

St Raphaels Catholic School Cowra  
Annual School Report to the Community  
2014



**School Contact Details**

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**Principal**

Mr Michael Gallagher

### Principal's Message

St Raphael's Catholic School is K-10 Catholic rural school in the Bathurst Diocese. The school has a population of 473 students and is situated at Cowra, a town with a population of 10,000 relying on farming and tourism in the Central West of NSW.

St Raphael's Catholic School is a Catholic, family-centred learning community, built on the Brigidine charism expressed as Strength and Gentleness. Our emphasis is to discover Jesus in the people we meet and in the ordinary events of everyday life. We set out to discover fun and purpose in learning in a supportive and safe social and physical environment. The close partnership established between home and school enables robust, effective child-rearing and learning.

Mr Michael Gallagher

Principal

### Parish Priest's Message

I am very pleased with the life and activity of St Raphael's Catholic School. (While coping well with the demands of everyday issues) the school is a vibrant centre of learning. The staff is conscientious and caring and there is a strong educational and pastoral atmosphere in the school.

A conscious effort is made to nurture active links between parish and school through prayer, service, liturgical participation, youth group, school visits and joint projects.

I am happy to add my comments to this annual report.

Fr Laurie Beath

Parish Priest.

### Parent Body Message

St. Raphael's Catholic School provides an enriching and welcoming environment for both our students and our parents. The Parents and Friends Association has had a long association with the School and always found the staff to be conscientious, approachable and caring. Parents are made to feel welcome and their concerns are always heard. The Parents and Friends meetings are generally held in the school each month with a positive attendance by the Principal and Assistant Principal and interested parents. I commend St. Raphael's on their ongoing work and commitment and its' positive inclusion of its' Parent Body.

Mr Mal Bird

P&F President

### Student Body Message

- Year 10 students have the opportunity to share in a three day retreat during Semester 1. The students travel to the "Winbourne" Retreat Centre Mulgoa by bus. Students are accompanied by staff members closely associated with the group for that year and the REC (depending on student numbers). The Parish Priest attends the second day to celebrate Reconciliation and Mass with the students that evening. The REC organises all practical aspects of this retreat.
- *Guardian Angels Program*
- Year 6 and Kindergarten participate in a special relationship called "Guardian Angels". Staff on these grades organise a Year 6 student to support a Kindergarten student each for the year.
- *Peer Support Program*
- St. Raphael's has adopted the Peer Support Foundation Program which is funded by the NSW Department of Health. This is a peer led, skills based experiential learning program.
- Year 9 participate in a Leadership one day retreat held at a venue in Cowra.

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## SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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St Raphaels Catholic School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Cowra.

- K-10 Catholic rural school
- Peer Support programme
- Guardian Angel programme
- Behaviour Management Plan
- Multiple Computer labs plus access in every classroom.
- Streamed classes in Maths and English through Stages 1-4
- Playing fields, Netball, Basketball, Cricket Nets, Tennis courts
- Assembly Halls
- Specialist Rooms: Visual Art, Music, Textiles Technology, LOTE (Japanese), Timber Technology, Computer Laboratories, covered outdoor learning areas, Exersite, performance room, Science laboratory.

### Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 10. 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
240	233	8	473

\* 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 93.59%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	95.58%
Year 1	91.66%
Year 2	93.93%
Year 3	93.96%
Year 4	93.03%
Year 5	94.86%
Year 6	94.72%
Year 7	95.20%
Year 8	94.80%
Year 9	93.61%
Year 10	88.19%

### 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
35	8	43

\* This number includes 24 full-time teachers and 11 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	5%
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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:

<b>Term 1</b>	Staff Orientation & Induction
<b>Term 2</b>	Nil
<b>Term 3</b>	Staff Retreat with St Joseph's Eugowra staff - Fr Richard Leonard SJ
<b>Term 4</b>	Professional Learning Communities - Tonia Flannigan (Hawker Brownlow) + Compliance & Closure

St Raphael's is a member of the Diocesan PLC Forum and as such there were several days of professional learning conducted for five staff members as well as follow-up days on site with facilitator Tonia Flanagan from Hawker Brownlow

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## SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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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.

