BUONGIorno: Cairns State High deputy principal Laura Mazzolini with Convitto Nazionale Paolo Diacono principal Oldino Cernoia and students Gabriele Qualia and Finlee Truelove. Picture: TOM LEI

Linked through language

ANIKA HUME

CAIRNS State High School is strengthening its Italian ties.

The principal of its Cividale del Friuli-based sister school arrived in town this week to consolidate further the ongoing arrangements between the two education hubs.

CSHS and Convitto Nazionale Paolo Diacono, in northeast Italy, developed a connection in 2008 when the Cairns school introduced the International Baccalaureate program, which includes the study of Italian.

Since then, both schools have annually hosted handfulls of each other's students as part of a reciprocal exchange program to enhance their language skills and experience a different scholastic system.

Participants also have explored the culture of their host country through staying with a host family.

This week, as eight Italian students enjoy time at CSHS, school principals Angela Toppin and visiting principal Oldino Cernoia opted to progress their successful sister school deal by planning future initiatives.

Projects in the pipeline include joint projects involving Year 11 students from both schools, allowing a cross-country exchange of project information and the schools contributing to a model United Nations conference together.

"We are looking to extend the agreement, including preparatory information for the arrival of this year's Cairns High IB students and to specifically create programs for their needs," Mr Cernoia said.

Ms Toppin said the schools were also considering maths, science and English teacher exchanges.

"Both schools are benefiting from this growing partnership, and we're really enthusiastic about it," she said.