Overview of Learning Areas

Religious Education
Religious Education holds an important place within Catholic Schools. The religious education program of St John’s school is aligned with the Brisbane Catholic Education Guidelines. The Assistant to the Principal - Religious Education (APRE) oversees the implementation and review of the program. The APRE is also responsible for the facilitation of the prayer and faith life of the school and coordinating with the staff and Priest in its liturgical celebrations. Class Masses, assembly prayers, liturgies and celebration of the sacraments are all aspects of the program. St John’s aims to encourage strong links between church and school. We actively support Sunday Parish Masses. Parental support is essential to maintain these links.

Liturgies
Children are encouraged to celebrate their faith in class liturgies. Students are involved in a variety of school and class liturgical activities throughout the school year. Families are always welcome to attend. There are several school/parish liturgies which also occur throughout the school year on Feast days, Holy days of obligation and celebrations such as Grandparents’ Day.

Sacraments
Children in Year 3 and above have the opportunity to participate in the Parish Based Confirmation, First Eucharist and Reconciliation Programs. Parents wishing to enrol their children in these programs need to do so when notices appear in school and parish newsletters. Families are encouraged to attend celebrations of the Eucharist at Sunday Masses in our Parish.

Class Prayer
Prayer is an important daily activity at St John’s. Formal prayers are taught as well as spontaneous prayer and Christian meditation. Some examples of prayers used at St John’s are:

**Grace before Meals**
Now before I eat my lunch I’d like to stop and say, thank you God for giving me this food to eat today.
AMEN

**Prayer before Play**
We give you thanks Almighty God for all the gifts that you have given us.
AMEN

**Prayer to go home**
Thank you for this happy day, for all our work and all our play.
Guide us on our homeward way, God our loving Father.
AMEN
**Living Relationships - Social and Emotional Learning**

A Catholic education is a holistic one that seeks to develop the 'whole child', not only academically, but also physically, culturally, socially and emotionally. The foundations of Social and Emotional Learning are the keys to wellbeing and are essential for success in school, home life, work and the world of tomorrow.

Social and Emotional Learning is developed through the “You Can Do It!” program to help foster better social and emotional intelligence and is integrated into all areas of the curriculum. ‘You Can Do It!’ education known as 'Program Achieve' is used throughout the school to help build the foundations of Getting Along, Organisation, Persistence, and Confidence. It aims to increase achievement and emotional wellbeing.

The ‘You Can Do It!’ Parent Program actively aims to help parents nurture and develop these foundations in their children.
English
St John’s daily timetable for students incorporates a unique two hour literacy block dedicated to the English program. The English curriculum consists of a number of components including:

Speaking and Listening: Using oral, aural and gestural elements to interpret and construct texts to achieve a specific purpose.

Reading and Viewing: Using a range of strategies to interpret and appreciate written, visual and multimodal texts in a range of contexts.

Writing: Using language elements to construct literary and non-literary texts.

Mathematics
The mathematics program includes:

Number and algebra: Counting, number sense, common fractions, addition and subtraction, multiplication and division.

Statistics and probability: Chance, collecting data and data displays

Measurement and geometry: Length, mass, capacity, area, time units and conventions, duration of time. 2D and 3D shape, location, direction and movement.

Our Mathematics program follows the National Curriculum – Mathematics. Teachers use a range of practical resources as well as a range of texts to deliver this program. The completion of our Mathematics Curriculum document provides a firm scaffold for teachers to reference when preparing their programs throughout the year.

Health and Physical Education
Each week all students are actively involved in two one-hour sessions structured physical education. These lessons take place each week on a Wednesday and Friday. They link to seasonal sports such as swimming, athletics and various sporting events.

St John’s School’s Health and Physical Education program is based on the Queensland School Curriculum Council’s HPE Years 1-10 syllabus (2002). This syllabus promotes HPE as a key learning area that reflects the dynamic and multidimensional nature of health and recognises the significance of physical activity in students’ lives.
Interschool Sport
Organised games are a regular and important part of our school curriculum and every child has the opportunity to participate in school sport. Regular fitness and skill programs are also organised on a weekly basis including 2 hours of physical activity each week. Sport uniforms are worn each Wednesday and Friday.

Our school is a founding member of the Silkwood / Mena Creek Sports Association. As a member of this association, students are provided with the opportunity to participate in sporting events with children from other local schools and may be eligible to qualify for selection in a range of sports at Peninsula level. We confidently anticipate your support in encouraging your child/children to take part.

- Term 1 – Soccer / Netball / Rugby League
- Term 2 – T-Ball / Softball / Aus Tag / Rugby League / Cross Country
- Term 3 – Athletics / Rugby League
- Term 4 – Kanga Cricket / Swimming

St John’s also holds Inter-house Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming Carnivals each year. Children are assigned a sporting team on enrolment: **Francis House** (Royal Blue) **MacKillop House** (White). Children compete in these teams on inter-house sports days.

Personal Development Program
St John’s School co-ordinates a Personal Development program for students. The information sessions are conducted by accredited Family Life Educators appointed by the Diocese. Parents are welcome to preview the videos – *The Wonder of Living* series that students will view during the presentation. Parents are welcome to attend the information sessions. This program runs biannually, i.e. 2013, 2015.

