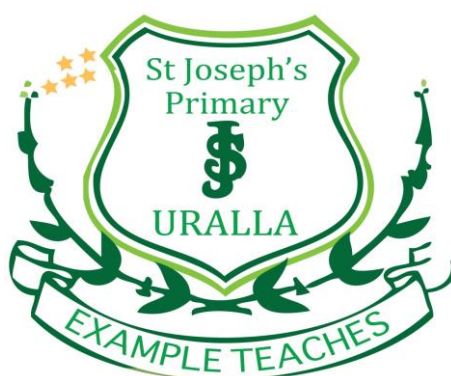


Annual School Report 2021 School Year

St Joseph's Primary School, Uralla



Wood Street
Uralla NSW 2358

Phone 02 6778 4063

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Principal
Judith Elks

About this report

St Joseph's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The report also outlines to the school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Annual Improvement Plan.

The report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the CSO. This report, approved by the CSO, monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. It is available on both school and CSO websites by 30 June 2022 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums, including the School Advisory Council meetings and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6778 4063 or by visiting the school's [website](#).



1.0 Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

There were many people who assisted in the development of the school as a Catholic learning community. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Joseph's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

St Joseph's Primary School is a small rural Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Uralla. St Joseph's was established by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1886. In that year, Mother Mary MacKillop (Saint Mary of the Cross) paid a visit to the school. Mother Mary wrote in her diary, on 29 April 1896, that she 'was very pleased with the school and children'.

St Joseph's is a vibrant Christ centred community, well supported by the parish and parent body. The Gospel values, including faith, respect and service, guide and permeate all learning and behaviour. A high standard of education is provided for the students, strengthened by the teaching and example of Catholic faith and tradition. Students are encouraged to develop to their full potential in an inclusive and supportive climate of love, respect and acceptance.

Student engagement is the key to learning. Dedicated and enthusiastic teachers strive to ensure that student learning is both meaningful and inspiring. Children are exposed to an array of activities that encourages them to extend themselves in all Key Learning Areas of the curriculum. They develop values, skills and knowledge within an engaging and inspiring environment. Classrooms are large, well resourced flexible learning spaces that allow for 21st century learning to take place. Students have access to Chromebooks, iPads and Promethean boards to further support learning, allowing them to keep up to date with the ever changing world of technology.

Teacher capacity continues to be built, in order to deliver the curriculum to students, by working collaboratively to enhance a more flexible and engaging learning program. St Joseph's remains focused on the needs of each and every individual student, whilst adapting programs to promote maximum learning growth and well-being.

Many extracurricular activities, that engage students and support the delivery of the NSW Syllabus, are included in the curriculum. These include the school's Organic Learning, a sheep manure business and the garden projects which not only beautify the school but also provide fresh vegetables for students to snack on. Many and varied visiting incursions and co-curricular and extracurricular excursions are conducted. Specialist coaches are accessed to support the school sport program, enabling student skill development.

The school values its place in the Uralla and wider community and in normal years participates in a variety of local and diocesan cultural and sporting activities. COVID-19 restricted many activities during 2021.

A before and after school hours care service, operated by Esteem Kids, is located within the school grounds. This service supports families in providing care for students outside of school hours and is open to the wider Uralla community for all students K-6. A weekly playgroup, Uralla Tigers, is hosted on the premises allowing parents a place to bring their toddlers and meet other young local families.

Judith Elks
Principal

1.2 A Parent Message

For the second year running, parent involvement was curtailed due to COVID-19. With the COVID-19 restrictions in place, parents were unable to do all the usual things such as PT&F meetings, fund-raising and social activities. Although we could not be physically present in the school, we were 'virtually' present during the remote learning from home while we helped our children with their online lessons.

Once the children returned to school, the usual parent engagement activities, such as Book Week, Grandparents Day and the Easter Hat Parade, were still unable to be attended by parents. These



events were videoed and links were provided for us to view. Other events had to be cancelled altogether.

We were unable to hold our street stall and annual fête this year, so fund-raising ground to a halt apart from catering for the Thunderbolt Festival. By the year's end Year 6 parents were able to attend the Annual Presentation Night. However, COVID-19 restrictions which meant there was not the usual gathering of families to celebrate the end of the year with the customary BBQ tea in the school grounds.

As parents, we are grateful for all the hard work that the teachers and Principal put in to provide the best possible school experience for our children.

We look forward to a return to some form of 'normal' for parents in 2022 as we continue to support the school in whatever way we can.

Kristy Redmond
President
PT&F

2.0 This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Joseph's Primary School is located in Uralla and is part of the St Joseph's Parish which serves the communities of Uralla, from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 137 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest, Monsignor Edward Wilkes, is involved in the life of the school.

