



# St John the Apostle Catholic Primary School Narraweena

## 2013 Annual Report



Principal: Mr Mark Bateman

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## 1. Message from Our School Community

### 1.1 Message from the Principal

This report is a celebration of life at St John the Apostle Catholic Primary School, Narraweena, during 2013. It is an acknowledgement of the combined efforts of many people who so generously contributed their time and energy to building up the Catholic community of St John's and who support us so well as we strive to educate and form our young people in Catholic discipleship.

The report will provide feedback on the goals named in our School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2013 and indicate the direction the school will be heading for next year.

*Principal*

### 1.2 Message from the Parent Body

#### The School Board

The School Board works in partnership with the leadership of the school supporting the achievement of the Annual School Improvement Plan.

We thank all those involved in the work of the Board during 2013.

Early in the year the School Board identified and prioritised goals which were based around the themes of students, faith and community, parents and Catholic education and future planning.

Our achievements for 2013 against these goals included:

- continued organisation and offering of parent prayer and reflection groups every Friday;
- representation on the KidsMatter Team which promoted mental health across the community;
- support for the introduction of the Kids Matter Framework and its launch to the community via the Channel Nine Weather Show;
- provision of support for community consultation about the effectiveness of composite classes in Years 5 and 6;
- involvement in understanding the importance of parent engagement with key school goals; and
- establishment of an initial function for Fathers aimed at encouraging their engagement with school agenda.

The Board continues to promote the St John's Board Awards, where peer nominations for students exhibiting one of the core school values of service, justice, hope, celebration, respect and compassion are recognised each term. The school Eco Garden was renovated and newly planted.

The School Board also participated in a retreat weekend at South Curl Curl Surf Club. The focus of the retreat was on learning through scripture, prayer and reflection. The retreat was facilitated and proved to be a valuable time for team building and prayerful reflection.

*School Board Co-Chairs 2013*



### **Parent and Friends (P&F)**

The P&F is an important part of St John's School. It promotes and strengthens the partnership between families, the school and the Parish by supporting the social, educational and financial aspects of the school. 2013 has been a big year in all these areas and the P&F would like to thank all the parents and Class Parent Helpers for the high level of support they have provided.

During the year the P&F ran a school Disco, a Bush Dance, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day Breakfasts, Cross Country, International Teachers Day lunch, a community Trivia Night and supported the School Concert – 'A Rockin' Reunion'. The P&F was hugely successful in raising over \$25 000 to support the school replacement of the synthetic grass area on the back playground, the replacement of classroom interactive whiteboards and the purchasing of readers.

In addition, the P&F supported Grandparents' Day, Taste of Big School and Parish Family Masses each month. The P&F plays an important role in the life of the school and looks forward to its work in 2014 with the continued support of all the families involved in St John's.

*President of the P&F 2013*

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

Being a student leader at St John's is a privilege. We had many opportunities to be part of school life and to contribute to it. Following are a few of the things we did during the year:

- we helped our Kindergarten buddies settle into school then become part of St John's;
- we attended camp at Milson's Island at the beginning of the year;
- we promoted Social Justice by planning our Mission Day in Term 4 along with the annual Talent Quest, these events supported the Beyond Borders Project. We were pleased to host a visit from a teacher from Cambodia to inform us about the project;
- we shared in leading our school and Parish Masses with our Kinder buddies;
- we represented the school at debating and public speaking;
- we played a big role in leading the school musical, 'A Rockin' Reunion';
- we ran assemblies each week as well as prayer and liturgy celebrations;
- we helped the school in its Review of the composite class system for 2014;
- we enjoyed our celebration day at Southern Cross Outdoor Recreation Camp at Somersby;
- we sustained our focus on recycling; and
- we were actively involved in many sporting events held at school.

Our teachers and parents helped and encouraged us all the way and we feel well prepared for high school in 2014.

*Senior Student Leadership Team, 2013*



## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2013:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
221	157	143	2	378

\*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
22	1	0	23

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 2013 was 94%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2012 to 2013 was 85%.

