

St. Philomenas Primary School Bathurst
Annual School Report to the Community
2014



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Principal

Mr James Farr

Principal's Message

As Principal of St Philomena's Catholic Primary School, Bathurst I take pleasure in presenting the Annual School Report for the 2014 School Year.

As a professional learning community we used NAPLAN data to plan for the year and continue our improvements in spelling.

With financial help from our fabulous P&F we invested in much needed playground equipment. Gross motor climbing equipment and associated constructions reflecting contemporary research into children's play and development.

We continued to use the Bathurst Diocese's Quality Catholic Education (QCE) framework to help direct staff formation and professional dialogue during meetings. Through regular meetings we have decided to concentrate on school compliance in 2015.

We lived our faith by raising money missions, our sponsor child and a Sri Lanken family.

This Annual School Report provides an opportunity for the community to reflect on and celebrate the significant achievements that have occurred this year. I acknowledge and thank the students, staff, Fr Pat, parents, parish and wider community for their contributions to the effective operation and development of this Catholic learning organisation.

Mr James Farr – Principal

Parish Priest's Message

During 2014 Fr Pat O'Regan continued as our School Manager and Chaplain. We were indeed fortunate to have Fr Pat's guidance and care during the year. Fr Joshy celebrated Mass and Reconciliation on a regular basis and his homilies were always meaning and joyful.

It is with a sense of happiness and sadness we wished Fr Pat all the very best as he accepted the position of Bishop of Sale, Victoria and welcomed Fathers Paul Devitt and Owen Gibbons to our parish community.

Parent Body Message

The Parents & Friends Association (P&F) is an integral part of St Philomena's Catholic Primary School. It provides a formal structure for parents and caregivers to participate in all activities and decision making processes and to work for the benefit of the school and, ultimately, our children.

We are blessed at St Philomena's to have a wonderful community of parents who are so supportive of the children's education and faith development. The parents are an integral part of our school community. We participate actively in the life of St. Philomena's, assisting in the daily events in the school in classrooms, canteen, and library and throughout the year at various times on a needs basis.

Parents who attended our P&F meetings were: welcomed into a group of like minded people sharing a positive Christian ethos; involved in promoting the principles of Catholic education; building community by becoming actively involved in providing support for our children's learning; became more involved in our children's spiritual, academic and social growth by the sharing of information.

Mrs Jillian Smithers - 2015 P&F President

Student Body Message

St Philomena's is a beautiful and kind Catholic school with a lovely principal, staff and students.

At St Philomena's we have a wide variety of facilities and these include: Computer Room, large playground, Library, Girra Girra Gymnasium, Oval with footy posts, sand pit, basketball court, cricket nets, handball courts, Snakes and Ladders court, hopscotch games and canteen.

We also have a lot of electrical equipment. We have 25 iMacs, 20 ipads and 21 MacBooks. Classrooms have computers, TVs and Smartboards.

We have an Anti-Bullying Policy that we take very seriously. We don't tolerate bullying and we are a kind school. We are known for being considerate and caring of others.

We are also a very religious Catholic school and participate in Masses and Liturgies. We have lots of liturgies and are well known throughout Bathurst for our lovely behaviour and beautiful singing.

At St Phil's we have many fundraisers for different causes. Examples include; Cancer research, Project Compassion and March for Melanoma just to name a few.

2015 School Captains

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

St. Philomenas Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-Educational School located in Bathurst.

St Philomena's is very well equipped and has resources the envy of many schools. Budget spending always sets a high priority on resources and facilities that encourage children's learning, enjoyment and access.

Each classroom has air-conditioning, ergonomic furniture, disabled access, large opening windows and carpeting. WH&S notification is displayed and regular emergency drills are carried out.

The computer lab has 25 iMac computers along with a printer and electronic white board. All classrooms and the library have an electronic whiteboard and desktop computers. MacBook Airs with a portable trolley are tools available to children to access online learning. All classes and staff have access to wireless internet.