- In 2014 our Diocesan Curriculum is “To Know Love and Worship”.
- *Prayer*: The centre of all our religious teachings is PRAYER. This reinforces our responsibility as religious educators to provide continual opportunities for students to develop their personal faith and relationship with God.
- *Catholic Identity*: Explicitly and implicitly, Religious Education forms an integral part of the total curriculum of the Catholic School. It is broader than the classroom teaching of Religion, and is directed towards the personal and religious development of students.
- *Sacramental Programme*: St. Raphael’s School plays an integral part in the Sacramental programmes of St. Raphael’s Parish. The Sacramental Programme at St Raphael’s is parish based. The school prepares eligible candidates for the celebration of First Reconciliation (Year 2), First Eucharist (Year 3) and Confirmation (Year 6).
- *Pastoral Care*: Pastoral Care is an integral component to the community of St. Raphael’s school. Showing the face of God, tangibly, to fellow staff members, students and the school community is strongly encouraged.
- *Guardian Angels Program*: Year 6 and Kindergarten participate in a special relationship called “Guardian Angels”. Staff on these grades organise a Year 6 student to support a Kindergarten student each for the year.
- *Peer Support Program*: St. Raphael’s has adopted the Peer Support Foundation Program which is funded by the NSW Department of Health. This is a peer led, skills based experiential learning program.
- *Retreats*: Year 10 students have the opportunity to share in a three day retreat during Semester 1. The students travel to the “Winbourne” Retreat Centre Mulgoa. Students are accompanied by staff members closely associated with the group for that year and the REC (depending on student numbers). The Parish Priest attends the second day to celebrate Reconciliation and Mass with the students that evening. Year 9 participate in a Leadership retreat held in Cowra. The day is facilitated by one of the secondary members of staff supported by the Principal, the other Year 9 teacher and the REC.
- *Staff Spirituality*: The spiritual wellbeing of all staff members is an important and integral part of the faith development at St. Raphael’s. Weekly staff prayer is undertaken by all staff members. Staff members are encouraged to celebrate parish and school liturgical events. Personal occasions such as weddings, personal achievements, births, family bereavements are also supported. Staff members are encouraged to complete a Post Graduate Certificate in Religious Education through the Australian Catholic University as an ongoing commitment and understanding to the ethos of the Catholic school. A staff retreat is provided by the school - this year by Fr Richard Leonard.

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	33.49
Year 8	31.00

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.

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## SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

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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.

The school follows the K-10 syllabi produced by the NSW Board of Studies in each of the designated Key Learning Areas (KLAs). The Religious Education Programmes are based on the Bathurst Guidelines.

The KLAs are:

- Religious Education K-10
- English K-10
- Mathematics K-10
- Science and Technology K-6
- Human Society and Its Environment K-10
- Creative Arts K-10
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education K-10

Key competencies can be an integrating focus for the teaching/learning programmes developed by the school. These key competencies are:

- collect, analyse and organise information
- communicate ideas and information
- plan and organise activities
- work with others and in teams
- use mathematical ideas and techniques
- solve problems
- use technology.

The Education Enrichment department provides remedial support as well as challenge and enrichment.

Co-curricular activities include sport, debating, poetry, chess, music, band, Tournament of Minds, Science and Engineering Challenge and an array of academic competitions.

The School follows the BOSTES syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and 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 school curriculum.

- Religious Education K-10
- English K-10
- Mathematics K-10
- Science 7-10
- Human Society and Its Environment K-10
- Creative Arts K-10
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education K-10
- Technological and Applied Studies 7-10
- Language Other Than English 7-10 (Japanese)

Electives – specialisation in any three areas of study:

Food Technology, Timber Technology, Commerce, Dance, Visual Art, Music, Textiles Technology, Japanese, Information Software Technology, Photographic and Digital Media, Physical Activity and Sports Studies.

The Education Enrichment department provides remedial support as well as challenge and enrichment.

Co-curricular activities include sport, debating, poetry, chess, music, band, Tournament of Minds, Science and Engineering Challenge and an array of academic competitions.

