



St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School Balgowlah

2010 Annual Report



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1. Message from Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

The highlight of 2010 was the Blessing and Opening of our new school buildings by the Vicar General of the Diocese of Broken Bay which occurred on 18 June 2010. The official party also included the Parish Priest of the Catholic Community of North Harbour, the Director of Schools of the Broken Bay Diocese and St Cecilia's School Principal. The acknowledgement of the original land owners was by the Catholic Schools Office Aboriginal Education Officer. The Vicar General's opening prayer follows.

"Today we ask God's blessing on St Cecilia's Catholic Primary school, this centre of seeking, learning and teaching what is true. We ask that those entrusted with the education of young people may teach their students how to join the discoveries of human wisdom with the truth of the Gospel. We ask that the students will find in their teachers the image of Christ, so that, enriched by their learning, they will be able and willing to enlighten and assist others as Disciples of Jesus."

The formation of the inaugural St Cecilia's School Board and the leadership shown by our Pastor, teachers and from our Parent and Friends committees has been energizing throughout 2010. Together we have sought the best possible outcomes for our students through open communication and by developing positive relationships.

There have been many opportunities for our students to learn, grow and excel both within the classroom and out of the formal classroom. There were many events where we came together, parents, students and teachers to celebrate our learning and community whilst embracing the core values of Respect, Service, Justice, Hope and Celebration. Values based on the life of Jesus Christ.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

In 2010 the P & F Executive Team published their roles/responsibilities and a brief role description of our many P & F Sub-Committees. This reminded us that our role is one of welcome. Our aim is to involve and support all in a friendly and faith filled community and to provide opportunities for parental perspectives and voices, as well as raising funds for our children's learning environment. With this in mind, we can look back at our events and achievements of 2010 with pride.

We commemorated our new look school with a very special Opening and Blessing Ceremony. The P&F commissioned and donated a beautiful sandstone statue of St Cecilia to celebrate this occasion.

Some of our P&F Committees started the year by setting up in new surroundings; the Crunch Cafe and the Uniform Shop. Some of our Committees initiated new members into roles such as the Yearbook and Uniform Committee.

Looking back on 2010 we started as we always do, in many social ways, Tea and Tissues for our new families and then our Welcoming Cocktail Party. We as a community this year embraced the word change! For our Golf Day and Dinner we had a K-6 Committee approach, we assisted with the purchase of our new representative gala jerseys which were worn proudly on the sporting fields and we catered for our first Italian day in style.

We as parents and friends supported and enjoyed our times of prayer at Liturgies, Masses and Sacramental Programs, our many school sporting and gala days, our family times on Father's Friday and Mother's Monday, not to mention our colourful and creative costume efforts for our Book Week parade.

In short, another action packed year for the parents and friends of St Cecilia's, but most importantly, an illustration of the crucially strong synergy between two of the most influential sets of people in our children's lives, parents and teachers.



1.3 Message from the Student Body

As the Year 6 student leaders at St Cecilia's the highlight for our year was to be a buddy to the kindergarten children and to go to camp at Challenge Ranch. We also enjoyed being a part of the Student Representative Council (SRC) and Social Justice (SJ) groups who decided on fun activities to raise money for people in need. The whole school loved dressing up for Book Week as book characters, also wearing happy hats for the people of Haiti and grooving/dancing for the children in the orphanage in Varin, Cambodia. We also all had turns in doing Meals on Wheels with the local community group. All Year 6 children are leaders at St Cecilia's and 2010 was a great last year being a leader to all the other children.



2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2010:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
111	46	2	0	157

*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.csodbb.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
12	0	0	12

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 2010 was 96%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

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

2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

A survey by RADII completed by 14 staff members in 2010 advised that in the area of

Catholic Practices, Philosophy and Faith

- 100% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides a place where faith is nurtured



Pastoral Care and Community

- 100% of teachers strongly agreed the Catholic school is student centred, safe and supportive

Pedagogy

- 100% of teachers strongly agreed that the school has effective teaching and learning in literacy to improve student achievement data.

2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Year	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	93
1	94
2	97
3	98
4	94
5	91
6	87

The average student attendance rate for 2010 was 94%.

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

A survey by RADII completed by 17 upper primary students advised that in the area of

My Connection with God and the Church

- 88% strongly agree or agree that "I learn a lot about God and the Church at school."