Our Library is expansive and is made available for class lessons and lunch time visits. Children are encouraged to read regularly and literature is promoted through the Simultaneous Reading Day, Book Week, author visits, Book Fares, Book Club and regular borrowing.

Disabled access is ensured through ramps, disabled toilets few steps and wide corridors. Teacher's Aides are provided for those children requiring extra help both mentally and physically.

Our grounds are irrigated from run-off collection. WH&S procedure, our cleaner and groundsman facilities are clean and safe. Facilities include gross motor climbing equipment, basketball court, gym, cricket nets, vegetable gardens, a chicken pen and ample shaded seating. The grounds are fully fenced and toilets are located inside the main building. These features combined with visitor registration at the main office help maintain children's safety.

The canteen operates three days a week and complies with stringent WH&S and Bathurst City Council Health Department. It also complies with Crunch and Sip guidelines for healthy choices.

Our Girra Girra Gymnasium is a large, modern building with a basketball court, disabled toilets, visual entertainment, a moveable stage, storage and a kitchette. Classes use the gym for PE, wet weather games and visiting performances.

Girra Girra is Wiradjuri for happy, joyful, noisy place

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2014:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
108	91	2	199

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The school enrolment policy has been developed in the context of government, system and parish requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. Total fees are made up of the Diocesan school fee, the Diocesan Family Building Levy and local fees and charges.

Detailed information about enrolment at the school is available from the school administration office.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2014 was 94.75%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	95.13%
Year 1	95.56%
Year 2	96.72%
Year 3	92.31%
Year 4	94.54%
Year 5	93.30%
Year 6	95.66%

Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- the Executive Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Education Office Bathurst officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2014:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
12	7	19

* This number includes 7 full-time teachers and 5 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Education Office Sydney. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

The School held the equivalent of five staff developments days this year with areas of focus as follows:

Term 1	Naplan data review, iCloud & Google Apps, Professional Standards, Goal setting & Accreditation, DDA, PETAA English Planning Day, WH&S E-Learning
Term 2	Mental Health Professional Development Day, QCE Compliance, Mathematics K-6
Term 3	WH&S Compliance - CEO Child Protection Policy, voice care. PLC - Science programming format. Full day staff retreat.
Term 4	Maths K-6, Science Programming. QCE Topic: Prayer, Liturgy & Spiritual Life. IEU - Dealing with Difficult People. CPR

Professional learning refers to the development of teachers' professional expertise. Our Professional Learning Plan is available from the front office.

The Diocese of Bathurst has established a policy on the Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education, which will be implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

In 2014, under the guidance of the Dr Angelo Belmonte from the CEO, members of staff have been supported in completing the Religious Education Certificate through ACU, Broken Bay Institute-University Of Newcastle.

Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the three categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	11
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Catholic Schools have a unique role in the evangelising and educating mission of the Church. As a key ministry of parishes and the diocese, Catholic schools encourage and support parents in their responsibility for the faith formation of their children. This formation is supported by prayer and opportunities to participate in the life, mission and liturgy of the broader Catholic community.

The School follows the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student textbooks *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Bathurst.

Catholic Heritage

Established in 1901 by the Sisters of St Mercy, to serve the needs of the Catholic community of "Milltown" as South Bathurst was then called. The school was located on the corner of Seymour and Rocket Streets.

In 1983 the school moved to its present position. Following in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, the school offers a quality education in the charism of Catherine McAuley. St Philomena's Primary School is a single stream Catholic coeducational primary located in Bathurst.

The school community reflects the diversity of Australian society with families of differing cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Religious Life of the School

St Philomena's is an integral part of the parish community. The spiritual growth and welfare of each student, along with sound educational practices is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, staff and parents.

The school enjoys a positive relationship with the local community with different organizations and clubs utilising the school property for outside school activities. The school participates in many local events.

St Philomena's liturgies are rich in tradition and enhanced by the active participation of children from Kindergarten to Year 6. At St Philomena's we strive to continually support the faith journey of our children by educating them in the traditions and doctrine of our Catholic faith.

