year 7 students with about 100 already enrolled.

The school, like all the secondary schools, is also ensuring their pastoral care program is fine tuned to help with the transition. "Parents and students must be comfortable knowing that support programs are in place for this unique set of circumstances," said Principal Ida Pinese.

St Monica's College is in the process of constructing a four-storey building to accommodate the 120 Year 7 students they are expecting.

"By making the building four storeys, it's giving us all the space we need," said Principal Kristen Sharpe. "Bringing the Year 7s into secondary school is a very exciting time for all the school communities."

St Mary's has also had major building works going on as they prepare for 170 new students.

As have all the Diocese's secondary schools, the college has been preparing for over a year and has encouraged the primary students making the transition to visit the school and experience secondary school life before they join the school.

"It's great for them because they get to see what it's like in a science room, a home room, practical arts areas and different classes throughout the school," said Assistant Principal Adelaide Kibby.

"And it really helps them to get an idea of what high school is like."

St Andrew's Catholic College isn't as busy on the building and construction side but the school has still had a year of preparation to get ready for the Year 7s' introduction into high school.

"Because we are a Prep to Year 12 college, we feel like the new plans for the Year 7 transition are complimenting what we already do here," said Mark Kennedy, Deputy Principal and head of middle years.

"We are taking in about five extra classes, but we are really lucky as we don't have as much building and construction to do as some of the other schools.

"But there still has been a great deal of preparation work involved."

In addition to accommodating the new students by adding new classroom space and integrating the Year 7 curriculum into their programs, all schools in the Cairns Diocese haven't forgotten the most important people being affected – next year's Year 7 (and Year 8) students.

"Our Pastoral Care programs, like all the secondary schools', are there so that parents and students realise they have someone to talk to if they have any concerns," added Good Counsel College Principal Mr Keenan.

Many of the secondaries have created separate courtyards and lunch areas for the Year 7s so they can comfortably make their transition into high school.

"We modified an area to make a courtyard for them to provide them with their own space," said St Augustine's Principal Br Darren.

"We encourage them not to stay in the one area, but it does give them a place of their own and helps them to adjust."



Top left: Ready: Good Counsel College Principal Paul Keenan in front of the new building to help accommodate Year 7. Above top: St Andrew's Mark Kennedy with students who will be transitioning to high school within their P-12 college. Above: Own space: St Augustine's students check out the courtyard area created for next year's Year 7s.

Construction: Building works are underway at St Monica's College Cairns to cater for the influx of Year 7 students next year.

## OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

"We chose a Catholic education for our children because the values and principles that they teach the children are values that we feel will help them throughout adolescence and adult life."

Andrew Jackson, Parent,  
St Clare's School, Tully

# Year 6s & 7s making history together



Memorable moments: St Joseph's Year 6 and 7 students, Emma, Annie, Allysa, Kai, Daniel, Lauren, Luke and Edward enjoy their last year at primary school.

Below: Family ties: Siblings Ashley Ricketts, Year 6, and Joshua, Year 7, from St Therese's Bentley Park will start high school together.



Above: All in the family: Cousins Maya Threlfall, Year 6, and Brad Threlfall, Year 7, are ready to make the transition together.



Left: United cause: Year 6 student Zac Fordson, and Year 7 student Paige Dalgety, from St Teresa's Ravenshoe, are ready to join high school together.

WHILE a great deal of focus has been placed on preparations for the move of this year's Year 6s to high school next year - neither the students in question, nor their elder Year 7 cohort who also start high school for the first time next year as Year 8s - have been forgotten.

In fact, they're both getting the senior-student star treatment and going into the record books at the same time.

Together, this year's Year 6 and 7 students as Year 7s and 8s next year will constitute one third of six year levels that will be new to their secondary college. In any previous year, they would have been one year level in five new to the school. This in itself represents a new challenge to secondary colleges, but one they are preparing well for with pastoral support programs and staff training.

The Catholic primary schools in the Cairns Diocese have not only spent the last year planning and implementing programs to prepare their students, parents and staff for the move of this year's Year 6 and 7 students, they've also planned to ensure both the Year 6 and Year 7 students are excited about being part of the change.

"We point out to them that it's an

historical event," said Brendon Alexander, Principal of St Francis Xavier's School at Manunda. "We are highlighting the positive aspect that they're history makers.

"And they're excited."

For the first and last time in history all the primary schools are including both Year 6s and 7s in school leadership roles, ensuring the Year 6s also enjoy their last year of primary school as senior students, without undervaluing the experience for the last ever Year 7s.

"We don't want the Year 6s to miss out on anything they'd normally do as Year 7s," said Liam Kenny, Principal of Good Counsel Primary in Innisfail, "and likewise we don't want the Year 7s to feel any less important when they start secondary college because they have to share the limelight with the current Year 6s.

"It's a big year for the Year 6s as well as for the Year 7s."

All the schools have included Year 6 students in shared leadership programs, school captaincy roles, senior leadership positions and senior camps as well as making sure the Year 6 students have the distinction of wearing senior school uniforms. And

they'll be a significant part of the end-of-year graduation ceremonies.

"It is historical," noted Kevin Browning from St Therese's School at Bentley Park.

"It's the last Year 7 group we will be farewelling, so that is very special for them, along with the first Year 6 group we will also say goodbye to."

Throughout the transition planning process, the advice of parents was vital.

"What was important to the parents was important to us," Mr Alexander said. "It was really important that we took on board their views before we moved forward."

With the loss of a year level there will be a decrease in numbers in the primaries, although many schools' Prep enrolments are increasing and compensating for the loss of students. Most of the schools are taking advantage of the decrease in numbers to increase their classroom space.

"Like most primary schools we will turn our extra space into bigger classrooms," added Mr Kenny.

"It will also give us another multi-purpose area which we will use for various activities, especially to work with students in small groups."

The smaller regional schools will face a bigger impact when they lose both Year 6 and 7 students at the same time.

"We will lose 22 students, which is a lot for our small school of 115," said St Rita's South Johnstone Principal Vicki Conomo.

"We are going to be impacted significantly," agreed Principal Greg Hoare of St Clare's Tully, "however on the positive side, you can never have too much room."

## OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

"I like the caring environment that the Catholic school provides for my child."

*Julia Parsons, Parent, St Anthony's Dimbulah*

## YEAR 7 TO SECONDARY

# A timely move

**T**HE move of Year 7 to secondary next year now sees Queensland aligned with most other States' and Territories' schooling structures where Year 7 is already the first year of secondary school, Catholic Education's Assistant Executive Director School Development, Paul Cazzulino, said.

"Educators agree that young teenagers are ready for greater independence and this move, along with the Australian Curriculum will open up new educational opportunities for students of this age," Mr Cazzulino said.

"When Prep was introduced in 2007 those students were on average 6 months older and these are the students that by next

year, more than half will turn 13 and will be in their eighth year of schooling which is the appropriate time for secondary school to begin.

"The move of Year 7 to secondary in 2015 is a government initiative across all schooling sectors in Queensland and has the support of the State, Catholic and Independent schooling sectors."

He said as with the introduction of Prep in 2007 and the rollout of the *Building the Education Revolution* funding in recent years, the Catholic sector had the runs on the board when it came to seamlessly delivering major initiatives and he expected that the move of Year 7 to secondary would be no different.



# Staffing priorities

Sound workplace planning had ensured there would not be any forced moves or redundancies across the Diocese's primary schools when Year 7 moves to secondary schooling next year.

Catholic Education's Assistant Executive Director School Development, Paul Cazzulino, said while contracts had been on offer to teaching staff over the past couple of years, the regular staffing processes could now resume and full-time permanent teaching positions would again be offered in the 2014/2015 staffing cycle.

Catholic Education is also committed to providing professional learning opportunities to build capacity of all teachers working in the middle phase of learning, he said.

"It is our intent that there is a shared understanding of the student as a learner as well as the pedagogy and practices that support student learning and achievements."

Primary staff had already participated in 'Sharing of Practice' programs in secondary colleges.

Professional learning opportunities around learning and teaching young

adolescents were being offered and coordinated by Catholic Education Services.

"Understanding young adolescents' growth and development and the implications associated with this are just some of the topics on offer, along with change management for school leaders, strategies for the wellbeing of students and building teacher capacity to teach the Australian Curriculum in Science and Mathematics in the lower secondary area."

Mr Cazzulino said secondary colleges would also offer professional development to primary teachers focusing on adapting to the secondary setting. Dealing with older students, attitudes, communication, behaviour and relationships were just some of the topics to be tackled, along with timetabling in the secondary setting and subject options, specialisation and expectations, amongst others.

"The increased staffing needs in secondary colleges will be challenging and will be addressed alongside the current move of Positions of Added Responsibility (PARs) to Middle Leadership positions," he said. (see story on page 2).



## St Monica's College, Cairns



**St Monica's College is the oldest school in Cairns. The College is highly regarded for its time honoured values and contemporary teaching and learning. We have a tradition of academic excellence and sporting success.**

**St Monica's College is a purposely small, welcoming, friendly and inclusive community - Year 7 to Year 12. Each student is known and valued by a highly professional and dedicated staff. Students enjoy a strong sense of belonging and love our sense of community.**

**Contact – Ph (07) 4042 4800  
office@stmonicas.qld.edu.au**



*Faith Integrity Self Belief Courage Mercy Community*

# Caring for Creation



Right: Green thumbs: School leaders at Our Lady Help of Christians School Earlville with their garden project.



Above: Watering: St Anthony's Dimbulah student, Clancie Sivyer at work in the school's vege garden.

**T**HE caring culture in Catholic schools not only extends beyond the school gate into the wider community, it also includes the responsibility of caring for Creation.

From growing gardens and planting trees to raising chickens and making worm farms, each school in the Diocese has a range of environmentally-aware initiatives to help encourage children to appreciate the natural wonders of Creation.

One of the newest initiatives adopted by some schools, including St Rita's Babinda, St Anthony's Dimbulah and St Joseph's Atherton, is the introduction of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.

Students are taught how to build and maintain veggie and herb gardens using organic principles. Then they harvest and cook their produce into meals for students, parents and teachers.

"Our students just love it," said Judy Billiau, Principal of St Rita's Babinda.

"The students really enjoy the hands-on engagement that gardening and cooking provide, and they love to eat their own food."

Another environmentally friendly initiative some schools are undertaking is a Nude Food Day, where the children's lunchboxes come litter-free. Parents put the food inside little containers, the containers go home with the students and rubbish is non-existent.

"Some students were having up to 10 pieces of rubbish in their lunch boxes every day," Ms Billiau said.

Some of Catholic schools' green ideas have been initiated by students.

"Our Year 5s and 6s are looking at recycling and what's happening to our planet so they wanted to do something to help," said Vicki Conomo, Principal of St Rita's South Johnstone.

"They started with composting and are planning on building a garden next. It was their idea and they're very passionate about it."

Some schools take advantage of things happening around their school or in the community to pass along the message of environmental protection.

Students at St Clare's Tully are involved in a restoration project on a creek that backs on to their school, while students at St Michael's Gordonvale and other schools join in on Clean Up Australia Day to clean their school and its surrounding areas.

Our Lady Help of Christians turned a negative into a positive when they started their tree-planting program.

"We are expanding our oval and unfortunately some trees have to go, and we really wanted to offset the potential message that kids might take away from seeing the trees come down so we initiated a planting program where we plant three trees for every one that we lose," said OLHOC Principal Luke Brown.

Holy Cross is believed to be the only school in the Diocese to be raising chickens.

"We've had three chickens for about 12 months now," said Principal Wendy Manners.

"They are actually fenced in on our parish priest Father Neil's property for health and safety reasons, but the students visit them, chat to them, feed them and collect the eggs."

