New outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services at two Catholic primary schools in Mackay and Rockhampton have been well received by families with most places booked after operating for only a few weeks, according to Catholic Education Early Childhood Co-ordinator Kathryn Byrne.

The services opened at the beginning of the school year at St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School in Wandal, Rockhampton, and Emmanuel Catholic Primary School in Andergrove, North Mackay.

Mrs Byrne said the parent communities had identified the need for the OSHC services which was further supported by an overwhelming positive response to initial surveys by Catholic Education last year.

“Catholic Education worked collaboratively with the school communities and using existing facilities were able to appoint Co-ordinators and assistants ready for the start of the 2017 school year,” Mrs Byrne said.

“It has been very pleasing to be able to offer this service to parents and families as work commitments can cause significant pressure for families. Knowing children are well cared for with firm routines in a safe and supportive environment helps alleviate some of those stresses.”

“The service offers a Nationally Approved Framework called My Time Our Place, which offers opportunities to engage in leisure and play-based experiences which contribute fully to their ongoing development.”

“Parents have been particularly interested in our OSHC literacy program where children are encouraged to read with educators every afternoon providing great continuity and practice, and helping children to form good reading habits,” Mrs Byrne said.