### 2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers were surveyed as part of the KidsMatter Framework on mental health. Part of the survey looked at factors associated with a positive school community. Teachers identified that they felt St John's was already very positive in its relationships with children and families and that there were many initiatives in place to encourage and sustain such an environment. With the help of KidsMatter these initiatives will be more clearly identified and built upon.



## 2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Year	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	96
1	96
2	96
3	96
4	96
5	96
6	96

The average student attendance rate for 2013 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; and
- 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

During 2013 students identified their teachers as being caring people and as a positive influence on their lives at school. They felt that school gave them an important understanding about the place of God in their lives. They felt there were a number of opportunities available for student leadership and for being involved in many of the school's planned events. They particularly liked the preparation and presentation of the school musical, 'A Rockin' Reunion'.



### 3. Catholic Life and Mission

#### 3.1 Catholic Heritage

St John's was founded by the Brigidine Sisters in 1962. Since its beginnings, St John's has valued the importance of a supportive community, deeply interested in creating a sense of connection between its families, the school and the Parish.

#### 3.2 Religious Life of the School

The religious life of St John's continues to be one of its key strengths. This is evident in a number of ways including:

- daily classroom prayer circles, led by the children; an opportunity for meaningful prayer, sharing scripture, thanking God for his many gifts and praying for the needs of others locally and globally;
- weekly whole school prayer assemblies; each grade takes turns to share something from their religious education focus or engage the school in a special Liturgical celebration;
- the school prayer at daily morning assemblies;
- special Masses and Liturgies are held throughout the Church and school year and are used to gather together as a faith community;
- weekly Strength and Gentleness Awards in recognition of students who have exhibited these attributes;
- Board Awards based on Gospel values awarded each Term;
- Classes attend Parish weekday Mass during the term and Reconciliation as Lent and Advent preparation; and
- Social justice initiatives to support Caritas, Mission Australia, Sisters of Mercy, Peru, and the See Beyond Borders Project.

#### 3.3 Catholic Worldview

Catholic Worldview is identifiable within our daily school life and within the curriculum. A Catholic Worldview statement is embedded as part of the rationale for each Key Learning Area.

- Participation in the Catholic Worldview photo competition enabled students to express their understanding of their faith through the world around them.
- Year 6 discipleship responses to the Bishop showed a clear understanding of the correlation between faith and action.

#### 3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Accreditation Policy for Staff in the Diocesan School System in respect to the Mission of the Church](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

2013 saw five staff members engaged in further education in the area of Religious Education or theology.



## 4. Pastoral Care

### 4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Behaviour Management and Student Discipline](#) Policies including Student Welfare and Anti-Bullying, 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

St John's has Pastoral Care and Anti-bullying Policies in place and both of these have been derived from the Diocesan Policies. Major disciplinary sanctions such as suspensions are outlined within these policies.

During 2013 the school introduced the KidsMatter Framework for the promotion of mental health. Staff meetings and staff twilight sessions were used to introduce the framework. A KidsMatter Committee representing teachers and parents was established and met regularly to introduce aspects of the framework across the school which included a focus on building a Positive School Community using in-class strategies, and processes of welcome and acknowledgement.

### 4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

St John's was once again allocated support for the position of Family Liaison Officer. The role is used to support families in need, to create opportunities for parent education and to establish networks between the school, our families and support agencies such as Catholic Care.

The 'Casserole Club' continued to provide meals for families experiencing stress or difficulty.

Families were offered support through access to counselling services or access to community based organisation where needed. The School Counsellor, Principal, Assistant Principal and Family Liaison Officer worked together to provide practical support for our families wherever the situation arose.

Our Seniors acted as buddies for our Kindergarten children and provided them with much needed pastoral support as they began their lives at school.

Our Learning Support Teachers worked with children requiring special assistance and co-ordinated a volunteer program for students requiring assistance with Reading and other learning issues.

