



***'One stop learning'***

***at one site***

- ***Playgroup***
- ***Kindergarten***
- ***Prep to Year 7***





# Welcome to St John's

## BY PRINCIPAL, ANDREW MALEY

At St John's School, Silkwood, we recognise families as the first and most important educators of their children. We see our role as supporting your relationship with your child and enhancing a home/school partnership based on mutual trust, respect and a shared responsibility.

As we work together for the education of your children, we strive to ensure your time at St John's will be spent in co-operation and mutual support.

'Plant the seed, nurture the growth, celebrate the harvest' is our school vision. Our teaching principles are based on sowing Christian values, nurturing relationships, cultivating excellence, rising to challenges and harvesting opportunities to grow an optimistic community.

At St John's, we are very proud of our staff, students and families that create our community.

We celebrate academic, cultural and sporting achievements and support our students' potential through curriculum initiatives. So please, read on to discover what St John's can offer your child. I look forward to welcoming you to the St John's School community and journeying with you in the education of your children.



## BY PARISH ADMINISTRATOR, FR KAREL DUIVENVOORDEN

It is always a joy to welcome people of our Tully-Silkwood Parish which includes communities at Silkwood-El Arish, Kurrimine Beach, Mission Beach, Tully and Cardwell. We represent the southern-most area of the Cairns Diocese.

Like so many other parishes across the country and the western world, we do feel the impact of smaller worshipping communities, but our faith tradition and practice is both deep and strong. In our faith life we strive to provide support and service to the communities in which we live, and maintain a proud liturgical tradition and practice.



The parish embraces two Catholic primary schools – St John's at Silkwood and St Clare's at Tully – both contributing to critical life pathways for our young people and their families and both intricate to our life in the region.

I am confident you will find in St John's School all the hallmarks of our wider parish life. It is my hope the school will provide a worthy doorway for you into the wider faith community that is our home in this area.

Welcome and blessings.







# Convenience for families

*My family's association with St John's stems back to 1999 when my children began their schooling. St John's offers high quality academic opportunities in a family oriented environment. Children are made to feel safe and loved, promoting the opportunity for all children to achieve their potential in contemporary facilities. Our community kindergarten, located on the school grounds, provides the first step in our school community's nurturing and development of the next generation.*

Mrs Vera Sendra –  
Past parent, school & kindy secretary

## Playgroup

St John's Community Playgroup has been established for more than 20 years and caters for children from birth to 5 years of age. Parents/carers and children meet each Monday during the school term from 9-11am at our Community Kindergarten. Our playgroup is coordinated by parents and is affiliated with Playgroup Association of Queensland.



## Kindergarten

Catholic Community Kindergarten Silkwood is a valued partner in our school community and prepares each child for a seamless transition to Prep. The kindy provides a happy learning environment with quality care and developmentally appropriate activities and play experiences.

Kindy encourages each child's independence and self-discipline and aims to enhance their physical, emotional, intellectual, creative and social development.

The kindergarten program is delivered by a qualified teacher three days per week, 40 weeks per year, for children in the years prior to Prep.

The kindergarten and school combine regularly for assemblies and activities, making the transition to Prep all the easier.





# Teaching and Learning - Prep to Year 7

*My daughter has blossomed socially, academically and emotionally in St John's small class cohorts. I love teaching here because as a small school, teachers and students have wonderful opportunities to engage in teaching and learning experiences that are unique. Our teachers tailor lessons to suit the specific needs of our students and ensure that all children reach their full potential. Our teachers place high importance on assessment to inform their subsequent planning. The analysis of NAPLAN results informs our whole school curriculum focus.*

*The generous amount of professional development staff receive at St John's enables me to remain up-to-date and well prepared to teach students the required content of the Australian Curriculum, utilising our wonderful ICT resources.*

Mrs Debbie Daly – Parent, class teacher and curriculum support teacher

## The Catholic school difference

Our **purpose** at St John's is to provide an educational climate that allows students to learn together to achieve their personal best in a united, caring and Christ-centred environment.

We **aim** to empower students to reach their true potential so that they can be life-long learners and active contributors to our society and the local community.

We **strive** to provide a holistic education by developing the 'whole child', not only academically, but also physically, culturally, socially and emotionally. This inclusive education takes place in an environment formed by Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

In partnership with families and our community, we nurture the foundations for achievement that are key to social and emotional wellbeing. These foundations are essential for success in school, home life, work and the world of tomorrow. Social and emotional learning is integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

As a Catholic school, we are an extension of the church and strive to make the life of Jesus real and personal for each of our students. Religious Education is part of our daily routine.

*One of my greatest joys comes from watching the emotional development and joy of giving.*

*St John's provides an environment where our children receive a higher-than-average level of professional development.*

Mrs Julie

*Our children have been nurtured in a caring environment where values respect, empathy and honesty.*

Mrs Kylie





# Learning environment

St John's provides a challenging learning environment where students can achieve their potential across all Learning Areas, with an emphasis on English and Maths. Enhancing this challenging learning environment is our composite class structure of Prep/Year 1, Year 2/3, Year 4/5, and Year 6/7.

Programs are created with the understanding that children develop and learn differently. Classes are rich with a diversity of students and at St John's, we understand that children develop and learn differently. All learning programs are developed to cater for different learning styles.



## Prep

The Preparatory Year of full time schooling (Prep) provides a smooth transition to school life. Prep follows a quality teaching and learning program with the curriculum based on active learning, inquiry, investigation and play. Prep is an important year when children develop relationships and build strong foundations in learning, particularly English and Maths. Students are provided with learning experiences that develop an awareness of the five senses, social, fine and gross motor skills.

