

St. Philomenas Primary School Bathurst
Annual School Report to the Community
2015



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Principal

Mrs Louise Davies (Acting)

Principal's Message

As Acting Principal I present the Annual School Report for the 2015 School Year. As a professional learning community we are working collaboratively to review and ensure that as a school we live our school vision that *St. Philomena's, is committed to high quality Catholic education in a loving family orientated community environment.* We continue to use the QCE framework and characteristics of a Professional Learning Community to guide and direct staff formation and professional dialogue with emphasis on the learner and commitment to continuous improvement which embraces the very essence of the PLC model.

As a Mercy school we continue to support those in need in our community, living each day by our school motto 'to live justly, lovingly and faithfully in Christ'. I acknowledge and thank Fr Owen, Fr Paul and Sr Alice for their regular presence in our school community. The dedicated staff, who welcome and support ongoing initiatives within the school. The student body who are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Our parents, parish and wider community for their consistent ongoing support which contributes to the effective operation and development of this school.

Parish Priest's Message

Fr Owen Gibbons continues as our School Chaplain and leader in faith. Fr Owen regularly celebrates the Sacrament of Penance each term with our Primary classes. We are extremely fortunate to be able to celebrate Mass throughout the year in our 'Girra Girra' gymnasium, of which we have always welcomed parishioners and school families to attend. Our Mother's Day Mass continues to be a highlight of the school year. Often these Masses are the only opportunity for many children to be involved as part of their faith formation. It is rewarding to experience and be part of the reverence and involvement during these prayer times.

Parent Body Message

The Parents & Friends Association (P&F) is an essential part of our School. We meet every second Tuesday of the month and it provides an opportunity for parents and care givers to participate in all activities and decision making processes for the benefit of the school and our children.

Parents and carers of our children and friends of the wider community are welcomed in sharing a positive Christian ethos by being invited to collaboratively promote the principles of Catholic education, building community by becoming active supporters of our children's learning and becoming involved in our children's spiritual, academic and social growth by the sharing of information.

We are extremely blessed at St Philomena's to have a wonderful community of parents who encourage and constantly support the education and faith development of each child.

Mrs Jillian Smithers - 2015 P&F President

Student Body Message

St Philomena's is a loving and caring school with students and teachers who take a strong stand against bullying. We are lucky to have a fantastic new playground, with new equipment, farmyard, sandpit, tunnel, 100m track, musical instruments and stands for our school band, sensory board and a blackboard, all of which promote physical and mental well-being. We learn a lot about our faith through Masses, the Sacrament of Penance and through the teacher's knowledge of Religion. St Phil's has a good name in the community because we give to charities such as 2BS miracle Appeal, our Sponsor Child, Caritas and Mission fundraising days. We have respect in our school uniform wearing it with pride and we especially love our new hats.

There are plenty of opportunities for children to compete in competitions eg: Paul Kelly Cup, Peachy Shield, Sport trials, Swimming, Cross Country and CWA competitions. Teachers are fun but firm, teaching a variety of activities in the classroom. Teachers prepare us well for the next year, teachers care about the whole person not just the academic side. Students have the opportunity to suggest ways to improve the school through SRC meetings.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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

St Philomena's is the only single stream K – 6 Catholic School in Bathurst. Established in 1901 by the Sisters of Mercy, to serve the needs of the Catholic community of "Milltown" as South Bathurst was then called. The original school was located on the corner of Seymour and Rocket Streets, Bathurst. In 1983 the school moved to its present position.

Following in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, the school offers high quality education in the charism of Catherine McAuley.

Our enrolments remain steady and parent involvement in classrooms is strongly encouraged across the school. The parent body provide vital resources for the school through their annual fundraising activities such as the school fete, car parking on Bathurst Race Weekend and the chocolate drive to name a few.

Children are actively involved in inter school sporting competitions, AFL, Rugby, Netball, Hockey and Tennis days where they are encouraged to meet in friendship and experience a higher level of competition collegially with other schools in our Diocese and beyond. This year our school convened the Bathurst Eastern Region Athletics Carnival and the dedicated staff and parent body came together to implement and ultimately run a successful and enjoyable day where children's achievements were acknowledged and supported.