2.2 Catholic Life and Religious Education

St Joseph's Primary School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

The Opening School Mass was a great way to start the new school year, asking for God's blessing and guidance for the year ahead. During this Mass, the School Leaders for 2021 were inducted and received their badges. The whole school normally attends Mass each Friday morning, however, due to COVID-19, students were unable to attend during Terms 3 and 4. When able to attend, each class took it in turn to prepare the readings and participate in the procession of the gifts. Students in Years 3-6 were invited to altar serve at the school Mass as well as weekend masses. They also participated during Mass by reading, taking up the offertory or singing in the choir. Parents and friends were invited to attend the weekly school Mass when possible. Special liturgies and/or masses were celebrated at other significant times throughout the year. These included Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and the feast of St Joseph. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the Graduation Mass was unable to be held. In its stead, a paraliturg was conducted.

Catholic Principles and Values (CPV) underpin all that is done in Catholic schools. These principles and values were explicitly taught in all Key Learning Areas this year. Through the teaching of the CPV, students develop a world view that focuses on God and his desire for us to create a world where everyone is cared for and respected. This includes a commitment to look after the environment.

Students were encouraged, through their lessons, to reach out and help those in need by active participation in such things as the Charitable Works and Catholic Mission fundraisers. Students in Year 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of fifty multiple-choice questions. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

During Term 3, Catholic students in Years 5 & 6 were confirmed by the bishop at a special parish celebration held during Saturday evening Mass.



Once each term, a special prayer afternoon is held at the school and run by the Spirituality team from the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale. Staff, parents and parishioners are invited to this special time of self reflection. A retreat day is offered each year to all the staff. This year it was held off premises at NERAM in Armidale. This day allowed the staff to reconnect with God in an uninterrupted space.

Students in Year 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions.

Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

| Our School's average result (as a mark out of 30) | |
|--|----|
| Year 6 | 23 |

2.3 School Enrolment

St Joseph's Primary School caters for children from Years K to 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

| | Year K | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | TOTAL 2021 | TOTAL 2020 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------|------------|
| Male | 0 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 16 | 14 |
| Female | 8 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 23 | 16 |
| Totals | 8 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 39 | 30 |

2.4 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, staff as part of their duty of care monitor attendance each day. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each week by the Principal or their delegate. The college uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by staff. Parents are requested to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence by means such as a written note, telephone call, SMS message or email to the school, preferably on the first day of absence and certainly within seven days. The Principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations, the Principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases, students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2021 is shown in the following table.

| | Year K | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | All Years |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Average Student Attendance Rates | 90.0% | 96.0% | 91.0% | 93.0% | 93.0% | 94.0% | 90.0% | 92.4% |

Managing Student non-attendance



Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The school, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/carer involvement.
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed, the Principal and the System Performance Leader will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.

2.5 Staff Profile and Teacher Standards

| Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile | | Number of Teachers |
|--|---|--------------------|
| 1. | Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level. | 0 |
| 2. | Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Proficient level. | 5 |
| 3. | Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Highly Accomplished level. | 0 |
| 4. | Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Lead level. | 0 |
| 5. | Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education. | 5 |
| 6. | Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the school. | 1 |
| 7. | Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school. | 4 |

2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility



The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the school and the local community. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- St Joseph's continually promotes respect and responsibility as part of its culture and beliefs as a Catholic school. These permeate throughout the curriculum and all aspects of school life.
- Student Leadership forms a major part of the culture of Respect and Responsibility that makes up the caring climate within the school. The school actively promotes Gospel values, with respect and responsibility being a core element. Student leaders act as role models for younger students and accept responsibility for specific tasks around the school.
- Students are actively engaged in negotiating school rules that reflect the rights and responsibilities of all students and staff. These are routinely reinforced with positive feedback and restorative practices in order to build respectful relationships. School and class awards are used to formally promote these values.
- St Joseph's encourages a three-way partnership between parent, student and teacher. This effective partnership is based on mutual trust and respect, and shared responsibility for the education of the child at school. Parents are encouraged to have an active involvement in all areas of their child's education. Through this partnership, positive outcomes for the child can be achieved.
- When able, the school participates in important community commemorations such as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and NAIDOC Week, reflecting on important cultural values and beliefs, with a Catholic perspective.

2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

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, the school used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the school from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

Twenty-five of the 26 eligible families took the opportunity to participate in the Parent Survey. The parents expressed very positive comments about the school's "caring environment", "dedicated staff who go above and beyond to make children feel safe, secure and ready to learn". They commented on the "quality of education" and the "individualised support" students receive. They are very happy with the "excellent communication between school and home", the "community involvement" and that "at the foundation of the school environment is a Christian faith".

