



St Mary's Catholic Primary School Toukley

Annual Report 2013



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1. Message from Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Toukley is a welcoming, inclusive school where an explicit, positive and rich expression of Catholic Life and Mission is strongly evident. The vision of "shared leadership" and "shared wisdom" are valued as important aspects of our school. Throughout 2013, we continued to build a collaborative culture of continuous improvement.

Throughout the year strong links with the Parish and the parent community continued to be established through open, trusting relationships based on integrity and deep respect. As a school community we continue to be blessed with resilient, wonderful, positive and accepting children; hope-filled, student-centred staff and very supportive parents.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

Parents are feeling an even stronger connection to the school. During 2013, through Parent Education sessions and workshops, the parents feel they have a good understanding of the Restorative Practices used at St Mary's and of the Mathematical Assessment Interviews and Extending Mathematical Understanding project in Maths. Of particular note, the Numeracy Workshops provided a range of practical, hands-on activities to use with the children at home to reinforce their Numeracy learning. More than 150 families were represented at these Parent Education opportunities during 2013. Parents describe the workshops as extremely positive and beneficial.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

St Mary's students are proud to be a part of such a wonderful school. Senior students at St Mary's provide excellent leadership and role modelling for the younger students. Whether it is in a formal role or an informal role the Year 6 students help make St Mary's a happy, vibrant place to be. Exciting and important work done by the student leaders includes Restorative Practices playground support, Feast Days and Fun Days, raising awareness of social justice and mental health issues and running our weekly assemblies. Most of all we value our little Kinder Buddies and we have built strong relationships with them as they settle into school life.



2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2013:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
234	217	6	25	451

*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:

- a) have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines;
- b) 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;
- c) 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
25	0	0	25

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 95%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2012 to 2013 was 100%.

2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

Staff felt very satisfied and supported in their teaching. They value the professional learning opportunities provided in Literacy and Numeracy and the collegiality of the Learning Conversations and Literacy and Numeracy Coaches. Each teacher knows they are a vital part of the St Mary's Professional Learning Community and they enjoyed seeing learning gains in their students. Relationships and learning continued to be paramount.



2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Year	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	96
1	95
2	97
3	95
4	96
5	96
6	95

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

The students of St Mary's have felt a strong sense of belonging and connectedness and are positive, hope-filled young people. Friendships, teachers and opportunities to learn and participate in a variety of sporting and extra-curricular activities were the most common responses when asked what they valued most about St Mary's. They also appreciate all the lovely resources and the fantastic playground we are fortunate to have.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Toukley was established in 1973. The school motto, Faith, Love and Understanding, articulates that as Catholics we are called to be disciples of Jesus who share our faith, love and understanding with all we meet.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

St Mary's is a welcoming, inclusive and evangelising Catholic community. Our Vision and Mission Statement empowers us to live, learn and grow as disciples of Jesus. As Catholic educators, in partnership with our parents and Parish, we are committed to providing quality teaching and learning in Religious Education. Our Catholic values resonate through all Key Learning Areas and underpin the relationships in our unique Catholic community. St Mary's students participate in a range of experiences and are exposed to a variety of opportunities designed to enlighten and contribute to their faith formation as disciples of Jesus. Such experiences and opportunities occur in partnership with parents and the Parish community. Students engage in a variety of activities aimed at strengthening their relationship with God, individually and as members of the Universal Church. These activities include, but are not limited to, Liturgical celebrations, prayer, reflections and sacramental programs (aligned with the School Improvement Plan). Through authentic, quality Religious Education programs, St Mary's enables students to live out their Catholic values and call to discipleship. We uphold the Scriptures as the exemplar of the 'Catholic Worldview'. The Scriptures teach, speak to and enrich the lives of our students today.

In 2013 St Mary's witnessed the following number of students celebrate the sacraments: Confirmation (69), Eucharist (61), and Reconciliation (57). St Mary's staff also participated in Diocesan Masses and some enriched their faith-journey by attending the Ministry for Teachers program. St Mary's staff continued to undertake theological studies through the University of Newcastle and the Broken Bay Institute (BBI). The School Captains and Student Parliament representatives attended the Diocesan Mission Mass in October. The annual Year 6 Cluster Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of the Rosary, The Entrance.