Each term, whole-school masses are celebrated. Our masses are themed, reflecting the appropriate celebration according to the liturgical calendar and community events. We start each week with a whole school assembly at which time we pray as a school community. Each classroom has a sacred space focus area which is central to our class prayer. We begin the school year with an opening school mass, blessing our school leaders and presenting them to the community and end the year in celebration with a school Mass.

St Philomena's Mission Statement challenges all to respond to Jesus' call to proclaim Jesus and Gospel values, in word and through celebration.

Our local parish clergy were very involved in school life again in 2014. Staff and students give witness and service in their own parishes.

Catholic Worldview

As a Catholic school, St Philomena's has the particular task of presenting quality education as an expression of the Catholic Worldview. The school therefore seeks to offer opportunities to apply that worldview to all aspects of school life, and life outside of school.

Mini Vinnies continued with the help of Mrs Bray (REC). The group played a major role in raising awareness of the poor and needy. As a group they collected food hampers and blankets. Mini Vinnies met four times a term to organize ways to help the underprivileged in our community.

Catholic Missions - \$2301.35

Students in Years 6 and 8 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Bathurst undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of fifty multiple-choice questions. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 50)	
Year 6	38.61

Further information about the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum and the RE Tests may be accessed at the [Religious Education and Evangelisation](#) site on the Catholic Education Office Sydney website.

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

The school provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the BOSTES syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Education Office Bathurst. School effectiveness is monitored by the Quality Catholic Education self review process and through regular school reviews conducted by CEO personnel. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

Quality Catholic Education

St Philomena's curriculum is underpinned by the Religious Education Curriculum, which is central to the student's learning. All Board of Studies requirements are being met as the school seeks to implement a contemporary curriculum to meet the needs of all students.

St Philomena's is fortunate to have many dedicated teachers who are passionate about and value learning. All teachers have been involved in many professional learning opportunities throughout the year. Each week, the focus of our professional learning meetings has been targeted at spelling and reading to improve student learning outcomes.

In each classroom, teachers timetable a dedicated block of time for Literacy and Numeracy. In both Literacy and Numeracy, assessment data from Basic Skills, NAPLAN & school assessment results are used to inform learning and teaching and identify students at risk.

Religious Education Program

Kinder to Year 6 students undertake all of the core units from The Bathurst Diocese Religious Education Program (draft) — Kindergarten to Year Six. Religious Education lessons are taught every day. Preparation for aspects of Year group and whole school liturgies occur in Religious Education classes e.g. Prayers for the Assembly, offertory elements and artwork.

Teaching of the love of God through Mass, liturgy and Prayer

All students participated in Eucharistic Liturgies to celebrate significant events in the life of the school and the Church. Regular Mass attendance is valued and seen as integral to Sacrament preparation.

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	66.00%	50.00%	3.00%	12.00%
	Reading	55.00%	46.00%	14.00%	13.00%
	Writing	50.00%	39.00%	4.00%	11.00%
	Spelling	41.00%	44.00%	14.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	59.00%	36.00%	0.00%	14.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	55.00%	37.00%	7.00%	16.00%
	Reading	45.00%	34.00%	10.00%	16.00%
	Writing	7.00%	16.00%	7.00%	21.00%
	Spelling	39.00%	33.00%	7.00%	16.00%
	Numeracy	32.00%	26.00%	10.00%	18.00%

Student Welfare Policy

School Pastoral Care Policy

Through guidance by the Catholic Education Office (CEO) Pastoral Care Development Guide, St Philomena's has improved and sustained its Pastoral Care policy. This policy promotes self-discipline, responsibility and faith. The core rules are: care of self, care for others, and care for the place we are in. In line with the cognitive ability of the students in the care of the school, it is reverberated to students using a consistent and common language that everybody has a right to feel safe.

The school aims to support the students in developing the skills needed for positive self-esteem and self-worth through the Religious Education Programs, Anti-Bullying Program and the Awards Policy.

The class programs are differentiated to best meet the individual needs of all students. The Support Teacher and Education officers work closely with classroom teachers in providing high quality support and assistance to children with special needs and learning difficulties. A counsellor, through Centacare, is available to all students and their families.

