

**St. John's**  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



**WALKERSTON**

# St John's Catholic Primary School Parent Handbook 2023

*"I give to you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

*John 13:34-35*



**Catholic Education**  
Diocese of Rockhampton

February 2023

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the St John's Catholic Primary School thank you for taking the time to read this Parent Handbook. If you are an existing family seeking further information, or a parent considering enrolling your child/children at St John's, thank you for your interest.

Every school is uniquely different. St John's is a vibrant, Christ-filled community which exists to meet the educational needs of students in Prep to Year Six, with an approximate enrolment of 300 students. We are proud of our newly refurbished facilities and resources, proud of our students and extremely grateful for the tremendous support we receive from our parent and parish community.

I believe when parents enrol their child into a Catholic school, they are also enrolling their family. The sense of spirit, faith and community at St John's enriches all. We strive to make a difference in the lives of the young people entrusted to our care and to their families.

This handbook serves to outline some of the expectations, processes, procedures, and routines that occur at St John's.

All enquiries and questions seeking clarification are very welcome.

Kind Regards,



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Nathaniel Rice  
**PRINCIPAL**

# STAFF LIST – 2023

Priest: Father James (Parish Administrator)

Leadership Team	
Principal: Mr Nathaniel Rice APRE: Mrs Tenille Galea APC: Mrs Shae Saunders	
Classroom Teachers	Specialist Teachers
<b>Prep A:</b> Mrs Amy Zarb/ Mrs Sarah-Jane Considine <b>TA:</b> Mrs Catrina Simpson	<b>Physical Education:</b> Mrs Tenille Galea (P-2); Mrs Celeste Pastega (3-6)
<b>Prep B:</b> Mrs Gayle Frank <b>TA:</b> Mrs Carmel Scriha	<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing:</b> Mrs Celeste Pastega
<b>Year 1A:</b> Miss Jessica Bugeja	<b>Music &amp; Drama:</b> Mrs Melissa Mitchell
<b>Year 1B:</b> Miss Tiffany Wilton	<b>Digital Technology:</b> Mrs Ellen Grima
<b>Year 2A:</b> Mrs Jorden Alexopoulos	School Counsellor
<b>Year 2B:</b> Mrs Natasha Freeman	Ms Wendy Parker (Thursday and Friday)
<b>Year 3A:</b> Miss Jemima Mactaggart	Inclusive Curriculum (IC) Staff
<b>Year 3B:</b> Miss Helen Baisden	<b>IC Teacher:</b> Mrs Yoon Noy
<b>Year 4A:</b> Miss Tahlia Kelly	<b>IC Teacher:</b> Mrs Tanya Hamilton
<b>Year 4B:</b> Miss Bridie Beatson	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Rhonda Bennett
<b>Year 5A:</b> Miss Emma Anderson	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Diane Blines
<b>Year 5B:</b> Mrs Leanne Cureton	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Amanda Bostock
<b>Year 6A:</b> Mrs Hayley Kaddatz	<b>TA:</b> Miss Montannah Browne
<b>Year 6B:</b> Miss Hannah Ross	<b>TA:</b> Mr Riley Chapman
Administration Staff	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Kylie Hinschen
<b>Administration Secretary:</b> Mrs Fiona Spina	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Lou Kidd
<b>Finance Secretary:</b> Mrs Michelle Fry	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Brooke Marlow
<b>Finance Secretary:</b> Mrs Tanya Bridson	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Sara Patterson
Ancillary Staff	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Rachael Springis
<b>Facilities Co-ordinator:</b> Mr Dean Zellar	<b>TA:</b> Mrs Raelene Stevens
<b>Library Co-ordinator:</b> Mrs Michelle Mugliett	<b>TA:</b> Miss Mikinley Sugars
<b>Tuckshop Co-ordinator:</b> TBA	Carer Assistance Program (CAP)
<b>Tuckshop Assistant:</b> TBA	Miss Danieka Callaghan
<b>Cleaner:</b> Mrs Michelle Mason	

## RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Relationships are very important in any community, however, in Catholic schools, quality relationships between all stakeholders are paramount. At the core of any quality relationship is trust. Children must feel that the school and home is united in expectations and desired outcomes.

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton (CEDR)<sup>b</sup>, has a position statement *Right Relationships: Parent Code of Conduct* that outlines a set of Guiding Principles to assist and inform parents on effective ways to engage with schools and make expectations clear to ensure all parents within a school community are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities.

It is our ongoing goal to provide an environment for right relationships to exist, where values of respect, courtesy, confidentiality, care, and compassion are shown by all members of the community and we work together to solve problems at the lowest possible level.

Source: <https://www.rok.catholic.edu.au/parents-community/parents-community-overview/>

# CATHOLIC ETHOS

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION, DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton, has a proud tradition stretching back some 150 years. We owe a great deal to those who have gone before us, priests, religious and parents and lay educators who worked, sometimes in difficult conditions and often against odds to provide quality Catholic education to successive generations.

For further information regarding Catholic Education, Diocesan services, policies etc. please visit their website - <https://www.rok.catholic.edu.au/>

## VISION AND MISSION

At St John's, who we are, what we value and what we believe as co-educators in a child's life is crucial to our success as a learning organisation. Through fostering children's ability to become reflective and self-directed learners, our school aims to nurture effective communicators, capable producers, willing participators, eager investigators, and creative problem solvers. Our Vision and Mission Statements define WHY we do what we do and HOW we do it.

*Vision Statement*

"To be a community of faith who strive for love, honesty, thankfulness and excellence through teaching and learning."

*Mission Statement*

Inspired by the Sisters of Mercy:  
At St John's Catholic Primary School, we try to be like Jesus in everything we do.  
We aim to spread His message of love to all those we meet.  
With the help of our parents, teachers and friends we try to do our best always, using our virtues, and the gifts and talents God has given us.

Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

## ST JOHN'S SCHOOL EMBLEM



The St John's School emblem features a shield divided into three sections. These sections represent the triad of influences that underpin the education at our school:

- academic,
- sporting/cultural, and
- spiritual

## OUR MOTTO

The bottom of the emblem features our school motto, taken from the Gospel of St John:

*"Love one another as I have loved you".*

## OUR PATRON – ST JOHN

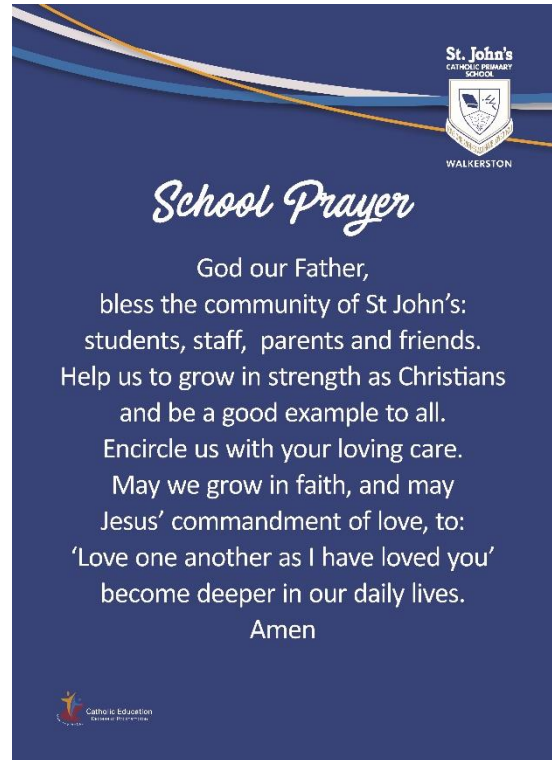
St John was the son of Zebedee and brother of St James the Greater. He was an Apostle and evangelist, being the author of the Fourth Gospel. In his Gospel he refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” The spirit of love permeates all the writings of St John. St Jerome tells us that when he was an old man the single theme of his preaching was: “My little children, love one another.” When the faithful asked him why he did not preach on something else he replied that this was the Lord’s commandment and that if this is fulfilled it is sufficient. He died peacefully in Ephesus about the year AD 100.

## FAITH LIFE

St John’s School has a strong commitment to witnessing and practicing our faith. There are many opportunities for the community to gather and celebrate, pray and reflect.

As a whole school, we gather for masses and liturgies throughout the term to celebrate feast days and days of special significance. Parents and parish members are always welcome to join us during this time.

Prayer is an important part of our faith life. Each class develops prayer routines in their classrooms. Our school prayer (right) is also a source of reflection and inspiration to all.



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### School Prayer

God our Father,  
bless the community of St John's:  
students, staff, parents and friends.  
Help us to grow in strength as Christians  
and be a good example to all.  
Encircle us with your loving care.  
May we grow in faith, and may  
Jesus' commandment of love, to:  
'Love one another as I have loved you'  
become deeper in our daily lives.  
Amen

Catholic Education  
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## ST JOHN'S VIRTUES / MAKING JESUS REAL



**St. John's**  
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**THANKFULNESS** **EXCELLENCE**

**HONESTY** **LOVE**

“Love one another as I have loved you.”

- ✓ Service
- ✓ Compassion
- ✓ Generosity
- ✓ Commitment
- ✓ Perseverance
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Trustworthiness
- ✓ Forgiveness
- ✓ Courage
- ✓ Consideration
- ✓ Kindness
- ✓ Respect

Inspired by our founders, the Sisters of Mercy, St John’s accepts four virtues that reflect this Mercy character – Love, Honesty, Thankfulness, Excellence.

Virtues are the very meaning and purpose of our lives, the content of our character and the truest expression of our self. Students are exposed to these Virtues in many ways:

- Classroom lessons.
- During times of prayer.
- House Spirit days.
- Discussions about behaviour and how we treat one another.

Through the model of our Virtues, we are working to embed the philosophy and framework “Making Jesus Real” (or MJR). We use these two things in tandem to bring the Catholic faith to life for students by showing them how to live it every day.

MJR aims to give students the tools they need to feel the *Spirit of Jesus* each day and find the *God Moments* that are always happening around them.



To assist us with this alignment to our Virtues, MJR is embedded into our Virtue language and in aspects of the Curriculum.

Our connection between the Virtues and MJR is simply:

- Love – I make Jesus real!
- Honesty – Jesus lives through me each day!
- Excellence – I believe in myself!
- Thankfulness – I have an attitude for gratitude!



### **SACRAMENTS**

Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist are administered through the St John's Parish Office. For further information, please contact the parish office on 4959 2241, via Facebook or email [saintjohnswalkerston@mcs.net.au](mailto:saintjohnswalkerston@mcs.net.au)

## **CURRICULUM**

### **SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

St John's provides an excellent educational and spiritual grounding for our students. Through the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, teachers structure student learning to help all grow to their full potential by achieving the goals or outcomes at their level while also embracing and celebrating the uniqueness of each child and the differences among children. Through effective teaching, the staff at St John's create learning activities that are safe, enjoyable, and challenging, and cater for a wide range of learning styles among our students. Through our words and actions, we uphold the values of the Gospels within our teaching and learning practices.

Our aim is to develop life-long learners by equipping the students of today with the necessary spiritual, physical, social, and academic skills needed to function and achieve in the world of tomorrow. CEDR schools, are committed to the roles of a life-long learner to give meaning for life.

### **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

Your child's progress is monitored daily by their classroom teacher in both formal and informal ways. You are always welcome to visit classrooms to view your child's work and discuss their progress with them. If a more formal conversation is required, please make a mutually convenient appointment. Please keep in mind that before and after school teachers have preparation time for classes, duties, and staff meetings etc. that impact upon their availability during the week. It is **never** appropriate

to “pop in” to see a teacher during class time, or to discuss your concerns with other parents. Your child’s teacher should always be the first point of contact regarding academic progress.

Formal school procedures for keeping informed of your child’s progress include:

- Parent Information handouts – early Term 1.
- Parent/Teacher Meetings – early Term 1, middle of Term 3.
- Report Cards – end of Semester 1 & 2 (Prep – 6).
- NAPLAN reports (Years 3 & 5) – 2023 delivery to be confirmed.

### **BOOKS LISTS, STATIONERY AND MATERIALS**

As with all schools, students require items and stationery to assist them with completing their studies. These items represent the individual consumables needed by each child for a year of schoolwork. These details are provided on the class booklist(s) provided upon enrolment and at the end of the school year for the upcoming year. We make a sincere effort to keep requirements to a minimum and review book lists yearly.