This year our School Improvement Plan was for students and staff to continue to deepen their understanding of prayer. Staff had another professional learning day with our Parish Priest and the Mission Services Education Officer. A parent workshop on prayer and modelling of the use of 'The Examen' in all classes were significant opportunities.

3.3 Catholic Worldview

St Mary's nurtures the Catholic Worldview through quality education in all Key Learning Areas.

This highlights Point 6 of the Critical Indicators in the "Catholic Schools at a Crossroads" document. The school code of conduct, pastoral care program and personal development units formed a consistent platform supporting the Catholic Worldview. Mini-Vinnies students from Years 5 and 6 were actively involved in many social justice initiatives and various fundraising activities in our wider school community, e.g. Harmony Day, Project Compassion, St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas Appeals and Mission Australia.

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.



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 Mary's Catholic School sustained the STARS Positive Behaviour Program with continued success. A whole school collaborative focus ensured positive behaviour was identified and acknowledged by all teachers and was celebrated in our school community. The STARS underpin our positive school community with clearly articulated expectations, responses and where necessary, interventions. Major incidents are 'conferenced' and often, Restorative Practices are employed.

St Mary's continued the journey of adopting and implementing Restorative Practices which included further staff professional learning and directed parent education. The school has established a Restorative Practices Conference Room that allows students who have experienced a falling-out to be pastorally guided by a Restorative Justice Facilitator in repairing the relationship and making things right. We also established Restorative Practice Mentors on the playground (employing the leadership skills of our senior students) to manage trivial conflicts between students. We have witnessed positive changes in dealing with a range of conflict situations and acknowledge that the journey of embedding Restorative Practices will continue.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

St Mary's exudes a strong community spirit punctuated by a welcoming, inclusive environment, buoyed by the Class Parent Network who are committed to ensuring that significant events are appropriately acknowledged in each class and by our whole school.

We continued to host and promote workshops aimed at up-skilling parents and families forging our partnership in education and well-being. Parents and carers also assisted in a greater spiritual capacity, participating in a range of Liturgical celebrations and thus strengthening the relationship between our school and parish communities.

Well-being is a strong focus. Our part-time school counsellor assisted individuals and provided links to other local support agencies. The school provided parent education workshops and actively promoted workshops available in the local area.

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

Our School Improvement Plan's (SIP) Learning and Teaching goal was to increase the learning gains of all students in Number. Intentional high quality teaching, learning, assessment and feedback coupled with tracking and monitoring targeted students were pivotal to our daily work.

Throughout 2013, we continued to deepen our school's Learning Vision which states:

We are a staff who:

- *dialogue to plan action and embrace change to achieve results; and*
- *share a passion for learning and are committed to working collaboratively to achieve success for all.*

Fundamental to our daily work in teaching and learning was the introduction of a Literacy and a Numeracy Coach. The coaches worked beside teachers, modelling exemplary practice and providing constructive feedback.

5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 3 and 5 undertook tests as part of 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 Communities. 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 **(58)** students in Year 3 and **(52)** 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	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	0	8.6	5.2	32.8	15.5	37.9	100
Writing	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	1.7	3.4	17.2	43.1	34.5	100
Spelling	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	1.7	6.9	15.5	22.4	24.1	29.3	98
Gr. & Punct.	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	6.9	1.7	25.9	25.9	39.7	100
Numeracy	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	3.4	19	32.8	37.9	6.9	100

In all strands of Literacy and Numeracy, the percentage of students in Bands 5 and 6 (combined) exceeded the state and national figures. From the *My School* website it is evident that in comparison to statistically similar schools, St Mary's achievements were outstanding. The NAPLAN results indicate that current teaching programs and early intervention strategies, coupled with significant professional learning initiatives in Literacy and Numeracy, are proving effective.

Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	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	1.9	11.5	36.5	26.9	23.1	100
Writing	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	1.9	1.9	28.8	32.7	25	9.6	98
Spelling	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	1.9	5.8	25	30.8	25	11.5	98
Gr. & Punct.	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	1.9	17.3	19.2	34.6	26.9	100
Numeracy	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	1.9	7.7	19.2	30.8	13.5	26.9	98

Our Year 5 students' achievements in Numeracy and Literacy were very strong. The percentage of students in Bands 7 and 8 (combined) was higher than national and state figures in each test area except Spelling. Strong growth was also evident as indicated by a comparison to their Year 3 NAPLAN results. Our intervention and enrichment strategies have proven to have a positive effect on our Year 5 students' learning. Comparison to statistically similar schools was excellent.



5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

St Mary's offered opportunities for the children to develop their unique gifts by providing a diverse range of extra-curricular activities in Creative Arts, Leadership, Academic and Sporting areas.

Some of these opportunities included Student Parliament, School Choir, Chess, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Cricket and Soccer competitions, Debating and the Premier's Reading Challenge.

5.4 Professional Learning

In 2013 considerable professional learning occurred enabling teachers to enhance and develop student learning.

Staff at St Mary's had many valuable opportunities to discuss student and teacher development through structured meetings and staff development days. These opportunities included staff meetings, half day professional learning sessions and the Central Coast Cluster staff development day. We focused on several key areas throughout the year such as the Australian Curriculum, ICLT, Literacy and Numeracy and a day of prayerful reflection.

The Leadership Team had several opportunities during 2013 to further develop and implement various aspects of the 'Leading Learning' program. With follow up sessions to further consolidate our understanding of Collaborative Analysis of Student Learning (CASL) meetings and Data Walls, St Mary's has been able to incorporate many of these initiatives into our daily routines. Through Leading Learning we further developed precision in writing our School Improvement Plan.

All K-6 teachers were able to have a considerable amount of time with an Education Officer to further develop and enhance the English Block within our school and to maintain consistency across all grades. Year 1 teachers also worked with an Education Officer to learn about the Literacy Continuum and how to use the continuum to enrich student learning.

Towards the middle of the year, all staff attended two staff meetings to revisit KidsMatter, a wellbeing program which is pinnacle to our school's Pastoral Care. We had the opportunity to inform new staff of this program and refresh it for longer serving staff members. To follow this, three staff members from St Mary's Pastoral Care Team attended the Positive Schools Conference in Brisbane. As a follow-up from last year's conference, it helped staff become holistic in their views as educators. They returned and shared their ideas to further enrich classroom activities around the wellbeing of each student and staff member. The focus, Positive Thinking, is valuable lifelong learning.

Valuable support in the form of professional learning was given to new scheme teachers as well as teachers who were engaged in further formal study. Several teachers attended Observation Survey Training to assist students falling below the Diocesan minimum standards and to utilise new strategies to assist those learners.

The Learning Conversations continued in 2013 with a focus on student learning. Based on evidence from data such as common formative assessments, the Leadership team was designated as Year Co-ordinators and would oversee each Learning Conversation of their specific grade. SMART goals were still a focus as the Year Co-ordinator led their team's Learning Conversation on a specific learning outcome. Learning Conversations were held twice a term.

'Closing the Gap' also continued in 2013. The 'Closing the Gap' group had a foundation of continual formative assessments and from that, small intervention groups in Numeracy were formed. All grades were able to have dedicated time for these small intervention groups at various times of the year.

Professional Learning around Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) continued throughout 2013 as the Numeracy Coach, specialist teachers and staff became more familiar with implementing the Mathematical Assessment Interview (MAI) and using growth points to help inform learning in Numeracy.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2013 Priorities and Achievements

2013 saw the continued professional learning of Restorative Practices as the continued framework by which the school community would continue to build positive personal relationships. Foundation sessions for students, staff and parents ensured everyone shared a common understanding and commitment to the process of valuing quality relationships built on compassion, forgiveness, trust and inclusiveness.

Professional learning for staff focused on deepening our understanding of school improvement based on research undertaken by two academics from University of Toronto which focused on the 14 Parameters in addition to reflecting the Diocesan Leading Learning dimension. Fundamental to this work was having designated Literacy and Numeracy coaches who worked alongside teachers, building the collective capacity of staff.