Children experiencing a sense of loss through death, separation or divorce were offered participation in the 'Seasons for Growth' program which is co-ordinated by one of our teachers at St John's. This program culminated with a special Liturgy in which children and parents participated.

Special thanks to all involved in the programs and processes outlined above.

### 4.4 Resolving Issues

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

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



#### 4.5 Work Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for WHS and complies with the Australian Standard for WHS Management Systems. The WHSMS 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 WHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual WHS Plan. External WHS 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

Quality teaching and learning were of prime importance again at St John's during 2013. Staff worked extremely hard to ensure that the learning needs of each child were identified and tracked especially in the areas of English and Mathematics. Teachers took part in specific professional learning about aligning assessment with teaching and were provided many opportunities to work together on analysing then designing learning to address identified needs. A new assessment plan was developed and timing of student assessments was moved from Terms 1 and 3 to Term 2 and 4 beginning in 2013. Students took part in online assessments in Reading, Mathematics and Gifted and Talented identification from Years 2-6. Kindergarten took part in the Best Start interviews which looked at early Literacy and Numeracy and Year 1 participated in the Observation Reading Survey assessments which were regularly tracked throughout the year. Teachers used class based Mathematics assessments and observations in Year 1 to identify and cater for student learning needs.

Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators were appointed to ensure that each teacher was well supported in implementing our Literacy and Numeracy Plans in the classroom and co-ordinators were supported by an external consultant who supported them in Leading Learning with staff across the school.

Our senior students took part in a project on student engagement in Mathematics with Sydney University and the Catholic Schools Office. The project helped identify successful strategies for teachers to use to engage learners in Years 5 and 6 of the school.

The children were able to take part in a range excursions and incursions (visits from outside groups into the school) as a means of engaging them in their learning.

### 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 (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 Summary Report (Preliminary Results for Achievement) published by the Australian Curriculum,



Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). 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 2013 cohort, there were 50 students in Year 3 and 46 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	2.8	9.7	16.3	24.6	18.7	27.9	96.3
	National	2.8	8.7	17.3	23.5	22.6	23.2	95.3
	School	2	8	30	22	18	20	98
<b>Writing</b>	State	2.0	5.5	15.2	23.1	37.0	17.2	96.1
	National	3.1	5.2	14.3	28.8	29.9	16.7	95.0
	School	0	2	12	30	38	18	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	4.4	5.6	17.6	22.8	24.3	25.3	95.5
	National	4.2	9.2	17.2	24.9	23.0	19.5	93.9
	School	2	6	22	36	26	8	98
<b>Gr. &amp; Punct.</b>	State	3.2	7.5	14.2	20.7	23.7	30.7	96.4
	National	2.8	7.2	14.8	22.3	24.0	27.1	95.3
	School	0	8	18	30	20	24	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	2.8	8.3	21.5	28.7	24.8	14.0	96.5
	National	2.3	9.9	23.9	30.4	20.6	11.0	95.8
	School	0	4	44	36	12	4	100

Our results show that Writing, Grammar and Punctuation emerge as the areas of strength for the cohort. We have a large number of children achieving between Bands 2 and 5 across the English areas and this is a reflection of the broad spread of ability within the cohort. In the area of English, we were pleased with progress in the area of Reading Comprehension, especially in relation to their ability to be able to read for clues that were hidden within the text. However, we recognise that this group will need continued focused teaching in Reading and especially in building understanding about the connections between Reading, Writing and Spelling. Our work in this area will continue into 2014.

Our results in the Numeracy assessment placed the majority of our students between Bands 3 and 5 across the strands assessed. Our focus on using assessment to identify student areas of need and subsequent teaching focus will continue into 2014 from Kindergarten to Year 6.