Students in Prep and Year 1 enjoy access to a fully fenced early years learning environment, which incorporates outdoor undercover learning areas, covered sand pit, purpose built bathroom facilities and gross motor playground equipment.



## Class sizes

Our small school setting with an average class size of 15 has an excellent teacher/student ratio which creates an optimum learning environment.



*...st joys of becoming a member of the St John's School community  
...ing the children grow through the numerous, academic, social and  
...pment opportunities available. They also learn about the benefit  
...to others and become involved with community service activities.*

*...s a safe, caring environment based on Christian values,  
...en are supported through the school's  
...age teacher to student ratio and its  
...velopment program for staff.*

*...ie Elliott – Kindy and school parent*

*...ve many opportunities and are  
...ring learning environment that  
...ncouragement, aspiration, care*

*...e Dodds – Kindy and school parent*





## Technology

Students are immersed in 21st century technology with excellent Information and Communication Technology resources including guided internet access in all classes, online educational resources, interactive whiteboards, iPads and a computer to student ratio of almost 1:1. Students gain experience using a variety of software and communication packages and develop skills in word processing, spread sheeting and multimedia presentations. The mobile computer lab means laptops can be transported into classrooms, the library or outdoor learning areas with constant access to the wireless network.



## Our staff

Staff members at St John's are committed to achieving excellence in teaching and learning. All our staff undertake regular professional development to keep abreast of current educational trends including the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Our targeted professional development in literacy enrichment has attained exceptional student improvement to date and promises to further promote St John's as a school of academic achievement. All teaching and support staff work to ensure that we have a collaborative approach to teaching, learning and assessment that is up-front and explicit.

## Academic results and student support

St John's positive school climate has contributed to students performing well academically. Teaching and learning, informed by detailed analysis of annual NAPLAN and other assessment data, aims to extend all students academically.

Early and systematic diagnostic identification strategies and intervention plans are implemented to help students in need of learning support or extension. Classroom teaching is supported with school officer assistance. Students also have access to visiting specialists and a school counsellor.

*St John's successfully blends excellence in academic performance, creative arts and sports. The school offers state-of-the-art technology and inclusive, flexible learning environments. All children's needs are well catered for.*

Mrs Cassandra Scopelliti – St John's P&F President



## Cultural

Private music lessons with a qualified teacher are offered during school hours. Students have access to saxophone, trumpet, guitar, clarinet, trombone, flute, drums and other instruments on request.

Speech and Drama is taught by an experienced and qualified teacher to all students from Prep to Year 7 in preparation for eisteddfod work. Private tuition is also available.

Italian is taught from Prep to Year 7 by a qualified teacher.



## ***Sporting***

At St John's, we value Sport and Health education and are affiliated with the Silkwood/Mena Creek Sports Association. Students have school, interschool and representative sporting opportunities which include: Soccer/Netball, Softball/T-Ball, Athletics, Cross Country, Kanga Cricket, Swimming, Tennis, Touch Football and Rugby League. Students also participate in our school-based Health & PE program.



## ***Surrounds***

St John's is located in a spacious, rural setting surrounded by cane fields and nature. Students at St John's spend a lot of time participating in outdoor activities because of our natural environment, lifestyle and our large undercover multipurpose area. Our modern, well-resourced library is also a hub for much active and engaged learning.



## ***Parent and community involvement***

Our school is an integral part of the Silkwood community, contributing to its social and cultural life. A major event in the life of the school is Australia's largest religious and cultural festival - the Feast of the Three Saints - held on the first Sunday in May ([www.feastofthreesaints.com.au](http://www.feastofthreesaints.com.au)). St John's small school environment creates a family atmosphere with the capacity for everyone to become involved in social and family orientated events. The members of our incredibly hard working and effective Parents and Friends Association coordinate the school tuckshop, uniform shop, Three Saints Festival BBQ, social events, cent sale and working bees, and are major fundraisers for the school.

Students play an active part in Mini Vinnies, a social justice group that gives back to those in need in the community. The Mini Vinnies committee coordinates visits to local Aged Care facilities, Winter and Christmas Appeals, as well as promoting community health and wellbeing programs.





## How to get here

Bus transportation is available from Mission Beach, El Arish, Kurrimine Beach, McCutcheon Road, Spanos Road, Silkwood, Japoonvale and No 4 Branch Road.



## Affordable and welcoming to all

Catholic schools are welcoming to people of all races, abilities, religions and socio-economic backgrounds. All educational programs, religious and academic, are developed in consideration of the multicultural nature of our local area and the requirements of students with special learning needs.

Although preference is given to Catholic enrolments, your family does not have to be Catholic to seek enrolment. There is an expectation though, that families are supportive of our Catholic school ethos.

Fees are kept as affordable as possible at about \$30 per week for one student, with substantial concessions for families with more than one child attending a Catholic school. A Catholic education will not be denied to students whose parents or carer cannot afford to pay school fees. Families in these circumstances are encouraged to confidentially discuss fee concessions with the Principal.

## Strong history, exciting future

St John's School, Silkwood was founded in 1948 by Parish Priest Fr Alfred Natali and the Franciscan Sisters. Our community is respectful of the past and excited about the future, as it plays its part in inspiring St John's students to live the school motto of Always Reaching for New Heights.

*"I immediately felt part of a strong community. I was welcomed in and encouraged to become actively involved in my children's education. The many school social events build on this community spirit, getting teachers, parents and students together in a relaxed environment. Through St John's active P & F Association I feel I do have a say and my opinion is valued."*

Mrs Sandra Andrijevic – Parent & long serving P&F member

## Enrolment enquiries are always welcome to:

The Principal  
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