Dear Parents and Caregivers

A warm welcome to our 2016 school year. In this Church Year of Mercy, where we as a Christ centred Catholic learning community we will be examples to our children committed to living our St Joseph’s motto of humility, care and respect. This year we welcome with wondrous anticipation our new students and 2016 prep cohort of 68 children. We also warmly welcome the following staff:

- Miss Sarah Hammond (Prep B Teacher)
- Mrs Majella Deegan (3G Teacher) & Mrs Shinara Auld (Primary Leader of Learning & 3G Teacher)
- Mr Anthony McGibbon (4B Teacher)
- Mrs Julia Bell (6B Teacher)
- Dr Keira Roffey–Mitchell (Guidance Counsellor)
- Dr Jennie Jackson (Visual Arts Teacher) and Mrs Hedwig Shears (Visual Arts Projects)
- Mrs Angela Williamson (Music, Drama & Dance Teacher)
- Mr Martin O’Brien (Technology Consultant)

In my second year as your principal, I return this year with continued great enthusiasm, vision, hope, passion and excitement for this year ahead and am thrilled to be leading your child’s educational journey here at St Joseph’s Bardon.

**Master Plan Update** Our school’s physical resources and grounds continue to be improved as we are strategically committed to ensuring we have high quality resources at St Joseph’s Bardon. As part of our continued Master Plan over the holidays we began the tidy up and clearing of Rosewood Street. This began with the removal of concrete, rubbish and garden waste that has been dumped over numerous years. In the coming months, and in partnership with local council, we will look at the possibilities of this significant space and plan for its future.

Our extension to the Early Years playground is nearing fruition. This work included a sandstone repair wall, levelling of the area, filling and laying turf, creating some sandstone seating and a creek bed to capture water flow. Fencing the area for safety, creating an entrance on The Drive and a concrete path to enter this play space and a direct entry to the Early Years area. This has included creating garden beds along the new pathway ready for our Early Years students to plant in the coming weeks.

We have become preparation of under the Prep building as another play space. This area which will be opened in a few weeks and will have storage space for sports equipment and an area for imaginative play with a shop front, kitchen play equipment, drawing walls and seating area. In the coming months, we are planning to build a timber landing deck of the current stairs and the new sandstone wall with slippery slides, a rock wall and climbing ropes. This new play space will be opened soon as we are wanting the new turf to establish first. In the coming month, we will also continue the new black fencing the length of Cecil Road, incorporating gates near the crossing and across the driveway leading up to the Year 4 and 5 classrooms. New storage has been built behind the Early Years toilets and the wall near Prep G classroom to house play equipment.

Our school oval has had an upgrade with levelling and tonnes of new soil being trucked in. This oval has been resurfaced, new turf laid and had major work completed to help with the flow of water and underground waste in our school. The installation of 8 water bubblers outside the hall near the playground on the oval will ensure our students have greater access to water when playing on the oval. We have continued to paint areas around the school to enhance our grounds. A set of 4 new bubblers have been installed outside our Years 4 and 5 classrooms near the timber outdoor furniture. Tree lopping for the safety of our play areas has occurred during the break as well as pest control. New carpet has been laid in PB, PG and our administration block. New signage has been installed and we will upgrade our school sign on The Drive in the Early Years area in the coming weeks.
In March, we will commence the work outside and around the Parish Centre (OSHC) and our top staff car park. This work will include a new pathway so on entering our school on The Drive you can choose to walk directly down to the Year 3 classrooms or across to the Office. Additional car parks, short term car parking and an area for bus set down will be part of this redevelopment.

Last week, I met with our Architecture to finalise our plans for building in 3 new GLAs (General Learning Areas) classrooms under our current Year 3 classrooms. I anticipate these plans going out to tender in the near future so work can commencing in this first term. More information pertaining to our Master Plan will be shared in the coming weeks.