Sharing and Caring

- 100% of students strongly agree or agree "Students have Leadership roles at school."
- 6% of students agree "There is bullying at school."

My Learning

- 100% of students strongly agree or agree "I have opportunities at school to learn independently."
- 94% of students strongly agree or agree "My teacher is interested in my learning and how it can be improved."



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Cecilia's Catholic School Balgowlah was founded by the Good Samaritan sisters in 1930. The school commenced with infants classes but now educates children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The recently renovated school hall was previously the parish church and was converted each Monday morning from church to school. Some of the first students who lived in tents on the flats at Clontarf were brought up to the school by the Good Samaritan sisters.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

The students from Kindergarten to Year 6 were involved in many Religious celebrations during the year. These celebrations included the Ceremony of Light Liturgy to begin the school year, Masses to celebrate Ash Wednesday, the Dedication of the Church, Stewardship and Mary Help of Christians. All students attended a parish celebration to celebrate the Feast of St Monica. The students were also involved in a series of Easter reflections prior to their Easter break. These reflections provided prayerful preparation for Easter. The Year 6 students also attended the Year 6 Cluster Mass to recognise their leadership and final year of schooling.

Progress was made towards significantly increasing attendance at Sunday Mass and deeper involvement in the life of the Church with each class being invited specifically to attend the Families Come Gather Masses during the year. The pre schoolers for the Kindergarten class for 2011 were also invited to Mass as a welcome to our Church and school community.

Children involved in the parish sacramental programs were provided with support through our religious education programs and the school worked with the parish to support the children and parents. The school facilitated the Diocesan e-conference program on Mary with parish and school community members attending.

The Bishop of Broken Bay visited our school, as did the Director of Schools, the Assistant Directors of Schools and the Head of Educational Services.

3.3 Catholic Worldview

Children at St Cecilia's had the opportunity to participate in many social justice activities throughout the year. These activities provided support for St Vincent De Paul, The Karuna Foundation and the Women of Peru.

Co curricular activities were planned by the Student Representative Council which were aimed at further evangelising and catechising students and otherwise nourishing their spiritual life. The Student Representative Councillors organised a "Blue Day for Books" and "Groove for Karuna" to raise funds for the Karuna Foundation to purchase resources for the children in Cambodia to assist with their schooling. They also collected jumpers for the St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal and promoted the collection of food for the Christmas Hampers. The Year 6 Social Justice Captains played an integral role in the success of selling handicrafts from Peru to raise funds for the people in Candela. A fundraiser was also planned in direct response to the earthquake in Haiti. The Student Representative Council planned a "Happy Hats for Haiti Day" where money raised was sent to the Haitian people.

Efforts were made during the year to connect with Catholic families and maximise their participation in the school. The school provided material for parents and community members in the newsletter each week which focused on an issue of faith and Parent Prayer was held during Lent. The school community gathered together once a fortnight at Prayer Assemblies. These were led by all classes during the year where maximum involvement by students, parents and staff was encouraged.



A highlight for 2010 was the student's involvement in the Broken Bay Peninsula Schools Mission Project. Mission captains and liturgy leaders met with student leaders from other primary schools in the Diocese to plan a social justice initiative. The students organised a Talent Show to raise funds for The Karuna Foundation.

The Year 6 students participated in a reflection day to prepare them for their graduation and to reflect on their time spent at St Cecilia's.

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.

The staff attended their first overnight retreat together at Kincumber. This provided the staff with an opportunity to reflect prayerfully on their faith and to strengthen their relationships with God and each other.

Support was provided to the teaching staff throughout the year by the CSO Religious Education Consultant for the Peninsula area, who worked with staff members on the continued development and deployment of curriculum and resources to promote high levels of Catholic religious literacy.

The staff participated in the Lenten Reflections e-conference provided by the Australian Bishops and attended seminars presented by speakers from the Broken Bay Institute.

Staff continued to use the Lectio Devina model of prayer as they gathered each Monday to pray together in preparation for the coming week.



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

Student discipline at St Cecilia's takes a "Positive Behaviours for Learning" approach. Corporal punishment in any form is not permitted. Appropriate behaviours are rewarded and inappropriate behaviours result in a "Teach, Practise and Apply" strategy. School rules have been written with regard to the gospel values of Respect, Justice, Service, Hope and Celebration and specific behavioural expectations are discussed with the students daily at assembly.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Our school is energised by a vibrant spirituality of pastoral care.

