

2016 Annual School Report to the Community

St. Philomenas Primary School Bathurst

Lloyds Road, Bathurst 2795
stphilsbathurst@bth.catholic.edu.au
www.stphilsbathurst.catholic.edu.au
(02) 63 31 1198

Principal Mrs Louise Davies



Principal's Message

St. Philomena's is a professional learning community working collaboratively to ensure that we live our school vision that *St. Philomena's, is committed to high quality Catholic education in a loving family environment*. The Diocesan QCE framework and characteristics of a Professional Learning Community guide staff formation and professional dialogue, with emphasis on the learner and commitment to continuous improvement embracing the very essence of the PLC model. As a Mercy school we 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 and Sr Alice for their presence in our school and Bishop Michael McKenna for his visit with our Year Six children during their Sacramental preparation of Confirmation.
- Our dedicated staff, who ensure pedagogical practices of the highest professional standard are maintained, also who welcome and support ongoing initiatives within the school.
- Our students who are enthusiastic, keen to be challenged, and eager to learn.
- Our parents, parish and wider community for their support, contributing to the effective operation and development of our school.

Parish Priest's Message

One of the great traditions of the Cathedral Parish is the commencement of the school year with a Mass for all those involved in the Catholic Schools. It serves as a focusing of the task ahead, that all the many elements that constitute our educational endeavours are underpinned by the person of Jesus Christ, the mystery of God, and the strength and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Masses and other liturgies that are celebrated during the year make explicit our recognition of our faith in Jesus Christ and our dependence on his grace and love. Nurturing of the spiritual dimension of students' lives is also woven into the daily life of our school. Values of kindness, fairness, compassion, and justice are witnessed to in many ways by all members of the school community. Sometimes we fail, and then that other crucial Christian value of forgiveness has to be brought into play. While we can learn a lot about God and how God has been particularly revealed by Jesus, the challenge is always to apply what we have learnt in our relationships at home, school, in the workplace, on the sporting field, in all those places we live and interact with one another.

Parent Body Message

The Parents and Friends Association (P and 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 - 2016 P and F President

Student Body Message

We are part of a loving and caring school, focusing on living by the values of Jesus each day. We are lucky to have a wonderful playground and our teachers are always helping to build up our physical and mental well-being and mindfulness. We learn a lot about our faith through Masses, the Sacrament of Penance, Holy Communion and Confirmation. St Phil's has a good name in the community and we support each other and those who are less fortunate in our community by giving 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 appreciate how lucky we are to have such a beautiful place to learn in.

There are plenty of opportunities for children to compete in competitions. Teachers are fun but firm, teaching a variety of activities in the classroom and we love having special activities in Rest in the Lord Week each term. Teachers prepare us well for the next year, teachers care about the whole person not just the academic side. All of us, even Kinder have the opportunity to suggest ways to improve the school through SRC meetings and we are encouraged to use our voice respectfully.

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 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 Swimming 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.

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 2016:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
98	108	0	206

* 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 2016 was 93.45%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	95.21%
Year 1	91.72%
Year 2	93.83%
Year 3	95.21%
Year 4	92.86%
Year 5	93.45%
Year 6	91.84%

Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their learning. 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 Schools (or designated CEDB 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 2016:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
11	9	20

* This number includes 7 full-time teachers and 4 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
--	----

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	Whole Staff Retreat with Paul Skippen on Relationships, Hawker Brownlow in School Professional Learning Communities,
Term 2	Assessment - Learning Intentions & Success Criteria, Staff Formation Day at Carcoar
Term 3	Hawker Brownlow - Professional Learning Communities Academy, Inter-School Visit Sydney, Assessment - Feedback, Importance of Literacy Blocks
Term 4	Naplan Review, St John's First Aide/CPT Training

Each class teacher undertook Professional Learning for our Science and Technology Units implemented this year. Four members of staff were trained in Mathematics. Two staff attended a STEM conference. Staff, students and parents undertook a Sebel Furniture workshop toward changes for a contemporary classroom environment in Term Four.

