PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

38-44 Churchill Street Childers QLD 4660
Phone: (07) 4126 1866 | Fax: (07) 4126 1192
Email: pchilders@bne.catholic.edu.au
www.stjosephschilders.qld.edu.au

Christian Values • Catholic Family • Individual Growth
Introduction From The Principal

St Joseph’s School aims to build A Connected Community by instilling a sense of belonging in students, staff, parents and visitors. We access all available resources to provide high quality teaching and learning in a Catholic Christian environment. Our motto ‘Christian Values, Catholic Family and Individual Growth’ are the touchstones of our community.

Christian Values
We teach Christian values and prepare students to make strong decisions, both at school and the wider community.

Catholic Family
We foster a sense of belonging and build a connected community – school, parish and wider community.

Individual Growth
We empower students to achieve their personal best through working self-confidently and considerately with others.

This information booklet attempts to capture some of the beliefs and practices of the school. While it covers key areas, it does not attempt to cover all possibilities. Rather, it is meant as a guide to allow you to gain a sense of what St. Joseph’s School is about. The handbook also complements our official school website; www.stjosephschilders.qld.edu.au

Building on our educational story, spanning over eighty years, and being the educational leader of this fine school is a true privilege. I look forward to the opportunity of sharing some of the St. Joseph’s School story with you and inviting you to contribute to the school’s ongoing development in partnership with each member of the school community.

John Hinton
Principal
Our Vision & Mission

Our tradition stems from Christ himself, who sought to be a beacon of light for the world, whilst encouraging others to be beacons themselves. The founders of our school; the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart lived Christ’s message through action. Mary MacKillop, Australia’s first Saint and co-founder of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, stated “Never see a need without doing something about it.” Spirituality through action has its fulfillment in the unique ethos of St Joseph’s School.

Our School’s Vision Statement is - A Connected Community.

The word Connected should be interpreted as our link with humanity, recognising that we are all interconnected. When we recognise this we make different choices. Our choices become more collaborate, selfless and good.

Creating ‘A Connected Community’ at St Joseph’s starts within and moves outside of us. Lily Tomlin wrote “I always wondered why somebody doesn’t do something about that. Then I realized I was somebody.” The
more we give of ourselves in the spirit of service, the more we create ‘A Connected Community’.

Values are also a fundamental component of all educative processes. As a community we are conscious of the role that values play in guiding all that we undertake at St Joseph’s. We believe that values, along with our Josephite traditions, underpin the vision of our school and encourage a flourishing community.

Gospel values should so illumine and enliven Catholic Education that the way of life in each school gives witness to Christ. This alone makes the school distinctively Catholic. Obviously, these Gospel values will impact on all decisions concerning the purposes, content, teaching/learning experiences, evaluation processes and structures which form elements of the curriculum in Catholic schools. The following values have had a major influence in assisting the community in the development of this policy.

Our Catholic Christian tradition: we are a pilgrim people, journeying together, our story is never fully written, so our plans are never fully realised; we are constantly drawing upon our tradition and also being called into new ways of growing and renewing ourselves as church.

Dignity and justice for all: all persons are created equal and human dignity is inviolable. Our educational efforts should confirm the belief that everyone is unique, that individual distinctions enrich and enliven our world and that the individual has both rights and responsibilities.

Catholic Christian Community: a community in communion that does not exist for itself but is empowered by the Spirit to be at the service of others; an evangelising and joyful presence in the world.
Search for truth: education shall impart in the learner a zest for life, the courage to tackle it, and a desire by students to use and extend what they learn. Critical judgment in different areas of learning is underpinned by a search for truth.

Collaboration and subsidiarity: Catholic educators make use of a ‘shared wisdom’ in arriving at decisions and attempt to locate decision making at the lowest appropriate level.

Creativity: we look for creative, flexible and future oriented responses that best address the needs of students, the local community, system and government.

Stewardship: education should view individuals as moral beings, accountable for their decisions and responsible for their actions, with an ability to seek what is true and to do what is right.

A mutual accountability: as an educational community we report on the outcomes of our work and the degree to which our goals are realised.