### **DIGITAL LEARNING**

Our support of digital and online learning is extensive across the school. Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard as well as:

- Prep – Year 1: 10 iPads per year level
- Years 2 – 3: 10 Chromebooks per class
- Years 4 – 6: 18 Chromebooks per class/or trolley

The school also has 30 iPads for digital technology lessons and for class borrowing and a trolley of Chromebooks for additional classroom use.

### **EXCURSIONS AND CAMPS**

At times during the year, tours of educational interest maybe organised by class teachers. There will be times when parents will be asked to join us on excursions to ensure adequate safety and supervision.

Years 5 and 6 attend school camps.



### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Opportunities exist for students to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities. Over time this could include:

- Sporting: school-based rugby league, school-based netball, Primary School representative sport, Pioneer Valley sport (Netball Yrs 3/4 & 5/6; Friday sport), Catholic Schools Challenge Cup (Term 3, under 12 rugby league and netball carnival involving schools across the Diocese), inter-school Friday sport (year 5 and 6 with Pioneer Valley schools)
- Religious: participation as an altar server at weekend mass, sacramental preparation, Catholic Education Week celebrations
- Cultural: Mackay Eisteddfod – verse speaking, choir
- Academic: Mackay Mathematics competition, Pioneer Valley public speaking, Pioneer Valley Mathematics competition.

## **HOMEWORK**

Students at St John's School will be expected to complete homework that is relevant, suited to a child's ability and is not too time-consuming. Homework enables and encourages students to become self-directing, to develop good study habits and routines, and to promote independent learning. It may be used to reinforce classroom learning, to develop life-long and life-wide learning skills and to more closely link home and school in supporting children's learning.

We believe that homework is to be valued as a purposeful, worthwhile learning experience that seeks to enhance the extent to which each child benefits from the school's educational program.

- Prep and Year 1 up to 1 hour per week
- Years 2 and 3 up to 1.5 hours per week
- Years 4 and 5 up to 2.5 hours per week
- Year 6 up to 3.5 hours per week

If you or your children have questions or concerns regarding the type, amount or requirements of homework, please speak with your child's classroom teacher. Our school Homework Policy is available on our website.

## **INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM**

St John's School believes in providing opportunities for all students that allow them to achieve to the best of their ability, with the right amount of required support. Our Inclusive Curriculum, learning support and equity for students with learning needs is a strong part of our school. Should you have concerns regarding your child's progress – academically, socially, emotionally – please speak with their classroom teacher in the first instance.

## **LIBRARY**

The school library has a wide range of junior fiction, fiction and non-fiction books which are available for your child to borrow on a weekly basis. Reference books are also available for use at school. Children are required to have a waterproof library bag/satchel which has a drawstring or zip fastener. Waterproof satchels are available from the school. Children who do not have a library bag will not be permitted to borrow.

## **LOST LIBRARY BOOKS**

We are proud of our library and the huge variety of resources we can offer our students, staff, and families. From time-to-time books and resources borrowed by may become overdue. Students are advised by our Library Co-ordinator, Mrs Michelle Mugliett, when books are overdue. We would appreciate if parents could assist their children to look for overdue items at home and return it as soon as possible. If the item cannot be found, we ask that you contact our library co-ordinator, by telephone or note, to make her aware of this. We ask that you reimburse the school for the loss of this item. If no communication is received from parents regarding outstanding book loans or lost items, a note will be sent home to advise parents of the replacement requirements.

## **PREPARATORY YEAR (PREP)**

As of 2017, Prep is a compulsory full-time year of school. Our Prep teachers implement a play-based curriculum helping the children to:



- get along with others
- listen to and speak with others
- use their imagination creatively
- develop independence
- make sense of words and numbers
- to develop a sense of enjoyment for school and learning
- to feel good about themselves
- to learn about God

Interviews for enrolment occur mid-year in the year prior to enrolment commencing. If parents have a student of prep age and wish for them to be enrolled at St John’s, they are encouraged to visit our school website and go to the enrolment section to complete an application form. Prior to enrolment interviews, parents will be contacted to arrange a time to speak with the principal.

Prep eligibility age:

<b>Child’s Birthdate</b>	<b>Eligible for Prep in</b>
1/7/2018 – 30/6/2019	2024
1/7/2019 – 30/6/2020	2025
1/7/2020 – 30/6/2021	2026

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is an important aspect of our curriculum. Students participate in learning about the Catholic faith during class lessons, masses, liturgies, prayer, and community activities which focus on generosity of self to others, and the witnessing and practicing of their faith and Gospel values through their daily interactions. All students enrolled at our school are expected to participate fully in all Religious Education and faith-based learning and activities.

**SPECIALIST LESSONS**

St John’s School is blessed with the talents of a variety of Specialist Teachers. Students in all year levels participate in Physical Education lessons each week, taught by Mrs Tenille Galea (Prep to 2) Mrs Celeste Pastega (Years 3 to 6) and Music and Drama taught by Mrs Melissa Mitchell. These lessons occur on either a Wednesday or Thursday and go for 40 minutes each. Students are to wear their Sports uniform (Years 1 to 6; Prep their normal uniform) on their HPE day.

Each semester, students also participate in lessons focused on student Mental Health and Wellbeing. These lessons draw on learning areas such as Health, Personal and Social Development, as well as the Child Safety curriculum (previously known as the Daniel Morcombe curriculum). These take place weekly for 40 minutes and are taught by Mrs Celeste Pastega. Digital Technology is taught by Mrs Ellen Grima for 40 minutes and covers aspects of the curriculum including coding, robotics, apps, and other digital devices.

# ADMINISTRATION

## BEHAVIOUR

Everyone at St John's School – students, staff, and parents – have rights and responsibilities. Behaviour management at St John's School focuses on the development of quality relationships, the nurturing of social and life skills, and the fostering of emotional resilience. The community of St John's respects the dignity of each person and the development of Christian attitudes and values that support respect for ourselves and for others.

The basis of our Behaviour Management is very simple:

- 1) Students can expect to learn in a safe environment;
- 2) Teachers can expect to teach;
- 3) Students are responsible for their own actions.