Science
St John’s School follows the National Curriculum – Science and teachers utilise ‘Primary Connections – linking science with literacy’. This is an innovative approach to teaching and learning which aims to enhance primary school teachers’ confidence and competence for teaching science. Primary Connections supports teachers to improve students’ scientific literacy, as well as their learning outcomes in both science and literacy. Linking science with literacy enriches the learning experience for students. It is based on the theory that students learn best when they are allowed to work out explanations for themselves over time through a variety of learning experiences structured by the teacher. Students use their prior knowledge to make sense of these experiences and then make connections between new information and their prior knowledge.

By engaging in a wide variety of experiences, students appreciate the importance of ‘working scientifically’. This concept involves the processes of investigating, understanding and communicating. The scientific understandings within the learning area of Science are organized into five sub-strands: *Biological Sciences, Chemical Sciences, Physical Sciences and Earth and Space.*

The development of the St John’s Science Curriculum Statement further supplements the Primary Connections Program ensuring National Curriculum – Science is adequately covered.
Study of Society and Environment (SOSE)

At St John’s School the SOSE curriculum rotates on a two year cycle. This key learning area centres on human fascination with the way people interact with each other and with environments. This key learning area encourages young people to be active participants in their world. Students develop abilities to reflect on the values of democratic process, social justice, economic and ecological sustainability and peace to make decisions about issues related to societies and environments.

Technology

Teachers at St John’s have developed a St John’s Technology Curriculum Statement which outlines process of designing, making and appraising which is at the heart of the Technology Key Learning Area. Students explore, apply and develop information, materials and systems. The development process is not a linear one; appraising is as much a part of designing as it is about making, for example. All aspects of the process are interconnected and as they interconnect they generate new ideas that can be acted upon.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

St John’s has developed an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Plan. This includes identifying the processes, applications and equipment we will use to access, create, organize, analyze, present and communicate information. In essence, the vision of this ICT plan is to significantly enhance the learning opportunities for the pupils and the community within the school area. With the implementation of an integrated approach to ICTs in the classroom, the teaching and learning of ICT will be significantly enhanced.

Student-centered learning is supported and the teaching of information communication technology is promoted to provide the necessary skills and knowledge to promote lifelong learning. At St John’s school each student has the opportunity to access their own work via the school server. Each classroom has a minimum of five computers and access to a mobile lab of lap-top computers. This way, technology is able to be incorporated into every aspect of the curriculum in the class setting. All students and teachers are able to access the internet for research and communication from each and every computer in our school. Students also utilize digital cameras (video and still) and other multimedia devices for curriculum and project work. St John’s has recently installed interactive white boards in classrooms and the library. These are regularly used by students and teachers in the delivery of our curriculum. In addition iPads are now regularly used in classrooms.

Internet and Electronic Mail - Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Cairns

We are pleased to offer students of St John’s School Silkwood access to the CENet computer network for electronic mail. Access to e-mail and the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, St John’s School supports and respects each family’s right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

Internet User Agreement
St John’s School actively supports students accessing information resources with the development, by staff, of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources. We recognize that technology continually changes and evolves and with that student instruction and learning will change and evolve as well. The school recognizes that electronic information research skills are now required as essential tools.

St John’s School Silkwood expects staff to incorporate appropriate use of information technology throughout the curriculum. Teachers will provide both guidance and instruction to students in their daily use of this resource. Teachers will facilitate and support students when accessing information to help enrich their learning while taking into account the various learning styles, abilities, needs and development levels of students. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility! Parents and students are required to sign an Internet User Agreement.

**School Computer Network**

Students are responsible for good behaviour on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behaviour and communications apply. The network is provided for students to conduct research and to communicate with others in our collaborative learning community. Access to network services is provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access entails responsibility. Individual users of the school computer network are responsible for their behaviour and communications over the network. It is presumed that users will comply within school standards. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review student documents to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

The following are not permitted:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Damaging computers and computer networking equipment
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another’s password
- Trespassing in another’s folders, work or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the network for commercial purposes

Violations may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.
Mobile Devices
Mobile communication technologies are a significant and seemingly necessary part of modern life. In order to educate students about the appropriate use of mobile phones and associated technology, St John's has implemented a policy requiring students to hand in any devices to the office to be kept safe until collected at the end of the school day. This ensures classes are not disrupted by gadgets and gizmos. This will assist students to remain focused on their learning.

Arts
The concepts of Art are organized into five strands: Dance, Drama, Media, Music, and Visual Arts. Students at St John’s also have the opportunity to perform in Choric Speaking. Private music tuition with a qualified teacher is offered during school hours. Students have access to saxophone, trumpet, guitar, clarinet, trombone, flute, drums and other instruments on request.

We participate an annual presentation evening to showcase the talents of the students in these art forms.

Language Other Than English (LOTE)
Japanese was initiated in 2013 to develop alignment between St John’s Primary School and Good Counsel College at Innisfail. Japanese is taught as a key learning area of the curriculum to ensure a quality and sustained languages program provision.

Weekly, hour long classes enhance cultural awareness and develop our students’ bilingual capabilities. All students from prep through to Year 7 are taught Japanese language skills and cultural identity. St John’s language curriculum provides an opportunity to ensure that all students benefit from learning Japanese to provide continuous, equitable, appropriately sequenced and educationally challenging pathways through the primary curriculum.