

# 2024

## ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT



### **St Mary's Catholic Primary School**

458 Main Road, TOUKLEY 2263  
Principal: Mrs Emma Sellars  
Web: [www.smtdbb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smtdbb.catholic.edu.au)

## About this report

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St Mary's Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB), the proprietor, with Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) as the approved authority for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The Annual School Report (the 'Report') demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and CSBB. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

The Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, reliable and objective information about educational and financial performance measures as well as School and system policies. This information includes summary contextual data, an overview of student performance in state and national assessments, a description of the achievement of priorities in the previous year and areas for improvement. Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented at local school level and is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders.

Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

## Message from key groups in our community

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### Principal's Message

St Mary's is a welcoming, inclusive school where an explicit, positive and rich expression of Catholic life and mission is strongly evident. Throughout 2024, we continued to build a collaborative culture of continuous improvement, collectively working towards our Diocesan Vision "Inspiring hearts and minds to know Christ, to love learning, to use their talents to be the very best they can be".

Our students at St Mary's are happy and respectful children who look for the best in each other, guided daily by our motto of 'Faith, Love and Understanding'. St Mary's is a place where our Catholic faith and values underpin everything we do. Our staff enjoyed helping our students be faith and hope-filled, resilient young people who value relationships and the dignity of every person.

Our school maintains a robust partnership with our parish community, ensuring a cohesive environment where spiritual growth and academic excellence intersect seamlessly. Our weekend Grade Masses continued in 2024, with great success. Our grades also took turns in attending the Friday morning Parish Masses, in addition to our whole school Masses. We remain committed to nurturing the partnership between school, home and parish.

2024 saw us continue to embed our commitment to working as a Professional Learning Community at Work. Once again, our Leadership Team worked alongside Linda Bendikson in the areas of School Improvement, with a particular focus on Spelling. Collaborative Coaching has continued at St Mary's, allowing teams of teachers from each grade to meet with our Assistant Principal weekly. The focus was around student achievement, data analysis and content development across English and Maths, with a particular focus each week on Spelling. We expect these to all strengthen student learning.

We excitedly anticipated the start of our upcoming school build project; we were a successful recipient of a significant government grant to support our capital works program, determined by Catholic Block Grant Authority (CBGA). A concept design was developed, with the initiative promising to enhance our learning environment and support our students in new and innovative ways. We expect works to begin during 2025.

### Parent Body Message

At St Mary's, we take great pride in being a well-established, welcoming community where both students and their families feel a strong sense of belonging.

Our parent group, the P.I.P. Team (Parents In Partnership), continued to strengthen family engagement through our successful 'Just One Thing' initiative - an open invitation for families to contribute to school life in whatever way they can, even if it's simply by doing 'Just One Thing'.

This initiative has inspired ongoing participation from our families, and under the guidance of the P.I.P. leadership committee, we've hosted a number of inclusive, large-scale events. These events have welcomed mums, dads, grandparents, aunts, uncles and more highlighting the richness and diversity of our school community.

In 2024, we've enjoyed celebrating special occasions such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Grandparents' Day. We've danced under the stars at outdoor school discos, supported students during their sacraments, and warmly welcomed new Kindergarten families with morning teas.

We're grateful for the ongoing partnership between the school and our parent community, and look forward to continuing to build strong, meaningful connections in the years ahead.

### **Student Body Message**

At St Mary's, our teachers are committed to helping us grow, learn, and shine. They create fun and engaging classrooms where we feel supported and encouraged to do our best. Through their guidance, kindness, and care, they're preparing us for the future. We also enjoy learning from specialist teachers who provide exciting lessons in music, PE, and library, helping us build a wide range of skills.

Our school motto, Faith, Love, and Understanding, is at the heart of everything we do. It shapes how we treat each other and creates a strong, caring school culture. This is especially clear in our Religion lessons, whole-school Liturgies, Masses, and other opportunities that help us grow in our faith.

There are so many fun things to get involved in during lunch and recess. We can visit the Library, join Chess Club or Choir, or take part in the Stage 3 Mini Vinnies group, just to name a few. Sport is also a big part of our school life with games like soccer, oz-tag, and plenty of free play using school equipment. One of the best things is how inclusive our playground is. You'll often see kids from all grades, from Kindergarten to Year 6, playing together on the oval everyone gets a turn, and friendships are made.

We also love the chances we get to explore the world beyond our school. Our Swimming and Athletics Carnivals are always a highlight, full of fun and friendly competition. Excursions are another exciting part of our learning journey. In Year 5, we get to stay overnight in Bathurst, and in Year 6, we spend three amazing days in Canberra. These experiences help us learn in new ways, create lasting memories, and bring us even closer together.

