

St Leo's Catholic College Wahroonga

2011 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

At St Leo's Catholic College we strive to provide an excellent academic education in the Catholic tradition. In 2011 the education at St Leo's has informed, challenged, encouraged and engaged our students to promote our College values of Integrity, Hope, Dignity, Respect and Justice in all aspects of school life. In 2011 this was validated by our very pleasing and successful College Review conducted at the start of Term III.

This has formed a solid basis for our Strategic Plan in the coming three years.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

The St Leo's Parent Network initiative was run on a trial basis for 2011. The Network held a Principal's Update meeting each term in which the Principal and other key staff joined in conversation with parents about current initiatives and issues for the College. The meetings attracted between 50 and 70 parents.

Other significant achievements in the year were the St Leo's Dinner, held at the Hornsby RSL Ballroom, extension of the Multi-Lit Reading program, educational workshops, and a parent meditation and spirituality evening. St Leo's involvement in the Hornsby Soup Van project (The Dish), which supports local homeless people, was a major highlight with very strong support from the parent community.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

St Leo's Catholic College is comprised of a diverse, dynamic and willing student body who express their ideas through the elected student leadership team, who are conscious at every level, of their role to see that the thoughts of their peers are heard, and subsequently brought to fruition.

The students are active members within the community and contribute by providing feedback on mechanisms in place to improve the quality of learning at their school. Not only do students seek to facilitate academic advancement, but also the social well being of every member of the College. Such examples include the Peer Support and Peer Mentor programs, run by students that provide an informal atmosphere for struggling peers to voice their concerns.

Student contribution is a defining aspect of the College and the continuing tradition of St Leo's Day, an exciting and commemorative carnival-like event organised by students, emphasises the strong sense of community spirit within St Leo's. Furthermore, the ardent desire exuded by students to contribute to the wider community has been manifested through stationery donations to Queensland flood victims, trips to establish links with underprivileged Aboriginal communities in NSW and participation in mass fundraising for St Vincent de Paul's Winter Appeal. Such fundraisers were generated by the students through various avenues to ensure that every individual's initiatives are considered and executed collectively by the College.



2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2011:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
372	577	123	3	949

*Language background other than English

2.2 Enrolment Policy

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

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

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

2.3 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report detail 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
78	2	0	80

Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school's profile page on the *My School* website.

2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2011 was 96%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 96%.

2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

The high staff retention rate demonstrates the satisfaction staff experience working at St Leo's. Staff are committed to professional learning and they generously support activities and programs such as camps, retreats and Vinnie's Night Patrol and they enjoy an active social club.



Communication is open and honest and consultation is employed when changes are considered. Feedback and dialogue are encouraged to address individual and holistic concerns and evaluations of all major events are carried out.

Staff achievements are acknowledged and celebrated.

2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Year	Average student attendance rate (%)
7	95
8	93
9	95
10	91
11	94
12	94

The average student attendance rate for 2011 was 94%.

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2009, 87% completed Year 12 in 2011.

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 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

Peer Relationship Surveys are conducted on a regular basis to ensure a safe and supportive school environment and a positive learning culture. Positive relationships are fostered, diversity is celebrated and the values of dignity, respect, justice, integrity and hope are held dear.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their decisions and when ineffective choices are made they are led through a process of self-evaluation. There is a clearly published Student Appeals Process in the diary. There is a Student Representative Council with representatives from each year group.

Students demonstrate their satisfaction with the College through their participation in extra curricular activities: Peer Support, Debating, Representative Sport and social justice activities.

2.8 Senior Secondary Outcomes

The percentage of students in Year 12 attaining a Year 12 Certificate or equivalent VET qualification in 2011 was 99.3%.

The percentage of students in Year 12 undertaking vocational or trade training was 40%.

2.9 Student Destinations

Students at St Leo's Catholic College can choose an academic or non-academic pathway for study for the Higher School Certificate. The College offers two clearly defined patterns of study. An ATAR pathway ensures students qualify for the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) leading students to further study at University while a non-ATAR pathway directs students to seek an apprenticeship, further study at TAFE or full-time employment. Of the students who completed their HSC in 2011, 4% are still looking for work or taking a "GAP" year. Approximately 61% of the candidature was offered places over a range of courses at Universities in NSW. The majority, 28%, gained entrance to Macquarie University, closely followed by University of Technology Sydney, 17% and Australian Catholic University, 12%. Other Universities that accepted several St Leo's Catholic College students include University of Western Sydney-10%, University of New South Wales-10%, Sydney University-10%, Notre Dame Sydney-6%, as well as Charles Sturt University – Bathurst, University of Canberra and the University of Newcastle. A number of students also applied for positions at private Colleges. Approximately 35% obtained apprenticeships, continued study at TAFE, or entered employment.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Leo the Great forms a significant focus for the College. Parents and students are introduced to the historical person and the religious identity. Our College prayer clearly identifies our College values and core belief statements of our Catholic Faith. This College Prayer was included in most liturgical activities.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

