

# **Reachout Group – St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School**

## **Aim:**

The aim of this group is to show the love of Jesus, and do the work of Mary quietly in the background, through random acts of kindness to assist others in need in our school community.

**Motto:** “Love one another as I have loved you”

## **Purpose:**

This band of volunteers, comprised of members of our school community, (and sometimes some who have left the school community but wish to remain in the group) will seek to support any members of our school community who need help in some form for a period of time while being sensitive to their needs e.g. one parent in hospital, a hospitalised child. At times, this group may support others by providing a cooked meal for the family or providing comfort over a shared cup of tea. This group will rely on other community members informing them of a family or person who may need support. It is expected that any sensitive personal details relating to family situations will be kept confidential by group members. All support given will be offered on behalf of the St John’s School community. The group does not become involved in separation or divorce cases as we do not want to be seen to take sides in these cases.

## **Working details:**

A group of volunteers will indicate their willingness and availability to provide assistance in a number of ways, according to the specific needs that may arise. The group will be led by one person, a co-ordinator, who will be responsible for contacting people on the member list to ask for their assistance. The co-ordinator’s position will be reviewed each year. Any requests or notifications for possible assistance by the group will be directed to the group co-ordinator by the APRE who will then delegate the requests for assistance to group members.

## **Costs:**

Those providing assistance may be asked to provide a meal, either home cooked or bought, which will be at their own cost. The group will not be financial in any way and will rely solely on members donating their time, advice or food at times. A supply of card for various occasions (e.g. births, deaths, Thinking of you) can be collected from the main office by volunteers to give to those in need on behalf of the St John’s School community.

## **Communication:**

The Reachout Group will rely on other school community members making known a need within the school community. It is hoped that all classroom teachers will be key links in this communication system. School community members can inform of a need either by emailing or ringing the APRE or by placing the information in a sealed envelope, marked clearly with “Reachout Group” and given in to the main school office to be then forwarded to the APRE. This information should relay the recipient’s name, the situation and number of children as well as any other essential information.

## **Group Advertising:**

The group will advertise through the school newsletter, once per term to invite new members to join as well as to inform the school community of its existence so all needs can be identified through the help of others. Other notices will be placed at regular intervals in the school newsletter.

**Forms of Assistance offered by the Group:**

- The group may provide a cooked meal either home cooked or bought. It is suggested these meals be economical e.g. pasta dishes.
- Cards for various occasions are available at the school front office for collection.
- Personal visits by group members to those in need may also occur where a card will be given on behalf of the Reach Out Group as part of the St John's school community and also perhaps either a meal or flowers purchased or from the group member's home garden are given.
- Other services may be offered e.g. hand massage, by a qualified group members, to offer some extra support
- The group may inform those in need, of other support agencies in Gladstone who may be of assistance for any particular case e.g. Breast Buddies; Multiple Births; ADHD, Autism Queensland, etc
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**Record Keeping:**

Confidential records will be kept by the co-ordinator of any assistance / support given by the group over the timeframe. Names will not be listed but the type of assistance given will be recorded.

**Possible Scenarios:**

**New baby** in the family with only Dad at home with other children – provide a meal for one or two nights,

**Mum or dad in hospital** and mum or dad is at home with other children – provide a meal(s);

**Death in the family / bad medical news for family** – someone to visit to provide support; suggestions of other support groups in town pertinent to medical condition e.g. Cancer Support group.

**Primary wage earner retrenched** - visit to show support / care