Teachers are skilled with using effective classroom management techniques and very few major issues arise which require more than simple redirection or other minor consequences e.g. lunch time Reflection Room visits etc. However, in circumstances where teachers are faced with behaviour issues, they follow through with our behaviour management guidelines. Information on these steps, guidelines and practices are on our website.

Four school rules, aligned to our School Virtues, give focus to the development of positive relationships when at school. Our four rules and their connected Virtue are:

- Be Respectful (LOVE)
- Be Responsible (HONESTY)
- Be Amazing (EXCELLENCE)
- Be Thankful (THANKFULNESS)

Through the rights, responsibilities, and ways of demonstrating these rules/Virtues, students and staff are able to work together and enrich the lives of others.



### Reflection Room

At times, students may need assistance and support to demonstrate the right behaviours when they are at school. Just like learning to read or completing maths, sometimes students will require support with developing good relationships and studious practices. Our lunchtime *Reflection Room* is a way that we can do this.

The Reflection Room is a space where student can talk through situations with a teacher or member of the Leadership Team and discuss ways that things can be done differently the next time they are faced with challenges. Referrals can come from either classroom or lunchtime incidents.

If a child is referred to the Reflection Room, either from their classroom teacher or a teacher on playground duty, they will attend on the next first break 10:55 to 11:20a.m.

Further details about our Behaviour Management process can be found on our school website.

### **BUS ASSISTANCE**

The Non-Government Schools Transport Assistance Scheme, funded by the State Government, provides financial assistance to families whose children have been assessed as being eligible for travel assistance to attend an approved non-state school. The NGSTAS consists of two programs:

- The Bus Fare Assistance Program (BFAP)
- The Students with Disabilities (SWD) Transport

Further information can be obtained by contacting QCEC Executive Officer – School Transport, on telephone No. 07 33165858 or by email to: [info@schooltransport.com.au](mailto:info@schooltransport.com.au)

### **COMMUNICATION**

The key to all good relationships is clear two-way communication. Our school tries extremely hard to ensure all matters are communicated in a prompt and timely way. There are several key methods of communication that all parents need to be aware of.

Our two main methods of communication are:

- Email:
  - Administration – general reminders and information as well as the school newsletter (fortnightly). Reading of the newsletter should be a priority for every parent.
  - Classroom teachers – updates and student specific feedback.
- SMS: general alerts and reminders

At times, information will go home in paper form through class trays, but this is generally rare. Our Facebook will have other updates, reminders, or advertising but is not our main delivery point for information.

However, communication is a two-way street. I understand that families are very busy and that parents receive multiple emails and messages from a variety of sources each day, but it is vital that parents are aware of our methods of communication.

If you feel that you are missing information, then it is important to contact the school Administration for clarification or the relevant staff member/teacher and done so with the right manner and respectfully.

Specific information about our information and communication sources:

#### SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

The school newsletter is distributed during the **first week of every term and every even week thereafter** on fortnightly basis. It is sent home on a Friday. This is distributed via email. Parents may choose to have a paper copy sent home also. Parents are asked to read the newsletter, as it gives up-to-date information about events and arrangements at school.

#### SCHOOL WEBSITE

Our school has a very informative, providing valuable information to parents. The school website can be accessed on <http://www.sjwarok.catholic.edu.au/>.

#### SMS

From time to time, it is necessary for the school to send a SMS to parents by way of reminders, alerts, emergencies or changes to routine. If your SMS details change throughout the year, please contact the office to update your information.

#### PARENT LOUNGE

An addition to our school database, TASS, is a parent portal called Parent Lounge. This service suite allows parents to update contact information, book scheduled Parent/Teacher Interviews and is the portal where student semester reports are uploaded. If you need assistance with accessing this page, please contact the school office.

#### EMAIL

Teachers and the school will use email as a direct source of contact with families. Email addresses are gathered from parents at the beginning of each year. Newsletters and other documents are often emailed to parents. This is not only time efficient but also doing our part to reduce our copying costs.

For general emails or to contact the principal, please use the school email [sjwa@rok.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sjwa@rok.catholic.edu.au).

#### FACEBOOK

The school has a Facebook page that exists for the purposes of communication to parents and for communication. This page is managed by the school and is updated regularly.

Teachers will also communicate with parents as the need arises via email, class notes etc.

### **ENROLMENTS**

Our Diocese has a very clear Enrolment Policy which all schools follow. For further information, visit our Diocesan website. An online enrolment portal is used to enrol new students to the school. A link can be found on our school website.

## PREP

Prep enrolments are accepted during the year until groups are filled. To enrol in Prep, a child must turn 5 by June 30 in the year they attend Prep. Steps for the enrolment of children at St John's Prep are:

1. Follow links on our website to complete an expression of interest for enrolment. A non-refundable enrolment fee of \$30 applies to all enrolment applications and is to be paid at this time.
2. In May of the preceding Prep year, parents who lodge an expression of interest via our online enrolment portal will be contacted by the school to arrange an enrolment interview.
3. Interviews are held with the Principal end of Term 2 for existing families and beginning of Term 3 for new families.
4. Offers of enrolment are made by the last week of August.
5. Transition visits are held in Term 4. At these times, students are exposed to a variety of activities at school including the library, specialist lessons, classroom activities and using the play equipment. Parents are provided a variety of information sessions that will help support their child entering St John's – social and emotional support/development, school information, parenting support.

Each Prep group is filled, but not limited to, a maximum of twenty-five students and in line with our Diocesan Enrolment Policy.

## ENROLMENT INQUIRIES FOR GENERAL CLASSES (YEARS 1 TO 6)

Enrolments for years 1 to 6 are accepted at any time during the school year. Prospective parents are welcome to phone the school to make a time for a chat with the principal or lodge an expression of interest via our online portal.

## NON-CATHOLIC CHILDREN

Non-Catholic children and families are very welcomed at St John's School provided that parents support the school's faith and religious life and that they and their children will be involved in and support the Catholic ethos of the school. Children who are not Catholic are involved in all liturgical events as well as taking part in all Religion lessons.

## FEES AND FUNDING

Funds for our school are derived from two main sources – Government funding and parent contributions through school fees.