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 School aims to provide a rich Catholic Curriculum to our students with the help of our Parish Priests, parents, staff and students. The Year of Mercy has been a focus in our school Religion lessons and emphasised in our prayer and liturgies throughout the year. The school has strong links to the community, participating in Anointing Masses at the Parish Centre, providing Sacramental support to students from non-Catholic schools, participating in the ANZAC March and attending NAIDOC celebrations. Our students visit the elderly, share their talents at local Eisteddfods and interact with the other Catholic schools in our area. Visits from the Mercy Nuns living in Bathurst and acknowledging and highlighting the contributions of the Mercy nuns to our school community, now and in the past, is vital.

St Philomena's is a very giving community. Mini Winnies and the school SRC help to organise various fundraising appeals throughout the year. A pancake day raises money for Project Compassion; our Socktober Ten Pin Bowling evening raises money for Catholic Mission. The Bathurst Christmas Miracle appeal and Winter Appeal receive contributions and acknowledgment from the school community. The school community also continue to sponsor a child less fortunate and this year we have been gifted Linah who is young girl from Africa. The values of Family, Dignity of each Person and Hope have been a major focus for our school this year as we aim to implement the Model for Christ Centred learning into our school culture. We encourage Gospel inspired choices in our children and each class spends a lesson each week reading and reflecting on the weeks Sunday Gospel.

Liturgies and Masses are based around the Liturgical Year to enhance the children's knowledge and faith of Catholic tradition. We begin and end each term with a school Mass. We bless our leaders and pray for the needs of those in our local community. The Sacrament of Penance is administered by Fr Owen in class Liturgies at school. Our school implemented fundraising initiatives in support of the Cathedral Restoration Appeal. This year the Feast of the Assumption was celebrated with the 4 Catholic Primary schools coming together with Fr Paul, using music and prayer to celebrate this wonderful feast of Mary. Each day at 12 noon we pray the Angelus. Meditative music on the theme of Mercy is played to ready the children for this prayer and bells are rung throughout. We are blessed to have the presence of Fr Owen, Fr Paul and Bishop Michael McKenna in our school throughout the year and Sr. Alice who also visits our school and runs 'Conversations with Catholics' a program aimed at parents who wish to develop their own understanding of the Catholic faith.

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	29.59

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. 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 Mathematics, History/Geography and Science Curriculum. Our PLT's have collaboratively worked on the Maths curriculum with a focus on Whole Number after reviewing NAPLAN and classroom results. As a whole school we are continuing to use explicit teaching programmes for Spelling and Reading. Results are continually improving across the school as we use data from our pre and post assessments and group children according to where they learn best. Our Aboriginal 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 children continue to support and 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 with a 1:1 device ratio.

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 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	72.00%	53.00%	0.00%	10.00%
	Reading	69.00%	48.00%	0.00%	11.00%
	Writing	66.00%	49.00%	0.00%	6.00%
	Spelling	69.00%	46.00%	0.00%	12.00%
	Numeracy	55.00%	36.00%	0.00%	13.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	30.00%	36.00%	18.00%	15.00%
	Reading	36.00%	35.00%	18.00%	16.00%
	Writing	18.00%	17.00%	6.00%	18.00%
	Spelling	24.00%	30.00%	6.00%	17.00%
	Numeracy	39.00%	28.00%	6.00%	17.00%

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 this 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 2016

Key Improvements:

- Working as a Professional Learning Community
- Mentoring and Accreditation of New Scheme Teachers
- New Reading Programme showing successful data and overall achievement of students
- Mathematics lessons more focused on essential learnings
- NAPLAN data utilised to drive Mathematics
- '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.
- Professional relationships strengthened and a culture of professional dialogue through PLC, QCE and the new teaching standards apparent. 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 2017

As a staff in a Catholic school we are looking at embedding Catholic values across the school community and introducing different forms of meditation throughout our classes with staff and students as part of our focus on reflective prayer, mindfulness and well being.

Looking at Quality teaching with a focus on Mathematics and formulating a Framework across the school K - 6.

