



# Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School Chatswood

## 2010 Annual Report

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## **1. Message from Our School Community**

### **1.1 Message from the Principal**

Welcome to this annual report for 2010.

Our Lady of Dolours Primary School Chatswood is an integral part of the Parish of Chatswood and it is also a systemic school within the Diocese of Broken Bay.

Catholic values and traditions are taught in a formal religious education program and are a guide for all we do throughout the school.

As a school our core task is education. In this rapidly changing world we, as educators, are endeavouring to find a balance between modern techniques and more traditional methods to meet the learning needs of our students.

Our Staff are focussed on ensuring an optimum learning environment for all students.

In 2010 we have much to celebrate – the dedication of our Staff, the calibre of our students and the involvement of so many parents assures me that we are in a privileged community.

The Principal

### **1.2 Message from the Parent Body**

This year saw many changes managed by the principal and her team to start the building of new classrooms, library and COLA, thanks to the Federal Government's Building the Education Revolution (BER) contribution. The project is expected to be completed by early 2011.

This year was again a social and financial success for the P&F, with our annual welcome cocktail night, our annual trivia night, together with a number of children event days that children and parents alike enjoyed. Funds raised provided essential equipment for the children and the school.

Involvement in the "Coles Sports for Schools" raised many credits to enable the school to acquire much needed sports equipment.

The usual activities such as Kindergarten morning tea, Pancake Tuesday, Mother's day morning tea, Father's Day breakfast, Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, Our Lady of Dolours Feast Day and many others were hosted by our tireless P&F executive committee and the class parents.

The new committee for 2011 was elected at the end of the year with many positions changing hands. We wish the new committee every success for 2011 and thank those leaving the committee for their efforts over the past years.

P & F Association

### **1.3 Message from the Student Body**

Our Lady of Dolours is a great school with wonderful teachers and small classes.

The most fantastic highlights throughout this year were the excursion to Canberra and the colourful Creative Arts Festival.

This year we had the responsibility of being school leaders. We carried out our duties with care and perseverance. We have had much support from our helpful teachers and we have made many new friends. At Our Lady of Dolours we are encouraged to treat others as we want to be treated.

We have grown to be great leaders and learners who are looking forward to the challenges of high school.

2010 Student Body School Leaders



## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2010:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
139	145	209	0	284

\*Language background other than English

### 2.2 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Enrolment Policy](#)<sup>†</sup> which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

<sup>†</sup>Copies of this policy and other policies in this report may be obtained from the Catholic Schools Office website at: <http://www.cso.brokenbay.catholic.edu.au/resources/index.html> or by contacting the Catholic Schools Office.

### 2.3 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report details the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

- have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications
- do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:
  - to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
  - as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

a	b	c	Total
19	0	1	20

### 2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2010 was 94%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2009 to 2010 was 100%.

### 2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

In their end of year survey, teachers expressed satisfaction with:

- the annual Creative Arts Festival which has become a tradition at Our Lady of Dolours
- the ongoing implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning program
- the purchase and organisation of new Maths resources



- the professional learning input on dealing with cyber bullying issues
- the ESL model of working in classrooms alongside the classroom teachers

## 2.6 Student Attendance

YEAR	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	96
1	93
2	96
3	98
4	96
5	94
6	96

The average student attendance rate for the whole school for 2010 was 96%.

**Management of non-attendance:** In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the Principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the school's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.



The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system's School Review and Development processes.

## **2.7 Student Satisfaction**

Student surveys reflect a happy student population. Positive comments included particular references to the Creative Arts Festival, the sports carnivals and the diocesan gala days, many friendships and the school choir. The senior students noted the excursion to Canberra, the special Year Six t-shirts, the cluster public speaking competition and the leadership opportunities.



### **3. Catholic Life and Mission**

#### **3.1 Catholic Heritage**

Our Lady of Dolours Parish School was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1896 on the present site. The sisters travelled from Pymble each day to teach the children in a building which served the parish as a school during the week and a church at weekends.