## GOVERNMENTS

Funding from both State and Federal Governments is paid to our Diocesan Catholic Education Office in Rockhampton. This office then distributes funds to schools on a student needs basis. Government contributions to Catholic Schools are significantly less than the contributions made to State Schools. As a result, Catholic Schools must charge fees to make up for the funding shortfall. School fees are broken into two main areas – tuition fees and levies:

- Tuition Fees, a percentage of which is kept by our school. Means tested and eligible concession cards can reduce this amount by 70%.
- Levies, which include: both school-based (to support employment of grounds staff etc.) and Diocesan;



School fees can be a sensitive topic in some school communities. However, while current government funding models continue, at both State and Federal levels, fees are a vital part of Catholic Education.

Many Catholic schools were founded on the tradition of education for the poor. I support the equity of this model and will always listen to and work with families who have fallen on hard times. Families who are experiencing severe financial difficulty due to whatever reason can follow a process and apply for a concession.

Equity also includes ensuring that those who do pay fees and make payment a priority should not have their child's education disadvantaged by those who choose not to make paying fees a priority.

With everyone paying fees or making the best contribution to paying fees that they can, resources can continually be updated, professional development of teachers can continue, and facilities can be first rate.

Equity is providing what's promised, equity is fair contributions from all, equity is ensuring that when the school is approached and kept informed, we can assist families when necessary.

#### *COSTS – TUITION FEES AND LEVIES*

A detailed approximate summary of our school and Diocesan fees and levies schedule is available on our school website.

#### *PAYMENT OF FEES*

Accounts for term fees are sent out to parents in week 2 of each term and are payable within 14 days. Parents who wish to arrange to pay fees by weekly or monthly instalments are welcome to contact the school to discuss how this can be done.

#### *FINANCIAL HARDSHIP*

St John's has a genuine commitment to providing a Catholic education for all our students as stated in our Diocesan Enrolment Policy and it is appreciated that many families sacrifice a great deal to keep their children at Catholic schools. In the case of financial hardship, please contact the principal, who in confidence will negotiate appropriate arrangements with you – this is a case-by-case basis. As fees and levies continue to rise, parents are encouraged to speak with the principal so that options can be discussed for the long-term payment of fees.

#### *PARENTS & FRIENDS LEVY*

Our school Parents and Friends Association, in consultation with their school community and Board, have a P&F levy in lieu of continued significant fund raising. This is directed into student support activities, resources, IT, and areas of school improvement. This levy also supports the cost of the bus when students attend swimming lessons and also allows classes 1 excursion via bus per year (excluding camps).

#### **GRIEVANCES**

It is acknowledged that during your child's school years, there may be a grievance you wish to raise about your child's education. St John's is committed to ensuring that all grievances are addressed in a fair and equitable manner and the following procedures will guide parents in addressing grievances as quickly as possible.

Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton, has a position statement *Right Relationships: Parent Grievance Procedures and Guidelines* that outlines a set of *General Principles* to assist and inform parents on effective ways to engage with schools should a grievance exist and make clear expectations to ensure all parents within a school community are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities.

When addressing a grievance, the integrity and respect of all individuals must be upheld, the discussion should be calm and collaborative, and the response pastoral and in line with school and diocesan policy and procedures. Grievances or problems are not suitably handled via “car park gossip”, through negative and highly emotive conversations, or the use of social media platforms.

Who	What For...(Examples)
Classroom Teacher	Student learning matters, class discipline, friendship issues, homework, issues outside of school that may impact on learning, etc...
Member of the School Leadership Team	Continuation of issues raised with classroom teacher; school wide matters (traffic, school policies and procedures, etc), grievances with other parents, etc
Principal	Continuation of unresolved issues; student protection concerns, serious breaches of the Parent Code of Conduct, etc
Catholic Education Office	Continuation of unresolved issues

**Most** grievances are best resolved promptly at the local level. In schools, the classroom or subject teacher is often the best person to handle routine concerns about matters within their classroom and/ or area of responsibility. **Some** complaints will need the involvement of a member of the Leadership Team or the Principal. As issues are clarified, a complaint may be handed to another suitable person (for example, a teacher).

Additionally, the Diocesan Grievance Policy can be found at <https://www.rok.catholic.edu.au/about-us/policies-publications/>

### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

There are two ways in which policies are developed for St John’s School.

Our Diocesan Catholic Education Office does have policies which apply to all schools in the Diocese. To view the policies of the Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton, please go to their website <http://www.rok.catholic.edu.au/>.

If a policy does not exist at a Diocesan level, then the school is able to write a policy. With the guidance of the School Board, policies at a school level are drafted, shared with the community for consultation and then approved. School-based policies are available on our school website.

Information relating to the School Board can be found in the *Parent Engagement* section.

### **PARENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media has become a common way for people to communicate. By definition, “Social media” means websites and applications and any other service or device which enable a user to create and share content or to participate in social networking. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook,

LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Omegle, Twitter, blogs, forums, discussion boards, chat rooms, Wikis and YouTube.

It is important, therefore, that parents are aware of their responsibility to contribute thoughtfully, sensitively and with school guidelines in mind.

Parents are reminded to exercise caution at school events and consider the students captured in photos/videos and the like. It is ill-advised to presume that the parent of another child automatically gives consent for photos/videos to be taken and or published in any way.

### PARENT CHAT/CLASS PAGES

We believe our communication with the community is first rate. We are a very open community and will gladly answer any questions or provide additional information, where possible, to parents at any time. As such, it is important for parents or members of the community to exercise when it comes to association with unofficial school communication forums using social media as this could, at times, be in conflict to school messages.

As a guide, parents are asked to always reflect online behaviour that demonstrate a Christ-centered respect for the dignity of each person and consider Student Protection protocols and policies of Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton.

## DAILY ROUTINE

### ABSENCES /SMS NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS

Children should not be sent to school if they are not well enough to engage in normal classroom programs. Please advise the school of the reason for any absence of a pupil, for example, because of illness, holiday, family matters etc. A call to the office or an email to [sjwa@rok.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sjwa@rok.catholic.edu.au) on the day of absence is all that is necessary. This assists the school with the government regulations for unexplained absences.

If for any reason parents or carers do not contact the school regarding a student's absence, the school will issue an SMS to alert parents of their child(ren's) unexplained absence.