No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the School's Pastoral Care Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

Discipline Policy

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this School. The School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by School persons and non-School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the School.

Discipline Policy

When parents enrol their children at St Philomena's School they enter into a partnership with the school staff. This partnership is based on shared responsibility and mutual respect. The partnership should aim at achieving effective learning and good discipline so that the school environment is both productive and harmonious.

Pastoral Care and Discipline Policies are treated as the same policy, but for organization may be treated as separate sections when dealing with different behaviour. It is understood both sections should complement one another when working with both positive and negative behaviour.

St Philomena's Discipline/Pastoral Care Policy outlines and explains the paths of discipline procedure in an attempt to provide clarity for students, parents and teachers. It also outlines the levels of consequences in responding to breaches of rules: as well as the ways in which the school encourages and reinforces positive behaviour and a sense of achievement in its students.

No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the School's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Diocese of Bathurst has established a *Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy* which is used to guide the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) monitors the implementation of this policy as part of school compliance requirements. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the *Anti-Bullying Policy* may be accessed at the administration office.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Diocese of Bathurst has established *Guidelines for the Management of Complaints* which is implemented by our school through the Complaints Policy. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) monitors the implementation of this policy. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the *Complaints Policy* may be accessed on the School's website, or the administration office.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Responsibility Development

St Philomena's staff encourage children to develop responsibility and self-management skills. The following methods are used to develop responsibility

in our children:

- Student Representative Council (SRC)
- Mini Vinnies

Year 5/Kinder Buddies

- The Year 5 children are aligned with a Kinder child at the beginning of the year.
- Class errands
- Class teachers give children small errands and messages to take to other classes or the office.

Assemblies

- Year 6 children are in charge of organizing and running whole school assemblies and the Monday morning flag-raising and National Anthem.

Year 6 Leaders

- Year 6 children care for their own class. In doing so they ensure children move safely to class, are organized for lessons and helped with any problems.

SECTION NINE: QUALITY CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The School implements the Catholic Education Office Bathurst Quality Catholic Education Framework which outlines the processes and benchmarks for creating the culture and practice of continuous improvement with students as the focus.

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the School's Strategic Improvement Plan. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against standards in collaboration with the School Consultant.

Key Improvements Achieved in 2014

Achieved Educational Goals for 2014

Organisational Culture

Goal 1

Reviewed and determined the time frame for splitting the role of AP/REC the Executive is a team of three with revised role descriptions.

Professional Relationships

Goal 2

Worked on professional relationships and created a culture of professional dialogue through PLC, QCE and the new teaching standards.

Resourcing

Goal 3

Ensured enough hardware was available so more children could access Mathematics and Study Ladder.

Religious Education

Goal 4

Reviewed staff handbook and pastoral care program.

WH&S

Goal 5

Rolled out WH&S induction policy.

Goal 6

Clarify understandings and promote and regularly review policy and practice

Pedagogy and Practise

Goal 7

Develop, apply and sustain knowledge and understanding of contemporary learning theory and pedagogical principles.

Goal 8

Contextualised beliefs about learning and teaching.

Goal 11

Built professional learning into staff meeting time.

Priority Key Improvements for 2015

Strategic Initiatives for 2015

Organisational Culture

Goal 1 - Using PLC techniques improve communication between staff and executive.

Goal 2 - Introduce a process to include PLC time in staff meeting time.

Professional Relationships

Goal 3 - Work on professional relationships and created a culture of professional dialogue through PLC, QCE and the new teaching standards.

Resourcing

Goal 4 - Investigate ways to provide more teaching space in Years 3, 4 & 5 rooms

WH&S

Goal 6 - Develop staff & contractor induction package.

Goal 7 - Create a culture "WH&S thinking" within the student body.

Pedagogy and Practise

Goal 8 - Develop, apply and sustain knowledge and understanding of contemporary learning theory and pedagogical principles.

Goal 9 - Contextualised beliefs about learning and teaching.

Goal 10 - As a professional learning community & using NAPLAN data design and implement teaching strategies targeting creative writing skills across the stages and KLAs.