In 1966 there were 870 students enrolled at Our Lady of Dolours Primary School. Most of these students came from European, Irish, English and Middle Eastern origins. Mass was said in Polish, Italian, Croatian and English.

In 2010, 284 students were enrolled in our school. Although the majority of these children were born in Australia, many of them have a non-English speaking background, with families coming from a wide variety of Asian and European countries.

The life of the school is based on its Vision Statement which states: "We are committed to Catholic discipleship" and "We celebrate our diverse community".

#### **3.2 Religious Life of the School**

- Beginning of Year Mass was held in which student leaders were commissioned
- Kindergarten Blessing Mass was celebrated within the parish Mass on the first Sunday in February
- Mothers' Day Mass was celebrated, followed by morning tea
- Fathers' Day Mass was celebrated after a Fathers' Day breakfast
- Staff meetings began with a short prayer
- Staff gathered fortnightly before school begins for prayer prepared by staff members
- Whole school Masses were held for Ash Wednesday, Easter, Feast of Our Lady of Dolours and End of Year Thanksgiving
- Year Six Graduation was celebrated along with the End of Year Mass
- All classes attended a weekday parish Mass. They were welcomed by the parish priest who addressed his homily at their level of understanding.
- Parents and parishioners were included in school liturgies
- Staff proclaim the Word at weekday Masses
- Liturgies to celebrate other times of the Church calendar were celebrated both in the church and on the school grounds
- A special liturgy for the canonisation of Saint Mary of the Cross was held in October. Children received prayer cards and a medal to commemorate the occasion.
- A sister from the order of Saint Joseph was a guest speaker for all primary grades
- Reconciliation was celebrated once per term for all primary grades
- We farewelled Father Janusz and Deacon Anthony who returned to the Michaelite order in Ryde
- We welcomed Father Paul Finucane, Father Jaison Kuzhiyil and Father Mathew Kurumparath to the parish
- Welcome morning tea held for the new priests
- Priests regularly invited to staff social functions
- Priests visited the classrooms when requested



- Families from the school participated in the parish Centenary Mass
- All primary grades attended a Centenary Mass for the dedication of the parish
- The Religious Education Coordinator was involved with the Parish Sacramental teams for the sacraments received by the students this year
- Teachers and the Religious Education Coordinator shared resources with the Parish Sacramental team
- Parish Sacramental programs supported by classroom Religious Education programs
- Staff attendance of sacramental ceremonies as support
- Students attended the Year Six Cluster Mass
- Staff attended the diocesan Beginning of the Year Mass at the cathedral
- The school entrance foyer has a religious display
- All classrooms have sacred spaces where children and teachers gather for daily prayer
- Holy week liturgy and Christmas liturgical celebration were led by a renowned singer/songwriter
- Kindergarten sang Christmas carols at K-mart in Chatswood Chase
- Remembrance Day was commemorated in the rotunda area with a parent representative from the Australian Armed Force and a student from Mercy College who played the trumpet
- ANZAC day was commemorated with a liturgy near the school's flag pole
- Staff Spirituality day was held at Namaroo Convention Centre led by Susan Rudd and Kerrie Parry, focussing on meditation techniques for adults and children
- The Religious Education Coordinator has been actively establishing links with the Sisters of Mercy order at North Sydney

### 3.3 Catholic Worldview

- Project Compassion money was donated to Caritas at Easter
- Soft toys were collected and sent to the Society of St Vincent de Paul as part of their drive for soft toys for Sri Lanka
- The new resource for Personal Development & Health developed in collaboration with other dioceses to include the Towards Wholeness document was presented to staff and will be implemented in 2011
- The Social Justice Coordinator organised three fund raising activities for the collaborative initiative of the Broken Bay Schools Office and the Parramatta Education Office to build and resource a teacher library in East Timor
- An awareness raising presentation from an East Timorese music group was held in the school hall