If a child becomes unwell during the day, the parents will be notified and asked to collect their child.

Students who have consistent patterns of non-attendance for explained or unexplained reasons will be asked to provide further context around these ongoing absences.

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child attends school, is prompt to school each morning, and is provided with all of the materials they require for the school day (especially their hat, food and water bottle).

### ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES ARRANGEMENTS

Students do not have permission to leave the grounds between arrival at school in the morning and departure in the afternoon unless a parent or nominated guardian signs the child out at the

administration office. If a student arrives after the second bell at 8:35 a.m. parents must sign them in the office. If a student is leaving early a parent must sign them out through the front office.

### **WHOLE SCHOOL PRAYER AND ASSEMBLY**

Prep – Year 6 assemble each Monday afternoon at 2:10 p.m. in the hall. Assembly commences with prayer, which is usually led by a class. We then commence our general assembly which is led by our School Leaders. Assembly includes anthem, school prayer, messages, awards, birthdays, and mission statement.

At the final assembly of each term St John's Virtue Awards are given by teachers to students from their class who have demonstrated the term Virtue in their daily life. There are no other awards at this assembly.

### **BEFORE / AFTER SCHOOL**

#### **BEFORE SCHOOL**

The school's duty of care commences at 8:15 a.m. We therefore request that parents do not drop their children off before this time. If students are left at school, they should not be left before 8 a.m. If this is a requirement, seeking before school care at either PCYC or at Walkerston Day Care should be sought.

Students who arrive before 8.15 a.m. must remain seated in the area under the sails near the Mercy Garden or undercover area near the library. This is not a time for play.

Our morning routine is as follows:

- Before 8:15 a.m. all students and parents/families are to wait at the tables near the back of the staff room/library. PLEASE DO NOT wait outside of classrooms, especially prep, or on classroom verandas.
- No play on the prep playground, at the lego table, or handball while waiting before 8:15 a.m.
- At 8:15 a.m. a bell will go. Students and families are to wait for the teacher on duty to signal students to move to classrooms.
- Students can then move to the MPA to play handball, otherwise they are to be in their classroom.
- Students should not wait outside of classrooms for friends or their teacher. At 8.30 a.m. a bell will ring signaling to students to move to their classrooms for the start of instruction time.

All students are expected to be at school, in their classroom, and ready for instruction by 8:35 a.m. Students arriving after this must be signed in at the office. Class attendance rolls are marked by 8:45a.m.

#### **AFTER SCHOOL**

Parents and children are to move off school grounds promptly. Teacher supervision commences at 3:00 p.m. and the teacher is stationed at the Hall/PE room doors and concludes at 3:15 p.m. or when the last bus leaves. Supervision is **only** offered at this area and parents should not encourage their child/children to wait in other areas, especially outside of the school grounds.

The following rules apply at after school time:

- There is to be **no playing** of handball or games after school, regardless of whether they are under the supervision of a parent/carer. This includes the use of playgrounds (at Prep or the senior area) and playing soccer etc. on the oval.
- All students travelling by bus are to go straight to the bus area at 2:55 p.m. where their name will be marked off the bus roll.
- All children waiting to be collected by parents should head to the MPA for supervision. This is the only supervised area after school.
- All children being collected by parents parked in Dutton and Anne Streets must wait inside the school grounds at the supervision area. Parents must enter the school grounds to collect their children and not signal from the car for the child to leave the school grounds.
- **No children are to wait in front of the Church and the church driveway should not be used as a 'drive through'.**
- Children remaining after 3:15 p.m. or after the last bus will be moved to the foyer of the office.
- Students remaining after school for extra curricula activities must wait quietly (no handball or games) until the supervising teacher/adult arrives.
- Siblings of those attending training are encouraged to be collected, supervised by their parents or travel home. They are not to remain at school unsupervised or expected to be supervised by another parent or the instructing teacher.

#### **DAILY ROUTINE**

TIME	ROUTINE
8:15 a.m.	Morning duty / Supervision commences
8:30 a.m.	Warning bell Move to rooms or assembly / toilet / drinks ALL tuckshop orders in – Wednesday to Friday
8.35 a.m.	Instruction bell All class trays to office with completed bus roll, any notes or money
10.40 a.m.	Bell – Lunch
10:55 a.m.	Bell – Play
11:17 a.m.	Warning bell – move to rooms / toilet / drinks
11:20 a.m.	Bell – Class Middle Session
1:20 p.m.	Bell – Afternoon tea break (10mins eating/10mins play)
1:37 p.m.	Warning bell – move to rooms / toilet / drinks
1:40 p.m.	Bell – Class Afternoon Session



2:20 p.m.	Assembly – Monday afternoon in the hall
2.55 p.m.	Pack up bell and Bus duty
3:00 p.m.	Dismissal bell
3:15 p.m.	All students and families depart school grounds. Any remaining students are to be brought to the office for supervision/contacting of parents. Staff meeting – Tuesday

### DATES FOR 2022 SCHOOL YEAR

Term 1 Monday 23 January – Friday 31 March

Term 2 Monday 17 April – Friday 23 June

Term 3 Monday 10 July – Friday 15 September

Term 4 Tuesday 3 October – Friday 1 December

### **Pupil Free Days:**

- Term 1: Friday 17 February (Bishops Inservice Day – Week 4)
- Term 3: Friday 1 September

### **Public Holidays:**

- Australia Day Thursday 26 January
- Good Friday 7 April
- Easter Monday 10 April
- Anzac Day Tuesday 25 April
- Labour Day Monday 1 May
- Show Holiday Thursday 22 June
- Queen's Birthday Monday 2 October

### **HOUSE SPIRIT**

House Spirit is an important part of St John's School identity. Our two sporting Houses are O'Connell (Gold) and McAuley (Green).

House Captains are elected from the Year 6 class. House teams are arranged to keep students from the same family together.

To develop House Spirit, *House Spirit Days* are held each term to bring house groups together. On these days students wear their House shirt and sit together at each break to eat. Other activities are generally planned on these days that assist with bringing our St John's Virtues to life.

Students and parents will be made aware of planned House Spirit Days via the newsletter and term calendar.

### **LOST PROPERTY**

Parents are asked to ensure that all items of clothing and personal belongings of their child/children are clearly labeled with the child's name.