Pastoral Care is an expression of the ethos of St Cecilia's and our vision statement especially endorsing Gospel values of respect, justice, tolerance, reconciliation and compassion. Pastoral Care at St Cecilia's directs the energies of the curriculum towards the holistic development of each student. Pastoral care is centred around right relationships and is committed to implementing restorative justice processes.

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

St Cecilia's Catholic School is committed to working together to provide quality education for every student in our care. The curriculum is underpinned by the schools core values of respect, hope, justice, service and celebration.

Integration of technology continued to be a focus in 2010. An Apple Distinguished Educator conducted an all day workshop with our senior students and teachers. Other teachers from the Diocese attended this workshop at St Cecilia's.

Challenge Based Learning programs were developed and implemented in the primary classrooms. These programs are inquiry based, they have a strong focus on the use of digital media and an outcome whereby the student takes on a real life challenge to make the world a better place.

Students from K-6 could be seen using many technologies in 2010. Students had opportunities to participate in a video conference with another diocesan school, to set up blogs and to film movies.

Numeracy was a strong focus in 2010. This focus was driven by the Schools 2010 Improvement Plan in numeracy assessment. All teachers participated in professional development sessions on the implementation of a diagnostic tool to assess growth points in Mathematics. Teachers will be better able to meet students individual learning needs in Mathematics.

St Cecilia's actively participated in the Peninsula Catholic Community of Schools initiatives. These included the Maths Challenge program for Stage 3 students, the ZooMatics program for Stage 2 students and debating and public speaking competitions.

All classes attended excursions that enriched the units of work being studied in the classroom. Class excursions included visits to the Botanical Gardens, MacKillop Place, Narrabeen Coastal Environment Centre, Powerhouse Museum, Vaucluse House and Taronga Park Zoo.

Year Five and Six experienced three days of outdoor education at Challenge Ranch in Somersby. Activities involved recreational, adventure and team building experiences.

Students in Years 3-6 participated in interschool soccer, eagle tag and netball gala days. Coaching sessions in tennis, cricket, eagle tag and basketball were held throughout the year.

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 23 students in Year 3 and 13 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
Reading	State	4	10	15	24	20	28	95
	National	4	10	17	23	22	22	94
	School	0	0	0	9	22	70	100
Writing	State	2	4	11	27	31	25	97
	National	2	5	13	30	30	17	96
	School	0	0	0	13	39	48	100
Spelling	State	4	9	18	24	25	21	94
	National	7	10	18	24	22	16	91
	School	0	4	4	17	26	48	100
Gr. & Punct.	State	6	9	13	19	25	29	94
	National	6	9	15	21	22	25	92
	School	0	0	4	13	43	39	100
Numeracy	State	3	12	24	22	23	15	95
	National	4	11	23	28	20	12	94
	School	0	0	0	22	39	39	100

Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	State	7	13	24	22	16	17	93
	National	7	14	23	25	18	10	91
	School	0	0	23	38	8	31	100
Writing	State	4	9	21	38	17	10	95
	National	5	11	27	31	17	7	93
	School	0	0	0	85	15	0	100
Spelling	State	5	11	22	27	24	12	94
	National	6	12	24	28	19	8	92
	School	0	0	15	8	69	8	100
Gr. & Punct.	State	6	11	20	18	28	17	94
	National	6	11	20	26	21	14	92
	School	0	0	15	23	62	0	100
Numeracy	State	4	12	27	25	18	14	95
	National	5	13	26	28	17	9	94
	School	0	0	38	31	31	0	100



Targets at St Cecilia's are for students to be achieving in the top two bands for literacy and numeracy. One needs to be mindful that the results of one student can impact significantly in a small cohort.

Further improvement is needed in numeracy to reach the set targets of the school.

In Reading, Writing and Spelling, in Year 3, in comparison to state and national figures, the percentage of students from St Cecilia's in Band 6, the highest band, was significantly higher.

In Reading in Year 5, in comparison to state and national figures, the percentage of students from St Cecilia's in Band 8 was significantly higher.

It is pleasing to note that 100% of students in Year 3 and Year 5 in all areas assessed achieved at or above the national minimum benchmarks.

