

St Johns Primary School Dubbo  
Annual School Report to the Community  
2014



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**Principal**

Mr Anthony O'Leary

### Principal's Message

St John's Primary School is a K- 6 Catholic school in the Bathurst Diocese and is situated in the rural city of Dubbo. Our Vision is to foster a community of faith that is centred on the teaching of Christ, where love and concern develops the whole child, empowering each individual with the opportunity to realise their full potential. Enrolment for 2013 exceeded 400 students with over 30 full time and part-time staff. We celebrate Catholic life and have a focus on Gospel values in the daily life of the school community. St John's Primary School has very strong links with the St Brigid's Parish. Religious Education is woven into the daily life of the school through formal religion lessons, the integration of Christian values into other subject areas and the encouragement to live full Christian lives. Opportunities for experiencing prayer and celebrating liturgy are provided for the school family, that is, parents, staff and children.

We actively promote responsibility and respect for one another and support for students to understand action and consequence as a key element in school discipline. St John's School has developed an excellent reputation in the local community.

### Parish Priest's Message

St Brigid's Parish is very fortunate to have within its boundaries five Catholic Schools;

- St John's Catholic Primary, Sheraton Road, Dubbo East;
- St John's Catholic Secondary College, Sheraton Road, Dubbo East;
- St Laurence's Catholic Primary, Tamworth Street, South Dubbo;
- St Mary's Catholic Primary, Wheelers Lane, Dubbo North;
- St Pius X Catholic Primary, East Street, West Dubbo.

It is easy to forget the vital role of the Catholic education system which, alone for almost a century, has upheld the right of parents to a faith-based education for their children. Over this time many parents and parishioners have made great sacrifices to build this system.

Catholic schools and institutions must reflect the moral and religious principles on which they were established - universities, schools and hospitals- must be "genuinely Catholic" and conform to official teaching on "respect for human life, marriage and family and the right ordering of public life."

We thank our teachers and staff for taking the Gospel imperative to teach the truth in its fullness. Regards,

Fr Mark McGuigan Parish Priest

### Parent Body Message

Our P&F Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month from 7pm in the staff room. Meetings were well attended by a dedicated and enthusiastic group of parents. The P&F presented the school with funds to purchase sporting equipment and reading resources. A successful School Fete generated not only funds, but more importantly school spirit and links with the community.

The P&F Clothing Pool was coordinated by Cath Osborne. This has been a beneficial service to our parents. The P&F Welcome Morning Tea was held for our kinder parents. Also in February the P&F hosted a welcome Picnic tea for about 60 families. The hospitality shown by the P&F at these functions is so important in making new families feel part of our community.

The P&F hosted A Biggest Morning Tea involving children, parents and staff to raise money for the Cancer Council in May. Thank you to all our parents who attend and contribute to our P&F meetings.

### Student Body Message

Our final year at St Johns has been one of many opportunities. St John's Dubbo is a school full of exciting challenges. St John's has many leadership programs such as the Powerful Futures mentoring support program and Live Life Well to assist all the Year 6 students learn to be leaders to our peers and to be role models to the younger students. Our excursion to Canberra was fantastic and enabled us all to become better friends.

At St John's the students develop their many talents and achieve high levels in numerous activities. Some of our achievements in 2014 included: the Science challenge Day, the amazing musical 'Alice' where many of Year 6 had important leads and our growing school band.

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## SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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St Johns Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-Educational School located in Dubbo.

St John's Primary School Dubbo was established in 1969 with the late Sister Lelia as Principal and Brother Theodore O'Shannessy as Assistant Principal. This school was formed by combining the primary girls from St. Patricks Convent and the primary boys from St. Johns School. The boys school was situated at the De La Salle Monastery in George Street.

The Parents and Friends Association has a major role to play as a parent forum, in helping to build a true spirit of community within the school, in the interaction between parents and teachers and in fundraising. The Parents and Friends Association, as a key parent group in the school, provides a forum for parents to:

- provide input on parent priorities and suggest ideas about Catholic schooling
- work closely with principal and staff
- raise money for resources
- provide students services e.g. canteen
- provide support for school programs etc working bees
- provide opportunities for social interaction and parents to form supportive networks

The Parents and Friends Association has a key role in developing the community of parents, students and staff. The P&F Association meets at 7:00 pm in the Library on the third Tuesday of each month.

All children participate in a wide variety of sports, which aim to improve their physical fitness and co-ordination. Our emphasis is on enjoyment, willing participation and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

During Terms 2 & 4 students participate in inter-school competitions in a range of sports through the Primary Schools Sports Association. Students in Years 4, 5 and 6 are eligible to compete in PSSA.