While the chickens complement the school's veggie and herb garden projects, they will not end up on the plate next to the garden produce.

"Our students just love them and think of them as part of the school family," Mrs Manners said. "They named them Mango, Fluffy and Spark and are very protective of them."

"But they do like eating their eggs."

Right: Feeding the chooks: Students from Holy Cross School Trinity Park visit the chickens they are raising.



Left: Budding gardeners: Isaac Darveniza, Bennett Buchanan and Imogen Stanley from St Rita's South Johnstone are helping by composting.



Below: Getting up close: St Joseph's Atherton Year 6 students Kiara Frost, Will Lawrence and Ethan Backshall check out the school garden.



## Phone app and website boosts Cath Ed comms

**C**ATHOLIC Education in the Far North has boosted its communication to parents and staff with the introduction of a phone and tablet app, a new website and a new staff portal.

The Cairns Catholic Education app, powered by Skoolbag, can be downloaded for iPhones or androids and also works on tablets. For those without a smart device, the communications centre on the new website provides instant updates.

All Catholic schools in the region are at varying stages of getting their own school version of the app up and running.

Executive Director Br Paul Hough said the new app would be a handy communication tool, especially during cyclone seasons.

“Push notifications can be sent to all parents and staff of individual schools who have downloaded their school app, or to the whole system simultaneously, without the cost of SMS messaging.”

Br Paul encouraged as many Catholic school families as possible to download the Cairns Catholic Education app by searching for Cairns Catholic Education in

their phone’s app store.

“The app is also downloadable by members of the public, with secure logins for internal information. For prospective parents it provides enrolment information. Job-seekers can receive instant notification of when new positions are posted.

“The beauty of the app is that it provides for the instantaneous dissemination of information, as well as allowing for response by email or SMS.

“This way the two-way flow of information is enhanced without some of the privacy and other issues sometimes associated with social media, although some postings could still be shared on social media sites,” Br Paul said.

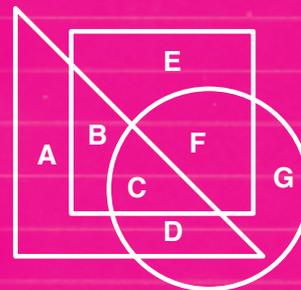
For a bit of fun, there are some quizzes to see if you are smarter than a fifth grader, based on NAPLAN testing. You will find quiz examples sprinkled throughout this issue of Spirited Schools. For answers, see the back page.

Cairns Catholic Education’s new website provides a wealth of information to new and prospective families including a find-a-school map searching feature and is mobile device friendly.

The new staff portal fulfils the intranet and extranet needs of the school system comprising Catholic Education Services and all Catholic schools in the Diocese.

### Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

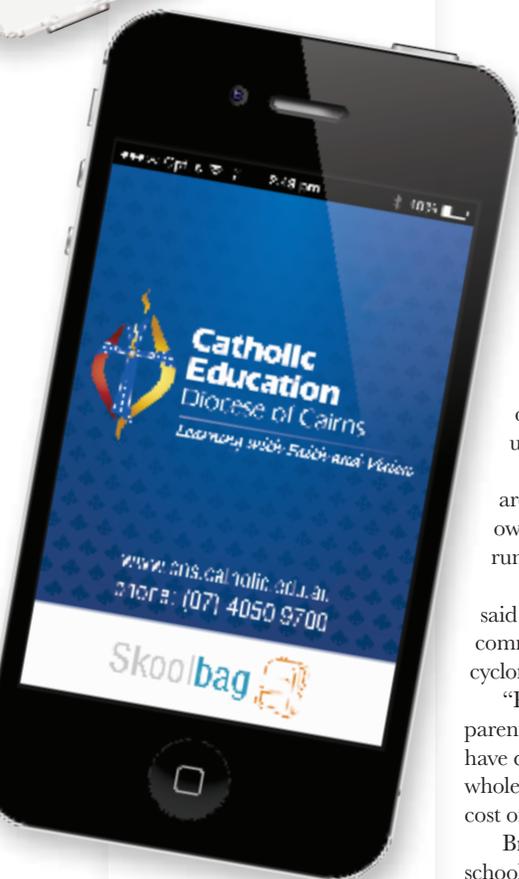
Q2.



Which letter is in the square and also in the triangle, but not in the circle?

Answers on back cover

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Left: Reading: Principal of St Teresa's School Ravenshoe Catherine McKechnie encourages students to spend more time on their homework.

Right: Interactive site: Checking out the online homework space are Mother of Good Counsel teacher Sue Glanville and Year 4 students.

Below right: Helping hand: St Augustine's teacher Chris Wright provides after school tutorial.

## Making homework life *easier*

**H**OMEWORK has often been a bane of existence for students, parents and teachers, but exciting new initiatives by some of Cairns Diocese schools have made homework life a whole lot easier for everyone.

Schools like St Therese's Bentley Park are trialling a new no-mark homework project for Year 1 students. While not like traditional homework, the project is aimed to enhance what the students are being taught at school, such as learning to read the clock and learning about numbers and colours.

Other schools, like St Rita's South Johnstone, have homework clubs, where students are encouraged to stay after school and get help from teachers. St Augustine's College also offers extra tutorials after school with teachers.

St Joseph's Cairns has weekly homework grids, which are charts the students receive each week with a number of activities to be completed including helping at home and exercising.

"We're trying to promote family wellbeing as well as student wellbeing within the homework framework," Principal Gavin Rick said.

One of the most dynamic and innovative new concepts to enhance homework is a new interactive extranet at Mother of Good Counsel North Cairns, where some students and parents can log in to access homework information, the school library's resources and links to other educational sites to make doing homework much easier.

"The teachers are putting homework information on the system and they're also uploading details related to what the students are learning at the moment, so parents can easily access that information," explained Mother of Good Counsel Principal Ruth Mallon.

The site also gives a rundown on what students are learning in class, which can be an invaluable tool for parents.

"When I ask my son what he is doing in school, he doesn't say much at all, like most

kids, but now I can look up what his class is learning about so that leads into discussions with him and more meaningful conversations about what he's learning," said Nadine Grant, a parent and a teacher at Mother of Good Counsel School.

"It's just fantastic."

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Thursday Island, is just starting to implement an unusual new approach to encourage students to do their homework.

"Some of our teachers have initiated homework contracts for parents to sign," Principal Helen Kett said.

"We believe that having an agreement in place will help get the homework done.

"We've only just initiated this. It's a test at this stage to see if it works."

And what happens if parents don't sign the contract?

"Well, then, the child doesn't get homework," Ms Kett said. "But they miss out on learning and developing."



### OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

"We chose a Catholic education because of the morals and values that come from the teachings of the church that my child is exposed to."

*Andrew Apap, Parent, St Clare's School, Tully*

## Sharing the accolades

**A**WARD wins and academic successes have become even more synonymous with students and teachers in Cairns Catholic schools thanks to an array of amazing local, state and national achievements from Catholic teachers and students in the last year.

Holy Cross Assistant Principal Religious Education Jo Martorella, St Mary's Catholic College Assistant to the Principal Adelaide Kibby, Special Assistance School Administration Officer Melissa Milton, students Nicole Chan, Justelle Coyle and Hannah Witten, Thursday Island's Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School staff members Lasmintan Ahboo and Tali Frank and volunteer extraordinaire Judy Rick were all thrust into the spotlight recently for their outstanding achievements.

Ms Martorella was at St Joseph's Cairns when she received a prestigious Queensland Spirit of Catholic Education Award.

The Spirit of Catholic Education Awards, an annual award celebrated as part of Catholic Education Week, drew a large contingent of nominations.

Ms Martorella, the Cairns Diocese recipient, was honoured for her outstanding services in teaching.

"I was so humbled," she said. "But,

to be honest, I just felt that it was an award representing all of Cairns Catholic education.

"Nothing you can do can be done by one person – everything is community based, so this award was not just for me."

Ms Kibby won the Australian College of Educators' Noreen Wilcox Award for classroom-based excellence for her involvement in various activities both in and out of school, which included her donning many hats – musical stage manager, Peninsula girls hockey team manager and Red Cross blood bank donor organiser, to name a few.

It also coincided with her 20th year of teaching and her 20th year at St Mary's.

"Winning was very humbling," she said.

"Noreen was a State educator in the Cairns area and advocated strongly for education professionalism, which makes this award very special."

Ms Milton, who previously ran the Mission program at St Andrew's Catholic College, was honoured as Volunteer of the Year at the Cairns Australian Day awards.

As the volunteer coordinator of Rosie's Friends on the Street for the past six years, Ms Milton has helped to provide companionship and support to thousands of



Left: Focusing on students: Adelaide Kibby of St Mary's Catholic College, who won the 2013 Noreen Wilcox Award for classroom-based excellence, shares a funny moment with Year 12 students.

homeless by developing training and building up a team of more than 100 volunteers.

Nicole Chan, a 2013 graduate of St Mary's Catholic College, was named the Cairns Young Citizen of the Year at the Australian Day awards while St Monica's students Justelle Coyle and Hannah Witten were selected to be part of the National Youth Science Forum at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart staff member Ms Ahboo won the Competition Medallion while her colleague Mr Tali was presented the Sports Medallion at the Australian Day Awards on Thursday Island.

Mum, grandmother and volunteer extraordinaire Judy Rick won the CES Docemus Volunteer of the Year award for her 30 years of dedicated service to Cairns Catholic Education.

Judy knows her way around Catholic

schools. She has volunteered hours of her time at St Michael's Gordonvale, St John's Silkwood, St Rita's Babinda, St Francis Xavier's Manunda, St Clare's Tully and St Joseph's Parramatta Park teaching music and sharing her knowledge of liturgy.

"I think music just helps you to express yourself and I really love teaching and sharing with the students and the wider community," she said.

She has driven from school to school, keyboard in tow, to practise hymns with students and share in school celebrations and masses.

It wasn't just current members of the school communities who were in the spotlight recently for their achievements. Former St Monica's student Lizanne Smith won the Australian Day Cultural Award and former St Therese's student Brianna Bortolanza won the Australia Day Sportsperson of the Year award.

# Br Paul moving on, authentic in his mission

**B**R Paul Hough, the Executive Director of Catholic Education Services, will leave Cairns at the end of June to take on a new role in Sydney as Advocacy Officer for the Marist Province of Australia.

Br Paul has been Executive Director since August 2012 but joined Catholic Education in 2010 as a consultant to manage a number of projects. He had earlier been in Cairns from 1982 to 1987 as the Principal of St Augustine's College.

"It has been a wonderful experience leading the education office in the Cairns Diocese," he said.

"My personal emphasis here has been to ensure that our schools remain authentically Catholic in their mission, particularly in our outreach to the poor and the marginalised in our community.

"There is always a tendency for a well-run system of schools such as ours to become complacent and possibly a little like a private school in outlook," he said.

"But we should always strive to be more than that. The Gospels teach us that our schools should also be places that welcome the weakest, the poorest and the most disadvantaged members of our community," he said.

Br Paul said it was important that students graduating from Catholic schools should have both a sense of their own worth as individuals but also a commitment to how they might serve their community: "Our world needs good strong people with a strong commitment to social justice – we need to play a part in that."

During his time at Catholic Education in Cairns Br Paul has overseen the development of trade training centres at the secondary colleges, approval of a school for disengaged young people in Cairns and Cooktown, the employment of Indigenous liaison officers at all schools, an increase in Indigenous student numbers and achievements, more places for students with disabilities, planning for new schools at Weipa and Mt Peter, and a charitable

foundation for young people in necessitous circumstances.

"But it's also the little things that make a difference, like the mini bus service we started this year to bring students from Yarrabah to St Michael's school at Gordonvale – these kids now have access to a Catholic education for probably the first time," he said.