All students who attempted the Year 3 Naplan assessments in 2008 showed growth in the year 5 2010 Naplan assessments.

5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

The availability of private music tuition and the opportunity to participate in a band attracted new students in 2010. Instruments studied included flute, saxophone, guitar, clarinet and keyboard.

The choir had the opportunity to compete in the Northern Beaches Eisteddfod and performed at the Marana Music festival, Manly nursing home and Stocklands shopping centre. An African Drum beat production was experienced by students.

The Book Week parade and Italian day celebration were new events on the school calendar and showcased the talents of students.

The senior students competed in both the Diocesan Public Speaking competition and the Peninsula Debating competition.

A number of students represented the school, the Peninsula and the Diocese in the annual inter school swimming, athletic and cross country carnivals.

The Tournament of Minds competition at UTS Lindfield, chess competitions and African Drum Beat production further highlight the variety of experiences available to students at St Cecilia's.

5.4 Professional Learning

Effect size research reports that it is the quality of the teacher that has the most impact on student outcomes (Hattie 2010). Therefore much emphasis is placed on teacher professional development at St Cecilia's. Teachers in 2010 attended Observation Survey Training, a series of workshops and presentations on the latest research on achieving improved outcomes for students, Religious Education planning sessions, Australian Catholic University Conference in Sydney, Interactive Whiteboard twilight sessions, debating training, and Professional Learning Groups.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2010 Priorities and Achievements

The inaugural St Cecilia's School Board was commissioned in November 2010. The Board comprises the Parish Priest, the School Principal, the Assistant Principal and six members of the school and parish community.

Parents were further engaged in the learning agenda of the school with the introduction of Mother's Monday, the continuation of Father's Friday and parents assisting in the classrooms in literacy lessons, creative arts and gross motor programs.

Teachers were engaged in reviewing draft documents of the Australian Curriculum in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

The Principal was part of a team of educators at the CSO who were reviewing the online school report for schools in the Broken Bay Diocese. An interim format for 2010 was completed.

The lowest 20% of students in mathematics in each class were assessed using the "Clinical Interview" process and decisions regarding implementation for 2011 were discussed.

A coach was employed to teach Chess to students at lunchtimes in Term 2 and Term 3. An outdoor chess board was painted on the playground as were many games for hopscotch, handball, and counting and word games.

6.2 2011 Priorities and Challenges

Primary School Review and Development will be a major focus for 2011. Parents, students and staff will be surveyed for achievements and future directions in the areas of Mission, Pastoral Care and Teaching and Learning.

Three School Improvements plans have been written for 2011. They are in the areas of

- New Edition of the Roman Missal-staff and parent faith formation
- Challenge Based Learning-inquiry process using multi media
- Assessment-continuing the implementation of the Clinical Interview process and its place in the cycle of teaching learning and assessment.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

Various opportunities were presented for parents to participate in school life and to be an active member of our school/ parish community. These included Meet the Teacher evening, the P&F Cocktail party, the Yr 5/6 Human Growth and Development evening, Father's Friday, Mother's Monday, the Parent Factor Numeracy, the formation of a School Board, the Golf Day and Dinner, the Triple P Positive parenting series of seminars and the School Disco. Sporting carnivals, Gala days and excursions were all well supported by parents.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Parents expressed high satisfaction for the Out of Hours School Care Service as well as meetings to confirm school traditions for Graduation and Year 6 leadership selection.

A survey by RADII was completed by 43% of families in 2010 and advised that in the area of

Catholic Life and Mission 94% of parents either strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied that the environment in the school allowed for their child's faith to grow.

Pastoral care and Community 96% of parents strongly agreed or agreed that the school community is student centred, safe and supportive, the well being, learning and growth of students are priorities.