### 3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a policy on the [Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

- Three staff members participated in the diocesan Ministry for Teachers
- Two staff members are continuing post-grad study in Religious Education/Theology



- Staff worked with the Education Officer of Mission Services from the Catholic Schools Office on units of work, perspectives and scope and sequence
- Religious Education Coordinator (REC) attended cluster meetings and REC days





## 4. Pastoral Care

### 4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Student Discipline](#) Policies which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

### 4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

- All members of the school community have the responsibility to foster high quality interpersonal relationships
- Teachers have a significant role to play in modelling the importance of building and maintaining relationships
- School curriculum is differentiated to best meet the individual needs of all students
- Learning Support teacher and LBOTE teachers work closely with classroom teachers in providing high quality support and assistance to children with special needs
- Positive Behaviour for Learning is implemented across the school led by a team of teachers. School rules are clearly displayed around the school and in all classrooms. Lessons are programmed to support the understanding and implementation of the rules. Data is collected and analysed by the team.
- Senior primary students buddy with students from Kindergarten
- PDH program provided in all grades addresses areas such as relationships, child protection, grief and loss, sexuality, self esteem, and values education
- Continued focus on physical activity
- Counsellor available to all students and their families
- ACCESS counselling available to all staff members
- Welcome and End of Year barbeque organised by P & F

### 4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

- The P & F Class Parent network actively supported families in crisis and long term need
- School Counsellor was available to work with families
- We have close links with St Vincent de Paul, which provided funding for uniforms, camps, excursions, family breaks, food hampers and Christmas gifts to families in need
- As a school community we pray for those in need or who are sick in the community
- The P & F provide financial support for families as needed
- Fee relief was available to all families in genuine financial hardship
- The Principal placed high importance on knowing everyone within the school community and was always available to meet with parents to discuss any issue

### 4.4 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a [Complaints Handling Policy](#) which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.



#### **4.5 Occupational Health and Safety**

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for OHS and complies with the Australian Standard for OHS Management Systems. The OHSMS adopted by the CSO for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a 'safe and supportive' environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant CSO personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with OHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual OHS Plan. External OHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.



## 5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

### 5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

- Highlights of 2010:
- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) continued to be successfully implemented
- NAPLAN data analysis completed
- K-6 Asian studies in term two, culminating in "Walkthrough Asia Day"
- Numeracy policy and plan developed, based on the diocesan Numeracy Statement
- Professional learning - Clinical interviews as an assessment tool in Mathematics
- Purchase, organisation and distribution of new mathematics equipment
- Observation Survey data analysed at the end of Term 1 and Term 4.
- One teacher completed Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) course
- Community Circles led by Year Six students build leadership qualities
- Excursions and incursions are an integral part of the curriculum for all students
- Public speaking competitions held in term two
- Author visit during Book Week
- Premier's Reading Challenge
- Liturgies led by renowned religious singer/songwriter
- Social Justice fund raising activities to support the building of a teacher library in East Timor

### 5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 3 and 5 sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3**, students placed in Band 1 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are performing at a standard deemed to be above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 and 6 are "at proficiency".
- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are performing above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 7 and 8 are "at proficiency".
- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions.
- State data for band distributions is sourced from the School Measurement and Reporting Toolkit (SMART), developed by NSW Department of Education and Training. All national data and state figures for the percentage at or above national minimum are sourced from the NAPLAN summary report published by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). All school data is sourced from SMART.



- In the 2010 cohort, there were 48 students in Year 3 and 36 students in Year 5.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are shown separately for Years 3 and 5. Additional information can also be accessed from the *My School* website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>).