## School Features

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St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a vibrant and nurturing faith and learning community, proudly educating over 540 students in a co-educational setting.

We are a welcoming and inclusive school where every student is encouraged to grow in their relationship with Jesus through a rich prayer life and meaningful participation in liturgies and faith celebrations.

At St Mary's, learning is at the heart of all we do. Grounded in strong educational research, our approach to teaching and learning sets high expectations for all students within a supportive and encouraging environment. We foster a collaborative culture of continuous improvement, where staff actively reflect, adapt, and strive to enhance student outcomes.

Our school's learning culture is defined by its clear purpose, evidence-based practices, and a shared commitment to ongoing growth. Staff are continually developing their knowledge of 'The Science of Learning' and implementing new curriculum frameworks to ensure best practice in every classroom.

We believe in the value of a balanced education. Our students engage in a broad range of learning experiences, including academic, sporting, musical, and social justice activities. These opportunities help them develop essential life skills such as resilience, empathy, and leadership.

A strong sense of belonging is central to life at St Mary's. Our inclusive culture promotes understanding and respect for diversity, and our students thrive in an environment where encouragement and support are always present. We are committed to nurturing compassionate, capable young people who are ready to make a positive impact in the world around them.

# Student Profile

## Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2024. Additional information can be found on the [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
247	286	10	533

\* Language Background Other than English

## Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Principles](#) temporarily supersede The Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools (2013) and are being followed by the School for enrolments for 2024. As inclusive and evangelising communities, we welcome every family who would like a Catholic education for their children. Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) strives to respond to the needs of all students, within the constraints of our available resources. We believe all students should have access to our schools which offer educational opportunities that nurture the Catholic faith, expand life choices, cater for the disadvantaged, and challenge all students to reach their full potential. Our schools are explicitly evangelical, catechetical and address (with the support of our parishes and agencies), the faith formation of our school communities. Copies of these principles and other policies in this Report may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB.

## Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for the School in 2024 was 89.50%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group						
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
92.60	90.90	90.00	90.00	88.40	87.60	86.80

## Managing Student 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 NSW Education Act (1990) 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 a sense of wellbeing and belonging in students
- 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, CSBB and the relevant Department of Education 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. CSBB monitors each School's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's Quality Assurance and Compliance processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance in Catholic Schools Broken Bay.

## Staffing Profile

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### Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2024:

Total number of staff	36
Number of full time teaching staff	25
Number of part time teaching staff	11
Number of non-teaching staff	5

### Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

All teachers employed by the School are qualified to teach in NSW. Additionally, all teachers at this School who are responsible for delivering the curriculum are accredited with NESA and hold a Working with Children Check.

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional, proficient or highly accomplished as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Catholic Schools Broken Bay in our 45 schools at these levels is as follows:

- Highly Accomplished: 9 teachers
- Proficient: 1322 teachers
- Provisional: 132 teachers
- Conditional: 67 teachers

Additionally, there are approximately 60 teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.



## Catholic Identity and Mission

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As a Catholic community, the School shares in the mission of the local Church. The [Diocesan Mission Statement](#) is our statement of shared common purpose: "The Diocese of Broken Bay exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, gathered as friends in the Lord and sent out to be missionary disciples."

In partnership with parents as the first faith educators of their children and the local parish community, the School seeks to provide authentic, professional Catholic Education, inspiring hearts and minds to know Christ, to love learning, to use their talents to be the very best they can be. Our vision, purpose and all we do is founded on faith in Jesus Christ, and informed by Christian values including faith, joy, witness, compassion, and courage.

The School's Religious Education (RE) program is based on the [Catholic Schools Broken Bay Religious Education Curriculum](#) and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging and challenging learning experiences that explores the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it. A new Religious Education Curriculum has been developed to further enhance the learning experience for all. This was implemented into Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 3, Stage 4 and Stage 5 classrooms incrementally from 2022 with the final stage being implemented in 2025. These programs include formal Religious Education as well as retreats, spirituality days and social justice opportunities in which students are invited to serve others, especially the poor and those who are marginalised.

Faith formation opportunities are provided for students, staff, parents and caregivers. Students regularly celebrate Mass and pray together. Students are invited to participate in age appropriate sacramental and Youth Ministry activities aimed at living out their mission as disciples of Jesus.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Toukley, was established in 1973. Our school motto, "Faith, Love and Understanding," calls us to be disciples of Jesus, sharing these values with everyone we meet. Our Vision and Mission statements guide us to live, learn, and grow as disciples within a welcoming, inclusive, and evangelising Catholic community.