Br Paul will spend most of Term 2 away from Cairns as he undertakes a study sabbatical in preparation for his new role.

"I expect to be a regular visitor to the Far North in my new role. I especially want to be here when the new Special Assistance School opens in Cairns and Cooktown – that will be a day to celebrate," he said.

Bishop James Foley said Br Paul was leaving Cairns on the eve of his golden jubilee as a Marist Brother on 2 July.

"This personal landmark will provide a suitable moment for him to finish his work in Cairns and to receive the recognition he deserves for the particular service he has given to the people of Far North Queensland," he said.

Bishop James said he would make an appointment of a new Executive Director in the coming months, with Deputy Executive Director Bill Dixon acting in the role in the interim.



Bill Dixon



Br Paul Hough

"Students graduating from Catholic schools should have both a sense of their own worth as individuals but also a commitment to how they might serve their community."

## OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

"Our school expects a high standard from its students and we like that, particularly when it is done in such a way that the student's individuality is respected and celebrated, and their welfare remains a priority."

Ann Aitken, Parent,  
St Stephen's Catholic  
College, Mareeba

## Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

**Q3.** The sum of the opposite faces of a standard six-sided dice is always 7.

Hannah rolls three dice.

The sum of the top faces is 11.

What is the sum of the three opposite faces?

**Q4.** The population of Australia in 1950 was 8.27 million.

The population of Australia in 2000 was 19.16 million.

What is the difference in number between these two populations?

 million

Answers on back cover



St Stephen's  
Catholic College

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## SOCIAL JUSTICE



Backers: Alex Loughton from the Cairns Taipans with students Sheridan Rick and Mitchel White showed their support for the buy-a-bale campaign.

## A focus on helping others in need

IT'S amazing how one single compassionate thought could cause a chain of events that would bring leaders and communities together for a positive common goal.

Such was the case when St. Joseph's Cairns Year 7 captain and animal lover Mitchel White was talking to a friend about the drought Queensland farmers are currently experiencing and wanted to do something, anything, to help.

After writing a letter to his Principal Gavin Rick, his idea to help was encouraged and supported by the school and resulted in a highly successful Buy-A-Bale fundraising effort.

The money raised goes towards buying bales of hay to feed livestock and is in conjunction with Aussie Helpers, who will organise and distribute the hay to the areas most affected.

"The children are just loving it," said Mitchel's mother Shirlene.

"It's made them so aware of the struggling farmers and they really wanted to do something to help."

The entire school has jumped on board with Assistant Principal Religious Education Janet Zaccour leading a team of mums and students to make, paint, decorate and varnish 17 corflute cows which were set up in front of the school.

Aussie Helpers threw their support behind the project, bringing their Pattison Bear, a drought-awareness mascot, to increase awareness of the campaign. The Taipans and Barron River MP Michael Trout also got on board.

The Buy-A-Bale fundraising is one example of hundreds of amazing social justice causes Catholic schools are involved in. Each and every school has programs and projects to encourage students to help others in need.

Some, like St. John's Silkwood, started a Random Act of Kindness Week through their Mini-Vinnies program.

"Wherever there is a human in need, there is an opportunity for kindness and to make a difference," St. John's Principal Andrew Maley said. "Random Act of Kindness Week at our school was a huge success and while it's over, everyone is still continuing with the initiative of showing kindness."

Mr Colin Harvey, Assistant Executive Director of Faith and Religious Education at Catholic Education Services, says the strong focus on social justice is an everyday part of the Catholic school philosophy.

"Social justice in our schools is a strong focus," he said. "The students are given a sense of their wider responsibilities and

wider obligations, and they do wonderful things for the community."

St. Andrew's Catholic College, a well-respected powerhouse in social justice causes, encourages every one of their students to be involved in helping others.

"We want them all to be agents of action," said APRE Luke Felstead.

"They learn by doing and it very much empowers the kids."

Students at the school have helped make and deliver food and care packages to the homeless, raised money for breast cancer research, raise funds for Relay for life and help with a multitude of compassionate causes.

"It's amazing to see how much they get out of helping to feed the homeless," Mr Felstead said. "Things like this really change their lives."

The school's Relay for Life campaign involved 280 students who raised \$20,000.

"They were amazing," Mr Felstead added.

"Anyone who says kids today are not as good as they used to be is so wrong."

"I think kids today are wonderful."

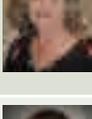
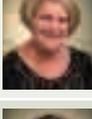
### OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

"I chose a Catholic education for my child in the knowledge that students of Catholic education are taught the importance of faith and values, such as self worth and to care for others. At a Catholic school I believe students receive an education of the whole person – physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually, and this is extremely important in today's world."

*J Taylor, Parent,  
St Rita's School,  
South Johnstone*

# Enrolment Guide to Catholic Schools and Colleges

## Our Primary Schools

Location	Schools & Colleges	Offerings	Contact	Principal	Enrolment Information	Specialties
<p><i>From next year, our primary schools will offer Prep – Year 6. They currently offer Prep to Year 7. Some also offer Outside School Hours Care (OSHCare). A stream is a class within a year level, eg. four streams in Prep means four separate Prep classes</i></p>						
Bentley Park	St Therese's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	135/167 Robert Rd Bentley Park 4869 Ph 4055 4514 secretary.bentleypk@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stthereses.qld.edu.au	Kevin Browning 	Prep enrolments from 1st Monday of March for following year. All other applications taken at any time throughout year. Contact Vera Skinner or Colleen Will. 4 streams in YP-6 next year, currently 2 streams Y7.	LOTE Japanese, performing arts, music program (private tuition), sporting program.
Earlville	Our Lady Help of Christians School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	18 Balaclava Rd Earlville 4870 Ph 4054 2566 secretary.earlville@cns.catholic.edu.au www.olhoc.qld.edu.au	Luke Brown 	Limited vacancies across year levels. Applications for Prep – Yr 6 considered throughout the year, subject to vacancy and interview. Enquiries welcome. Contact Madonna Snell.	A caring, inclusive community that provides Social Emotional Learning, Instrumental Music program, Italian Language lessons, strong focus on Literacy & Numeracy and Anti Bullying programs. OLHOC is committed to preparing students for the 21st Century.
Gordonvale	St Michael's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	58 Mill St, PO Box 64 Gordonvale 4865 Ph 4056 1614 secretary.gordonvale@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stmichael.qld.edu.au	Lea Martin 	Prep Terms 1 & 2 for following year, anytime for other year levels. Vacancies in all year levels. Contact Justine Hind or Dorina Gawley.	Small school with country, family atmosphere. Specialist in the arts; school football and netball teams; instrumental teachers for private tuition; strong SEL focus; peers support program, chess club, environmental club.
Manunda	St Francis Xavier's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	5 Atkinson St, PO Box 95 Manunda 4870 Ph 4037 9900 secretary.manunda@cns.catholic.edu.au www.xaviercairns.qld.edu.au	Brendon Alexander 	Term 2 for the following year. Some vacancies across year levels. Enquiries welcome. Contact Julie Storrs.	Specialist programs in music and Japanese, strong sport tradition, Home-stay program, Cultural Exchange program, technology focus, digital learning a priority, all Yr 4-5s have iPads as part of Bring Your Own Device program, which is embedded into curriculum.
Mossman	St Augustine's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	Grogan St, PO Box 327 Mossman 4873 Ph 4098 1631 secretary.mossman@cns.catholic.edu.au www.staugustine.qld.edu.au	Frazer Rigby (Acting) 	Prep enrolments end of Term 2 for following year although applications welcome anytime, subject to vacancies and interview.	Specialist PE and Information Literacy Skills programs, instrumental music program, emphasis on values and SEL, Peer Support program, Buddy program Preps & Year 6, Life Long Learning Awards evenings, small school, supportive community.
North Cairns	Mother of Good Counsel School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	394 Sheridan St, PO Box 22 Cairns 4870 Ph 4053 6133 secretary.nthcairns@cns.catholic.edu.au www.mogc.qld.edu.au	Ruth Mallon 	Prep Term 1 and early Term 2 for following year. Applications for other year levels accepted throughout year. Some vacancies across other year levels. 2 streams in Years P-6 in 2015. Contact Evelyn Connors.	Small community minded, strong SEL focus (Playground Guardians, Peer Support, Better Buddies programs), specialist Japanese, Arts and PE programs, instrumental music and school choir & ukulele club, strong ICT focus with knowledgeable team of teachers supporting.
Parramatta Park	St Joseph's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	11 Loeven St, Parramatta Park 4870 Ph 4051 4041 secretary.parramatta@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjosephscairns.qld.edu.au	Gavin Rick 	Enrolment enquiries for P-6 welcome at any time, however Prep enrolments conducted Term 1 & beginning Term 2. Contact Michelle Zaeh. 2 streams in Years P-6 in 2015.	A community that values learning, community, respect and love, St Joseph's is a school for healthy minds, bodies and spirits. Social & Emotional Learning through a Catholic spiritual lens. Strong multi-cultural presence with an extensive ESL program. HPE, Music and Mandarin are specialist areas offered. 1:1 iPad program from Year 4. Strong parent engagement.
Trinity Park	Holy Cross School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	Reed Rd, Trinity Park 4879 PO Box 1026, Smithfield 4878 Ph 4057 6920 secretary.trinitypk@cns.catholic.edu.au www.holycross.qld.edu.au	Wendy Manners 	Enrolments accepted any time of year. Preps up to and including Term 1 for following year. Prep interviews Term 2. Some existing vacancies across year levels, waiting lists in most. In 2015: 3 streams P-Y5, 2 streams Y6. Contact Margie Thorpe.	Instrumental music, tennis, Peer Support, Playground Guardians programs, LOTE Italian, sporting clinics, netball, Futsal & NRL, SEL emphasis.
Woree	St Gerard Majella School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	63 Anderson Rd, PO Box 12131 Woree 4870 Ph 4054 4805 secretary.woree@cns.catholic.edu.au www.sgmcairns.qld.edu.au	Terry Grant 	Enrolment applications accepted any time of the year. Prep interviews March for following year. Some vacancies across year levels. Enquiries welcome. Contact Sarah Rankine. 2 streams in each year level.	Specialist Arts, LOTE and PE teachers; choir, writing, chess and science clubs. Instrumental music programs from Y2 onwards.
Atherton	St Joseph's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6	Cnr Alice & Jack Sts, PO Box 829 Atherton 4883 Ph 4091 4211 secretary.atherton@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjoey.qld.edu.au	Gerry Simon (Acting) 	Prep enrolments Term 1, 2 and 3 for following year. Applications taken any time of year, subject to vacancy and interview. Vacancies in most year levels. Contact Annette Born or Leona Lane.	Instrumental music specialist, specialist HPE and LOTE P-Y7. Strong community & parish links. Emphasis on SEL and student & parent programs. A caring environment that values family and developing the whole person.
Dimbulah	St Anthony's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6	Hyde St, PO Box 128 Dimbulah 4872 Ph 4093 5319 secretary.dimbulah@cns.catholic.edu.au www.sta.qld.edu.au	Katrina Miller 	Term 3 for following year. Vacancies in all year levels. Contact Katrina Miller.	Specialist PE/HPE program, Literacy Enrichment Teacher, ICT focus, small class sizes, experienced teachers.
Mareeba	St Thomas's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6	63 Constance St Mareeba 4880 Ph 4092 1570 secretary.mareeba@cns.catholic.edu.au stthomasmareeba.qld.edu.au	Rita Petersen 	Term 2 for following year. Interviews middle to late Term 2. Induction for new families end of Term 3. Some vacancies across year levels. Enrolment enquiries to Connie Martens.	Performing Arts & PE P-Y7, instrumental music lessons, school band, school representative council, active After School Care programs.
Ravenshoe	St Teresa's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6	6 Moffatt St, PO Box 249 Ravenshoe 4888 Ph 4097 6173 secretary.ravenshoe@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stteresas.qld.edu.au	Catherine McKechnie 	Term 2 for Prep following year. Vacancies in Prep, Y1 and Y5, waiting lists all other levels. Contact Catherine McKenzie or Debbie McDonnell.	Strong inter-school sporting program, reading rotations across year levels, ICT technologies to enhance numeracy teaching, Literacy Enhancement Teacher, community involvement, choir, instrumental music program.
Babinda	St Rita's School	2014: Prep – Year 7 2015: Prep – Year 6	7-13 Church St, PO Box 363 Babinda 4861 Ph 4067 1467 secretary.babinda@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stritasbabinda.qld.edu.au	Judy Billiau 	Prep enrolments in Term 3 for following year. All other enrolment applications welcome at any time. Vacancies in all year levels. Contact Judy Billiau, Debbie Kurucz or Lisa Calcagno.	A small school with a big heart! Small class sizes, high teacher-to-student ratio, every student in Year 4 – 7 has an iPad, friendly family atmosphere, specialist Japanese and Science lessons, strong school emphasis on SEL and differentiated learning.