### Band Distributions (%) – Year 3

		Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6 (+)	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	State	4	10	15	24	20	28	95
	National	4	10	17	23	22	22	94
	School	2	2	2	15	21	58	98
<b>Writing</b>	State	2	4	11	27	31	25	97
	National	2	5	13	30	30	17	96
	School	0	0	2	13	33	52	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	4	9	18	24	25	21	94
	National	7	10	18	24	22	16	91
	School	0	0	13	13	21	54	100
<b>Gr. &amp; Punct.</b>	State	6	9	13	19	25	29	94
	National	6	9	15	21	22	25	92
	School	0	2	6	13	21	58	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	3	12	24	22	23	15	95
	National	4	11	23	28	20	12	94
	School	0	8	8	17	31	35	100

It is noted that Year 3 have improved in the test area of Grammar and Punctuation from the 2009 scores and are above the state average. In all areas Our Lady of Dolours' students achieved results at or above the national minimum standards.

In 2011 the targeted areas for improvement include:

**Literacy:** Cohesion links of text across paragraph; Character analysis; and Persuasive texts

**Numeracy:** Time – interpreting calendar, timetable

### Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	State	7	13	24	22	16	17	93
	National	7	14	23	25	18	10	91
	School	0	14	28	22	28	8	100
<b>Writing</b>	State	4	9	21	38	17	10	95
	National	5	11	27	31	17	7	93
	School	0	3	14	44	25	14	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	5	11	22	27	24	12	94
	National	6	12	24	28	19	8	92
	School	0	11	11	44	22	11	100
<b>Gr. &amp; Punct.</b>	State	6	11	20	18	28	17	94
	National	6	11	20	26	21	14	92
	School	0	3	22	22	31	22	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	4	12	27	25	18	14	95
	National	5	13	26	28	17	9	94
	School	3	17	22	28	11	19	97



In all areas Our Lady of Dolours' students achieved results at or above the national minimum standards. It is noted that a lower percentage of students at our school achieved Band 8 results in Reading when compared to the national figures.

In 2011 the targeted areas for improvement include:

**Literacy:** Reading and inferential comprehension

**Numeracy:** Time; Interpreting compass information; fractions and decimals; angles

### 5.3 Extracurricular Activities

- One of the highlights of the year was the annual Creative Arts Festival which was held at Oxford Falls in term three. The theme was "When I Grow Up". Children in all classes were involved in preparing props, drama scripts, dancing, singing and presenting their item based on the theme. The performance night was well supported by the attendance of over 600 parents, family and friends.
- The school band performed at the Creative Arts Festival and again for the whole school community at the end of the year. They also enjoyed time together at a Band Camp.
- Music opportunities are also offered by an after school drama group and keyboard lessons during lunchtime. Some students took advantage of participating in the Junior and Senior Choir; while others learnt how to play the recorder.
- Sports carnivals (Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country) and diocesan Gala days (Netball, Soccer, Basketball) are a feature of our Sports program

### 5.4 Professional Learning

- All teachers were given the opportunity to work with an external consultant on the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) of Mathematics during the first half of the year. A school Numeracy plan and policy was developed and elements of the plan were implemented.
- The Maths Committee led the staff in the understanding of Diagnostic Interviews as an assessment tool for identifying growth points in the key strands of Maths. Staff members were given opportunity to assess low achieving students in their class and use it to guide differentiation in their Mathematics programs.
- The Language Project was led by a trained Speech pathologist. Through participation in small group sessions, staff members were able to observe the strategies used by the Speech pathologist for teaching children with language difficulties.
- One teacher completed the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) course offered by the Catholic Schools Office (in conjunction with the Australian Catholic University). This brought the total of TESOL trained teachers in the school to a total of 9.
- Two teachers completed the OH&S training days offered by the Catholic Schools office
- All staff members attended Anaphylaxis training and have First Aid and CPR certificates
- Some staff members attended seminars organised by the Australian Literacy Educators Association
- All staff members attended a Spirituality day at Namaroo Convention Centre led by Susan Rudd and Kerrie Parry, focussing on meditation techniques for adults and children
- An external Literacy consultant met with the leadership team to analyse the NAPLAN results and identify the main areas of focus for school improvement