St. Philomena's participate regularly in the Bathurst inter school debating and chess competitions and Mighty Minds Muster. We support the CWA Public Speaking and Country of Study, we participate in the Bathurst Eisteddfod in support of our local community and especially in the Bicentennial celebrations this year.

Children at St. Philomena's experience a range of organised educational excursions and incursions which assist in the teaching of key learning areas of the NSW curriculum.

Our school is well resourced and equipped and we are looking to the future on expanding and /or modifying our primary classrooms to become more contemporary and adaptive spaces with the assistance and guidance of the Catholic Education office.

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 2015:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
107	107	1	214

* 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 2015 was 92.56%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	92.45%
Year 1	91.63%
Year 2	91.69%
Year 3	93.44%
Year 4	94.14%
Year 5	90.80%
Year 6	93.77%

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 2015:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
12	11	23

* This number includes 8 full-time teachers and 4 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	Dealing With Difficult People - IEU facilitated, Reading Mastery - Sarah McDonough, NAPLAN Review
Term 2	Creative Writing Day - facilitated by Paul Stafford & Lorraine Short Negativity in the Workplace - facilitated by Rose Bendell
Term 3	Your Rights & Responsibilities at Work - IEU facilitated
Term 4	Technology in the Classroom - facilitated by Vicki Vance, Camps & Excursions - IEU facilitated, First Aid & CPR - facilitated by St John's Ambulance

Training & Assessment of Staff - Week Inservice attended by Principal in Term 1

PAT Maths Inservice @ CEO - 2 staff members in Term 1

Ipads in Action - Digital Literacy - 2 staff in Term 1

Questacon Science - 2 staff - Term 1

Jolly Phonics - 2 staff in Term 2

Securing Our Future - IEU facilitated - 3 staff

Quicksmart Inservice - 3 staff in Term 3 & 4

Sue Larkey Inservice - 6 staff in Term 3

Pool Safety Course - Principal in Term 3

Embedding Formative Assessment - 5 staff in Term 4

Governance Training - Sydney attended by Acting Principal - Term 4

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.	12
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.

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

The school enjoys a positive relationship with the local community and different organisations and clubs utilising the school property for outside school activities. The school participates in many local events such as Anzac Day and are supportive of organisations such as St Vincent de Paul and the 2BS Miracle Appeal that care for those in need in our community.

Our liturgies are rich in tradition and enhanced by the active participation of children from Kindergarten to Year 6. 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. Each day we pray the Angelus at midday and the children are able to respond to our school Mission Statement which challenges all to respond to Jesus' call to proclaim Jesus and Gospel values, in word and through celebration.

We begin each school year with an opening school mass, blessing our school leaders and presenting them to the community. We also end the year in celebration and thanksgiving for the successes achieved throughout the year. Our local parish clergy are very involved in school life with Fr Owen and Fr Paul often visiting the classrooms and celebrating Mass. Sr. Alice is also a welcome face to our school and encourages our parents to come along to 'Conversations with Catholic'.

Mini Vinnies continues to play a major role in raising awareness of the poor and needy in our community. As a group they collected food hampers and blankets. Mini Vinnies meet throughout the term to help the underprivileged in our community. Caritas is supported every year and enable the children to become more aware of other children and families in the wider world. St. Philomena's has sponsored a child for the past 20 years and as a school community we see this as a vital tool to assist children to develop an empathy and awareness for children in other economic and cultural societies.

Our school was the venue for the Cathedral Parish Bush Dance held in support of the Cathedral Restoration Appeal. Our school community also assisted in the Cathedral Parish Restoration Appeal Raffle held this year and one of our school families were fortunate to win the main prize.

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)	
	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.

Kinder to Year 6 students undertake all of the core units from The Bathurst Diocese Religious Education Program (draft) Religious Education lessons are taught every day. Each week teachers focus on the Gospel Teachings of the coming weekend giving children the opportunity to experience the word of God in their faith development.