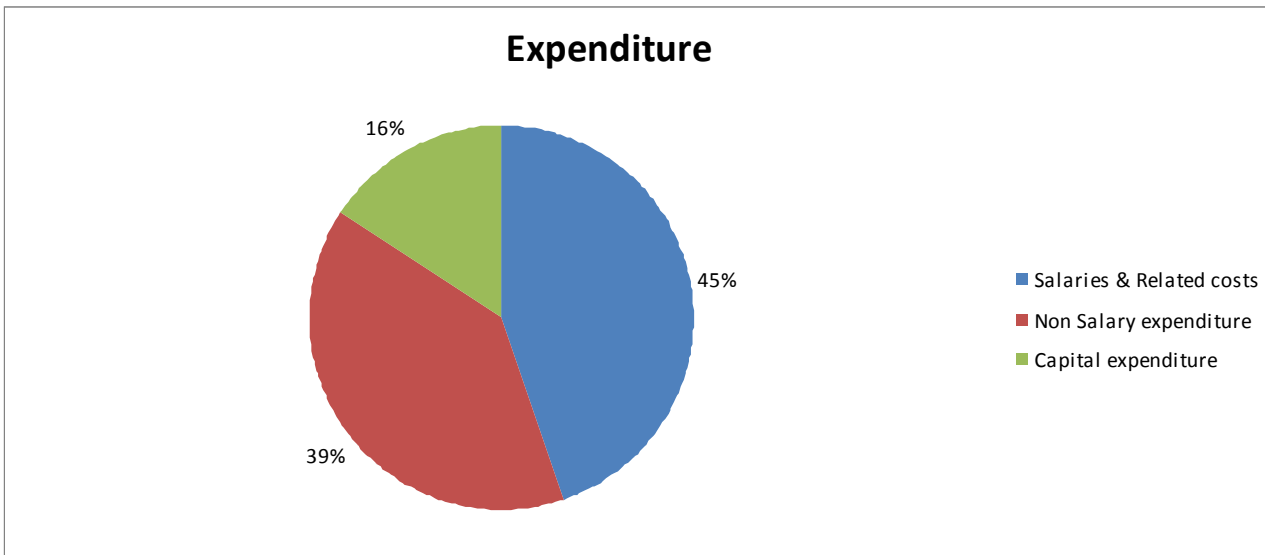
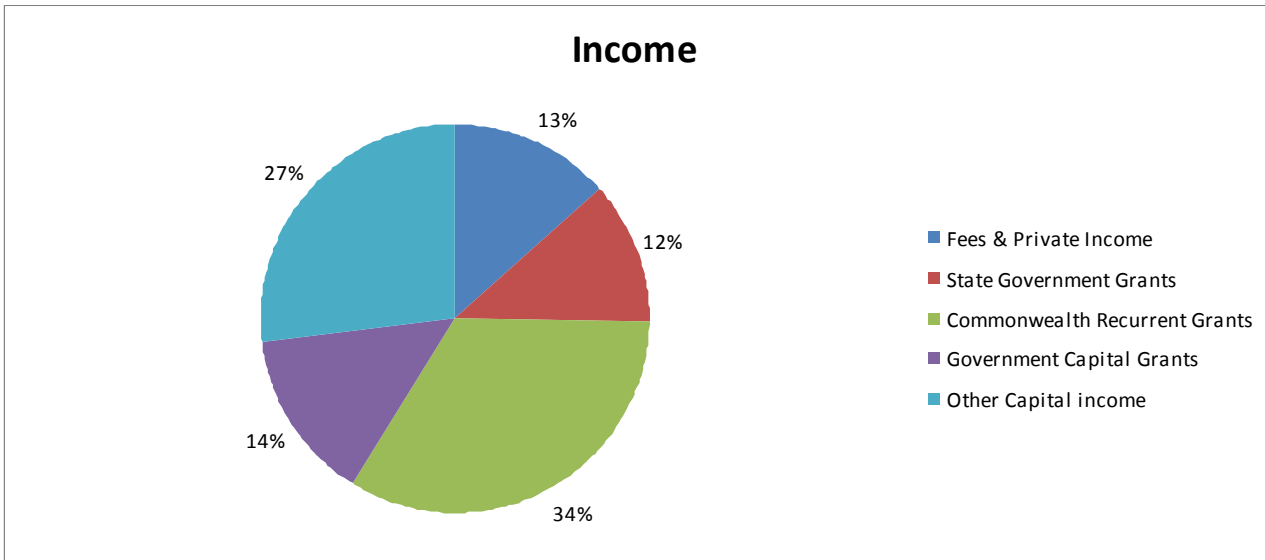
Curriculum teaching and Learning 96% of parents strongly agree or agree teachers in the school engage positively with new technologies and emerging technologies in learning environments.





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, Anne Duncan.