# Colleges in the Cairns Diocese

## Our Primary Schools (cont.)

Location	Schools & Colleges	Offerings	Contact	Principal	Enrolment Information	Specialties
Innisfail	Good Counsel Primary School	2014: Prep - Year 7 2015: Prep - Year 6	96 Rankin St Innisfail 4860 Ph 4061 2994 secretary.innisfail@cns.catholic.edu.au www.gcps.qld.edu.au	Liam Kenny 	Term 3 for following year. Prep Term 2 for following year. Limited vacancies across all year levels. Contact Liam Kenny or Annette Dunne.	Japanese Y4-7, choir Y4-7, instrumental music Y3-7, performing arts and HPE P-Y7, embedded SEL, Student Council Y6-7, Minnie Vinnies class groups Y6-7, Longreach Camp Y6-7, Tinaroo Camp Y5, Herberton Excursion Y4.
Redlynch	St Andrew's Catholic College	2014 & 2015: Prep - Year 12 Co-Educational Day Schooling OSHCare	The Enrolment Officer, Kieran Casey Intake Rd, PO Box 150 Redlynch 4870 Ph 4039 5204 enrolments@standrewscc.qld.edu.au www.standrewscc.qld.edu.au	Lee MacMaster 	Positions available for Prep for 2015. Positions in other year levels may become available at any time of the year. 4 streams Prep -Y6.	Stimulating co-educational environment for Prep - Y12 in a contemporary campus. Broad, flexible curriculum, excellent academic results, Honours classes and extension, Centre of Musical Excellence & Performing Arts, community sports facility, extensive extra-curricular program, vocational education - Trade Training Centre, proximity to Early Learning & Care Centre - Childcare and Kindergarten, outside school hours & vacation care, lush tropical setting on 25ha.
Silkwood	St John's School	2014: Prep - Year 7 2015: Prep - Year 6	Harold St, Silkwood 4856 Ph 4065 2193 secretary.silkwood@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjohnssilkwood.qld.edu.au	Andrew Maley 	All year, however Prep applications from Term 2 onwards. Vacancies in all year levels including Community Kindergarten for 3½ to 5 year olds. Contact Vera Sendra.	Teaching excellence in an ICT rich scaffold. Kindergarten on site, specialist music tuition program, LOTE Japanese, modern spacious facilities, full-size athletics and soccer field, small class sizes, warm and caring environment.
South Johnstone	St Rita's School	2014: Prep - Year 7 2015: Prep - Year 6	8 Green St, Sth Johnstone 4859 Ph 4064 2153 secretary.johnstone@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stritascps.qld.edu.au	Vicki Conomo 	Preferred enrolment time Term 2 onwards for following year. Vacancies across all year levels.	Family-oriented school, individualised learning, instrumental music program, camp experience for all years, involvement in a wide range of sporting events, LOTE Japanese for Y4-7, participation in Optiminds, specialist ICT teacher.
Tully	St Clare's School	2014: Prep - Year 7 2015: Prep - Year 6	13 Mars St, PO Box 97 Tully 4854 Ph 4068 1527 secretary.tully@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stclares.qld.edu.au	Greg Hoare 	Term 2 for following year. Vacancies in all year levels. Contact Rosanna O'Kane.	Specialist programs in Literacy & Numeracy Enrichment, Music and Japanese. Social and Emotional Learning program from Prep to Y7. Fully equipped and modern facilities including an Arts Performance Centre. ICT technologies such as laptops, iPads and green screen used across curriculum. Strong sporting program across a wide variety of sports.
Thursday Island	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School (Hammond Is. campus P-3)	2014: Prep - Year 7 2015: Prep - Year 6	Douglas St, PO Box 544 Thursday Island 4875 Ph 4069 2203 secretary.ti@cns.catholic.edu.au www.olsh.qld.edu.au	Helen Kett 	Term 3 for the following year. Vacancies across all years. Contact Helen Kett or Marsha Loban.	Choir, music, PE.

## Our Secondary Colleges

From next year, our secondary colleges will offer Years 7-12. They currently offer Years 8-12. Enrolment applications and enquiries are welcome at any time, but are preferred before the end of March in the year before commencement. After that time, offers are made only on a places-available basis.

Innisfail	Good Counsel College	Secondary Co-Educational Day Schooling	The Enrolment Officer, Catherine Mifsud 66 Owen St, PO Box 839 Innisfail 4860 Ph 4063 5300 gcounsel@gcc.qld.edu.au www.gcc.qld.edu.au	Paul Keenan 	Term 1 for following year. Interviews from Term 3. Contact Catherine Mifsud.	Successful academic curriculum to Yr 12. Two Asian languages with immersion programs. Specialist sporting program resulting in significant Peninsula & State representation. Trade Training Centre with fully functional Engineering Workshop and commercial Hospitality Kitchen. Newly established \$4.5m Library, ICT centre and Classrooms; completed for 2014.
Mareeba	St Stephen's Catholic College	Secondary Co-Educational Day Schooling	The Enrolment Officer, Denise Morrow McIver Rd, PO Box 624 Mareeba 4880 Ph 4086 2500 office@sscc.qld.edu.au www.sccc.qld.edu.au	Ida Pinese 	Term 1 preferred for Y7 & 8 enrolments for 2015. All enrolment enquiries welcome at any time. Contact enrolment officer on 4086 2500 for information.	Modern facilities, Trade Training Centre for certificate courses, strong technology focus in all curriculum areas, strong academic results. Music available.
Herberton	Mount St Bernard College	Secondary Co-Educational Day Schooling Boarding for Girls & Boys	15 Broadway, Herberton 4887 Ph 4096 1444 office@msb.qld.edu.au www.msb.qld.edu.au	Br Bill Tynan CFC 	Applications accepted from Term 1. In Years 7-10, each year level has about 46 students, there are 4 streams ie. class sizes of about 12. In year 11-12, both OP and VET streams.	A full range of OP subjects. VET options continue to expand, including Indigenous Primary Health Care, Public Safety-Fire operations, School support, Agriculture & Horticulture. Modern dormitories, and since 2012, over 20 more new renovated rooms in use. CRICOS registered for overseas students.
Parramatta Park	St Augustine's College	Secondary Boys Only Day Schooling Boarding	The Enrolment Officer, Lesley Willis 251 Draper St, Cairns 4870 Ph 4051 5555 admin@sac.qld.edu.au www.sac.qld.edu.au	Br Darren Burge 	Limited vacancies across year levels in the day school however, boarding vacancies exist and applications can be received throughout the year. All applicants whether successful or not will be notified by mail by May 19th. 5 streams in Y8-11, 4 in Y12, and 5 streams in Y7 2015.	Specialist in strategies that work for boys; pastoral care and peer support programs; extensive elective options; over 30 subjects in Years 11 & 12, including music extension and Vocational Education; record of high OP success. Music & instrumental opportunities; extensive sports program; outdoor education; service & leadership programmes. We are a co-educational boarding and boys only day school. Boarding for St Monica's.
Cairns City	St Monica's College	Secondary Girls Only Day Schooling Boarding (at St Augustine's)	The Enrolment Officer 177 Abbott St, Cairns 4870 Ph 4042 4800 office@stmonicas.qld.edu.au www.stmonicas.qld.edu.au	Kristen Sharpe 	Applications close March of previous year for Y7. Applications for Y8-12 considered throughout the year. Waiting lists in Y7-12. Contact Jenny Flood.	A caring, inclusive community with a tradition of academic excellence, comprehensive instrumental music and arts programs and sporting success. Boarding at St Augustine's College with daily bus transport.
Woree	St Mary's Catholic College	Secondary Co-Educational Day Schooling	53 Anderson Rd, Woree 4870 PO Box 259E Earville 4870 Ph 4044 4200 office@smcc.qld.edu.au www.smcc.qld.edu.au	Patricia Jones 	Enrolments are encouraged as early as possible in the year prior. Applications considered at any time of the year, subject to vacancy and interview. Contact Candice Devey.	Instrumental music program, Performing arts, Trade Training Centre, Gifted & Talented program, a strong sporting program, leader in curriculum development, high academic standards.
Redlynch	St Andrew's Catholic College	Prep - Year 12 Co-Educational Day Schooling OSHCare	The Enrolment Officer, Kieran Casey Intake Rd, PO Box 150 Redlynch 4870 Ph 4039 5204 enrolments@standrewscc.qld.edu.au www.standrewscc.qld.edu.au	Lee MacMaster 	Positions available for Y7 & 8 for 2015. Positions in other year levels may become available at any time of the year. 6 streams Year 7-12 in 2015.	Stimulating co-educational environment for Prep - Y12 in a contemporary campus. Broad, flexible curriculum, excellent academic results, Honours classes and extension, Centre of Musical Excellence & Performing Arts, community sports facility, extensive extra-curricular program, vocational education - Trade Training Centre, proximity to Early Learning & Care Centre - Childcare and Kindergarten, outside school hours & vacation care, lush tropical setting on 25ha.

# A new twist on agriculture to value add

ONE of the newest and most exciting electives being offered in a Cairns Diocese college is the agricultural/horticulture program at Mount St Bernard's College in Herberton.

"There are State schools that do offer agriculture, but we've got a little bit of a different bend on this," said Will Trueman, head of the agriculture/horticulture program at Mount St Bernard's.

"We're not doing traditional things like cattle. We're trying to do things a bit differently."

By teaching programs like soil science, hydroponics, farm skills, plant propagation and other skills, the school is hoping to enhance new opportunities for their students.

"We have a high proportion of Indigenous students; a lot of them come from small communities," Mr Trueman said.

"Agriculture is a big employer of Indigenous people so we wanted to help give them ideas on how they can take these skills to work anywhere in Australia or go back to their communities and share their skills."

Mr Trueman mapped out the program for the school, including giving students skills in value adding.

"A lot of farmers can't make a profit just on their primary production, so they turn to value adding so we're trying to teach those skills, like cheese making, red claw farming, jam making and wine making.

"We wanted to have diversity and I also wanted to have something that could spin off into other avenues.

"Eventually we want to be able to offer certification in areas such as cheese making, chocolate making and wine making.

"We offer these programs so they learn the skills to get jobs. Wine making is a huge industry, particularly in southern Australia, so we teach the students about pruning and grapevine management.

"We have started some grape vines, but it will be a while yet before we have our own grapes, but we just might be bottling our own wine next year at this time.

"Of course, they don't get to drink the wine. That's the teachers' job!"