A storage bin for lost property is located inside sick bay in the office. Any items found around the school **without identification** are sent there. The items in the storage bin are displayed once a term and each class is asked to view and collect any belongings. Teachers are asked to encourage the children to check the box on a regular basis. At the end of each term this area is cleared and items of clothing in good repair are donated to our school secondhand clothing shop.

### **PARENT PARKING**

At times, parking can become congested around the school. It is vital that parents are aware of these guidelines.

### **SCHOOL PARKING**

There is a **5 minute “drop-off” zone** in front of the Prep rooms. This must be adhered to for the benefit of all. If a school visit is likely to take longer than 5 minutes, please park elsewhere.

Parents are reminded of the importance of parking in the correct drop off zones when driving children to and from school. If parents are delayed and cannot collect children by 3:15 p.m. they should contact the school before 2:55 p.m. so that a message can be given to students.

Parents can park on the street side and on the vacant allotment opposite the church in Anne Street. The vacant land in Creek Street is **private property** and parents parking on this land should take care when doing so.

### **SUPERVISED SCHOOL CROSSING**

All children and parents who cross Creek Street **MUST** use the school crossing that is provided in front of the school. Parents are reminded of the importance of setting a good example to their children in this area of road safety.

### **STUDENT LUNCHES / HEALTHY FOOD /SNACK BREAKS**

There is no restriction on what the children bring to school for lunches though we teach and recommend healthy and nutritious food. In general, pack food that is easy to open and eat. We also suggest making sure that your child has a wholesome breakfast otherwise we find them feeling very hungry before recess. While our school is not nut free, we do encourage students and parent to make food choices that are considerate of those who are allergic to nuts.

### **TUCKSHOP**

Tuckshop is ordered online and distributed through either a traditional ‘brown paper bag’ system or insulated “Sticky-beak Bag”. Menus are available on the online ordering system or distributed each term with the newsletter. The tuckshop does not open for the afternoon break.

### **UNIFORMS**

At St John’s School we are very proud of our school uniform. It is presentable and, when worn correctly, builds a sense of belonging. At our school, students are encouraged to have pride in and respect for their personal appearance.

Our Uniform Policy and Expectations on our website and can be purchased from Uniform Solutions.

We have a commitment to each other to ensure that the uniform is worn correctly. It is also very unfair to the majority of children who wear the uniform correctly, to allow others not to comply. Should this become an ongoing problem, a letter will be sent home with students reminding parents about uniform requirements.

## **COMMUNITY**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

On a yearly basis, parents are asked to update their general contact information to assist the school with communication. Parents are also asked that if their contact details change, or family situations changes, to please contact the office as soon as practical to confirm this with the school. Address and Phone details can also be amended on the Parent Lounge site.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are very welcome at St John's School. Parents are an essential part of the education of your children and will remain the most important teachers a child will ever have. P&F membership is automatic when you enrol your child at St John's.

We will call on you for voluntary assistance on occasions. We realise that parents are extremely busy, and many have younger children. However, if you can help in any way, please let us know. Your participation in everyday activities will help your child to bridge the gap between home and school and build a secure and happy environment. Parents can help by:

- Visiting school and joining in the program.
- Supporting the Parents' & Friends' Association.
- Reading notices.
- Supporting and encouraging your child to develop a positive feeling of his/her own worth.
- Offering to share hobbies, interests or expertise you may have with children.
- School Board representatives.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Parents or family members may volunteer their time at the school. All Volunteers need to read and sign-off on our Volunteer Code of Conduct register. This only needs to be done at the first volunteer time each year. When volunteering, parents are required to sign-in at the office and wear a *volunteer* lanyard. Volunteers who are not parents must have a Blue Card before they can volunteer at the school or school activities.

### **PARENTS' & FRIENDS' ASSOCIATION**

Our P&F is an integral part of our school and provides a formal structure for parents and others interested in the welfare of our students, to plan and organise activities for the benefit of the school. Our Parents' & Friends' Association participates in our school by:

- providing a medium of support, information, and involvement of parents/carers in their children's education and the school community.

- developing collaboration between parents/carers and school staff.
- promoting the principles and ethos of Catholic Education.
- fostering a distinctive Christian environment in the school.
- providing a medium for parents/carers to participate at Diocesan, State and National levels.

While other groups are active within the life of our school, it is the Parents & Friends Association which represents the interests of the whole parent body at our school.

Our Parents' and Friends' meetings are friendly, social and of no longer than one hour in duration. They are informative, and a great means for parents to learn more about the school, and to be involved in shaping our future. All meeting dates are advertised in school newsletters.

### SCHOOL BOARD

The St John's School Board is a school community body which supports the principal. Responsibilities include:

- the ongoing development of the Catholic ethos of the school,
- being consulted in relation to the appointment of a principal,
- supporting staff, especially the principal, who will have the day-to-day responsibility for maintaining and promoting the Catholic ethos of the school,
- overseeing the prudent financial management of the school, particularly with a view to ensuring access to quality education for future generations, and including planning for the provision of future facilities,
- providing advice to the principal on any matters referred to it by the principal,
- developing policies on matters referred to it by the principal.

Appointments for new Board members are normally held in October/November of each year and the opportunity for participation in a Community Education Program is offered to all interested persons prior to that meeting.

Members of the Board consist of Parish, School staff and Parent members.

### WEAPONS

Any weapon or instrument that could be used to cause harm is prohibited at any school sanctioned activity. Students or parents breaching this requirement may face serious consequences including suspension and the termination of enrolment. The matter will also be reported to police.

**WHS**

### STUDENT ALLERGIES AND HEALTH ISSUES

There are several students who have allergies and allergic reactions to different items/ substances. If a child does have any allergy, health issues such as asthma, or any other medical condition it is the parent's responsibility to provide the most up-to-date medical information to the school so that the appropriate control measures can be put in place. Failure to provide such information puts the health and safety of your child at risk.

### EMERGENCIES – ILLNESS/INCIDENTS/ACCIDENTS

At the time of enrolment, parents are asked to indicate what steps they would like taken in the event of emergency, illness, or accident. Children with severe medical conditions must arrange for a doctor approved Emergency Action Plan to be provided to the school. Please notify the office as soon as possible if there are any changes to these records.