BOSTES requirements are being met as the school seeks to implement a contemporary curriculum to meet the needs of all students. Staff have been working in Professional Learning Teams to implement the new Maths and Science Curriculum. Our PLT's have collaboratively worked on the English curriculum with a focus on Writing after reviewing Naplan and classroom results. As a whole school we are continuing to use explicit teaching programmes for Spelling and Reading as results are continually improving across the school as a whole as children have been pre and post tested and are grouped according to ability. Our Indigenous students receive additional support each day with intervention, consolidation or extension activities. Our Support Teacher works with each class to plan and implement strategies to assist with individual plans for children who may be on funding or require assistance in a particular area of learning. The focus of our professional learning meetings has been based on our teaching of writing spelling and reading to improve student learning outcomes. Staff have been involved in professional learning opportunities throughout the year. Our PDHPE has been an area of focus this year where we encourage our children to participate in Crunch and Sip and to focus on the 12 fundamental movement skills that we are implementing in our sport lessons each week. Technology is consistently being upgraded and maintained throughout the school.

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 2015		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	69.00%	52.00%	0.00%	11.00%
	Reading	58.00%	48.00%	4.00%	11.00%
	Writing	59.00%	47.00%	4.00%	7.00%
	Spelling	42.00%	41.00%	15.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	66.00%	34.00%	0.00%	15.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	48.00%	36.00%	11.00%	17.00%
	Reading	52.00%	34.00%	7.00%	18.00%
	Writing	26.00%	19.00%	0.00%	18.00%
	Spelling	52.00%	33.00%	4.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	41.00%	28.00%	7.00%	16.00%

Student Welfare Policy

No changes were made to this 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

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

Pastoral Care is an expression of the philosophy and vision of our school, reflected in the quality of daily relationships. It embraces all facets of the Curriculum and is sustained by values that reverence life and respect the dignity of each person and the contribution they make to our community. We support the students in developing the skills needed for positive self-esteem and self-worth through the Religion Program, Anti-Bullying Program and Awards Policy.

Class programs are differentiated to meet the individual needs of all students. The Support Teacher works 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.

School spirit is seen as extremely important to give children a sense of belonging. Our school prayer and school song (written in 2006 by Fr. Kevin Bates) epitomise our vision and mission as a school community and these are the focus of each day.

The P & F have established a Pastoral Care email address enabling the school executive to become aware of families in need in a confidential non-invasive manner.

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 2015

Key Improvements:

- Implemented Professional Learning Community
- Mentoring and Accreditation of New Scheme Teachers
- Implemented new Reading Programme
- Infants Maths Units written for class implantation
- As a professional learning community & using NAPLAN data design and implement teaching strategies targeting creative writing skills across the stages and KLAS.
- 'Rest in the Lord Week' – introduced in light of Pope Francis' message to families encouraging them to build their lives on love, reminding them also that God's love is for everyone.
- Worked on professional relationships and created a culture of professional dialogue through PLC, QCE and the new teaching standards. Developing a culture of positive thinking and 'I have a voice' – supported through professional development
- Re-structured staff meeting times to be more effective ie: Business Meeting
- Implemented new programmes to assist children in various stages of learning ie: Quick smart, Indigenous Support Groups, Learn to Move
- Adapted classroom environment to enhance student learning through use of contemporary furniture and teaching tools.

Priority Key Improvements for 2016

Next Year in 2016 we hope to:

Put in place the CEO Model of Christ Centred Learning

Implementing new NSW curriculum ie: History / Geography

Restructuring of classrooms to be more adaptive supportive and flexible

Update guidelines and school policies and procedures in relation to Teaching Staff

PLC focus on Whole Number

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 continues to use the feedback form and suggestion box that is located outside the front office of the school and any feedback is encouraged. Parents feel welcomed, valued and respected as part of the school community and communication between staff and parents is open and collaborative in regard to the learning needs and successes of each child.