St Joseph’s Behaviour Support Plan

Effective Teaching and Learning is supported by a safe, positive and productive learning environment based on principles of consistency, fairness and engagement. This starts in the classroom, with each and every individual student. At St Joseph’s School, we believe in the key concepts of Play is The Way (a social and emotional teaching framework):

1. Treat others the way you would like to be treated
2. Be brave – participate to progress
3. Pursue your personal best no matter who you work with
4. It takes great strength to be sensible
5. Have reasons for the things you say and do

Over recent years, the school community have also developed an Expected Student Behaviour Matrix that is in line with our three school
rules – we are safe, we are respectful, we are learners. This Matrix was developed in consultation with the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support committee, staff, students and the School Board.

At St Joseph’s School we expect that parents/ caregivers will:

• Show an active interest in their child’s schooling and progress
• Cooperate with the school to achieve the best outcomes for their child
• Support school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students
• Initiate and maintain constructive communication and relationships with school staff regarding their child’s learning, wellbeing and behaviour
• Contribute positively to behaviour support plans that concern their child

At St Joseph’s School we expect that staff will:

• Provide safe and supportive learning environments
• Provide inclusive and engaging curriculum and teaching
• Initiate and maintain constructive communication and relationships with students and parents/carers
• Promote the skills of responsible self-management
• Maintain student attendance records

Please visit the School Website for a full copy of the Behaviour Support Plan.
Enrolment

Enrolment is open to all children whose parents value full participation in school activities. If numbers exceed our capacity to cater for these children, preference will be accorded following the criteria below: -

- Children who belong to the Sacred Heart Parish or outlying Parish Centres
- Brothers or sisters of present or past students
- Children of past students
- Children transferring from another Catholic school
- Close relatives of present or past students
- Non-Catholic children whose parents desire a Christian Education and will actively support the Catholic identity of the school

Children with specialised learning needs require the completion of an Enrolment Application Support Process. To discuss this process in greater detail, please contact the Principal directly.

The Following table explains when children are eligible for Prep.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIRTH DATE</th>
<th>ELIGIBLE FOR PREP YEAR IN:</th>
<th>ELIGIBLE FOR YR 1 IN:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The entry point for St. Joseph’s is Prep Year. A copy of the child’s Birth Certificate, and where appropriate, Baptismal Certificate should accompany enrolment applications.
The process for Prep enrolment is as follows: -

1. Enrolment applications to be lodged by the advertised date
2. Parents and child attend an interview with the Principal in term three
3. Parents are advised of successful application
4. A pre-prep program is held for parents and children in term four

Enrolment Forms are available from school office or can be downloaded from our website.

**School Fees & Levies**

St Joseph’s school has been established to provide excellence in education that is Catholic in its goal, holistic in its scope and pastoral in its process.

It is necessary for St Joseph’s School to collect school fees to cover financial costs in meeting the goals of the school and the parents who choose Catholic education for their children. School fees cover basic tuition, maintenance and development of school buildings. To sustain quality Catholic education at St Joseph’s, it is agreed by parents at enrolment, that school fees and levies are payable when the school accepts the enrolment of their child.

School fees are set annually, taking into account the Archdiocesan recommended minimum fee and the local circumstances of the community. We recognise that in particular circumstances, from time to time, parents may need an avenue for discussion and mutual decision with school personnel about the procedure and capacity to pay the given fees. The Parish has placed the role of fee management with the Principal of the school.

A copy of this year’s fees and levies can be obtained from the School website, office or enrolment package.
Communication with Parents

This is the most important ingredient in the establishment of the home/school partnership. It is imperative that both school and home inform each other fully of the happenings that affect both elements of the partnership.

Issues Regarding Your Child

Should parents have concerns related to their child’s education, the first step would be to contact the teacher to arrange a suitable time to meet to discuss the issue. If parents feel that it is a broader school-based related issue, an appointment should be made to discuss the issue with the Principal.

Absences from School

Should your child be absent from school on any occasion, it is the school’s policy that the parent/guardian phones the school on the morning of the day in question.

Late Arrivals and Early Departures

If children arrive late for class, the expectation is that the parent and child first report to the school office. For early departures parents should report to the school office and notify office staff who will in turn inform the teacher of the child’s class. The child will then meet with the parent at the school office.