Reviewing our Assessment Policy and being proactive in formulating and implementing strategies for formative and summative assessment K - 6.

Our school environment will undergo change to incorporate unused corridor space as part of our classrooms to make them more engaging and supportive for contemporary learning.

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 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

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 really good school. We move around for Maths, Spelling and Reading groups going to different rooms as we all work at different levels and learn at our own pace. Being in different groups helps us with our learning, some children in primary learn high school level words for spelling."

"Sport is fun we participate in lots of skill work and we have people come in to show us how to play golf, touch footy, netball 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.

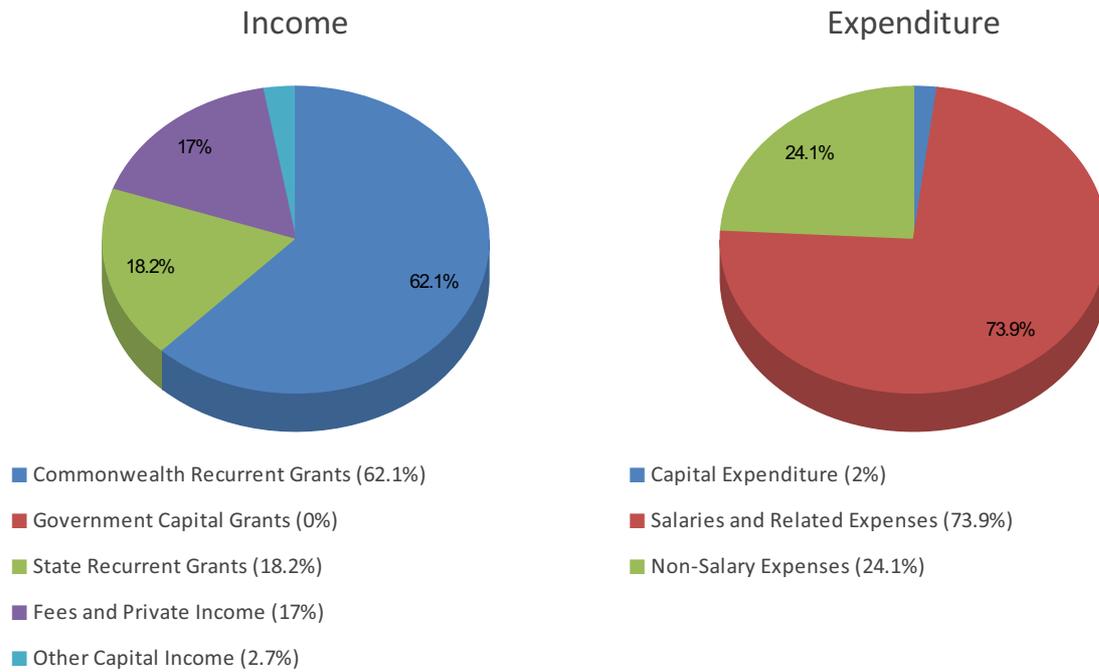
Many families who have left the the school only do so due to moving town and often clearly express how they have been happy with the education their children have received and the happiness of the students at the school.

Teacher Satisfaction

During 2016 our work environment became more settled once we were informed that Mrs Davies would be acting Principal for the year. We were able to set goals as a staff and achieve them. We were more supportive and proactive of each other and the school community. We have matured as a team, using the PLC model to enable and encourage all teachers to present their thoughts and ideas within a friendly and professional platform.

All staff were re-allocated to a new class and stage to teach which was a very exciting time in our school as we began to share resources, ideas and sought advice from our peers. Our collaboration increased enormously because we were all in a new space. Staff rose to the challenge and great progress was made in relationships, sharing and supporting one another.

Staff became more cohesive. We worked, planned, collaborated and shared within our PLC Teams and came together regularly as a staff. The morale of staff lifted as we helped each other come to terms with changes happening and the work that needed to be done. Though feeling overwhelmed at times, staff worked together to ensure our children's learning was outstanding.



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.