FROM THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dear Parents, Carers and Community Members,

As our school year draws to a close, may I take this opportunity in the last newsletter for 2015 to express deep gratitude to you, our parent community, for your support and commitment to St Rita’s school throughout a very memorable year.

As we fittingly farewell our Year Six students as their primary schooling concludes, we are also extending our appreciation to Mr Billion and Mrs Shepherd for the fine contribution they have made to the wellbeing and education of many of our students. As Mr Billion prepares to take up Principalship at St Mary’s Beaudesert, Mrs Shepherd prepares for a new chapter in life – retirement. Marie’s teaching career spans more than 40 years. Over the course of her career, she has enjoyed various roles in School Leadership – but the role that she loved the most was as a classroom teacher and in particular, loved teaching Year 2. We congratulate Marie on a wonderful career and her ability to stretch young minds – none so more than this year’s 2K class who will be remembered with great affection for their inspired and happy learning.

It was great to see so many parents join us in the farewell liturgy to Mr Billion last Wednesday. It was clear to all that Mr Billion will definitely be missed at St Rita’s. His contribution to St Rita’s students, families and staff over the past five years is significant and he leaves a school strong in our Catholic identity, contemporary learning, student support – all underpinned by positive, trusting relationships thanks to his professional and personal qualities.

We farewell Mrs Jessica Hill – for a period of twelve months – as she prepares for the birth of her first child. Jess returned to St Rita’s this year at a time of need. I cannot think of a more suitable person to take up this leadership role and she has undertaken this responsibility the utmost level of dedication and competence.

We also extend farewell and good wishes to Mrs Michelle Shorthouse, Mrs Maggie Nisbet, Mrs Karlee Franks and Mrs Sharelle Simpson who have joined our teaching team this year fulfilling contracts across a range of year levels. We wish them all well and hope that they may return to St Rita’s in the future as each of them are fine teachers.

Introducing our Teaching Team for 2016.

Assistant Principals – Mr Brian Mason and Mr Nathan Mulhearn
We wish all of our families a blessed and holy Christmas. Our thoughts and prayers to those who will be celebrating Christmas for the first year without loved ones – may you find peace and love in their absence. For those not returning to St Rita’s, may you always remember your connection with our school inspired by our vision to Know More Do More and Be More.

We look forward to a new beginning in 2016 with a new theme – “Unique and United – We Rejoice”

Anne

As the year draws to a close I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support, comfort and love the St Rita’s community has given me this year. It has been such a joy to again be part of the St Rita’s community in a different role. Each day I have cherished the opportunities I have had to be with you and your children, especially during this special time in my life in preparing for motherhood. I look forward to sharing the news of the birth of my first child with you all next year. Best wishes for the Christmas Season and the year ahead, enjoy the time together with your families.

Farewell for now and thank you,
Jess

DIRECT DEBIT FORMS

A final reminder to submit your Direct Debit Form with the school office before the end of the year for it to commence early 2016.

STUDENT MEDICAL RECORDS

The Student Medical Records were sent home some weeks ago. Please ensure these are returned to the class as soon as possible. This information is very important, and needs to be updated every year, for every child. The form is available from the school portal, website or school office.
**MEDICATION**

A reminder to all parents that if your child/ren has medication that is kept in the school first aid room, can you please ensure it is collected at the end of the school year. If medication is left during the school holidays and is out of date it will be deposed of before the beginning of the new school year.

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**LEARNING SUPPORT**

**Sharing good news stories.**

**Peer Mediators**

Congratulations to the forty-two year six students who took on the role of peer mediators this year. These students committed to the training that was required to fulfil this position and put their skills into good use by helping younger students solve their own problems. These are leadership skills that these students can proudly take with them into high school and use to solve issues for themselves in the future.

To recognise this achievement, a small presentation **will take place during week 9** where awards will be presented to the peer mediators to recognise their outstanding effort.

Thank you year six. **Go safely and Good Luck with your new endeavours!**

**Happy Holidays**

Merry Christmas from the Learning Support team. It has been a gift working with your children this year. We wish you a peaceful and joyous Christmas break.

*Sue, Ray and Wendy*

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**SPORTS NEWS**

**St Rita’s Touch Football**

Congratulations to all those boys and girls involved in teams this year. I would also like to thank Mrs Saleh, Mrs Anderson, Mr Fernando, Mr Dennis Winterburn, Mr Chris Galbraith and Mr Tony Pollock for their help and support coaching and managing teams this year.