Religious Education is the life force of the College's curriculum and underpins everything we do at the College. Central to our mission as a Catholic school are our Catholic values and these are explicitly taught through all teaching programs at the College.

Regular opportunities were offered for students and staff to participate in prayer and liturgical celebration. Mass was celebrated both as a whole College, in whole Year group gatherings at Camps or Retreats and in twice weekly masses. The Graduation Mass for Year 12 and End of Year Mass for Year 10 were highlights of our liturgical year. The special celebrations of Mothers' and Fathers' Days were well attended.

Student leaders led prayer at Whole School and Year assemblies and initiated weekly gatherings for Rosary and Bible readings.

The students were also involved in Back to Parish Liturgy where students had the opportunity to go back to their parish communities. Priests from our neighbouring parishes generously share time with the College during our Retreats and Masses. Students supported nursing home visits, Street Retreats and Eucharistic ministry initiatives.

3.3 Catholic Worldview

The College demonstrated a strong commitment to social justice. Support for whole College initiatives such as monthly Vinnie's Van, the St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas Appeals. There was generous support of Project Compassion, Mission Australia, and the Year Group Charity initiatives such as Youth off the Streets, Friends Near and Abroad. Specific charitable events for the Queensland Floods were actively supported.

The Outback Pilgrimage enabled students to experience rural communities. Year groups from 7 to 10 were involved in reflection days, with Year 10 supporting the Diocesan Social Justice Day.

3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

Staff in the Religious Education Department are knowledgeable Catholics charged with the task of teaching Religious Education in our school. Support for professional learning opportunities were endorsed. A whole Staff Spirituality Day on the theme of Burning Hearts was supported. A Staff Development Day offered insight about New Evangelisation. The College Leadership spent time with Catholic Schools Office Mission Life team on personal/College spirituality formation. Learning opportunities about ethics, religious traditions and the Religious Education Co-ordinator retreat were supported.

The opportunities afforded by Tier 2 Review enabled all the College stakeholders to be involved in discussions about the Catholic life of the community.

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.



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

Diocesan policies form the basis of College developed policies, for example the Pastoral Care Policy, the Anti-bullying, Anti-Harassment and Staff Wellbeing policies.

The College has in place sound systems and structures that build resilience and a healthy school community. The National Safe Schools Framework and the application of the National Safe Schools Framework audit Tool ensures a safe, secure and supportive environment where diversity is celebrated and each individual is valued for his or her differences, similarities, gifts and talents.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

St Leo's openly acknowledges the families and caregivers of its students as the primary caregivers and prides itself on honest and open communication. Parents and caregivers can communicate with the College through: The Student Diary, email, phone calls and personal interviews. Parents and caregivers have access to all staff, in particular members of the Pastoral Support team – the Director of Pastoral Care, the College Counsellor, the Youth Minister and the Year Co-ordinators. There is also referral to outside agencies when appropriate. There is a Parent Network group whose activities are published in each edition of the Pride and the College holds Parent Education Evenings, for example 'Taming Technology'.

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 Catholic Schools Office 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 Catholic Schools Office 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

During 2011 the College underwent an external audit by a panel consisting of Catholic Schools Office staff, teaching and executive staff from other secondary schools, and senior representatives from other Diocesan systems. All compliance areas were exceeded, and the panel found that the rich diversity of curriculum offerings, the dynamic responsiveness of the College to student learning needs and the focused application of educational research to pedagogy accounted for the excellent teaching and learning at the College.

5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 7 and 9 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 7**, students placed in Band 4 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 5 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 6-9 are performing at a standard deemed above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 8 and 9 are "at proficiency".
- **In Year 9**, students in Band 5 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 6 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 7-10 are performing above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 9 and 10 are "at proficiency".
- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area.
- State data for band distributions is sourced from the School Measurement and Reporting Toolkit (SMART2), 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 preliminary summary report published by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). All school data is sourced from SMART2. Because figures are rounded and exempted students are not included in Band distributions, percentages may not add up to 100.
- In the 2011 cohort, there were 171 students in Year 7 and 166 students in Year 9.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables where band distributions and percentages of students achieving the national minimum standard are outlined separately for Years 7 and 9.