### 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	1.8	9.4	22.6	28.9	22.1	15.3	97.0
	National	1.9	9.9	23.4	30.0	21.9	10.9	96.2
	School	0	6.5	15.2	41.3	19.6	17.4	100
<b>Writing</b>	State	6.3	8.8	32.3	29.7	15.2	7.8	93.1
	National	6.4	11.8	28.1	31.8	15.0	5.1	91.7
	School	2.2	6.5	28.3	30.4	23.9	8.7	98
<b>Spelling</b>	State	5.5	8.1	21.1	27.3	24.7	13.2	94.4
	National	5.0	11.7	23.1	27.9	19.5	10.9	93.1
	School	0	6.5	26.1	39.1	10.9	17.4	100
<b>Gr. &amp; Punct.</b>	State	4.6	9.3	21.8	22.3	23.1	19.0	95.8
	National	3.3	10.5	22.7	28.3	21.2	12.0	94.8
	School	0	8.7	17.4	13	32.6	28.3	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	5.1	15.1	25.7	26.4	13.0	14.8	94.0
	National	4.7	15.4	26.4	26.7	15.7	9.3	93.4
	School	2.2	17.4	26.1	21.7	19.6	13	98

Our Year 5 English results show strengths in the area of Grammar and Punctuation with over 60% of the cohort represented in the top two Bands. The children are still showing a need to identify connections between Writing, Spelling and Reading and the staff will continue putting effort into these areas. Year 5 showed improvement in Reading for hidden meaning which encouraged us in our work with them in this area during the year.

Our Numeracy results showed the majority of students placed between Bands 5-8 and this indicates that we have a diverse range of learning needs in this area. We showed stronger results in the area of Geometry, Space and Measurement than we did in Number, Patterns and Algebra. Our overall Numeracy result confirms our need to continue our work with assessment for learning so that we can better target teaching to the needs of our children.

### 5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

Students at St John's are provided a range of opportunities for extra curricula activities.

As a member of the Peninsula Learning Community of Catholic Schools, the students were provided opportunities to participate in:

- sport with Peninsula Catholic Schools each Term;
- Debating and Public Speaking;
- Year 6 Cluster Mass;
- School Captains visit to NSW Parliament House;
- Maths Challenge;
- Mission Day and
- Links Day with Mater Maria College and St Paul's Year 3 "Taste of High School".

In addition to the above events students took part in:

- Leadership Camp at Milson Island;
- Year 4 Orientation Day with Year 5;
- Year 4-5 Induction to Seniors Day and Year 6 celebration of leadership day at Southern Cross Education Camp;
- Keyboard classes;
- learning various musical instruments through the services of an outside provider;
- opportunities to be directly involved in audio visual and media activities as part of our Liturgical celebrations;
- Literacy Lunch at St Patrick's, Manly;
- Chess group and competitions; and
- Italian classes after school.



## 5.4 Professional Learning

The staff took part in professional learning sessions on the following topics in 2013:

- KidsMatter Framework – Building Positive Community;
- introduction of the New Mathematics and English syllabuses;
- exploration of Aboriginal Spirituality via an overnight staff retreat at Southern Cross Outdoor Education camp at Somersby;
- introduction of the Mathematics Assessment Interview;
- identifying effective formative and summative assessment in Religious Education;
- effective assessment for learning using online resources – PAT R, PAT M and AGAT;
- using Collaborative Analysis of Student Learning (CASLs) to identify teacher learning focus for impact on student achievement;
- Leading Learning sessions including analysis of School Improvement Plans and use of data to inform learning and the use of Instructional Walks to monitor student learning across the school;
- participation in the Literacy and Numeracy Support Groups – Peninsula Cluster of Schools; and
- Integration of ICLT into the classrooms including a focused series of sessions on the use of iPads in general learning.