P.S.S.A Winter Sports include Hockey, Netball, Rugby League and Soccer.

P.S.S.A Summer Sports include Cricket, Softball, Tee Ball and Touch Football.

Students also have the opportunity to be nominated in Diocesan Selection Teams in a variety of Sports throughout the year. This provides a pathway to State and National Competitions. Sports include Tennis, Basketball, Softball, Swimming, Netball, Golf, Athletics, Rugby Union, Rugby League and Cricket.

**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
221	190	9	411

\* 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 92.82%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	94.00%
Year 1	94.19%
Year 2	89.14%
Year 3	94.56%
Year 4	93.75%
Year 5	93.46%
Year 6	90.62%

**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
24	10	34

\* This number includes 14 full-time teachers and 10 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	7%
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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 development days this year with areas of focus as follows:

<b>Term 1</b>	Managing Challenging Behaviours with Dr Bill Rogers
<b>Term 2</b>	Staff Retreat with Fr Richard Leonard
<b>Term 3</b>	Professional Learning Communities
<b>Term 4</b>	No Staff Development Day

Staff professional development is critical to the overall improvement of a school. St John's School continually focuses on the needs and requirements which lead to further improvement.

Use of Promethean Interactive Whiteboards, Quality Catholic Education - School Improvement, Institute of Teachers Mentoring, Indigenous Learning Perspectives, NAPLAN review, Australian Curriculum consultation / implementation, Contemporary Learning, Learning Support, Gifted & Talented Education, Sport, Religious Education, Clerical PD (BCA) and English Curriculum have been a focus during 2014.

### 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.	24
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

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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.

At St John's we teach and follow Bathurst Diocesan Program and *To Know, Worship and Love* resources. Staff have received training in ICT tools to support the implementation of the program.

The Catholic identity of St. John's is enhanced due to its close ties with the Parish of St Brigid's, our Parish Priest Father Mark McGuigan and School Chaplain Father Greg Bellemy and the wider parish Community. We are actively involved in and support the Parish based Sacramental Programs.

The School celebrated its Catholic identity in numerous ways in 2014. We began and ended our School Year with a Mass at St. Brigid's Church. At least once per term we had the opportunity to come together as a K-6 community to celebrate being members of this community. The focus of these celebrations was a liturgy with a different theme depending on the Liturgical Season or time of year. A highlight for 2014 was the Missions Launch held at our school.

Bishop Michael McKenna was welcomed to St John's Primary School, Dubbo by the principals from the four Catholic primary schools in the city and the principal of St John's College and the College Band. Visiting school principals, teachers and students from MacKillop College and St Stanislaus' College, Bathurst, James Sheahan Catholic High School, Orange and St. Michael's Primary School, Dunedoo joined with the two St John's school communities to celebrate the occasion. The St John's Primary School hall was filled to capacity.

The title chosen for the Liturgy "When I grow up I want to be... Alive" took its name from the theme chosen by Catholic Mission for the celebration of World Mission Month 2014. The Liturgy also expressed the individual charisms and identities of the two St John's school communities. The launch had a special focus on the missionary Church of Jamaica in the Caribbean.

Our Catholic Identity was also enhanced by our use of our School Prayer every morning and our school Song at our Assemblies. Class and staff prayer were also an integral part of our daily and weekly activities.

From a very practical perspective, the School was involved in a range of activities designed to raise student awareness of our Church in action at a local and international level in 2014. This was particularly evident in our efforts to support the Society of St Vincent de Paul and Caritas, Australia.

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	31.66

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.

There are seven Key Learning Areas in the Primary Catholic School Curriculum in New South Wales.

- Religious Education
- English
- Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Human Society & Its Environment
- Creative & Practical Arts
- Personal Development, Health & Physical Education Religious Education

Religious Education is woven into the daily life of the school through formal Religious Education lessons, the integration of Christian values into other subject areas and the encouragement to live full Christian lives.

Opportunities for experiencing prayer and celebrating liturgy are provided for the school family, that is, parents, staff and children. Each class develops its own prayer focus in the classroom and makes prayer an integral part of the school day.

### Library

### Information Technology

The school's main aim is to ensure the children are competent and confident in the varied ways in which computers can support and enhance their learning. All students have ready access to Computers in the classroom and the school Library. ICT provision at St John's Primary School is enhanced by the 32 PC computer lab, all staff having a lap top, and each room equipped with an interactive whiteboard. The school now operates a pod of 40 Chrome Books for use throughout K - 6.

### Performing Arts

Several artistic performances are scheduled for all Grades. Students are exposed to dance, mime, storytelling and other music related performances. Students at St John's Primary School have access to a range of musical resources, including weekly music lessons with Mrs Dunn, a specialist Music teacher.