Band Distributions (%) – Year 7

		Band 4 (-)	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8	Band 9 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	State	3.5	16.0	25.8	23.7	19.9	11.2	94.9
	National	3.8	14.7	25.6	27.3	18.7	8.4	94.7
	School	0.0	2.4	18.6	28.1	38.9	12.0	100
Writing	State	6.6	18.9	26.7	23.1	16.4	8.3	91.7
	National	7.7	14.9	27.4	25.4	14.8	8.3	90.7
	School	0.6	7.8	22.3	30.7	28.3	10.2	99
Spelling	State	5.3	11.0	21.9	28.5	21.2	12.1	93.9
	National	6.0	12.9	24.5	29.1	18.3	7.7	92.5
	School	0.6	3.0	21.7	34.9	28.3	11.4	99
Gr. & Punct.	State	7.1	12.8	29.1	21.4	19.6	10.0	93.3
	National	5.8	15.0	26.8	27.3	16.7	6.9	92.7
	School	1.2	2.4	19.3	27.7	31.3	18.1	99
Numeracy	State	4.0	15.8	24.1	24.8	15.5	15.7	94.4
	National	4.0	14.1	25.6	25.8	16.8	12.0	94.4
	School	0.0	4.2	16.3	34.3	28.3	16.9	100

Band Distributions (%) – Year 9

		Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8	Band 9	Band 10	% at or above national minimum
Reading	State	6.3	18.1	25.4	25.3	15.8	9.2	92.9
	National	6.1	17.2	27.4	27.0	15.5	5.3	92.4
	School	0.6	9.8	25.6	26.2	29.3	8.5	99
Writing	State	16.0	18.5	20.8	22.7	12.0	9.9	84.6
	National	13.9	18.5	23.2	20.5	13.4	8.9	84.6
	School	4.8	15.7	21.1	30.1	13.9	14.5	95
Spelling	State	6.5	13.0	24.3	28.5	19.9	7.9	91.8
	National	8.0	14.9	25.5	27.1	16.1	6.9	90.5
	School	2.4	7.8	24.7	36.1	23.5	5.4	98
Gr. & Punct.	State	10.0	14.6	25.3	31.6	12.6	5.9	90.3
	National	8.5	17.7	27.9	25.8	13.7	4.9	90.0
	School	1.8	5.4	31.9	41.6	12.7	6.6	98
Numeracy	State	5.1	18.9	25.6	21.8	15.9	12.7	93.2
	National	5.4	18.4	27.5	23.8	14.6	8.9	93.1
	School	1.2	8.5	31.1	29.3	19.5	10.4	99

The College has systematically improved its NAPLAN results over the last four years. In all areas tested student results were at least similar to, but in many cases exceeded, those of students in similar schools. This improvement has been achieved through the directed Literacy Programme that meets each student at their point of need. In particular, the contribution of parent volunteers to the one-on-one teaching of students with lower Reading and Writing levels, impacted positively on these students' achievements.



School Certificate

Students in Year 10 sat for the School Certificate examination in November. The table provided shows the mean of the 2011 school cohort in comparison with State and school results from previous years.

School Certificate means, 2007-11

		English Literacy	Maths	Science	Civics, Citizenship & Australian History	Civics, Citizenship & Australian Geography	Computing Skills Test
2011	School	79.82	74.03	79.46	75.70	75.03	82.93
	State	77.34	70.88	75.44	72.42	72.15	79.20
2010	School	79.19	74.76	80.21	72.35	74.37	81.13
	State	76.87	72.10	76.67	70.16	72.38	79.44
2009	School	79.47	72.19	78.03	76.86	75.84	82.60
	State	77.43	70.61	75.00	71.56	72.36	81.67
2008	School	78.62	72.81	77.09	73.08	76.91	84.11
	State	76.63	70.67	73.61	70.58	73.52	80.71
2007	School	78.37	72.19	78.67	75.20	77.87	81.78
	State	74.76	69.38	73.48	72.14	74.60	80.28

School Certificate

The College was pleased that in English, 95.64% of students achieved Band 4 or above, as did 59% in Mathematics, 88.81% in Science, 79.87% in Australian History and 78.61% in Australian Geography.