## 6. Strategic Initiatives

### 6.1 2013 Priorities and Achievements

St John's Narraweena lists the following priorities and achievements from 2013:

- primacy of our Catholic faith in the daily life of our school;
- successful community involvement in our school musical – 'A Rockin' Reunion';
- introduction of the Maths Assessment Interview in preparation for 2014;
- encouragement of Parent Engagement in school goals, especially those related to student learning;
- staff professional learning in Religious Education assessment to inform learning;
- engagement of staff in further learning in Theology with the Broken Bay Institute and the University of Newcastle;
- support of the Parents and Friends Association for school outdoor facilities improvements, replacement of interactive whiteboards; purchase of new readers K-6 and replacement of synthetic grass playing field;
- involvement of the School Board with identified priorities;
- continued support of monthly Masses with the Parish;
- introduction and implementation of the KidsMatter Mental Health Framework;
- involvement of parents in discussing the issue of composite classes in Years 5 and 6;
- engagement of teachers in professional learning opportunities connected to our school priorities;
- whole school support for teacher involvement in the See Beyond Borders Program in Cambodia; and
- Senior student leadership teams and their support of school events.

### 6.2 2014 Priorities and Challenges

The following priorities and challenges will be our focus for 2014:

- in Catholic Life and Mission we will be focusing on raising awareness of similarities between our faith and those of aboriginal communities;
- use of the Mathematics Assessment Interview as a way of identifying student needs in this Key Learning Area;
- stronger engagement of the community in the educational agenda of the school promoted by the School Board;
- raising student achievement in Mathematic and Spelling;
- continue engaging teacher learning in the area of Literacy via the use of an identified Literacy Coach;
- engaging teacher learning through participation in the Extending Mathematical Understanding Project (EMU) with support from Education Officers and involvement with other local schools;
- introduction of a second component of the Kids Matter Framework associated with Social and Emotional Learning (SEL);
- continue improvement of information technology infrastructure along with expansion in information technology resources including the continued replacement of interactive whiteboards and consideration of further purchase of iPads;
- further consolidation of Leading Learning initiatives including regular classroom visits, collaborative analysis of student learning meetings and the use of data walls to clearly track student progress in Reading and Mathematics;
- continued consolidation of how we use data to inform learning; and
- continued focus on sustaining positive support of our Parish along with positive communication.



## **7. Parent Participation**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Parents were continually invited to participate in the life of the school and to engage with the School Improvement Goals for 2013 especially in relation to Religious Education, English and Mathematics.

The Parents and Friends Association provided very practical support through its fundraising, parent education and Class Parent Helper structures.

The School Board provided advice and processes to engage parents in issues affecting the community such as the evaluation of composite classes in senior grades, feedback on our assessment processes and input into our work on KidsMatter and Positive Behaviours for Learning.