Right: Different: Julian Sesar (at front) with Stanley Williams and Justin Ederer are breeding red claw as part of their elective.



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# Pay attention, you just never know...

LITTLE did Michael Gregory know when he studied Marine Studies at St Augustine's College in Years 11 and 12 that his studies would help save his life and the life of a neighbour.

His parents' friend Tony had taken Michael fishing but after a boating mishap overturned their boat, they found themselves stranded 60km off the coast of Innisfail with no land in sight and their mobile phones at the bottom of the ocean.

While hanging on to the hull sizing up their predicament, Michael knew exactly what to do to get help.

Tony, the boat's owner, retrieved the life jackets and flares and was safe in the knowledge that the emergency beacon, still in the boat's submerged cabin, was activated.

"He was under the impression the emergency beacon activates when it's fully submerged in water, and while some aviation beacons do, I knew it wouldn't be the case because of the Marine Studies program at Saints," Mike said.

"If I hadn't have done the course I wouldn't have known any better, and we might still be sitting out there!"

"Eventually I plucked up the courage to retrieve the EPIRB from the airless cabin and activate it. The course also taught me how to set off the flares, which I did, and operate the radio when talking to emergency services once we had been rescued, to turn back the chopper.

"I'm so glad I took it."

Once Michael activated the emergency beacon, they waited a few hours before the Emergency Rescue helicopter arrived. Just as it appeared, they were plucked from the water by another boat, which had been alerted through a chain of phone calls resulting from the EPIRB activation.

"It was so good to be rescued, but by helicopter would have been far more fun," Mike joked.

Marine Studies at St Augustine's College is one of the many and varied exciting electives offered in Catholic secondary schools.

Students today have access to a range of programs designed to stimulate their interest and involvement including science programs like Mythbusters and Forensics, SOSE programs like Ancient Mysteries and Making Money and health and education programs

like Outdoor Pursuits and Technology in Sport. The list is long and varied and offers students great opportunities to sample subjects.

"By having an enriching range of subjects in our elective program, it gives students an edge in deciding if they like it and want to pursue that subject," St Andrew's Deputy Principal Mark Kennedy said.

"We want the students to have choices to enhance their interest."

One of newest electives in the Cairns Diocese is certification in fitness. Schools like Good Counsel College in Innisfail and St Mary's Catholic College Woree are offering these programs in response to growing trends.

"It has become very popular with the students," Good Counsel College Principal Paul Keenan said.

"The idea is that students not only learn about how to get fit and maintain fitness, but they also have certification to help them become personal trainers later on if they want."

Secondary students can explore things like digital photography, cooking, multimedia, design, fashion, dance, languages, outdoor pursuits and Advanced Math, to name just a few, to help them decide if that's an interest they'd like to pursue.

"A range of subjects gives students the opportunity to test the waters of various subjects and keeps them motivated," Mr Kennedy added. "And an enriching range of subjects and electives minimises the behaviour problems because our students are motivated."

"It's a win-win situation."



Left: Thankful: Michael Gregory had to put to good use the knowledge he gained in Marine Studies at St Augustine's College.



Right: Flex it: Good Counsel College's Jarred Anderson, Year 12, with Isaac Wallace, Year 10, using the new fitness centre.

## Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

Q5. David and Sarah both bought a T-shirt and hat.

They each spent the same amount of money.

David's T-shirt cost \$28.90 and his hat cost \$21.10. Sarah's T-shirt cost \$30.95.

How much did Sarah's hat cost?

\$19.05   \$19.15   \$20.95   \$21.10  
A   B   C   D

Answers on back cover

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### Curriculum

Specialist in strategies that work for boys; pastoral care and peer support programmes; extensive elective options; over 30 subjects in Years 11 & 12; including music extension and vocational education; record of high OP success.

### Facilities under construction

16 new classrooms, 4 new computer labs, a hospitality centre, commercial kitchen and a new boarding residence.

### Extras

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SCHOOL camps have been a long-standing tradition in the Catholic schools of the Cairns Diocese, but the value of having school camps is becoming more apparent than ever before.

Learning how to pitch a tent, boil a billy, cook their own food or light a fire are some of the skills taught to students at camp, but today's camps have much more to offer.

"Camps teach children an amazing set of life skills," said St Andrew's Assistant Principal Religious Education Luke Felstead.

"We have spiritual retreats, team-building camps, leadership camps and practical camps.

"And they're designed to also enhance social emotional skills like problem solving, overcoming fear, being more independent and learning to understand each other."

All school camps are different at each school. Some feature trips to various townships like Longreach, some have excursions to historical towns like Chillagoe while others are closer to home on the Tablelands or in the Cairns region.

Mount St Bernard College in Herberton offers a different type of camping opportunity for its students.

"We go out on expeditions where we take the students out and teach them how to live in the bush, how to live together in that situation," said Anne Quinn, one of two expedition coordinators at MSB.

"We all take our food with us and we take radios, camping gear, cooking gear, everything. We go away from civilisation and the students know that whatever is in their backpack is what they have to survive.

"It teaches kids a whole range of hands-on skills."

The school has been running these



# Life skills learnt on camp

expeditions for the last 10 years.

"It definitely shows leadership," expedition coordinator Peter Nightingale said.

"And it's amazing as a lot of kids will point out different bush tuckers and Indigenous historical sites to us, and it's great to see them share their knowledge."

Mr Nightingale admits the expeditions are challenging for students. They are a week long and students are away from their families,

friends, computers and phones.

"It's amazing to see the new friendships form between students who wouldn't normally get to know each other otherwise," Mr Nightingale said.

"And there's a significant improvement in teacher/student relationships because when you've got to cohabitate 24/7 for a week, you develop a unique bond because you all see each other in a different light.

"Teachers who do go on expeditions find it improves their relationships with those students once they get back into the classroom."

Above: Focused: Students Hannah McKim and Jan Lukac from St Andrew's Catholic College hone their skills on camp.

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# World apart, yet similar

**B**RIDGET Kenny and Jade Ryan from St Monica's College Cairns are both Year 12 students, school captains, are 16 years old and they share similar values. Yet they come from vastly different worlds.

Bridget grew up on a banana, sugarcane and cattle farm in Innisfail, living the country lifestyle and being part of a close-knit community. Jade is a city girl, having lived in the Cairns CBD for nine years enjoying access to all the things a city has to offer.

"We were totally surprised at how different our lifestyles appeared, even though we have a lot of similarities," Jade said.

"It's no secret that there is a significant difference between city and country life," Bridget added. "We've learned that both have their advantages and disadvantages."

Bridget boards at St Augustine's College and goes home to Innisfail on the weekends.

"It is only now that I am a young adult that I have come to fully recognise and appreciate what small country towns have to offer," she said. "In a small town everyone seems to know one another and you can't go grocery shopping without running into at least 10 people you know."

"Being born in Innisfail, I had never experienced people living in high-rise apartments or having grocery stores deliver goods to your doorstep.

In contrast, Jade is used to living in the

centre of Cairns where supermarkets, clothing stores and restaurants are within walking distance of her Esplanade home.

"The sound of screeching tyres, car horns and sirens that rise from the city streets and the music and screams from party goers that echo through my bedroom are typical among the commotion of the CBD, which would be quite foreign for those who live in a more serene environment like Bridget," she said.

"I love having these facilities at my fingertips, and it's been more convenient for my parents who no longer have to drive me to and from school."

While both girls come from different backgrounds, they do share many similarities.

"We both value our families, friendships and the opportunities we've been given this year at school," said Jade.

Bridget agrees.

"I think we are both compassionate and caring people who want to achieve the best for ourselves and others.

"We really do try to be our best and give 100 per cent."

Opposites: Top left: Jade Ryan, top right: Bridget Kenny, and right: the two St Monica's College school captains compare their similar values but different lifestyles.





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# Tuckshop options evolve



WHILE some parents remember getting a meat pie in a brown paper bag for a lunch-time tuckshop treat, today's students are more food savvy and prefer sushi to meat pies and online bookings to the paper-bag system.

Today's tuckshops have evolved into healthier and more modern tuckshops with many Cairns Diocese Catholic schools providing healthy options and easier online booking services.

"There is more of an emphasis on healthy food today," noted Liam Kenny of Good Counsel Primary School Innisfail, which has just expanded its tuckshop.

"Healthy food is starting to become a priority for families, so we make sure we have plenty of fresh, good food."

Heidi Churchward, tuckshop convenor at Mother of Good Counsel North Cairns, is helping to revolutionise today's tuckshop menu.

A chef by trade, Heidi helped set up the tuckshop at the school and immediately initiated healthy options.

"Heidi runs the most amazing tuckshop I've ever seen," said Principal Ruth Mallon.

"She makes just about everything from scratch – pizza dough, pizza sauce and even sausage roll fillings, and she puts heaps of veggies in the food as well and the students don't even notice it."

Heidi is passionate about ensuring that everything the tuckshop provides is wholesome.

"I want to make it as healthy as possible," she said. "I give the students what I would want my kids to have at tuckshop."

"Because our tuckshop hasn't been open for long, we started it as a healthy eating tuckshop. I have visited other tuckshops and what I have discovered is that they'd like to change their menus to be more health conscious, but they face a challenge with past menus.

"The students have become used to the processed food and sugar and that's very hard to change," she said. "We were lucky here because we never offered that, so the students don't know any differently."

Tamsin O'Brien, tuckshop convenor at St Andrew's Catholic College Redlynch, is also a chef by trade and is also determined to give students healthier food.

Like Heidi, she sneaks veggies into her meals whenever she can. And knowing that students are susceptible to fast food advertising and appeal, she camouflages some of her menu options to give them added appeal.

"We make things like egg and bacon muffins, but we use a grill to fry the bacon to remove a lot of the fat, and we use low-fat cheese and muffins," she said.

"We make low-fat burgers and we also introduce different flavours to the students, like Thai food and fried rice full of vegetables and low-fat meat."

While most tuckshops aren't lucky enough to have chefs like Heidi and Tamsin at the helm, they are offering menus with less processed foods, more local produce and fresher options.

Some of the schools, like St Thomas's Mareeba and St Andrew's at Redlynch, are also offering online tuckshop ordering to cater to a new demand in tuckshop service.

"We trialled the online tuckshop ordering system last year and it was just fantastic," said Rita Petersen, Principal of St Thomas's.

"It's growing every week. It's such a convenience for busy parents."

There is one vital ingredient that is always essential to running a successful tuckshop.

"The one thing that hasn't changed about tuckshops over the years is that most of them are succeeding because of volunteers," said Liam Kenny, Principal of Good Counsel Primary School, Innisfail.

"Without volunteers, we would never be able to run a tuckshop."

Above: Resident chef: MOGC tuckshop convenor Heidi Churchward serves up healthy fare to Y4 students Jada Ani and Jack Hislam. Top right: Hi-tech: St Thomas's Mareeba students Mia Costas and Alexandra McCormack (Y6) use an iPad to order online from their tuckshop. Above right: Family affair: St Gerard Majella Woree tuckshop volunteers Karen Blakeney and her mum, Pat Simpson help out.

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# Senior pathways deliver choice for all and leadership opportunity

ALL senior students in the Diocese's Catholic colleges have a wide range of career pathways from academic, cultural and sporting pursuits to Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs, but they're also given the opportunity to become future leaders who make a difference.

Just like 2009 St Monica's College graduate Melissa Sinopoli, who was recently named the prestigious Regional Woman Lawyer of the Year Award winner from the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland.

After graduating from St Monica's, Melissa went on to attain her Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Business degrees from James Cook University before joining MacDonnells Law in Cairns. She was promoted to an Associate position, making her the youngest lawyer in the firm's 128-year history to achieve the level of Associate.

Melissa is not alone. There are hundreds of success stories of former students from the Cairns Catholic secondary schools, just as there are exciting new beginnings for recent high-achieving graduates.