Higher School Certificate

In 2011 143 students sat for examinations in 31 subjects. Of these, students achieved above the State mean in 21 subjects and in most subjects an upward trend was noted. The College Dux achieved an ATAR of 99.65, and at least 14% of students achieved an ATAR of 90 or above. There were 82 Band 6 achievements across 25 subjects, and in 76% of subjects students achieved Bands 4, 5 and 6 results. The artwork of three students was nominated for Art Express, and two were finally selected for exhibition. One student achieved 8th place in the State in Information Technology.

5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

At St Leo's we believe that each individual is blessed with God given gifts that should be nurtured and shared for the benefit of the whole community. We are committed to offering each of our young people this opportunity in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Opportunities exist for students to compete in a range of representative sports, performing and creative arts. Students can participate in drama productions and music groups including symphonic, concert and stage bands, the Bel Canto choir and individual tuition in music is also available, as well as an Internationally recognized Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

All students are encouraged to reflect on their talents and become involved in as many activities as possible with the hope of not only developing the whole person but also enhancing College life.



5.4 Professional Learning

The key focus for professional learning in 2011 for all staff was 'Knowing my Students'. Using a comprehensive database of student academic and pastoral data, staff began the year by developing detailed profiles of each student in their classes. Each teacher engaged in action research, developing a case study in which they further developed their class profiles using ongoing observational data and assessment results to gear their pedagogy to meet the specific learning needs of their students. Simultaneously, fourteen staff members worked with the University of Newcastle to develop their understanding of the Quality Teaching Framework so that they could enhance the quality of their own teaching and share their understanding with colleagues. Three New Scheme Teachers achieved accreditation, ICLT professional learning was provided on a responsive needs basis and teachers across all Faculties attended a variety of subject-specific in-servicing provided by external professional organisations. Additionally, one staff member completed a Graduate Diploma in Choice Theory, enabling the College to provide Choice Theory training in-house.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2011 Priorities and Achievements

In preparing for the College Review, staff, parents and students reviewed the priorities that were listed in the 2010 Report.

The Professional Development of staff in "Knowing My Students" program was launched and is under way every second Wednesday afternoon. The aim of this program is to improve our student outcomes.

The Parent College Network was formed in order to strengthen the relationships between the partners in the life-long learning of our students.

The planning for the 2012 -2014 College Strategic Plan was based on the evidence gathered by the surveys, the College Review and consultation with staff and the College Board. This will be launched at the start of 2012.

The achievements are best summed up in an excerpt from the College Review Report -

"...At St Leo's one sees students, parents and staff interacting with respect for one another, engaging in meaningful dialogue, giving their best, confident to be themselves, able to be an individual in their own right with respect to culture, colour, faith, socio-economic background, abilities, age and individual differences.

The College aims for the members of the school community to know they are valued, respected and respectful, able to achieve their full potential in the College and the wider world..."

6.2 2012 Priorities and Challenges

There are three main goals as we continue on our journey towards an excellent Catholic school.

1) Catholic Life and Mission –

We seek for the College community to better understand what it means to be 'Catholic'.

2) Learning and Teaching / Student Well Being –

We seek for improvement in student outcomes.

All staff to use feedback and data to self-evaluate and adapt classroom practice to student needs.

If this occurs we would expect to see:

- all students increase their responsibility for their own learning; and
- substantial parent involvement in the College through the parent network and initiatives such as the Literacy Group.

3) Building a Better Environment –

We seek to ensure that a viable Master Plan is in place and is supported by all stakeholders.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

The St Leo's Catholic College Board has a strong parent representation and has provided sound and wise input on significant areas of College management; for example the 2011 Tier 2 College Review and the Strategic Plan. The Board was also largely responsible for the establishment of the 40 kilometre School Zone on the Pacific Highway adjacent to Waitara Station.

The Parent Network continued to expand in 2011 and provide Literacy Support, co-ordination of social events, hospitality support for College events, the manning of the St John's Wahroonga Soup Van and Parent Evenings.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Parent Satisfaction was overwhelmingly endorsed by the feedback received by the 2011 Tier 2 Review Panel.