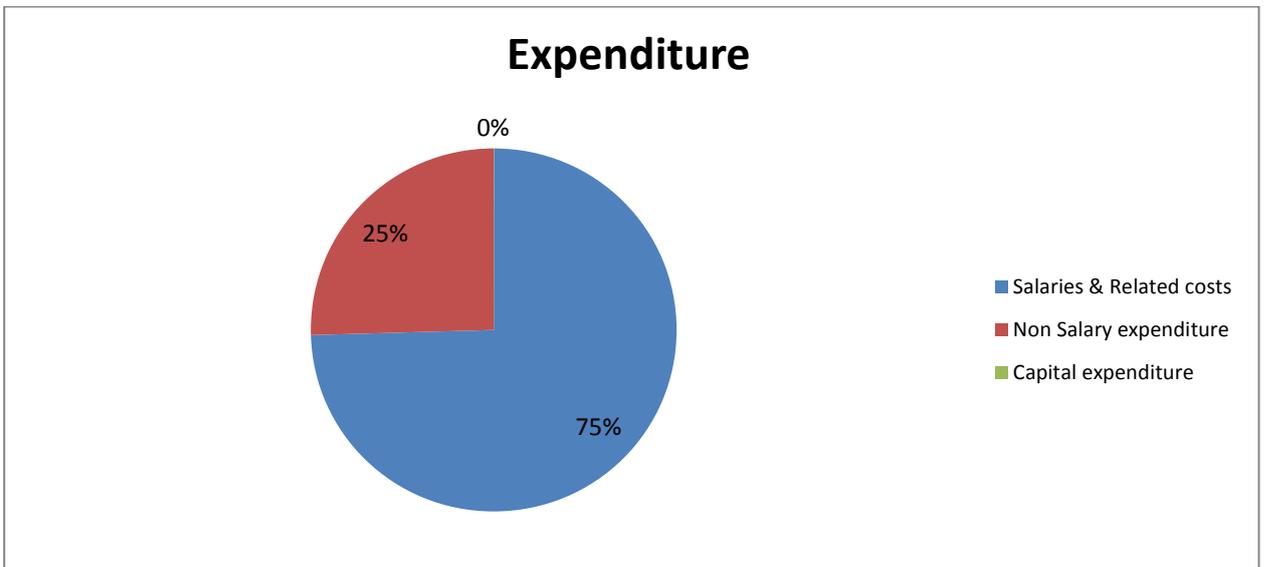
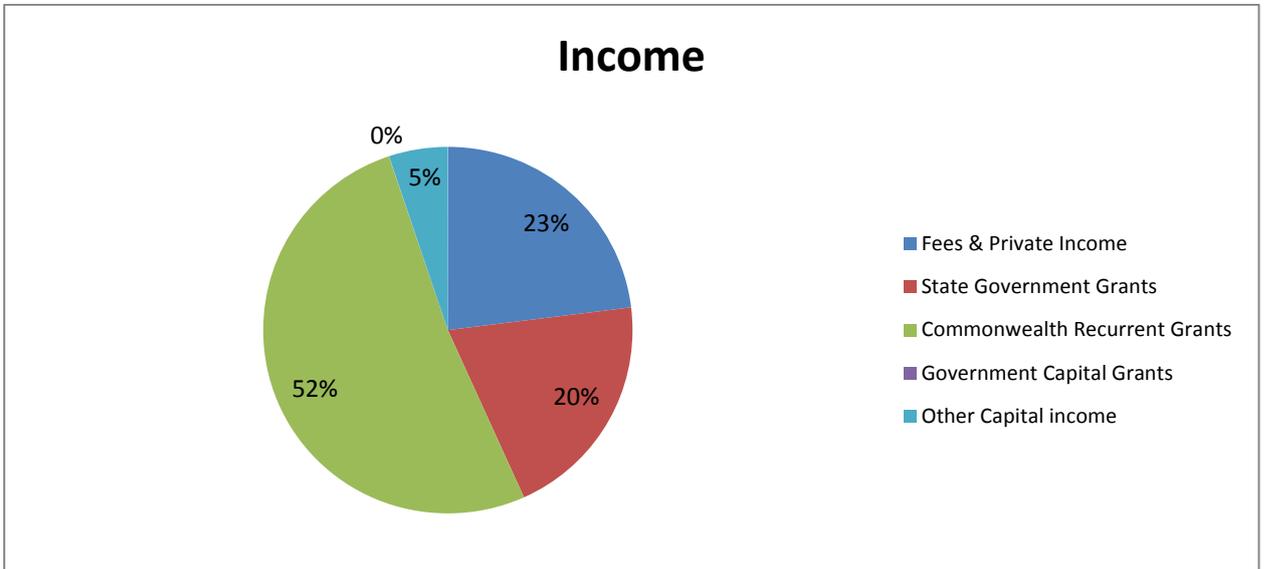
### **7.2 Parent Satisfaction**

Focus group meetings of parents were conducted in relation to the issue of whether to continue with composite classes in our Years 5 and 6. A broad representation of parents from grades across the school was present. The meetings confirmed parent value for the strength of Catholic community at St John's. Parents particularly valued the place of authentic opportunities for student leadership and encouraged the review of role descriptions for student leaders. It also supported the engagement of parents in the educational agenda of the school and was particularly interested in pursuing the connection between St John's and local Catholic high schools.



## 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 can be found in the Diocesan school system Annual Report, which will be available at <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au>



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School’s consultant, Anne Duncan.