Eight 2013 duxes from the colleges in the Diocese (St Andrew's had two duxes) have chosen university studies as their next step to achieving their dreams.

Nicole Chan, St Mary's dux and 2013 Cairns Young Citizen of the Year, is currently studying for her Bachelor of Medicine degree at the University of Queensland. St Augustine's dux Daniel Esposito is also at the University of Queensland, studying economics and commerce.

Meanwhile, three former top students are pursuing careers in law. Breanna Lyall from Mount St Bernard's is studying law at James Cook University, Bonnie Walsh from St Andrew's is at Monash University in Melbourne and Kai Priestly from St Stephen's is at the University of Queensland.

Engineering careers have also attracted three high achievers from 2013. Emily Chapman from St Andrew's, Sophia Hooton

from St Monica's and Jessica Bugeja from Good Counsel Innisfail are all studying Engineering at the University of Queensland.

"As a community focused on education, personal and spiritual development, we are immensely proud of all of our students," said Danielle Purdy, Catholic Education Services Senior Education Officer Secondary Curriculum.

"Catholic Education in Cairns continues to work to ensure students have access to the wealth of opportunities available to them.

"This enables them to take that next step into vocational, academic or community pathways and continue towards achieving their goals."

It was a high-achieving year for all Year 12 students at St Stephen's Catholic College in Mareeba in 2013 with all achieving a Queensland Certificate of Education and VET qualification, an outcome not common in Queensland schools.

"All our 2013 Year 12 students are to be congratulated for their performance whereby 94 per cent of OP eligible students received a score between one and 15, and 70 per cent of students received a score between one and 10," Principal Ida Pinese said.

"It's a huge achievement."

And while students are to be highly commended for their achievements, there is also a great deal of support behind the scenes.

"It is the tireless work of our P-12 teachers, parents, school officers and the richness of our pastoral care and extra-curricular programs that assist our students take full advantage of these opportunities," Ms Purdy added.

One of the best things about the achievements of the Diocese's top students is their deep belief in helping others, a faith nourished by the schools' rich Catholic values.

Hanna Snell, a top 2013 graduate from St Stephen's, is studying medicine at James Cook University and plans to specialise in rural and remote medicine.

"Since Year 10, I have spent a lot of time

in remote communities where they don't receive decent medical treatment because of the lack of practitioners and equipment," she said.

"Hopefully, by working in these rural and remote communities I can make a difference."

Clockwise from right: High achievers: Jessica Bugeja, Daniel Esposito, Sophia Hooton, Kai Priestly (far right, with fellow Year 12 students) and Nicole Chan, with Principal Patricia Jones.



OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

"I chose a Catholic education because I want my child to have a holistic approach to learning. Learning to love other people is just as essential as gaining knowledge."

Darani Monck, Parent, Holy Cross School, Trinity Park

## Student protection puts *children first*

STAFF at Catholic schools are being trained to ignore their own values and personal relationships when it comes to assessing child protection concerns.

"We need to put all that aside and objectively look at the information we have and follow the clearly defined processes around what we need to do about it within the context of a child protection framework and our legislative responsibilities," said Catholic Education Services Student Protection Officer Ann Barr.

"Our approach is process based, on what information we have and assessing whether it is a reportable matter. It's not about how the situation sits with our personal values or whether it involves someone we know – the legislation is very

clear about our reporting responsibilities and school staff have no leeway to respond differently," she said.

"And if there is any uncertainty at all our training is to always act in favour of the child. That's because the consequences of not acting can have an enormous impact on the future wellbeing of the child concerned."

Ann said all new staff undertook mandatory child protection training when they joined Catholic Education or a Catholic school and this was updated through regular annual compliance training. The induction training program used is a QLD Child Protection Week Award winner which was developed specifically for and by Catholic Education.

Staff were very keen to improve their understanding of child protection issues:

"There's a much better understanding than there was three to four years ago. It is not just about following reporting processes, but having an awareness of what constitutes child abuse and the impacts it has on children, families and the wider community.

"Our schools acknowledge the important role they play in the wider community responsibility that 'child protection is everybody's business'. Our school staff are very conscious of the importance of monitoring students, identifying concerns and responding appropriately, and are very proficient in doing so.

She said it was a legislative requirement that each school had at least two child protection contacts, with many schools having more. These staff received additional

training and their role was widely publicised in school communities.

"Student Protection Contacts have important roles in Catholic Schools. They are really another option of support for students when they may be worrying about something going on at home or within the school environment," she said.

"Our reporting is based on reasonable suspicion, we are not authorised or qualified to investigate or prove concerns. The statutory authorities that are allocated these responsibilities are the experts in this field," she said.

"It is also important to note that our school communities will work with and for families wherever possible but this support does not replace the need to follow legislative reporting processes".

# Music good for brain and soul

**M**USIC is the universal language of love and good feelings, which is why Catholic schools enthusiastically and actively promote music throughout their curriculum and co-curriculum programs.

"I think music is essential in the curriculum because it's good for the soul, but it's also good for the brain," Maureen Cameron, head of music at St Andrew's College, said.

"It helps students in all areas – their math-solving skills, reasoning capacity, problem solving, creativity and social and team skills.

"And it makes people happy. It's a real lift for your spirit."

While students in the Cairns Diocese have the opportunity

to learn to play a wide variety of different musical instruments through curriculum and co-curriculum programs, they also have the opportunity to perform in front of live audiences in school assemblies, musicals, choir performances, eisteddfods and even theatre restaurants.

St Mary's Catholic College music teacher Joanne Wright, a well-respected and accomplished Cairns vocalist, director and performer, has been involved in music all her life, having grown up in a musical background.

Her parents are stalwarts of the Cairns Choral Society, with her dad John currently the president and her mum Jan the musical director. Joanne co-directed and performed in the Choral Society's recent production, *Phantom of the Opera*. Her three children also performed in the production, with daughter Cassandra sharing the lead role of Christine.

"I think music benefits our sense of wellbeing," she said. "It lifts the soul."

**Budding musicians:** Mariah Simpson and Taliah O'Connell from St Teresa's Ravenshoe are ready for the school's new music program.

Mrs Wright is currently coordinating the school's musical *The Wizard of Oz*, which involves more than 100 students.

"I think performing, whether in a musical or a band, helps students with personal development and helps them find a place to belong because they're part of a team working on a common goal," she added.

Performing Arts Coordinator at Innisfail's Good Counsel College, Jo-Anne Kemp, believes music also increases students' academic learning abilities.

"Music is one of the only subjects that use both the right and left side of the brain simultaneously," she said. "That cross-brain stimulation actually stimulates both the analytic side of the brain and the creative side."

Ms Kemp, who is completing her PhD combining performance and research with a focus on the Australian composer Miriam Hyde, studied the piano for many years and attained both her Licentiate (L.Mus.A) on piano and her Master's degree in the same year. She has won several awards for her accompanying skills, along with many years' experience in music theatre in the roles of orchestra member and musical director. Mrs Kemp also has experience as an adjudicator and has travelled to New Zealand to be part of the National Singing School held every two years. Like Ms Wright, she also grew up in a musical environment, having a talented pianist grandmother and a mother who has been involved with the Cairns Choral Society for 40 years.

She is currently directing the college's inaugural theatre restaurant, *A Knight to Remember*, scheduled for July. She believes learning music is one of the best things a student can do.

"I think you'll find that most of the top academic students have learned a musical instrument or have been involved in performing arts in some way," she said.

St Augustine's College's Director of Arts Malcolm Cole has also had a passion for musical all his life. He started learning music in Year 1. He studied violin, played with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and studied music education in Hungary and did his Masters through UWA on violin pedagogy.

"Music really helps students to build confidence and creativity," he said.

Mr Cole, who is currently finalising his PhD on the cultural study of history of music in Cairns, says one of the features of the music program at St Augustine's that he loves best is the school's whole-of-school singing program.

"We have about 650 students sing at our masses, and it's amazing," he said.

"It's really quite moving to hear all those voices singing together. We've heard that some people come to our mass just to hear them sing!"

"Music really lifts everyone's spirits."

Martin Luther King summed it up best when he said: 'Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.'



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**MOUNT ST BERNARD COLLEGE**



Left: Supported: St Monica's College Principal Kristen Sharpe and P&F president Alex Ung chat with students of the college.

## Schools thankful for parent support

THEY donate hours of their free time to the schools, helping in decision-making processes that enhance their school's community.

They aren't formal teachers, but they are the main educators of children and have a wealth of knowledge of what's right for children.

They are the parents and friends of the school community.

Parent and Friend Committees (P&F) are an integral part of all schools in the Cairns Diocese and a huge asset to the schools.

"They do so much for our schools and we're so lucky to have them," St Monica's College Principal Kristen Sharpe said, echoing

the sentiments of all Catholic school principals.

From raising funds for building works, new equipment and school renovations to having a voice on where their fundraising money is spent, P&F committees play a vital role in making the school a better place to be.

"I think it's really important to be part of the school community," said Joe Cristaudo, P&F treasurer and former P&F president at Good Counsel College in Innisfail.

"It's a great way to meet other parents, build relationships with the teachers and be a part of the school community. And it's a great way of supporting your children and the school."

Joe has triplets in Year 12 and has been involved with P&Fs since they were in primary school.

"It's been wonderful because it's an opportunity to spend time doing things for and with my children," he said. "By being part of the P&F you also get to spend more time at the school, help the school community and get to know the teachers and the office staff as well."

The P&Fs are the voice of the parents. And because not all parents have the time to give, they look to their P&F committee to speak for them.

Alex Ung, P&F president at St Monica's College, has also been involved in P&Fs since his daughter, now in Year 10, was in Prep.

## Award winning approaches to language

Separate and distinct, innovative projects have resulted in two teachers at St Andrew's College being the only teachers in the Diocese to earn a prestigious Queensland teaching award. But while both teachers won for different reasons, both are linked by a common element.

Masumi Morimoto and Alyson von Dietze, Japanese language teachers, were both recipients of Modern Languages Teachers Association of Queensland awards for exemplary teaching practice in 2013.

Masumi combined her passion for the environment with her love of Japanese culture to initiate a dynamic new program for her Year 7 class, Have a Rice Day, which was recognised for incorporating the principles of sustainability into her Japanese language program.

Alyson was recognised for her use of technology and innovative website which turned her junior Japanese curriculum into a paperless classroom.

Masumi came up with the rice-growing project while studying for her Masters of Education degree at James Cook University.

"I wanted to do something to improve my language class, and while I was studying the theory and philosophy of sustainability I had the idea of linking those two areas," she said.

She found a rice farmer in Ayr who provided her with Koshihikari rice seeds and taught her how to grow rice. She started the project at home before taking it into the school and teaching it to the children.

The rice was originally grown in 50 buckets, but the school has since developed an open area with a 2mx5m rice paddy in the school vegetable yard.

"The students really like the learning experience of planting and growing rice in a traditional, organic Japanese way," she said. "The setting for students' use of Japanese language was appropriate and they quickly developed the vocabulary."

The students do cook with the rice, but before they can the rice has to be milled and husked, which was a challenge for Masumi. After extensive research, she ended up buying her own machine from Asia so they can do the milling and husking at school.

Alison won her award for her website and use of technology, which turned her junior Japanese curriculum into a paperless classroom and provided both students and parents access to her program.

Alison's website [juniorjapanese.weebly.com/](http://juniorjapanese.weebly.com/) has been designed with parents and children as the target audience. She has made it user-friendly and has created many of her own resources, including many of



Above: Having a rice day: St Andrew's Year 7 teacher Masumi Morimoto and students Nicholas Kerlin, Madison McDonald and Lachland Wormsley inspect the rice they have harvested.

her own movies and songs so they could be downloaded by all of her students and their parents at home.