### Sport and Physical Education

All children participate in a wide variety of sports, which aim to improve their physical fitness and co-ordination. Our emphasis is on enjoyment, willing participation and promoting a healthy lifestyle. During Terms 2 & 4 students participate in inter- school competitions in a range of sports through the Primary Schools Sports Association. Students in Years 4, 5 and 6 are eligible to compete in PSSA.

- P.S.S.A Winter Sports include Hockey, Netball, Rugby League and Soccer.
- P.S.S.A Summer Sports include Cricket, Softball, Tee Ball and Touch Football.

Students also have the opportunity to be nominated in Diocesan Selection Teams in a variety of Sports throughout the year. This provides a pathway to State and National Competitions. Sports include Tennis, Basketball, Softball, Swimming, Netball, Golf, Athletics, Rugby Union, Rugby League and Cricket.

Students also participate in fitness activities including Zumba, a variety of coaching clinics and iKiFiT.

## 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	45.00%	50.00%	7.00%	12.00%
	Reading	44.00%	46.00%	9.00%	13.00%
	Writing	38.00%	39.00%	2.00%	11.00%
	Spelling	35.00%	44.00%	9.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	41.00%	36.00%	9.00%	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	38.00%	37.00%	16.00%	16.00%
	Reading	31.00%	34.00%	15.00%	16.00%
	Writing	5.00%	16.00%	13.00%	21.00%
	Spelling	32.00%	33.00%	11.00%	16.00%
	Numeracy	20.00%	26.00%	22.00%	18.00%

### Student Welfare Policy

At St John's Primary School we "embrace the values of respect, compassion and acceptance".

Our Catholic values are the source of our energies and give us direction. 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.

The school has developed a comprehensive Behaviour Management Policy based on the Gospel values of justice and respect for the individual. An important aspect of the Behaviour Management Policy is the area of "positive reinforcement" as well as our Award System.

The system of Awards, combined with consequences for inappropriate behaviour, provide a balanced and supportive approach to the management of student behaviour that encourages students to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

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

A number of principles and beliefs guide the effective management of student behaviour.

1. Behaviour is chosen for a purpose. Since behaviour is the result of choice, school communities must equip students to make the best possible choices.
2. Consequences for behaviour are non-violent. Non-violent consequences are responses that do not involve any form of physical punishment, emotional hurt or verbal harassment.
3. All individuals within St John's Primary School are valued and treated with respect.
4. Individuals are able to accept responsibility for their own behaviour. St John's Primary School recognises that the acceptance of responsibility for behaviour is developmental and is dependent on students having opportunities to discuss and practise appropriate behaviour.
5. All behaviour has consequences which affect future opportunities. Responsible behaviour increases the student's range of future opportunities.

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

In 2014 St Johns students continued to be involved with the Powerful Futures program. Our Year 5 students undertook training in mentoring and implemented supported lessons in classrooms from K - 4. Selected students also demonstrated their skills at the 'Powerful Futures' event held at Charles Sturt University.

Powerful Futures aims to -

Help improve student engagement in the Learning process with modern content and teaching strategies.

Help improve elements of fitness, including motor skills, cardio vascular fitness, muscle composition, strength and flexibility in local and regional communities, schools and homes.

Propagate language, activities and policies to help make schools Safe, Respectful, Learning Environments. Evaluation shows that this assists schools better engage and retain students, thus enhancing education outcomes, which in turn lead to better social, health and economic outcomes.

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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**

Catholic Life and Religious Education - Further develop the story and living tradition of the Mercy charism in new and relevant ways: Outcome = In 2014 we were able to develop our links with the Sisters of Mercy by coordinating a visit from Sister Bernardine Evens who spent a week with the staff and students and shared the stories of Mercy World actions in PNG and East Timor. Our students celebrated this work with a donation action day.

Prayer, Liturgy and Spiritual Life of the School - Faith Development – well planned opportunities for staff to support spiritual and faith development: Outcome = Father Richard Leonard SJ - Director Australian Catholic Office for Film & Broadcasting to share his insights at the Staff Retreat Day.

Planning, Programming and Evaluation - To continue building teacher capacity and improve student learning outcomes through deepening a shared understanding of the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics. = Evaluation practices are 'deep' in their process with PLC Teams working together to analysis data and discuss strategies for continuous improvement.

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

Permeation of Catholic Values - The school reflects the richness of Catholic culture through teaching of charisms, symbols and traditions. Visual symbols exist and are captioned around school (e.g. Catherine McCauley Rose, Mercy Cross).

Pedagogy and Teaching Practice - Contemporary teaching practices are evident in most classrooms. Programs reflect new outcomes and a variety of teaching strategies. Quality PD is implemented to support Contemporary Learning in the classroom.