Congratulations to both U/12 St Rita’s Blue and U/10 St Rita’s Green who both went down narrowly in their final matches to finish overall 2nd in their respective divisions.

Could all touch football players – please return their singlets and/or shorts by this Thursday 3rd December. Hand them directly to Mr Kenyon so they may be accounted for.

**Y3-6 School Swimming**

And the winner is

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<td>5th</td>
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Congratulations to Maroon (Boronia) our 2015 Swimming Champions!

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**NEWS FROM THE RESOURCE CENTRE**

**Holiday Reading Event:**

Everyone needs books for the holidays! A ‘Great Holiday Book Swap’ will be held at the State Library, South Brisbane on Thursday December 17 at 10.30am. Swap or buy books for just a gold coin and help raise funds for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. Bring as many books as you wish to swap. You might like to inscribe the book with a message for the next reader. We will also have some new books which have been donated for the event. The funds raised will be used by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation to buy new, targeted...
texts which are distributed to children in remote Indigenous communities.

We still have a few books out on loan at St Rita’s! Mrs Brownlie and Mrs Holt would love to see all books returned before the last day please! Enjoy your Christmas holidays with your families, and look forward to hearing about those great holiday stories when you return in 2016! Merry Christmas, Mrs Jo Rossi.

**TUCKSHOP NEWS**

**Wednesday 2 December**
Terri Comerford
Katie Natt

**Thursday 3 December**
Trish McNamara
Maria Kaese

We will be doing our clean out from 11:30 on this day. If you can spare an hour or 2 please feel free to drop in.

**Friday 4 December**
NO TUCKSHOP AS SCHOOL FINISHES AT 12:00

A very big Thank you to all our volunteers who gave up their time to help feed our children.

To all our Yr 6 Students and Parents I wish you the best of luck on your new adventure into high school. I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Joyful New Year.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2016.
Renee

**MUSIC NEWS**

I congratulate the students on a hectic but productive couple of weeks! Well done to ALL students from P-6 for a fabulous carols night - we were lucky enough to be blessed with amazing weather, and the I thought the kids performed with great volume and enthusiasm - can't wait for the next one!!

A big thank you to Kath and David Smith from Creative Kidz for providing the sound and set-up for the night as well as manning the desks. Thank you also to the Creative Kidz Dance Team run by Jess for a fantastic performance to start the night.

Well done to Junior Choir for a wonderful performance at Marebello Aged-Care in Victoria Point on Monday. The kids sang some songs that they have learned through the year as well as a set of Christmas Carols. Thank you to all parents that helped out with supervision, and a big thanks to Mr Kenyon for running the sound and supervision.

Just a reminder that there will be no Senior or Junior Choir in Week 9, as choir has now concluded for the year. Thank you for all the parent support through the year.

I am very excited to announce that there will be a musical next year, Suessical Jr 2016. If students would like to audition for the musical, we will be holding auditions in Week 2 of Term 1 next year. Audition materials will be posted on the parent portal for you to download and practice through the holidays, as well as details about the musical. I am collecting names of any parents that would like to volunteer with helping produce the musical. I will need groups for the following - Costuming, Make-Up, Set Construction, Painting, General Admin and Ticketing. If you are interested could you please email me with a contact and I will put you down on the volunteers list. The more the merrier!

Happy a very musical Christmas and see you next year!
Paul Tyrrell
**LOST PROPERTY**

Can you please ensure you check lost property this week as there are a number of towels from the swimming carnival. There are also numerous hats, jumpers, lunchboxes and drink bottle. Anything left on the last day will be disposed.

**UNIFORM SHOP**

**HOURS**

Thursday  8.00 to 10.00am  
Friday    8.00 to 10.00am

**PIANO/KEYBOARD LESSONS 2016**

Keyboard/Piano lessons will be offered to students in Prep through to Grade 6 next year. Keyboard is a great introduction to music and an instrument that sets the grounding for learning other instruments.

If you are interested in your child taking Piano/Keyboard lessons next year please collect an Expression of Interest form from the School Office. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Vicki.

Vicki Minogue  
Keyboard/Piano Teacher - 0407 027 216

**St Rita’s Family Christmas Vigil Mass**

24th December at 6pm in the Unitas Centre  
We are looking for children to be involved in our special Christmas Family Vigil Mass.  
We need children for the Gospel drama, choir, altar servers, readers and procession.  
Practice will be in the Unitas Centre on the 6th, 13th and 20th of December after the 9am Mass.  
Come along and join in the fun. Enquiries contact Candice 0415 738 769
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