## 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	54.00%	50.00%	21.00%	16.00%
	Reading	34.00%	46.00%	10.00%	16.00%
	Writing	49.00%	39.00%	13.00%	21.00%
	Spelling	29.00%	44.00%	18.00%	16.00%
	Numeracy	41.00%	36.00%	13.00%	18.00%

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	41.00%	3.00%	15.00%	12.00%
	Reading	41.00%	34.00%	17.00%	13.00%
	Writing	8.00%	16.00%	10.00%	11.00%
	Spelling	33.00%	33.00%	32.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	23.00%	26.00%	15.00%	14.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 7	Grammar and Punctuation	29.00%	30.00%	19.00%	19.00%
	Reading	29.00%	29.00%	15.00%	16.00%
	Writing	12.00%	16.00%	33.00%	28.00%
	Spelling	39.00%	31.00%	17.00%	17.00%
	Numeracy	24.00%	29.00%	14.00%	17.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 9	Grammar and Punctuation	21.00%	20.00%	24.00%	27.00%
	Reading	18.00%	22.00%	16.00%	23.00%
	Writing	16.00%	15.00%	37.00%	38.00%
	Spelling	29.00%	24.00%	18.00%	23.00%
	Numeracy	29.00%	24.00%	18.00%	21.00%

In 2014 the number of students issued with a RoSA	3
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### Student Welfare Policy

- St Raphael's Catholic School, Cowra – a Catholic school in the Brigidine tradition working in the spirit of "Strength and Gentleness" where the school community aims to:
- Encourage individuals to strive for excellence while valuing and respecting individual differences;
- Provide a relevant curriculum for a changing world enabling students to grow towards becoming competent, confident young adults who can think critically and make decisions informed by Catholic values;
- Educate the whole person in a quality learning and secure environment;
- Promote a strong sense of community, built on an active partnership of school, home, parish and local community.

St Raphael's Catholic School is a Catholic, family-centred learning community, built on the Brigidine charism expressed as Strength and Gentleness. Our emphasis is to discover Jesus in the people we meet and in the ordinary events of everyday life. We set out to discover fun and purpose in learning in a supportive and safe social and physical environment. The close partnership established between home and school enables robust, effective child-rearing and learning.

No changes to this policy were made 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.

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Pastoral Care is an integral component to the community of St. Raphael's school. Showing the face of God, tangibly, to fellow staff members, students and the school community is strongly encouraged. To this end staff have the opportunity to become a member of the Pastoral Care Committee each year. The full text of the school Student Welfare Policy may be accessed via the School Policies and Procedures Manual at school

Student Welfare Policy extract is also available in the Parent Handbook.

No changes to this policy were made 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.

### Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The following activities were included in the school calendar to promote respect and responsibility:

- Peer Support: Respect and support for one another and responsibility for one another's wellbeing
- Guardian Angels: Respect and support for one another and responsibility for one another's wellbeing
- Parish based community activities – Healing Masses & Easter liturgies
- Caritas support: Respect and support for one another and responsibility for one another's wellbeing
- Sorry Day: Respect and support for one another and responsibility for one another's wellbeing
- Fathers / Mothers Day hospitality: promoting respect and gratitude
- NAIDOC Week participation: Respect and support for one another and responsibility for one another's wellbeing
- ANZAC day participation: Respect and support for one another and responsibility for one another's wellbeing
- Remembrance Day participation responsibility to live and promote respect and peace
- Australian Red Cross Blood Donors: promoting social respect and responsibility

- World Peace Day: responsibility to live and promote respect and peace
- Festival of International Understanding: responsibility to live and promote respect and peace

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## SECTION NINE: QUALITY CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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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**

- Successful Development of Social Justice projects in the secondary department
- Establishment a shared staff retreat
- Immersion in the 125 / 75 year parish anniversary events
- Enhanced the structure and function of reporting & feedback
- Deepened understanding and commitment among staff of Professional Learning Communities
- Established a clear and consistent curriculum K-10 through collaboration across the year groups and KLAs.
- Secondary timetable upgrade
- Maximised access to grassed areas as Primary / Infants / Improved primary children's play spaces
- Successfully gained CBGA funding for expansion to Stage 6