Goal 11 - Design and implement a strategic process for obtaining satisfaction data from all stake holders.

SECTION TEN: PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

St Philomena's introduced a feedback form and suggestions box. At St Philomena's parents feel valued, respected and welcomed. The school has a community spirit which is supportive and friendly. Parents are appreciative of the dedication of the school staff and appreciate the quality feedback they receive around their child's learning needs, successes and gains.

Parents are extremely satisfied with the quality of teaching their child receives at St Philomena's. Parents continue to express satisfaction around the pastoral care particularly of the students and the emphasis of social justice and outreach. Parents see their child as safe from harassment, bullying and victimisation.

The greatest satisfaction expressed by parents is that St Philomena's is a place, which allows the child's faith to grow; that members of staff provide good role models of adult Christian life and the values.

Student Satisfaction

Students continue to maintain a high level of connectedness and pride to be a part of the this Catholic School community. Students regularly state the affection they have for our school.

Exit interviews for those students and families that have moved on clearly show the satisfaction with the school, and the happiness of the students at the school.

The feedback received from student leaders indicates that the students feel safe and happy and our school.

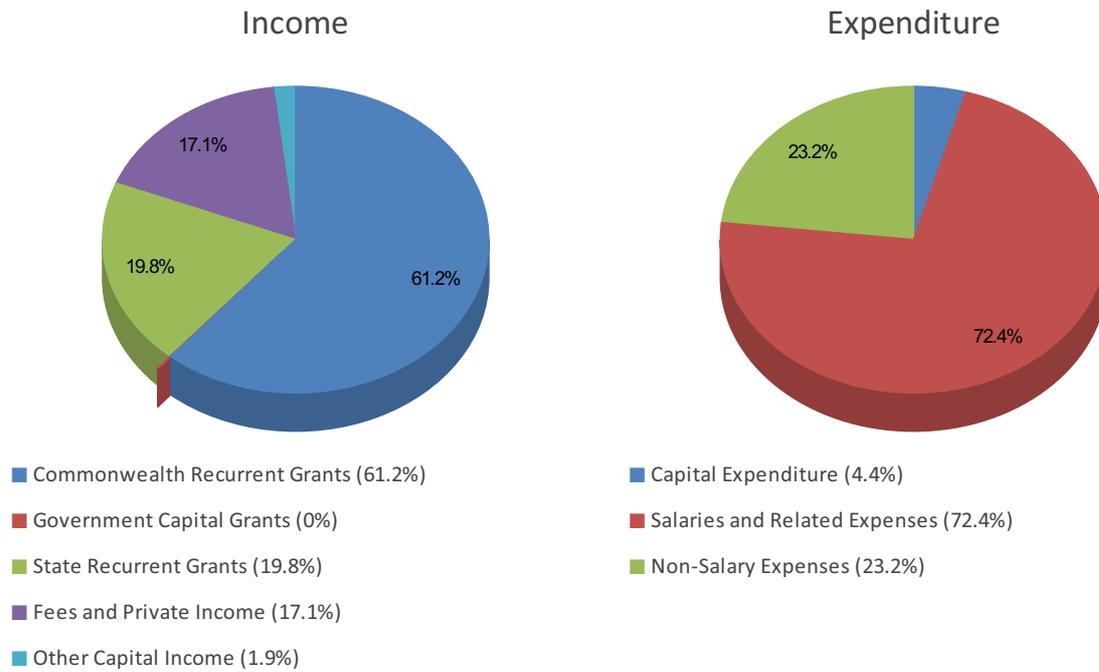
Teacher Satisfaction

Through PLC discussions teacher satisfaction related to the quality of resources, the working environment and student results.

Communication between support staff, teaching staff and executive is an area which needs processes developing so all "are on the same page."

Staff relationship require further work, so all feel confident speaking in the staff meeting.

Staff meetings need to stick to the agenda and provide time for more professional dialogue.



This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants include recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita and special purpose grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes capital funded through the central Capital Fund.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Plant, Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure include all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.