- A staff member attended "Rock and Water" (social skills training), "Science Connections" trainer's course and Cyber Bullying seminars shared information from these seminars at staff meetings
- Members of the leadership team attended a seminar
  - organised by the Catholic Schools Office with guest speaker David Eddy
- Two New Scheme teachers were supervised by an experienced colleague and completed their certificate of Teacher Accreditation
- Three staff members attended a NAPLAN Writing workshop



## **6. Strategic Initiatives**

### **6.1 2010 Priorities and Achievements**

#### **Mathematics**

Staff continued to work with an external consultant to develop pedagogy in mathematics. The Numeracy Policy and Plan was developed in line with the newly developed Diocesan Numeracy Statement. Staff were introduced to the use of the Diagnostic interview as an assessment tool that measures student understanding of core mathematical concepts on a continuum (growth points). This will be part of the assessment strategies and tracking for 2011.

An extensive range of new resources were purchased and organised so that in each classroom there is a basic set of resources. As well, there are organised containers of other mathematics resources to be shared by the school when required.

### **6.2 2011 Priorities and Challenges**

#### **Curriculum**

- Based on analysis of NAPLAN results, develop strategies for school improvement in Literacy and Numeracy K-6. Focus on developing Reading Comprehension skills.
- Follow development of the national curriculum in preparation for its implementation
- Develop Assessment Policy and Plan
- Develop Literacy Policy and Plan
- Implement "Connecting Science" Program

#### **Building the Education Revolution**

- Resource the new facilities developed through the Federal Government funding



## **7. Parent Participation**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The parent community was very active during the school year. The P & F have a social, pastoral and fundraising focus in all their activities.

During the year parents participated in:

- Beginning and End-of-Year barbecues
- Trivia Night
- Special lunch days which are held regularly

The class parents provided support for teachers and other parents as needed.

Parents were involved in assisting with sports carnivals and excursions.

Parents coordinated Our Lady of Dolours Netball and Soccer teams which participated in local competitions on Saturdays.

Parents were also involved in classroom program support, particularly with Literacy, Art and Asian Studies programs.

Together with the school, parents supported the Sacramental programs through their attendance at information nights and accompanying their children to the group sessions.

Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day Masses included parent involvement.

### **7.2 Parent Satisfaction**

Parents of children at Our Lady of Dolours have expressed great satisfaction with:

