Littlest wonders enjoy knowledge as a precious gift

ROB KIDD

The wonder in the eyes of these children comes courtesy of an anonymous donor. Keely Murphy, Tanaya Syntageros, Winnie Acot and Natu Wesedom are in Year One at the culturally diverse St Brendan’s Catholic Primary School.

Thirty-eight per cent of the small Moorooka school’s 127 pupils are members of refugee families and/or newly arrived in Australia. Behavioural issues and fine motor skills such as handwriting or cutting with scissors had been a problem for some pupils, so the school called on the help of students from the University of Queensland.

Students in their fourth year studying occupational therapy have visited the school once a week to help the kids. The occupational therapy children’s life skills clinic ran in 2008 but was discontinued due to a lack of funding. UQ had since received an unspecified donation from an anonymous donor allowing them to resume the program this year.

“They have been an integral part of the class. We don’t want it to come to an end.” said Rose Williams, a Year One teacher at St Brendan’s.

HELPING HAND: University of Queensland occupational therapy student Mel Merryweather (left) with St Brendan's Students (from second left) Keely Murphy, Tanaya Syntageros, Winnie Acot and Natu Wesedom. Picture: Glenn Barnes