

# St Joseph's Parish School, Weipa

School newsletter

No 2, June, 2015

## Meet Rosie Harrison – our new Principal

**Ms Rosemary (Rosie) Harrison has been appointed as the foundation Principal for St Joseph's Parish School, Weipa.**

Rosie, currently an education officer with Catholic Education, Cairns, has more than 30 years' experience in Catholic schools in Queensland and New South Wales as a teacher, Assistant Principal Religious Education, and Acting Principal.

With a background that includes growing up on a remote rural property, and having experienced Catholic schools in remote areas as a student, teacher and leader, Rosie is well placed to take charge of the new school.

"I am looking forward to getting up to Weipa and start talking to the families and children who will become part of this new school," she said. "The construction of the school is one thing and it is very exciting to see the buildings starting to come out of the ground. But the more important part is how we build a community of families around the new school," she said.

"One of the great advantages of small rural schools is that we have a strong sense of family and knowing each other," she said.

Rosie was raised on her family's wheat, sheep and cattle property near Mungindi in western Queensland on the New South Wales border, as the only girl in a family with five brothers.

Ironically her first schooling experience was with another St Joseph's Parish School, led by the Sisters of Mercy, in Mungindi. Rosie commenced her primary schooling as a five year old weekly boarder in her Kinder

year and later she moved to another Sisters of Mercy boarding school at Gunnedah in western New South Wales for her secondary education.

After attending university in Lismore her first teaching job was in St George before further teaching appointments in the Toowoomba and Lismore dioceses and later in Brisbane.

"As a background it means I understand remote communities and the sacrifices families make to give their children the best possible education. I can imagine how excited many families must be in Weipa and Napranum to know a new Catholic school is being built in their community," she said.

Rosie said the new school would provide a local opportunity for families attracted to the values of faith-based education.

"My understanding is that for a number of families with past positive experiences with Catholic schools that the availability of a Catholic school in Weipa will allow them to continue to live in Weipa and contribute to the local community," she said.



*Principal - Ms Rosie Harrison*

## Thanks for your interest

We are getting a steady stream of enquiries from families interested in the new school. These are being logged on our school database – if you have received this newsletter as an email then you are on our database. If you have received a paper copy, or forwarded the electronic newsletter by friends, and haven't yet logged an expression of interest, go to the Catholic Education website [www.cns.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cns.catholic.edu.au), follow the Home Page link to St Joseph's Parish School, Weipa and fill in the Weipa expression of interest form.

## Composite classes for the higher grades?

We have received a number of enquiries from families interested in whether the school's first stage might also include composite classes for years 4-6. We understand some families have children across a number of grades and would prefer to have all their children at one school. If you are interested in opportunities for years 4-6 next year please make sure you submit an expression of interest form.

There will be five learning areas in the school's first stage. How we utilise these areas will be in response to our capacity to best meet the needs of local families.

## It's a (fence) wrap

St Joseph's Parish School, after years of consultation and planning, is now a construction site. We expect the buildings to be completed by late October. In the meantime the site fence has been covered with a marketing fence wrap to promote enrolment enquiries.



## Some frequently asked questions

### When will the school open?

The school will open in January 2016 for the start of Term 1.

### Where is it?

The school is in Boundary Road Weipa adjacent to the Catholic Parish Church. Vehicle access will be from Boundary Road.

### What are the school's contact details?

The phone number is 07 4069 9500 (this number is currently redirected to Cairns). The PO Box is 1409, Weipa and the email address is [office.weipa@cns.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office.weipa@cns.catholic.edu.au). We expect the school to have a temporary office, probably on the church/school site in Term 3.

### What year levels will be offered initially?

The first stage will offer Prep to Year 3. If there is sufficient demand we will look at some composite classes in 2016 for the higher grades. Initial enrolments will be for up to 80 students.

### How big will the school be?

The school will grow to be a single stream (one class for each year level) school for Prep to Year 6. We expect the school to grow to about 180 students. This will be a viable school in terms of numbers but still small enough to have a welcoming family-friendly community.

### How can I express an interest in enrolling my children and to receive information about the school?

Go to the Cairns Catholic Education website [www.cns.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cns.catholic.edu.au), follow the Home Page link to St Joseph's Parish School, Weipa and fill in the Weipa expression of interest form.

### When will the interviews for enrolment take place?

We expect enrolment interviews will commence in Term 3, 2015. We hope to make offers of places as soon as possible to provide families with some certainty for 2016.

### What will the school fees be?

We expect to announce the fees and levies for the school early in Term 3. The two components of our school fee structure are the tuition fees and the levies, which are designed to meet school loan commitments, education materials, P&F support etc. We are still in the process of determining what those levies will be.

### Do you have to be a Catholic to enrol in the school?

No. Practising Catholics and children baptised in the Catholic faith have preference in enrolment, but enrolment is open to all families who support the values of the Catholic Church and a faith-based education. Catholic schools in the Cairns diocese have significant numbers of non-Catholic students.

### When will other staff be appointed?

Now that Rosie Harrison has been appointed as Principal, the recruitment of other staff will commence. We are currently advertising for an Assistant Principal Religious Education. This will be followed by recruiting other school staff - teachers, teacher aides, administrative staff etc.

### Will local people be considered for these positions?

Our recruitment process for all positions will be based on merit but we would expect a number of positions will be filled by local residents in the Weipa and Napranum communities.

### What features will the school have?

The first stage of the school will cost \$6.147 million – to ensure a state-of-the-art modern 21st century primary school. The school will have a number of learning areas (classrooms), all linked to a central resource area. The school will be well equipped with a range of computer and other ICT options. The buildings have been designed for airconditioned operations during all four terms.

There will be a large under cover activities area and a junior sports field. There is provision for a tuckshop and uniform shop.

## Contact

Website: [www.cns.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cns.catholic.edu.au)

Phone: 07 4069 9500

Email: [office.weipa@cns.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office.weipa@cns.catholic.edu.au)



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