**Curriculum Design and Development** One of our identified 2016 Strategic Goals is in the area of Curriculum Design and Development. Last week our professional learning community of teachers focused on this area for the 4 days of professional development. Today you will receive email correspondence from your class teacher outlining the Curriculum focus for these first 3 weeks of school. The major focus will be on the personal and social general capability of our students: *Personal and social capability involves students in a range of practices including recognising and regulating emotions, developing empathy for others and understanding relationships, establishing and building positive relationships, making responsible decisions, working effectively in teams, handling challenging situations constructively and developing leadership skills.*

Personal and social capability supports students in becoming creative and confident individuals who, as stated in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA 2008), ‘have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing’, with a sense of hope and ‘optimism about their lives and the future’. On a social level, it helps students to ‘form and maintain healthy relationships’ and prepares them ‘for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members’ (MCEETYA, p. 9).

Our teachers will spend time on building their relationships: student to student, student to teacher and teacher to student. Highlighted in our Model of Pedagogy with be “Who are my Learners?”

- Identify progress, prior achievement and development of learners and their learning
- Begin with the approved curriculum
- Identify learners’ levels of thinking
- Plan to accelerate the cognitive levels of all students
- Recognise the attributes students bring to the classroom

During these first 3 weeks, teaching teams will have a full day planning the Religious Education and Australian Curriculum for the year. Our Parent Night will be in Week 4 on 16th February where the Curriculum Overview for Term 1, reporting timelines, 2016 strategic goals and whole school focus, evidence of learning to name a few topics will be shared with you. In the coming weeks, teachers will be sending home an optional invitation for you to meet with your teacher to share your hopes and dreams for your child for this year ahead. More information pertaining to this key strategic area for 2016 will be shared in the coming weeks.
**List of 2016 Events.** This attached document lists the 2016 key events as at today’s date. This overview is subject to change and is not exhaustive at this point in time. It is meant to be a snapshot for you.

Our Parent Portal Calendar is a very important place to keep up to date with events.

2 February: Opening Mass at 9.00am
4 February: Sacrament of Reconciliation Parent Information Evening at 7pm, Sacred Heart Church, Rosalie. The Sacrament of Reconciliation Programme is open to baptised, Catholic students in Year 3 or above.

Thank you to our wonderful parents who provided our Tea & Tissues this morning. This event is evident of the very positive partnerships with have with parents here at St Joseph’s.

**St Joseph’s 2016 School Routines.** Attached is an important document that communicates our daily expectations and routines. The purpose of sharing this document with you is so you can help support your child in being ready for school. Our staff will be explicitly teaching these expectations and routines in these coming weeks. You can really help reiterate this message to your children by being aware of the procedures. Thank you in advance for your help and support. Also to help, especially our younger students, know where they are going in the afternoons, we ask that you complete and send back the return slip on the attached letter “After School Arrangements”. This communication helps our teachers remind students where they are going at the end of school and can help lessen anxiously.

**Volunteers Student Protection Training.** During our professional learning days last week, our staff completed the Student Protection Training in service for staff. Today, I will sharing this training with our school officers. In 2016, parents wanting to support our school as a volunteer will be asked to complete Brisbane Catholic Education Volunteers Student Protection Training. You will be able to complete this training online through our Parent Portal. A separate email outlining this process will be sent this week. As part of our Compliance mandate our school office will continue to keep a Register of our current Volunteers. Parents who are working in the capacity of a Volunteer will need to sign in and out at the office on a daily basis. All volunteers are required to wear an identification “Volunteer” lanyard. *(The only exception is for volunteers working in our Tuckshop, due to the nature of food preparation and equipment, a lanyard will not be required).*

**Change to daily routine.** In 2016, we have changed the times of sessions as communicated last year. As part of this change will be implementing a new eating routine. At both breaks, children will be supervised in areas just outside their classrooms to eat their lunch. This is to help with rubbish disposal, focus on the time of eating, returning lunchboxes and drink bottles safely back to bags prior to dismissal for play.

On behalf of our professional staff we look forward to this year ahead. We would like to invite you to join us on Tuesday 2nd February at 9.00am in St Mary Magdalene Church for our “Welcome Eucharistic Celebration” as we gather as a Christ centred learning community. Please see attached the Religious Life of St Joseph’s for Semester 1 which outlines our School Assemblies, Parish Mass, Whole School Religious Events and our Liturgical Season.

Yours in education

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