School Newsletter

Our main vehicle of communication is via the school’s weekly newsletter, which is distributed on Mondays. The newsletter is also available on our school website. Please make sure that you read, understand and attend to relevant articles in this document.

Phone Calls/ Messages

At times parents may wish to speak to the class teacher or want to give a message to their child. You can do this by phoning the school office, and then the message will be passed onto class teacher. Your child’s teacher will reply at an appropriate time, if necessary.
Curriculum

We believe that every learner is in some respect, like all others, like some others and like no other. Every person can achieve success in learning and can contribute positively to their community.

Our Goal for learning at St Joseph’s School is to empower learners of all ages to shape and enrich our changing world by living the Gospel of Jesus. We believe that the person of Jesus gives meaning to life and to learning. Therefore we strive to develop life-long, reflective, self-directed learners who are becoming:

- Community contributors
- Quality producers
- Active investigators
- Effective communicators
- Designers and creators
- Leaders and collaborators

St Joseph’s School provides a comprehensive Religious Education Program that focuses on the religious and moral development of students within the framework of the Catholic traditions. Our aim is to provide opportunities for each child to develop a close personal relationship with God. Special days and significant religious events are celebrated throughout the year within the church community. Parents are encouraged to join with the children in celebrating these special events.

Our overall curriculum program is changing and taking shape with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. This curriculum will continue to provide opportunities for children to engage in purposeful and real life learning, fostering the capacity within each student for lifelong learning so that they can achieve their potential and play an active role in enriching our world. St Joseph’s School has implemented the Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography. As additional Australian Curriculum Learning Areas become available, St Joseph’s School will implement them.
Students also have the opportunity to engage in specialist programs, including:

- Swimming (terms 1 & 4)
- Health and Physical Education
- Italian
- Music
- Drama
- School choir
- Enrichment programs
- Optional instrumental music (Strings/ Woodwind/ Brass/ Percussion)
- Optional tennis lessons

**Reporting and Assessment**

Reporting and assessment are vital components of the teaching and learning process at St Joseph’s School. Progressive assessment of each child is made as he/she grows and develops in all areas of his/her education. Assessment of students’ achievements occurs for a variety of reasons:

- Provide information on a student’s progress
- Improve the learning processes by providing feedback
- Keep parents informed
- Guide future school goals

Open communication concerning your child’s progress is encouraged throughout the school year. Interviews with teachers may be arranged...
at any time by appointment to discuss your child’s work. We believe that true partnerships can only be achieved when communication between home and school is free flowing.

Accordingly we use the following reporting practices:

**Information Evening** - Held in the first weeks of the school year to inform parents of curriculum matters, and class procedures.

**Beginning Term Letter** - Sent home in the first weeks of each term to inform parents of class curriculum and any special events occurring within the term.

**Formal Reporting** - Procedures occur at the end of the following terms:

- Term 2 (Semester 1) - Written report with parent and teacher interview.
- Term 4 (Semester 2) - Written report with parent and teacher interview by arrangement.

End of Semester reports describe individual student progress against Year Level Statements as described in the Australian Curriculum.
Excursions & Camps

Teachers are encouraged to take the educative process outside the classroom whenever it is appropriate to the learning needs of the students. The General Levy ensures parents will not have additional costs throughout the year.

Children in upper year levels attend a school camp. The cost of this camp is approximately $300 and is in addition to regular fees and levies.

Homework

At St Joseph’s, homework is viewed as an important part of the learning process. Homework, which is relevant to the teaching and learning that is taking place in the school and which is appropriate to the ability of the learner, assists and supports the learning process.

Homework will vary from class to class depending on the teaching strategies of the class teacher and the maturity and learning needs of the children. It may take the form of weekly sheets focused on the classroom concepts, daily review and completion of class work or individual research and project presentation. Reading is usually an important part of daily homework. Parents can assist their children by taking an active interest in their child’s homework as well as setting a regular work time, providing encouragement and promoting a high standard of work.
Medical/Health

The safety of the children in our care is a main priority. Our policies and procedures are focused on providing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Accidents – Regardless of the policies developed and the quality of supervision provided, accidents do occur in schools. At St Joseph’s, while many staff have Senior First Aid certification, no treatment is permitted except for basic First Aid. As such, it is vital that parents provide current telephone numbers and emergency contact details. In the event of an emergency or if parents are unable to be contacted, the injured child will be transported to hospital by ambulance.