Overall, parents are happy with the facilities at the school: "large classrooms that are well set up with flexible learning spaces and furniture"; "access to technology"; "creative arts"; "the vegetable garden"; "great shed for playing in"; "lovely playground". When asked if you could improve one thing at the school, most parents said "Nothing" or "More students". However, a couple of comments around updating the play equipment and canteen and beautifying the grounds will all be taken into consideration.

In summary, the overwhelming response was that St Joseph's is a school of friendly, caring, dedicated and competent staff; a school with a family-like atmosphere; a school where parents are encouraged to be partners in their child's learning and a school that values being a part of the local community.

Student Satisfaction

The Student Survey results were just as pleasing. Year 4/5/6 students were invited to participate in a Student Survey. Their overwhelming response was that they feel happy, safe, accepted, cared for,



encouraged and engaged in their learning. The students made comments about the "great teachers" that "care". That "everyone is kind and welcoming and we have great learning spaces." Students also commented that "we have teachers that can adjust to different student needs." They enjoy the learning spaces and the opportunities that they are given to "try all different activities in organic learning so that we can find the best way we learn."

Staff Satisfaction

Staff responses to the satisfaction survey were overwhelmingly positive, with all staff commenting that they felt valued and supported. Morale is high among all staff members and is reinforced by good communication between staff and school leadership. Professional learning opportunities were appreciated and valued. When staff were asked about one thing they particularly liked about the school, comments such as: "the collaborative team environment", "the culture of our school", "quality leadership", "our Principal brings out the best in us", "the importance we place on the wellbeing of both teachers and students" and "inclusiveness of everyone" summed up the overall sentiment. When asked about one thing the school could improve, their responses were: "I haven't found anything yet"; "nothing I can think of"; "more students". Other suggestions such as "outdoor learning spaces", "outdoor gym equipment", "more play equipment" and "basketball court" will be taken on board and discussed.

3.0 Teaching and Learning

3.1 School Curriculum

The school provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NESA syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

Religious Education in Catholic schools is a mandatory KLA included in the curriculum for students in each year group. St Joseph's Primary School is committed to providing a quality education that meets the needs of all students.

Indigenous perspectives are integrated into the curriculum and the curriculum is enhanced through the use of digital technologies.

St Joseph's strives to cater for individual differences by making adjustments for those students who have specific needs, as well as using pedagogical practices that cater for different learning styles.

A new methodology of teaching, called "Organic Learning", was introduced. This initiative is designed to allow students to become self directed learners, working both independently and collaboratively in order to guide their own learning. This is a K-6 initiative, with a team teaching approach, in order to deliver the NESA outcomes from HSIE, PDHPE, Creative Arts and Science syllabuses. This methodology has a major focus on engagement of the students in order to increase their depth of learning.

All students made substantial progress throughout 2021, despite the COVID-19 online learning interruptions.

3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

3.2.1 NAPLAN

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 3 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 7 students.



In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

At St Joseph's Primary School, school and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Joseph's Primary School students in each band compared to the State percentage.



NOTE: Year 3 has five or less students, consequently the NAPLAN information has been withheld to protect the privacy of the students.

| Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BAND | 8 | | 7 | | 6 | | 5 | | 4 | | 3 | |
| | State | School | State | School | State | School | State | School | State | School | State | School |
| Reading | 15.5 | 0.0 | 24.7 | 37.5 | 27.2 | 25.0 | 18.3 | 25.0 | 7.5 | 0.0 | 3.3 | 0.0 |
| Writing | 7.5 | 0.0 | 17.0 | 0.0 | 32.6 | 50.0 | 26.9 | 25.0 | 9.7 | 25.0 | 3.2 | 0.0 |
| Spelling | 15.1 | 0.0 | 27.5 | 12.5 | 24.4 | 37.5 | 17.2 | 37.5 | 8.2 | 0.0 | 3.8 | 0.0 |
| Grammar and Punctuation | 12.9 | 0.0 | 20.6 | 37.5 | 27.1 | 0.0 | 19.7 | 62.5 | 9.2 | 0.0 | 4.5 | 0.0 |
| Numeracy | 10.2 | 0.0 | 20.9 | 12.5 | 28.8 | 25.0 | 23.6 | 50.0 | 10.0 | 12.5 | 3.1 | 0.0 |

3.3 Teacher Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office Armidale. The school takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development.

All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2021 were:

| Staff Professional Learning Activity | Date | Presenter |
|---|------------|----------------------|
| Organic Learning | 20/01/2021 | Alicia Pringle |
| Living Well Learning Well | 17/02/2021 | Justin Matthews |
| Staff Retreat Day | 12/07/2021 | Kerrie Stellar |
| First Aid | 07/10/2021 | NE Community College |
| System and School Regulatory Compliance | 27/01/2021 | Judy Elks |
| School Planning Day | 28/01/2021 | Judy Elks |



4.0 School Policies

4.1 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This school does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the school's [website](#) and the Armidale Catholic Schools Office [website](#).