### **Priority Key Improvements for 2015**

- Diocesan Assembly goals addressed
- Plan out Secondary Retreat programme
- Stage 6 Curriculum content and Registration
- Collaborative Stage 6 Work Party guiding transition
- Consolidated and extended Fluency homework structure
- Consolidated PAT Maths & Literacy regime
- Consolidated and growable School Leadership structure
- Staff recruited in preparation for Stage 6
- Expanded SAS access and usage
- Playground Improved - Primary P'Ground 2 Shade/Seat covering
- Refreshed ICT plan
- Loan for the Stage 6 building
- Acquisition of New Land

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**

Parents in the Primary Department of the school have indicated that they are concerned that the K-6 section of the school will suffer neglect in resourcing as the school expands to include Year 11 and 12 in 2016. As this agenda item has been clearly identified, discussed and addressed in the 2015 Improvement Plan it appears those concerns have settled. Playground presentation in the Primary Department is a particular concern being addressed by the school and the P&F Association.

Parents in the Secondary Department of the school are focused on the expansion to Years 11 and 12 and are watching carefully in terms of staffing, staff development, resourcing and capital works. Regular updates have been available throughout the year and will continue throughout 2015.

### **Student Satisfaction**

Playground presentation in the Primary Department is a particular concern among students and is being addressed by the school and the P&F Association.

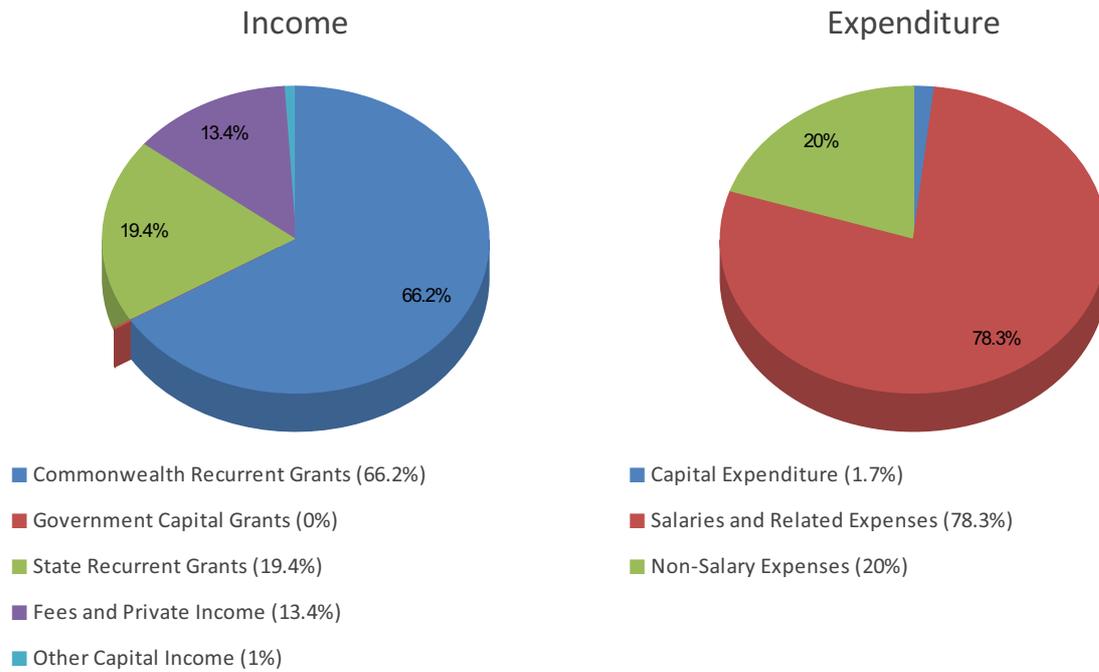
Students in the Secondary Department of the school are focused on the expansion to Years 11 and 12 and are watching carefully in terms of curriculum, resourcing and capital works. Regular updates have been available throughout the year and will continue throughout 2015.

### **Teacher Satisfaction**

The focus throughout 2014 on developing St Raphael's as a Professional Learning Community has been a challenge for most staff members because, while the theoretical framework is in place, practical infrastructure is still evolving and should come strongly into play in 2015.

Professional Learning has taken on a Stage 6 emphasis for Secondary staff members and there is a mixture of positive, nervous excitement evident. Numerous key questions still have to be addressed in preparation for the expansion and until they are there will remain a sense of the unfinished.

Positive energy characterises the 2014 staff members.



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.