If children are sick or injured, the school will contact parents and inform them of incidents. If a student's health is of concern, parent will be called to collect their child from school.

### **INFECTIOUS DISEASES / EXCLUSION PERIODS**

The school complies with Queensland Department of Health regulations in this regard. These regulations are able to be found on the Queensland Health website - [http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout\\_poster.pdf](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout_poster.pdf). If any doubt arises as to the interpretation of regulations it is the written advice of a registered medical practitioner which is accepted, by the school, as the final arbiter.

### **HAZARD REPORTING**

Please report all safety hazards, near misses or incidents to the school administration as soon as they arise. If you are involved in any incident on the way to or from school, please report this to the school office also.

### **HEADLICE**

The incidence of headlice can be contained provided every parent accepts the responsibility for checking and treating their children. It is no disgrace to contract headlice, but it is unwise to neglect proper treatment. For further information go to <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/wellbeing-guidelines/head-lice.html>

### **MEDICATION**

To comply with government regulations, we are required to following procedures for administering any medicines to students during the school day. The use of medication in Queensland Schools is strictly controlled. For safety, medication should be given during school hours only when this is unavoidable and be brought along in the original container.

The general provisions about giving medication at school are:

- ALL medication is to be handed in at the office.
- ALL medication is to be presented in the original packaging and secure clear lock-seal bag.
- Non-prescribed medication, such as aspirin or cough mixtures **cannot** be administered by school staff unless labelled with instructions for your child, by a pharmacist. NO PAIN KILLERS (Panadol, Aspirin etc.) can be kept in children's bags.
- Parents or guardians seeking to have prescribed medication administered at school must complete paperwork in the office.
- Any prescribed medication which is to be given at school must have the full instructions printed by the chemist on the label of the medication. The instruction must indicate the specific times when medication is to be given as well as the quantity to be given.



- In the case of Asthma medications, an Asthma form needs to be completed and the medication kept in the office for use as necessary. The asthma medication must have the full instructions printed by the chemist on the label of the medication.
- Cough lollies/nasal decongestion lollies are to be recorded by the teacher.

If you have any questions about giving medicine to students at school or while on school activities, please see the principal.

Schools are not permitted under the Poisons Regulations to stock any over the counter medicines such as Panadol. Medication can only be administered in the manner outlined above. At no time, should any medication provided for one student be administered to another student. Students are warned that sharing medication is not tolerated. The medication is to be kept by the school secretary and not by the student.

Parents must keep the school informed of any serious medical conditions.

## **STUDENTS**

### **ICT CODE OF PRACTICE**

The use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) within schools should be safe, responsible, legal, appropriate and for educational purposes. An ICT Code of Practice exists to all students in Catholic schools across the Diocese of Rockhampton and applies to the use of all school related ICT for educational purposes, whether provided by the school or the student. Both students and parents/guardians must read and sign this ICT Code of Practice. This is updated annually.

### **MOBILE PHONES**

At times, parents may allow their child to bring with them to school a mobile for. This could be for the child's safety if travelling by bus, bike or if walking to school. A school policy is available on our website outlining the correct procedures for use and expectations should a parent wish for their child to have a phone with them. A permission form, also on the website, must be completed and returned to the school.

### **GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR**

Students at St John's School have the availability of a school counsellor, Miss Wendy Parker. For services to be provided, it is a requirement that a referral is received through the principal. The counsellor is not permitted to undertake any counselling sessions with students until the appropriate referral is received.

As school counsellors are bound by confidentiality, it is vital that the confidentiality of the child is also considered. As an understanding and background to the student is paramount in counselling children, the school counsellor will not commence therapy until contact with the parent/care giver has occurred.

Permission forms are available through the office.

### **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

St John's encourages all students to be leaders within the school community. All Year Six students are recognised as school leaders and all Year Six students are presented with leadership badges at the beginning of the year.

Students can also be elected to the following positions of leadership:

- Class Captains: Years One to Six
- House Captains: 1 male, 1 female for each of the two houses from the Year Six cohort
- School Captains: 1 male, 1 female from the Year Six cohort

### **THE STUDENT COUNCIL/MERCY COUNCIL**

St John's School has an elected Student Council which meets regularly. The Council is made up of the senior students in the school (Year 6) and class captains.

As well as taking on specific projects, the Mercy Council can:

- (a) offer suggestions to the principal and/or the Parents and Friends Association
- (b) survey the student population about particular matters
- (c) assist in various school fundraising activities
- (d) provide a formal voice for the students

The Student Council was first formed in 1989, and in its first year of operation adopted the following biblical quote as the school motto - "Love one another as I have loved you." **(John 13:34)**

### **STUDENT PROTECTION**

St John's School, as a part of Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton, is committed to the implementation of student protection strategies and procedures that are intended to prevent harm to students, and to respond quickly and effectively when they suspect or are informed of any type of harm to a student caused by any person.

In any instance where you either become aware, or reasonably suspect harm to a student has occurred, or there is a risk of it occurring, you must report this as soon as possible to the principal or student protection contact.

At St John's, Mr Nathaniel Rice, Mrs Tenille Galea, Mrs Shae Saunders, Mrs Karlie Tatchell and Miss Wendy Parker are the relevant contacts. Any report that is made to the school is facilitated by these people. Once a report is made the school will do whatever necessary to make sure the child is safe.

Further information please visit our Diocesan website.

### **TOYS FROM HOME**

We ask that children do not bring toys from home to school, including trading cards or other 'collector' type items. They can be easily lost or broken, resulting in upset children. The school will not accept responsibility for any damage caused to these items. Presents on your child's birthday

are the exception to this rule, which can be brought for Show & Tell, however they will remain with the teacher while not being “shared” and not taken out for play.

## CONCLUSION

We are very proud of our school and of the opportunities offered by our school for the benefit of our students and their families. Thank you for considering St John’s for your child’s education. We look forward to working with you to provide opportunities for our students to reach their personal best. We hope that this handbook has been useful and provided you with the information you need regarding school routines, processes and expectations. Should you have any questions as a result of reading this handbook please feel free to contact the school.

Kind Regards,



Nathaniel Rice

**PRINCIPAL**