Parents continue to express their satisfaction around the pastoral care that is offered here at the school especially the implementation of the Pastoral Care email address. Parents, Grandparents and friends of the school community express their satisfaction in knowing that their children are being taught by staff who model the values of Christ and that children are always at the heart of the education received at St Philomena's school.

Student Satisfaction

Through conversation and feedback from student leaders across the school indicates that the children are happy and comfortable in their learning at St. Phil's. Our students often greet visitors to the school and the children are commended on their beautiful manners and the enthusiasm they show for their school environment, class work, peers and teachers.

St Phil's is a great school. I have learnt a lot especially in Maths. We did groups for Maths and we each had a job to do. In Spelling we all move to different levels and learn at our own pace and it helps us with our writing, some children in primary learn high school level words.

Sport is fun at St. Phil's as we are doing new games and skills all the time and we have people come in to show us how to play golf and AFL and even skills for athletics.

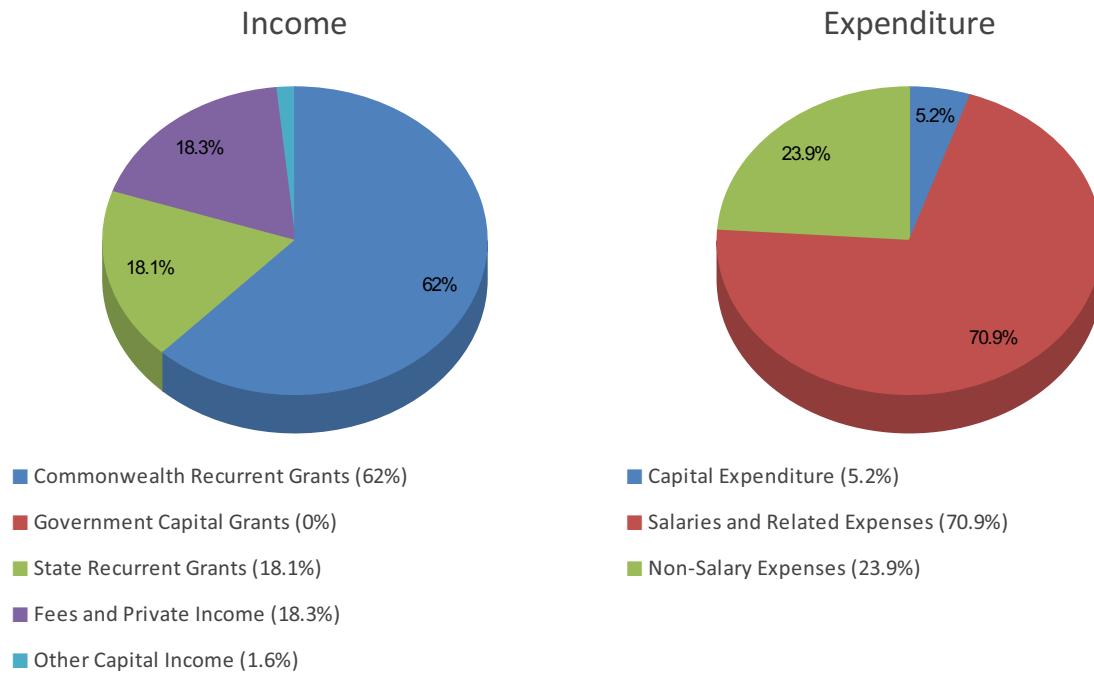
Throughout the year we often have ex-students come back to visit to see which teachers are still here and to recount fond memories of their education here.

Many families who have left the the school only do so due to moving town and often clearly express how they have been happy with the education their children have received and the happiness of the students at the school.

Teacher Satisfaction

During 2015 our work environment was very unsettled as we were uncertain of our school leadership due to lengthy absences of the Principal, however, the staff who 'stepped up' did a very good job. Parents and students were often unaware of the absences or unsettled feeling on staff as the other executive members and staff 'went about business as normal'.

The PLC has enabled and encouraged staff to speak up and use their voice during staff meetings – norms being set allowed for a more professional dialogue to occur and professional standards overall were lifted.



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.