



## Media Release

3 March 2021

### Upskilling local teachers, the focus for National Hearing Awareness Week

Townsville Catholic Education's Inclusive Education Team will upskill teachers across the Townsville Diocese this week as part of National Hearing Awareness Week to ensure they are equipped to assist students with hearing problems. (1-7 March 2021).

Kimberlee Lynch, Townsville Catholic Education's Inclusive Education Coordinator, said it is vital to upskill teachers in the Townsville Diocese to ensure adjustments can be made for students with hearing loss.

"In Australia, almost 4 million people have some form of hearing loss, and this continues to grow as our population ages.

"Early detection can assist in children's ability to learn and so we work with our teaching and support staff to give them a better understanding of working with students with hearing loss in their classroom and how they can adjust their teaching, environment and planning to cater for them."

"Our inclusive education team includes Hearing Impairment Specialists and Speech Language Pathologists and these staff assist with hands on strategies for teachers and classroom learning so that every student has the opportunity for learning to meet their needs."

As part of the professional development day, held 4 March, Audiologist from Hearing Australia, Jessica Keel, will address the group on hearing loss and the mechanics of hearing aids to better understand how they work and Townsville Catholic Education, Speech Pathologist, Harriet Naylor will talk about the effects of hearing loss on speech and language development.

"Hearing loss is often described as the invisible disability and the number of Australians who are deaf or hearing impaired is increasing due to long-term exposure to excessive noise, often in the workplace, accidents, the environment and the ageing of the population."

"As an inclusive education team, we want to ensure our teaching and support staff have the best information and resources and so we will also hear from a parent of a child with hearing loss, a uni student and past pupil with hearing loss as well as one of our teacher with hearing loss so that our team can have a well rounded view of the implications and what works in the classroom."

Other activities throughout the day will include a simulation of what it's like to have a hearing loss.

Hearing loss is the second most prevalent health problem in the Australian population, so Townsville Catholic Education are constantly further developing their skills to ensure they can best provide support for our students who suffer from hearing loss.

**END**