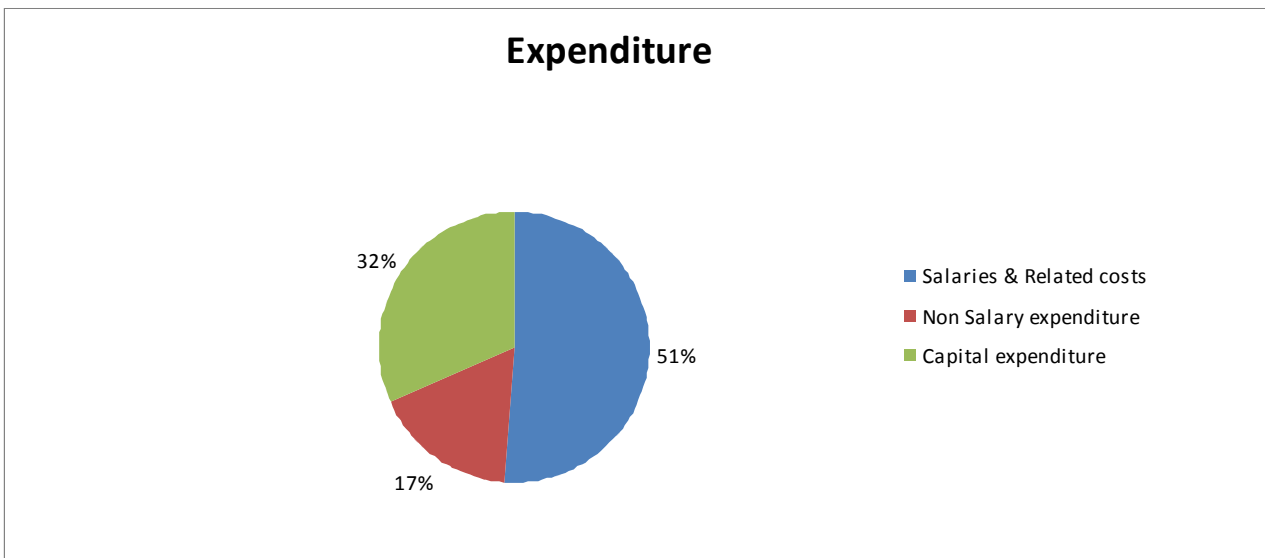
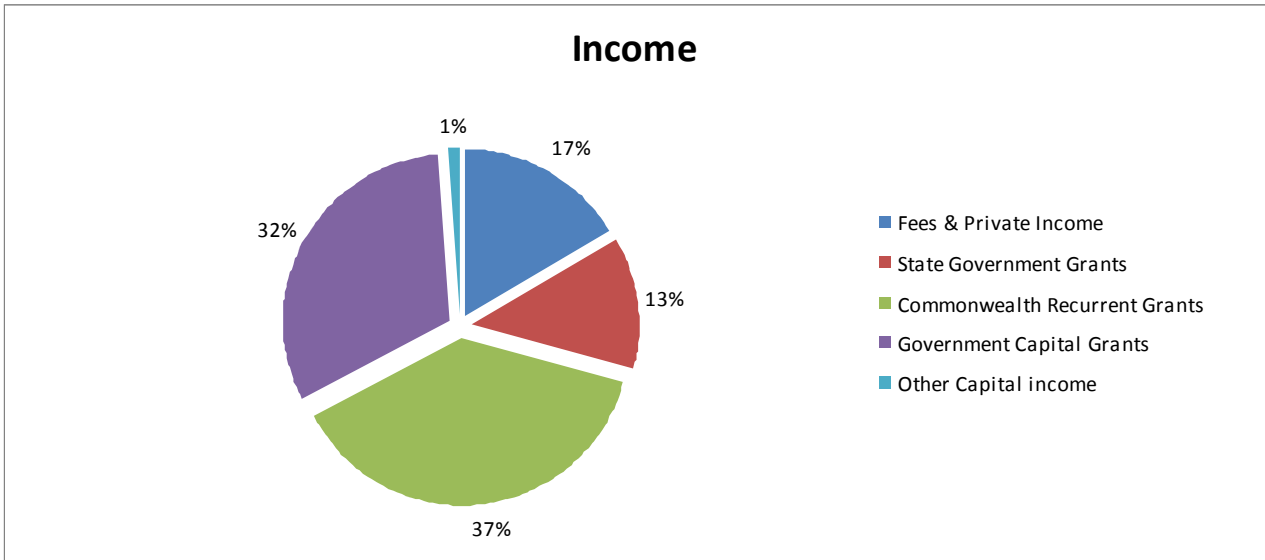
- The quality of the teaching and administration staff
- The approachability of all teachers and the Principal
- Small class sizes
- The care taken with the pastoral needs of children and families
- The quality of the Learning Support, New Arrivals and ESL programs
- The music and drama program within the school
- The "Walk Through Asia Day" in Term Two and the annual "Creative Arts Festival" in Term Three
- The Public Speaking Competition held in Term 2
- The role of the Principal - as expressed during the Contract Renewal process





## 8. Financial Report

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below. More detailed financial data is available on the "myschool" website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au>. Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report at <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/resources/annrep.html>



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School's consultant, Diann Hynes.