Designing strategies for differentiating the curriculum in both Numeracy and Literacy formed the basis of grade Professional Learning Conversations over the course of the year. This enabled the targeting of specific skills to strengthen student achievement. The analysing of collected data provided the direction for further teaching.

Two teachers were trained as EMU (Extending Mathematical Understanding) specialist teachers and leaders. They attended six professional learning days at CSO, under the guidance of an academic from Australian Catholic University. Specialist teachers led professional learning on the MAI (Mathematical Assessment Interview), growth points and interventional activities.

6.2 2014 Priorities and Challenges

A strong focus on developing the use of scripture across the school will encompass all sectors of the community. Opportunities for parents, staff and students to deepen their own understanding of scripture will be provided with the support of Diocesan facilitators.

The Restorative Justice Framework will continue to take shape as the community moves into the next stage of further embedding the principles into all that we do.

Specialist Literacy and Numeracy coaches will continue to support teachers across all Stages so as to continue to develop best practice to enhance learning outcomes for all students. Staff will continue to investigate ways to utilize collected data to drive student learning. As part of the Diocesan Numeracy strategy it is envisaged that every student in the school will complete the Mathematical Assessment Interview in Term 1 with Mathematically vulnerable students in Year 1 participating in EMU intervention groups.

The continual development of the school technology plan will inform and shape how technology impacts on the learning of students. We will continue to develop the Information Communication Technology (ICT) capability of both students and staff as we investigate pathways for using ICT both effectively and appropriately to access, create and communicate information, learn to solve problems and work collaboratively across all aspects of learning.

An additional underlying focus across Numeracy and Literacy will be our work in implementing the Australian Curriculum in 2014. Staff will be engaged in professional learning and dialogue so as to equip them to embrace the change.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

During 2013, we have developed and enhanced the positive relationships we have established between the parent body and staff at St Mary's. The P & F, class parents and liturgical groups have all been aspects of our school culture that embrace and value the families and community at St Mary's.

The relationship between teachers and parents at St Mary's continues to grow stronger through the P & F. After a celebratory 40th Anniversary dinner, many other school social events for fundraising have been successful projects of our P & F. This has strengthened our spirit and sense of community.

Class parents have played an important role in our school, successfully trialling class parents as a team last year. This approach was continued at St Mary's in 2013. The class parents are helpful, approachable people who support the class teachers, existing families and new families at our school.

Throughout 2013, many whole school and class projects have continued to run smoothly due to the participation of parents and families. Ventures such as book club, gala days, canteen, excursions, parent interviews, in-class assistance and sporting events would not have been successful without parent involvement.

For the third year, the parent Liturgy initiative has involved parents with teachers and parishioners to support celebrations in our Church. This includes Christmas Eve Mass, Good Friday, Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