Assessment - Data Analysis - There is a proactive whole school approach to using data effectively to inform the learning and teaching process and to continually improve whole school, cohort and individual student performance. The '7 Steps to writing success' will be reviewed by PLC mentors and trialled K – 6 as part of the PLC process.

Strategic Leadership and Management - The school actively demonstrates key characteristics of an effective learning community. PLT are in operation within a culture of respect and openness

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

Parent Participation - On many occasions throughout the year the opportunity is taken to acknowledge the partnerships of the school, parents and parish which underpins the life of the school and which has always been a key feature of the school.

During 2014 parents contributed significantly to the overall provision of education in the school by supporting various initiatives and fundraising:

- assisting as classroom helpers
- providing support for excursion programs
- providing funds for classroom resources
- supporting the school canteen by supplying volunteer counter staff
- High levels of involvement in Individual Learning Plan meetings
- providing support through assistance at school organised sporting events.
- Organizing major fundraising activities

### Student Satisfaction

The St Johns Primary Student leaders spoke positively about their roles as School Captains and as House Captains. The Year 6 students led the Friday assemblies and played a significant role in school pride at carnivals.

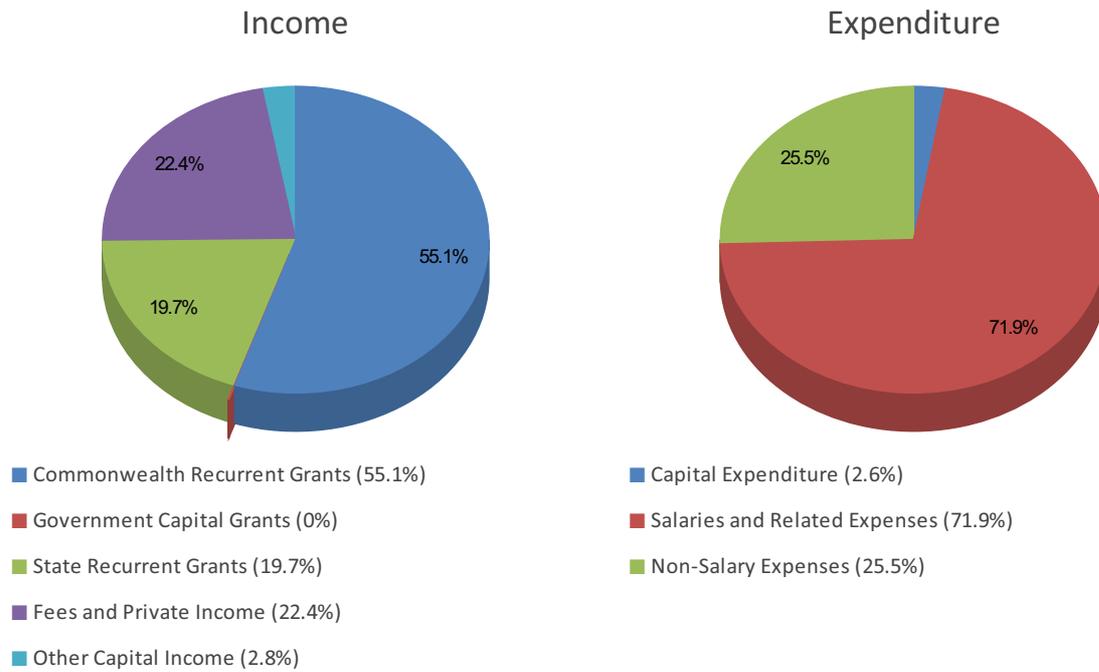
The Year 6 students also spoke very highly of their leadership opportunities for all students through the 'Kinder Buddy' program which operates all year and the Peer Support role that the Powerful Futures - Safe Respectful Learners program entails.

There is a genuine pride in the wearing of the school uniform.

### Teacher Satisfaction

The Teacher Satisfaction included positive reviews of:

- \* It was acknowledged by staff that the school was well resourced, particularly the continued enhancement in ICT provision, reading resources and mathematics resources.
- \* The teachers showed high levels of satisfaction with the scope and delivery of Professional Development opportunities. In the past year, opportunities to attend high quality professional development in areas such as Behaviour Management, reading, interactive white boards, Reading to Learn, ACER assessments and MULTILIT have been highlights.
- \* The teaching staff were very positive in the growing relationship between School and Parish. This development has been a focus of the QCE Framework. Teachers are now more involved in Parish life with an increase in staff choosing to take part in Childrens Liturgy as part of Sunday Mass and as Eucharistic Ministers.



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.