"Parents have often been left out of the learning in language teaching because they often don't know the language themselves, or if they did learn a language, they have forgotten it," she said.

"These days however, thanks to technology, parents can become an integral part of the process by using the website with their child.

"And it's great because the site now averages 150 hits a day."



Above: Award winners: Masumi Morimoto and Alyson von Dietze each won a prestigious award for exemplary teaching practices.

# Opening doors of opportunity through language



EARNING a second language has always been part of the Catholic school culture, but increased interest has resulted in a greater language program across most of the schools.

While Japanese and Italian languages have been the popular favourites in many schools, a new Chinese Mandarin language program is now in place in three schools – St Andrew’s

Catholic College, St Joseph’s Cairns and Good Counsel College Innisfail.

“Having it at our school this year is a new initiative based on the growing importance of our children knowing and learning the Chinese culture,” said St Joseph’s Cairns Principal Gavin Rick.

“This is due to the economic and commercial growth in our region of the Chinese.”

Mary Lantman, Catholic Education’s Languages Education Officer, said Japanese, Italian, Chinese and French are the languages being taught in different schools in the Diocese.

“Japanese is the most popular with the highest numbers,” she said. “There are quite a few schools teaching Italian, three teaching Chinese and one teaching French.”

Only one school – St Andrew’s – offers all four.

Schools in the southern deanery, such as St Rita’s South Johnstone, St John’s Silkwood, St Clare’s Tully and Innisfail’s

Good Counsel Primary and Good Counsel College, share one language teacher among the schools.

“Availability of language teachers is very difficult in regional areas,” said Liam Kenny, Principal of Good Counsel Primary in Innisfail.

“This year we were able to employ someone in the southern cluster to teach our five schools, which is great for all our schools and students.”

Ms Lantman is also the driving force behind the region’s Multi Language Speaking Competition, which is open to students from all schools in the region.

“We started it two years ago to promote languages and give students something to work towards and to help promote languages to the wider community,” she said.

“It’s really been successful. We are now looking at expanding it to more than one day.”

More than 350 students from Catholic, State and Independent schools participated in last year’s competition.

“It is great to see students excelling in Languages and finally realising that speaking a foreign language can open many doors and provide opportunities in our ever increasing global world and work force.”

Many of the Diocese’s Catholic schools are also involved in cultural exchange programs to immerse students in foreign culture and enhance language skills, she said.

(Above) New levels: Our Lady Help of Christians School Italian teacher Lyza Welsh works with students Rhys Norris, Dizie Woods and Grace Kennedy.

(Left) New understanding: St Joseph’s Atherton language teacher Livana Klein teaches prep student Samuel Raciti about Italy.



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BIRCH CARROLL & COYLE



Left: Brendon Alexander of St Francis Xavier's Manunda is Principal of his old primary school.

# Home-grown

## principals

**T**IMES sure have changed. Just ask Brendon Alexander, Principal of St Francis Xavier's School Manunda.

As a student at St Francis Xavier's, Brendon would sometimes find himself in the principal's office, being reprimanded for things like running on the school veranda or acting up. Today, he is on the opposite side of the desk, having returned to his primary school as Principal.

"I did get up to mischief at times, but I don't think anything I got into trouble about wasn't deserved," he laughed.

Brendon is one of six home-grown principals in the Cairns Diocese who have gone through the Cairns Catholic education system and returned as Principals.

Joining the elite home-grown principal ranks are July Billiau from St Rita's Babinda, Liam Kenny from Innisfail's Good Counsel Primary, Greg Hoare from St Clare's Tully, Rita Peterson from St Thomas's Mareeba and Gavin Rick from St Joseph's Cairns.

Principal Alexander attended St Augustine's College before he went to university. He taught at St Gerard Majella Woree and St Joseph's in Atherton before becoming Deputy Principal at Mother of Good Counsel, Acting Principal at Holy Cross, Principal at St Clare's and now Principal at St Francis Xavier's.

"Catholic education is about sharing the same set of values," he said.

"And, it's what I want for my children too."

Judy Billiau, who attended Mother of Good Counsel School and St Monica's College as a student, has returned to her home roots after university and spent 19 years in Catholic Education as a teacher and an Acting Principal before taking the helm at St Rita's.

"Catholic schools provide an education that is well-rounded for children," she said.

"The focus is more than just academic; we have a values-based education so the children are learning how to be good solid characters."

Liam Kenny has spent 25 years teaching in the Cairns Diocese including spending 18 years at St Rita's South Johnstone and three years at Good Counsel Primary.

Teaching is literally his blood.

"I'm the 23rd teacher in the family," he said. "Mum and Dad are both teachers as well as some of my brothers, aunts, uncles and cousins.

"And I'm married to a teacher.

"I think the morals and values that we offer our kids is what families are chasing today. Parents are very time poor; they like what we're doing at school to back up what they're trying to do at home."

Rita Peterson was born in Mareeba, went to school at St Anthony's Dimbulah and Mount St Bernard Herberton before getting her teaching degree. She returned to St Thomas's as a teacher for six years, then returned to St Anthony's as an Assistant Principal Religious Education and the Principal. She is now Principal at St Thomas's.

"I was a model student of course," she joked.

"I've never worked or went to a State school and I'm sure they're fine, it's just that the Catholic ethos means we're all like a big family, and that's what we try to instill in each other."

Greg Hoare grew up in Gordonvale, went to St Michael's there and St Augustine's in Cairns.

He has taught at Our Lady Help of Christians, St Anthony's Dimbulah, Holy Cross Trinity Park and St Therese's Bentley Park before taking the role as Principal at St Clare's Tully.

"I think a Catholic education brings out the best in each individual," he said. "The religious element is very strong within the Catholic schools, which gives the children morals and a good background."

Gavin Rick attended St Clare's in Tully when he was a young student before embarking on his teaching career. He has taught and had leadership roles at St Francis Xavier's Manunda, St Therese's Bentley Park

and St Rita's Babinda before taking up the Principal role at St Joseph's.

"I just think it's such a blessing to live and breathe the values that you believe in," he said.

"Our Catholic schools provide a really holistic education. And we're not just preparing the students for the future. I think we're preparing them for now too."



Above: Once a 'Tully boy', Gavin Rick is now Principal at St Joseph's in Cairns.

Right: Carrying on the family tradition, Liam Kenny is Principal of Good Counsel Primary School, Innisfail.



Above: Rita Petersen has returned to her home town of Mareeba as Principal of St Thomas's.



First Principalships for Greg Hoare (above) at St Clare's Tully, and Judy Billiau (below) at St Rita's School, Babinda.



# Dancing their way to G20 goal



Left: On a mission: Dancers from Mount St Bernard College Herberton have their eyes set on dancing at the G20 opening ceremony after success with Bangarra.

**S** EVEN students from Mount St Bernard College have been accepted into the Bangarra Rekindling Dance Program.

Herberton's Mount St Bernard's College was the smallest secondary school to audition (170 students) and had the highest number of successful students after Trinity Bay State School in Far North Queensland. Seven of MSB's 10 students who auditioned were selected, out of a total 32 selected.

Bangarra Dance Theatre is a company with an international reputation and strong history of producing and

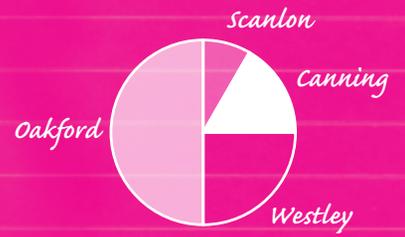
performing Indigenous works. The company has an unwavering commitment to share Australia's diverse Indigenous experiences with all citizens.

The dance program will be delivered at three separate gatherings throughout 2014 in conjunction with the local Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander elders and community members in Far North Queensland.

Mount St Bernard College dance students' next goal is to perform at the G20 opening ceremony in Cairns and Brisbane. The College dancers have tendered for the opening ceremony.

## Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

**Q6.** This pie graph shows the suburbs where a total of 600 students live.



About how many students live in Scanlon?

- 25      50      75      100  
 A     B     C     D

Answers on back cover

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### OUR PARENTS HAVE THEIR SAY...

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*M Leonardi, Parent,  
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# Indigenous support, students and staff

WITH 865 Indigenous students currently enrolled in Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese, Catholic Education has increased its focus on Indigenous educational opportunities, and not just for the students.

As the Indigenous student population grows to 9 per cent of enrolments, so does Indigenous teaching support to ensure both groups have career path opportunities.

"We want to accelerate the inclusion of Indigenous students into our schools to engage them in essential dialogue about different cultures," Catholic Education Services Executive Director Br Paul Hough said.

"It really gives all kids a sense of partnership."

The inclusion of Indigenous teachers and staff has improved substantially in the last few years.

"We now have 21 Indigenous liaison officers and an increasing number of teaching staff across the 26 schools," Senior Education Officer Indigenous Education Antoinette Cole said.

"Prior to 2013 we had some existing Indigenous liaison officers in secondary schools, but now we have them in almost all schools."

"The number of Indigenous students

continues to steadily increase, which tells us the service students are receiving is meeting their needs."

As well as employing more Indigenous teachers, liaison officers and support staff to help the students, Catholic Education also offers career paths designed specifically for Indigenous students such as the Indigenous Primary Health Care program at Mount St Bernard College Herberton, which gives graduates a Certificate II in Primary Health Care.

"We started this course in 2012 for Indigenous students looking for a pathway into health," said Natalie Vanderzant, the school's VET co-ordinator.

"We have a health centre here and will soon have a fully functional hospital room.

"About a third of the senior cohort does it, and we've already had two students go on to get a Diploma of Nursing."

To help close the distance gap for Yarrabah students, the Diocese has purchased a new bus for St Michael's Gordonvale, which now offers that service to the small community.

"We've only had a couple of students from Yarrabah in the past because it's very difficult for the parents to get their kids to school," St Michael's Principal Lea Martin said.

"This allows them accessibility that they never had before, and it's made a huge difference.

"The response from the Yarrabah community has been overwhelming and the 13 seat bus is fully

occupied

for 2014, which is just fantastic."

Catholic Education supports and encourages career pathways for its staff as well.

"Quite a number of Indigenous teachers became interested in education when they were school officers in our schools," Ms Cole said.

"We worked with them in terms of what they wanted to do. Some obtained their Certificate III in Education, some obtained their Associate Diploma in Education, while others obtained their Bachelor of Education."

Allira Alvoen, an Indigenous Liaison Officer at St Monica's College, is on her way to becoming a teacher after winning the Pearl Duncan Teaching Scholarship.

The scholarship, awarded to 15 Indigenous recipients each year, is in honour of Pearl Duncan, an Aboriginal educator who has dedicated her life to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in education.

"It not only assists me financially throughout the next four years of my studies, but it also guarantees me permanent employment straight after graduation," said Allira, who attended St Monica's College as a student.

"I will also have access to relevant departmental professional development and induction programs.

"I am just so grateful and honoured to have won the Pearl Duncan Teaching Scholarship and for the guidance and opportunities given to me by Catholic Education."



Above: Health option: Mount St Bernard College students take on the Indigenous Primary Health Care program to gain their Cert II.



Left: Teacher in training: Allira Alvoen aims to become a teacher with the help of a scholarship.

Below: Josephine Filewood (Cert III) Destiny Naawi (Cert IV) and Sandra Remedio (Diploma) at a Catholic Education Services Indigenous Workers Conference.



Below: Celebrate: Yarrabah students at St Michael's Gordonvale are thrilled to have a new bus to get them to and from school.



# Planting the seed of **success**

**A**s a young boy growing up on Thursday Island, St Augustine's Year 10 student Jarvis French never imagined what university life in Sydney would be like. But after encouragement by his school, he and four other students were able to experience uni life in the country's biggest city for four days.