Allergies – Some children in our school can have life threatening allergies, particularly to dairy products. Please be aware when packing lunches or providing birthday cakes of the need to check with the class teacher about potential problems. If you wish to know more, please contact the school office.

Infectious Conditions – For the safety and well-being of all members of our school family we ask that parents contact the school if they are unsure of exclusion periods for children with infectious conditions.

Sickness – Children who are unwell will be sent to the school office by the classroom teacher. Parents will be contacted to collect the child as soon as possible. Any child who is unwell should be allowed to recuperate at home until they are able to fully complete a school day.

Medicine – At times, some children may need to receive medication at school. Parents must complete, with the child’s doctor, a “Student administration of medication” form for each medicine including those available over-the-counter (forms are available from the office). All medication must be forwarded in the original packaging, dispensed by a chemist (even over-the-counter medication), with clear instructions for administration, as well as signed off by your family doctor. The school has clear policies in this area and these must be followed to ensure the safety of all.

Head Lice - Head lice are an ongoing problem in all schools. St Joseph’s
has established a practice where, if head lice are present, even if you have treated your child, could you please let the office know of head lice, so we can alert parents in your child’s class of a head lice problem.

**Parental Involvement**

We encourage parents to be involved in the school life of St Joseph’s. Some of the ways parents can support the education of their children is through:

- Classroom support in Learning Areas
- School liturgies & celebrations
- Sports carnivals
- Parent teacher interviews
- Working bees
- Tuckshop
- Parents & Friends Association

If you would like to offer assistance in your child’s classroom, you will need to sign the ‘Volunteers Code of Conduct’. This ensures that all helpers at our school have a good understanding of requirements set by Government Legislation. Please see the school office for more information.

Parents are also encouraged to be involved in the St Joseph’s Parents & Friends (P&F). The P&F works to distribute collected funds in fair and equitable ways that support the annual goals of the school. The P&F also aims to bring parents together in connected ways. The P&F meet regularly during the school term.

**Tuckshop**

Our tuckshop operates on alternate Wednesdays of each week using a volunteer system. On non-tuckshop weeks, we access Subway for school lunches.

Parents are encouraged to support the tuckshop whenever possible.
Parish Sacramental Program

In accordance with the Archdiocesan Sacramental Policy, the Parish is ‘responsible for and ultimately involved in the Sacramental preparation and presentation of students’. The students are properly instructed for sacramental reception through the use of the Religious Education Guidelines here at school. It is the parents’ responsibility to enroll their children in the appropriate Parish Sacramental Program. The Sacred Heart Parish Sacramental Team can be contacted through the Parish or through the APRE here at school.

Our Religious Education program in the school supports parents in this role and catechises the children in the sacraments from Prep - Year 6. Children are eligible for First Reconciliation in Year 2 and First Eucharist and Confirmation in Year 3.

Uniforms

St Joseph’s takes pride in its school uniform. It is a highly visible symbol of who we are and students are expected to wear the full school uniform neatly and with pride. Parents are asked to ensure their child is wearing the correct school uniform at all times. If there is a genuine reason why a student cannot wear the uniform at any time, it would be appreciated if you would send a note to the class teacher. Uniforms are available through Direct Garment Printing Group (local business in the main street of Childers). Second hand uniforms are available through the school office.
### Uniform Requirements: GIRLS

**SUMMER:**

**Day Uniform:**
Blue check dress with badge on left chest or blue check blouse (with badge on left chest, navy buttons) and navy culottes.

**Sports Uniform:**
Red and navy spliced polo shirt with embroidered logo on left chest with either navy pleated netball skirt, navy sport shorts, navy culottes or navy skort.

**WINTER:**
Blue check dress (as above) with navy tracksuit top or spray jacket OR check blouse (as above) with spray jacket or navy tracksuit and/or culottes.