Throughout 2024, staff engaged in ongoing professional learning and spiritual growth opportunities focused on scripture. These allowed teachers to deepen their faith and connect it meaningfully to their educational roles. This work has helped strengthen the relationship between students, families, and Jesus through scripture-based learning and faith formation.

As Catholic educators, we remain committed to delivering quality Religious Education. Catholic values resonate through all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and underpin the respectful relationships that define our school community. Staff focused on developing creative and thought-provoking scripture activities, while also revisiting the Religious Education syllabus

and programming requirements. The new Religious Education syllabus, introduced in 2022, is now fully implemented in all infant classes and will continue to roll out across the whole school next year. Professional learning also emphasised effective assessment practices in Religious Education to support consistent, quality outcomes.

Our partnership with the parish community continues to be a vital part of school life. Students regularly participate in liturgical celebrations, prayer opportunities, and sacramental programs, enriching their faith journey beyond the classroom. These experiences contribute significantly to students' growth as disciples of Jesus and their connection with God. In 2024, many students celebrated important sacramental milestones within our parish.

The wider school community showed tremendous generosity in supporting those in need locally and globally. Initiatives led by Mini Vinnies were a highlight, with students actively engaged in social justice projects such as Kids 4 Community, Project Compassion, the St Vincent de Paul Winter appeal, Christmas appeal and Mission Month's Sock-tober campaign. Several student representatives attended the Diocesan Mission Mass in October.

Through authentic and meaningful Religious Education programs and opportunities to live out their faith, St Mary's equips students to embody Catholic values and answer the call to discipleship. We are proud to share that three of our students were finalists in the 2024 Diocesan Religious Creative Arts Competition. Competing in dance and music under the theme "Courage," they earned 2nd and two 3rd place awards, receiving certificates from the Director of Schools and Bishop and celebrated by our whole community.

## Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for primary education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology (S&T), Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). In addition to this, the School implements the Diocesan Religious Education syllabus. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

In 2024, we continued our commitment to achieving high levels of learning for all students. Our teaching team collectively defined “high levels of learning” as students performing at or above their expected grade level. With the support of Linda Bendikson, we placed an increased focus on improving student outcomes in Spelling, responding deliberately to identified needs.

Professional learning around Explicit and Direct Instruction remained a key focus. This professional learning supported staff in understanding recent curriculum reforms and helped align our knowledge of the new curriculum documents, syllabus content, and teaching expectations. This professional learning will continue to evolve into 2025.

To reach our learning goals, we maintained a cycle of continuous improvement, leading targeted and timely professional learning sessions on Spelling throughout the year. Our literacy coaches played a vital role, drawing on insights from a blend of online and face-to-face learning opportunities to shape these sessions.

Our weekly Collaborative Coaching meetings, facilitated by the Assistant Principal, were highly effective. These meetings centred on answering four essential questions from DuFour (2006) that guide our teaching practice:

- What do we want our students to learn?
- How will we know when our students have learned it?
- How will we respond when some students don't learn?
- How will we extend and enrich the learning of those students who are already proficient?

Whole-school professional learning on curriculum reform was also a priority. The new K-2 English and Maths syllabus was implemented, while staff teaching Years 3-6 engaged in planning and familiarisation in preparation for full implementation in 2025. Support materials from CSBB were widely shared, and staff meetings provided valuable opportunities for teachers to deepen their understanding of the new curriculum expectations and consider practical classroom applications.

Intentional and high-quality teaching, learning, assessment, and feedback, alongside the careful tracking and monitoring of targeted students, remained central to our daily work and ongoing improvement efforts.

## Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

### NAPLAN

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The purpose of NAPLAN is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in literacy and numeracy. The test provides a measure of the student's performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching with a view to improving student performance.

NAPLAN results are reported against proficiency standards with 4 levels of achievement to give teachers, parents and carers clearer information on how students are performing:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

The percentage of student achieving at Exceeding and Strong proficiency standards in NAPLAN at St Mary's Catholic Primary School for 2024 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	59%	54%
	Reading	82%	66%
	Writing	88%	77%
	Spelling	61%	61%
	Numeracy	79%	63%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	77%	65%
	Reading	70%	71%
	Writing	82%	67%
	Spelling	58%	68%
	Numeracy	71%	68%

## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies, guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing Policy](#). This policy is underpinned by the guiding principles from the National Safe Schools Framework (2013) (NSSF) that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a prerequisite for effective learning in all Catholic school settings. The Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Learning for the Diocese of Broken Bay Schools System (the Framework') utilises the NSSF ensuring that diocesan systemic schools meet the objectives of the NSSF at the same time as meeting the diocesan vision for pastoral care and wellbeing. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSBB website or by contacting CSBB. The policy was revised in 2019 to align with the [Australian Wellbeing Framework \(2018\)](#) for implementation in 2020.

### Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned to the [Behaviour Support Policy](#). Policies operate within a context that all members of the school community share responsibility to foster, encourage and promote positive behaviour and respectful relationships. The policy aims to promote a safe and supportive learning environment to maximise teaching and learning time for all students. It supports the development of students' pro-social behaviour based on respectful relationships and clear behavioural expectations. The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours while ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSBB website or by contacting CSBB. There were no significant changes made to this policy in 2024.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying guidelines and procedures are based on and informed by the [Prevention and Management of Student Bullying Policy](#) and is aligned to the Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools and other related wellbeing policies and guidelines. All students, their families and employees within Catholic education have a right to a learning and work environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. Anti-Bullying policies support school communities to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. Further

information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB. There were no changes made to this policy in 2024.

### **Complaints Handling Policy**

The School follows the [Complaints Management and Resolution Policy](#). A distinctive feature of this policy is to ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and confidential manner at the lowest appropriate management level in order to prevent minor problems or concerns from escalating. The expectation is that complaints will be brought forward and resolved in a respectful manner, recognising the dignity of each person concerned in the process. The policy recognises that a number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB. There were changes made to this policy in 2024 to reflect new system processes.



## Community Satisfaction

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The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, a variety of processes have been used to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

### Parent satisfaction

The parents of St Mary's value the welcoming and inclusive nature of the school. Below are some comments offered by parents, collected in school survey data:

"I love the sense of community. My daughter has thrived since starting this year. The children are encouraged and loved by all the staff. I haven't experienced an educational atmosphere like St Marys before. I'm incredibly happy my children do."

"My favourite thing about St Mary's is the compassion, not only from staff but also the students."

"I love how the teachers work collaboratively and set clear expectations of the students and do their best to accommodate all students. I also am very happy with how receptive all school staff are to hearing from parents and discussing concerns with parents."

"I am really loving all of the fun days and events bringing our school community together that have been occurring over the past year. I feel as though it makes the school feel more welcoming for parents and like a big family community, it's beautiful."

"We know that they are well looked after, we know that they are cared for, we know that they are well educated and nurtured. Here at St Mary's they focus on the whole child."

### Student satisfaction

The students of St Mary's value the relationships and the learning. Below are a few comments offered by students, collected in school survey data:

"I like my school because I feel safe there, I have an amazing and caring teacher, I have great friends, everyone tries their hardest, we have fun events, everyone cares for me, and the teacher always makes things make sense and explains how to do it."

"I love school because everyone includes people and I love playing handball."

"I think this school is great, it has plenty of welcoming and kind people and teachers, it is the perfect place for children. To learn and still have fun at lunch, it is just an all-round perfect school for a child to come to".

"I like that we all get help from our teaches and other students."

"I really like it because all the teachers are kind and funny if you need help they will come straight over. I like how all the kids in the school are caring."

### **Teacher satisfaction**

The teachers of St Mary's value our school's collaborative and supportive culture. Below are some comments offered by teachers, collected in school survey data:

"Being a teacher at St Mary's is both a rewarding and a satisfying experience. We are consistently nurtured and encouraged to grow as professionals. The support that is provided by the Leadership Team, coupled with the collaborative nature of the school creates a positive learning environment for the students and teachers. I am so lucky to be part of such a welcoming, hard working team."

"Community is important at our school. St Mary's provides a collaborative environment where, as a teacher I feel trusted, respected and encouraged to be my absolute best, so that all our students can achieve high levels of learning. I feel very humbled to be a part of such a unique culture that builds positive partnerships across our whole school community, ultimately focusing on our students' learning and well-being."

"As a teacher at St Mary's I always feel supported, appreciated, encouraged and valued. I know our leaders are there to guide and support me. I really feel like a part of our community and it's truly a positive place to be."

## Financial Statement

Consistent with the NESA requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School in 2024 is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the My School website.

Recurrent and Capital Income 2024	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$7,214,709
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$1,903,808
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$1,859,733
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$380
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$10,978,631</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$653,315
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$6,273,377
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$1,787,625
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$8,714,319</b>

### Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

END OF 2024 REPORT