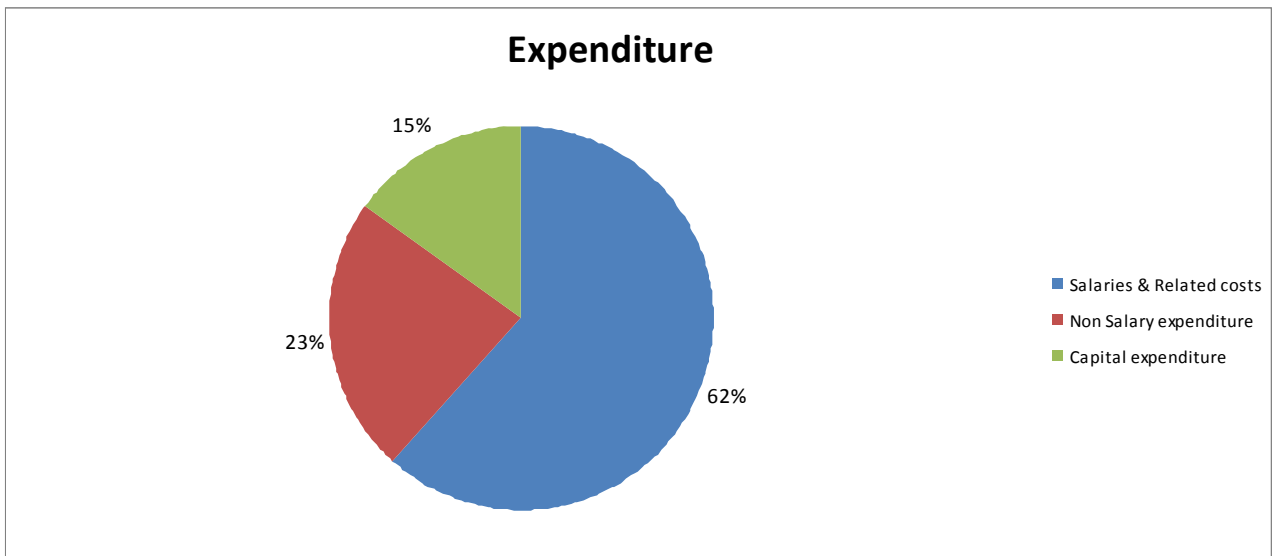
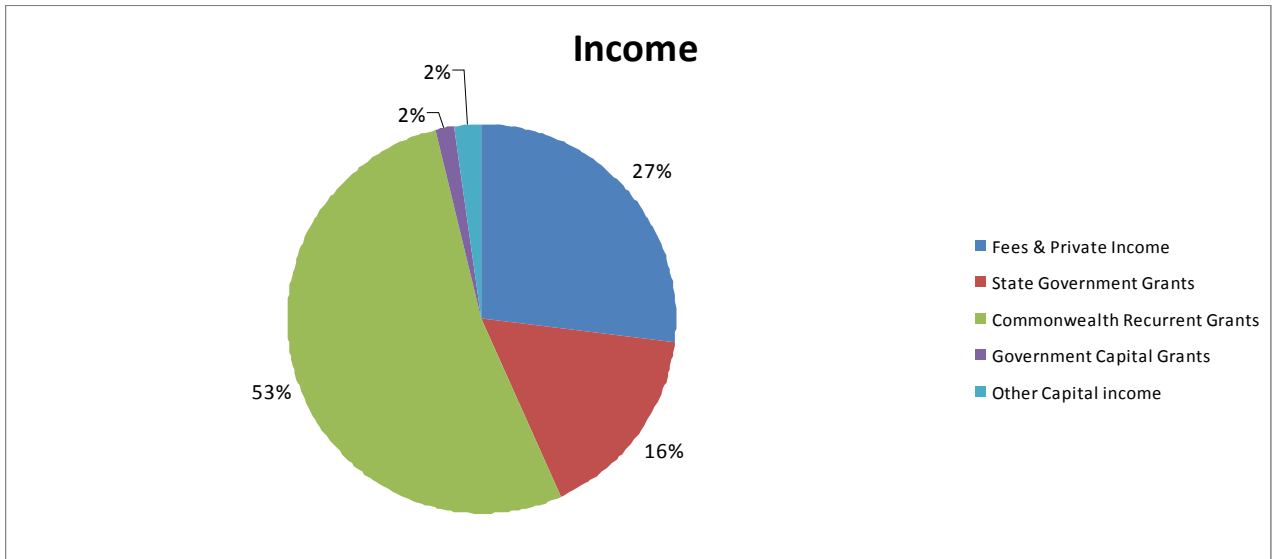
Parents were invited to be part of interviews that covered the three domains of Catholic Mission, Pastoral Care and Learning & Teaching. Their input reflected their positive connectedness to the College and a sense of being listened to and valued.

Strong positive relationships between all members of the College community – students, staff, parents and caregivers were evident to the Review Panel.



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, Ray Werren.