**Prep Uniform:** Same as Sports Uniform for both boys and girls, everyday.

### Uniform Requirements: BOYS

**SUMMER:**

**Day Uniform:**
Mid-blue shirt with navy cotton blend shorts.

**Sports Uniform:**
Red and navy spliced polo shirt with embroidered logo on left chest with either navy cotton-blend shorts or navy sport shorts.

**WINTER:**
Summer uniform with either spray jacket or navy tracksuit.

**Prep Uniform:** Same as Sports Uniform for both boys and girls, everyday.

All students wear navy socks, black shoes and navy blue hat.

NB: We are transitioning to the new shorts and skorts that will be able to be worn with both the day and sports shirts. These new shorts and skorts will have an ‘SJS’ emblem and will be available from 2015.
St. Joseph’s is a registered Sunsmart School. We follow the rule of ‘No Hat No Play’ Children are required to wear the school hat at all times when outside.

**Hair:** Hair must be kept neat and tidy at all times, and it is at the discretion of the Principal to decide on the suitability of any student’s haircut. Long hair must be tied back from the face. Hair ties must be red, white, blue, or black. Headbands are not adequate for tying back long hair.

**Jewellery:** Long dangling earrings are dangerous to the wearer during periods of play and are not acceptable at St Joseph’s. Studs are the safest earrings. Sleepers may also be worn. There must be no more than one earring per ear. Due to safety reasons, the wearing of jewellery other than earrings and wristwatches is not permitted.

**Make-Up:** Students must not wear make-up of any description at school, including nail polish.

**Lost Property:** Lost property will be retained in the school office. If items are clearly named, they will be returned to the children. Unmarked clothing not collected, will be sent to St Vincent de Paul, sold through the school office or disposed.

**School Hours**

School commences with parade at 8.35am and the children are dismissed at 2.50pm. Early bus children are dismissed when required. No child is allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours, except with parents and authorised persons.

Teachers are rostered for before school duty for supervision from 8.20am. Parents are encouraged not to drop off children before 8.20am as active supervision before this time is not possible.

**LUNCH TIMES:**

Lunch: 10.45 – 11.30am
Afternoon Tea: 1.30 – 1.50pm
School Facilities

All of the classrooms have interactive whiteboards or projectors, and thanks to our P&F, air-conditioning and fridges for student lunches.

All students are encouraged to utilise the well-equipped school library facility as much as possible. The main aim of the library is to encourage research orientated teaching and learning experiences for students, as well as to encourage a life-long love of literature. The school library is a resource centre for the use of all members of the school community.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones should not be brought to school, however circumstances may arise when parents require their child to have a mobile phone with them before or after school. If this is the case, the phone will be kept in the office during school hours.

History of St Joseph’s

In 1926, the Sisters of St Joseph accepted an invitation from the Parish Priest of Childers, and founded St Joseph’s School to cater for the primary and religious education of the children of the Isis District.

The first sisters were Sisters Sylvia, Cassin and Teresa. They were joined in May, 1926, by Sister Victor, who also attended the Farewell Mass to the Sisters of St Joseph on December 4, 1988.

The first convent was in Ridgeway Street, to which additions were made for suitable classroom space. During 1944, the Fitzgerald home in Taylor Street became the school and the Sisters moved to the newly acquired convent adjacent to the Church.
In 1948, the present school building was erected in Churchill Street, due largely to the generosity of the late Mr J. J. Butler. In 1956, an additional classroom was added to cater for the increased number of students attending the school.

A new administration block, covered area and tuckshop were added in 1985. During 1994, a new classroom block was constructed, the administration block extended and the original building refurbished. In 2000, a new Resource Centre was opened on the site of the old convent.

Preschool Education was introduced at St. Joseph’s in 2003. A purpose built “Early Education Centre” caters to the needs of our younger students.

The present day facilities are being enjoyed by many of the second and third generation pupils of the Isis District.

**Have we covered everything?**

If we have not covered everything in this booklet, there are a lot more policies and information on our website, listed below are some of those available:

- Grievance Policy (Moving Forward together)
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Internet Usage