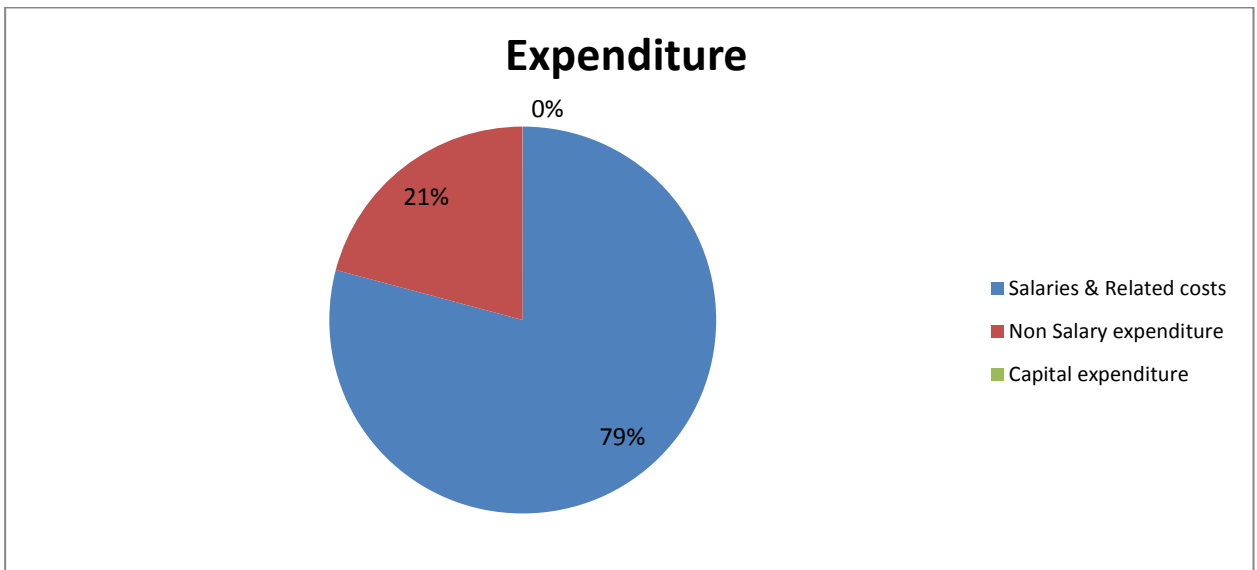
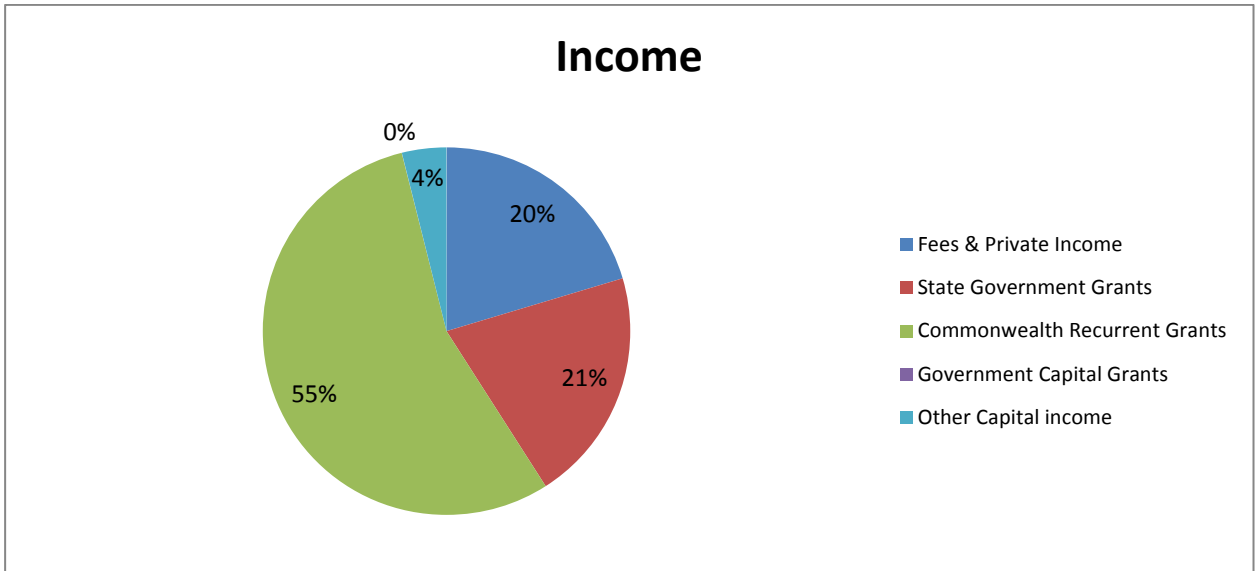
In 2013, we collated a survey completed by parents in late 2012 to find the needs and wants of the families at St Mary's. We established a need for more Parent Education around building resiliency and supporting Numeracy and Literacy education at home. A series of workshops were organised and presented to the parents and carers of St Mary's to consolidate learning in the classroom and at home. The feedback from the workshops was overwhelmingly positive.

After receiving feedback from the workshops and at other times during 2013, parents and carers are happy and feel supported by our pastoral care, faith development, learning and teaching as well as the positive attitude and compassion shown by teachers, students and our community. We have a strong partnership with parents and this is what makes our school a positive place.



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, Frances Reynolds.