Jarvis, Darby Conley, Tayshaun Mosby, Nathan Geno and Nelson Foster took part in the Wingara Mura Program, which encourages Indigenous students to seek a tertiary education.

They travelled with the school's Indigenous Liaison Officer Bryan Carswell to Sydney University along with 217 other students from across Australia.

"The boys had to write a submission and go through a selection process, so we were very pleased they were accepted," Mr Carswell said.

"This is a first time in Australia a university has had a summer school for Years 9 and 10, so for the boys to be accepted was just great."

Below: Uni experience: Indigenous students Jarvis French (Year 10) and Darby Conley (Year 9) who went to Sydney to experience university life discuss the experience with St Augustine's College Indigenous Liaison Officer Bryan Carswell.

The idea is to encourage more Indigenous students to succeed in their dreams.

"The aim is to put seeds in the minds of these young people before they enter the senior part of their schooling that they can go to university and become whoever they want to be; it is attainable," said Br Darren Burge, Principal of St Augustine's College.

"The university was really big; it was like a little city," Jarvis said. "But I really liked being there. It helped me to understand what's on offer at university. There are a lot of courses in what I want to do – civil engineering.

"We learned so much and in a fun way. And it was great to mix with everyone from all over Australia.

"I would definitely do it again and I would recommend it to everyone."

Other students making big strides in the Indigenous arena are Hope Musch from St Stephen's Catholic College and Brandon McHugh from St Augustine's.

Hope, although not Indigenous herself, has started her new career after graduation last year working with an Indigenous ministry,

Links Australia, as a personal assistant to the coordinator.

Hope, who was a vice-captain at St Stephen's Catholic College, Mareeba in 2013, hopes to travel this year both overseas to visit other youth leaders and their works in Asia and in the remote Indigenous communities of Australia to help establish youth development projects.

Brandon McHugh recently won a public speaking award at the National Schools Indigenous Convention and will now be participating in the National Students Constitutional Convention in Canberra.

Three other students from the school – Trey Patullo, Kobe See Kee and Nelson Ambar - also participated in the event.

"It's a great achievement for him and great experience for all of them," St Augustine's College Indigenous Liaison Officer Bryan Carswell said.

Above right: New career: Hope Musch, St Stephen's Catholic College, is now working with Indigenous ministry, Links Australia.



## Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

**Q7.** These were the top five names for boys born in Victoria in 2009.

Name	Number of boys
William	549
Jack	534
Oliver	453
Joshua	443
Thomas	442

Which of these statements is true of a boy born in Victoria in 2009?

- A**  He is more likely to be named Jack than Joshua.
- B**  He is certain to be named William.
- C**  He is less likely to be named Oliver than Thomas.
- D**  It is impossible that he will be named Christopher.

Answers on back cover

# A school like no other takes education to the streets

**T**HE newest Catholic school in Cairns – the 27th in the Diocese – will be a school like no other.

The Special Assistance School, with two campuses in Cairns and Cooktown, will provide new opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to re-engage in education.

“The vast majority of the students at this school will not be Catholic or perhaps have any faith background,” said Br Paul Hough, Executive Director of Catholic Education Services in Cairns.

“And a number of them will come from experiences where they have hated school so much that they have simply given up on education.

“Some have been excluded from other schools, been in trouble with the law, have problems at home, or issues with drugs and alcohol,” he said.

“These are young people at the very margins of our community, and we are going to find a place for them. What they will have in common with all the young people at all of our schools is that they will be treated with the respect and love that Jesus taught us. And we will support them and help them on their journey.”

Br Paul acknowledged the risks associated with a school of this kind but was encouraged by the words of Pope Francis of the

need for the church to be “out on the streets”.

It is expected the two campuses will be complete in time for Term 1 next year although there is consideration being given to starting some small outreach programs at both locations later this year.

“This would give us an opportunity to establish some relationships with the young people, identify their needs and try out some approaches and courses,” he said.

The campus at Cairns, in Manoora, will cater for up to 52 day students while the Cooktown facility will have 32 weekly boarding places with some additional places for day students.

Br Paul said there had been a strong and growing groundswell of support for the new school.

“The councils in Cairns and Cooktown have been fantastic in providing us with land and the State has provided the funding to build the school, but beyond that a whole range of community groups and individuals have provided enormous support and encouragement.”

Br Paul said Catholic Education was not being “starry-eyed” about what the new school could achieve:

“Unfortunately in schools of this kind the losses often outnumber the wins, but if we can turn some young lives around and transition them towards a life of purpose and positive outcomes, the school will have made its mark.”

“It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to any ordinary man or woman. But if the church stays wrapped up in itself, it will age. And if I had to choose between a wounded church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn church, I would definitely choose the first one.”

*Pope Francis*

*(Special Assistance School is the operational and planning name for the new school. An appropriate name, consistent with Catholic values and practice, is now being researched for a naming recommendation to be presented to Bishop James Foley)*

## School makes first appointment



Left: First appointment: Tom O'Donnell is Director of Student Services for the new Special Assistance School.



Helping out: Assisting with the SAS is Sr Mary Garnier (pictured left) in her Indigenous Liaison Officer role at St Therese's Bentley Park, and Rosie's Coordinator and Cairns Volunteer of the Year Melissa Milton (above).

**E**NSURING the new special assistance school is an active part of the community it serves is a key goal for the school's first permanent staff member, Tom O'Donnell.

Tom commenced work as the new school's Director of Student Services in February. He was the manager for student services for Education Queensland in the Far North and led Education Queensland's flexible learning centre in Cairns for several years.

He sees the new role at the school as an opportunity to combine his professional background in working with young people with a practical expression of his Catholic faith. Tom and his wife Josette, a pastoral worker with the Diocese, have been active members of both the Northern Beaches and Cathedral parishes.

“The issues around disengagement from education, and all the things that flow from it, are very real in our part of the world. By providing a space for young people to learn how to recover from difficult situations, encourage young people to resolve to do better next time, to walk alongside when they are bouncing back from adversity, and importantly being there when asked for help is essential for enabling young people to become positive and active citizens. This is an authentic opportunity in the Diocese to follow this mission,” he said.

“If we succeed we will only do it with the support and involvement of a lot of caring and generous people in our parishes and the wider community.”

“We hope that as this school gets underway that people will step forward to

help us as mentors, as numeracy and literacy coaches, in the kitchen preparing meals, or perhaps offering work experience or part time jobs for our students,” he said.

Tom said the success of outreaches such as Rosie's demonstrated there was a strong volunteer culture in the Far North willing to pitch in and help those in need.

“We hope that both Cairns and Cooktown will have strong volunteer support groups to help the staff deliver the educational programs. These volunteers will bring some great skills to the school but we will need to provide appropriate training and induction programs for them because at times it won't be an easy environment to work in.”

At present Tom is supported in his role by the part time support of Melissa Milton who also coordinates Rosie's and is Cairns

Volunteer of the Year, and Sr Mary Garnier, a Hammond Islander by birth with a long teaching career in Papua New Guinea. Since coming to Cairns Sr Mary has worked with disengaged young people and in Indigenous liaison for Catholic primary schools at Bentley Park and Gordonvale.

With the school set to open early in 2015 Tom's role in coming months is to talk to families and potential students as well as the numerous support agencies and organisations providing services in the Far North. Part of this may involve starting some smaller outreach programs in the second half of 2014.

“Our school will be based on the three Rs,” he said. “Relationships, Relationships, Relationships.”

# Schools for **Mt Peter** and **Weipa** seek capital funding approval for 2016 opening

**T**WO new Catholic schools, at Mt Peter on the southern outskirts of Cairns, and Weipa on Cape York, may be set to open in 2016 if capital funding can be secured this year.

Mt Peter just missed out on funding last year while Weipa now has all approvals in place to proceed with a capital funding application.

Mt Peter, which will serve Cairns' southern growth corridor, will start as a Prep-Year 3 school but will grow to be a Prep-Year 12 school similar in size to the successful P-12 St Andrew's Catholic College at Redlynch.

Weipa will be a Prep-Year 6 primary school servicing the mining township of Weipa and the neighbouring Aboriginal community of Napranum.

Catholic Education will find out mid-year whether the funding bids have been successful.

"They are two different schools but with the same mission – to provide a quality education grounded in faith for the communities they serve," said Catholic Education Services Executive Director Br Paul Hough.

"We have been actively planning both schools for several years."

Br Paul said a decision had been made this year to seek funding to open a school at Mt Peter as a P-3 after last year's bid for a secondary college beginning with a Year 7 cohort was unsuccessful.

"Our demographic analysis showed strong support for both the primary and secondary components but the need for

primary places in the area has become the more urgent requirement," he said.

"Once we get the school started I believe we will see the primary and secondary components soon developing in parallel with the full P-12 status being achieved sooner, rather than later," he said.

Br Paul said the proposed school at Weipa would eventually be a single stream primary school with around 180 students. It would be located in Boundary Road and be co-located with, and take its name from St Joseph's Catholic Church.

"We have a very active and resilient Catholic community in Weipa which has been advocating in support of a school for a number of years. At present there is no choice of education provider in Weipa and this has seen some families leave the community to pursue Catholic schooling options," he said.

He said that, with Thursday Island, this would be the most remote diocesan school and, as such, presented several challenges, including the provision of teacher accommodation.

Br Paul said the school did not see itself as being in competition with the nearby Western Cape College. Rather, it sought to provide an alternative for families seeking an education based on Gospel values.

He said the two new schools would be the 28th and 29th schools in the Diocese. "These schools, but particularly Mt Peter, will cater for much of our expected growth in the medium term for mainstream Catholic schooling"

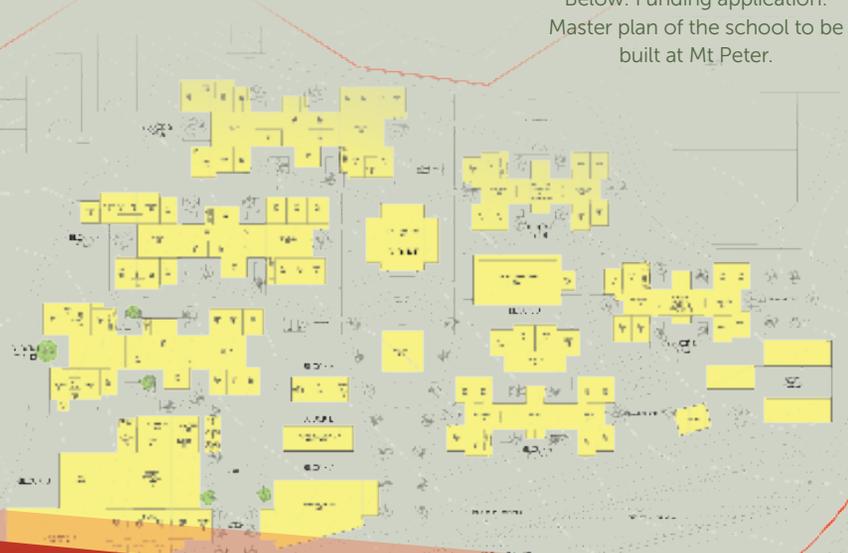


Above and right: Funding application: Artist's impression and plans for the new Catholic primary school at Weipa.



Below: Options: Once the Mt Peter campus develops quickly to full Prep to Year 12 status, students in the southern corridor like those from St Therese's Bentley Park, pictured, will have even more choice for secondary schooling.

Below: Funding application: Master plan of the school to be built at Mt Peter.



Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?

Answers :

- Q1. 4
- Q3. 10
- Q5. A
- Q7. A
- Q2. B
- Q4. 10.89
- Q6. B