4.2 Pastoral Care Policy

Jesus Christ and his teachings are the basis of all that occurs at St Joseph's Primary School. Christ's teachings, therefore, should relate to how staff develop student self-discipline. The school community believes in a holistic approach to individual development. Such an approach aims to develop the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual dimensions of a child. Staff aim to bring this about in the school by promoting self-worth and by encouraging each individual to answer to one's self for one's own actions.

All people attending St Joseph's Primary School have the right to be treated:

- justly
- respectfully
- fairly

No changes were made to the 'Pastoral Care Policy' this year.

The full text of the school's 'Pastoral Care Policy' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or at the administration office.

4.3 Student Discipline Policy

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by school persons and non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the school.

No changes were made to the 'Student Discipline Policy' this year.

The full text of the school's 'Student Discipline Policy' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or at the administration office.

4.4 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale has established a 'Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy' which is implemented by the school and all systemic schools in the Diocese of Armidale. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) monitors the implementation of this policy.

No changes were made to the 'Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy' this year.



The full text of the school's 'Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy' may be accessed on the school's [website](#), the administration office or on the CSO website.

4.5 Complaints Handling Policy and Guide

The Diocese of Armidale has established a 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' which is implemented by this school. The rationale for this policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of the contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policies.

No changes were made to the 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' this year.

The full text of the school's 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or the administration office.

5.0 School Review and Improvement

Each year, the school develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the school's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic Schools Office Annual Improvement Plan. The school engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the System Performance Leader.

| Key Goals Achieved and Implemented in 2021 | Key Goals for 2022 |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Professionalism - through collaborative professionalism, the school improved pedagogy, built teacher capacity and improved students' learning outcomes. • Wellbeing - the school continued to create an authentic Catholic community of care in which the wellbeing of all is a priority. • Great Learning and Teaching - through Organic Learning, the school provided a new methodology that focuses on all students and teachers becoming lifelong learners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build teacher capacity in a flexible learning space in order to support students' learning. • Implement the new K-2 Literacy and Maths Syllabus. • Organic Learning to be expanded on a larger scale. |

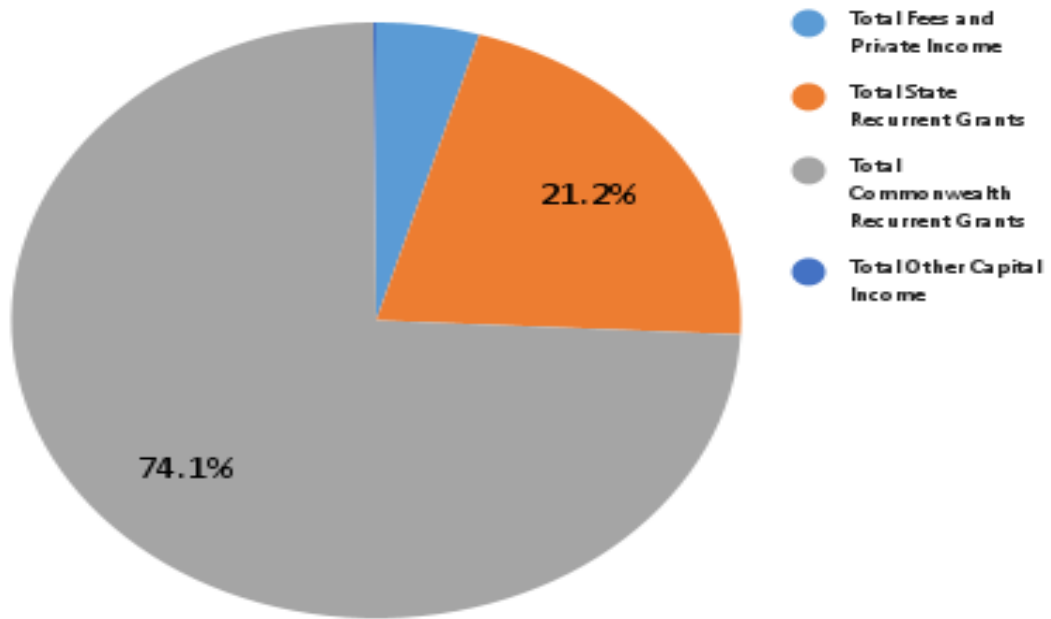
6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools, K-10 schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2021 is presented below:



2021 Income - St Joseph's Primary School, Uralla



2021 Expenditure - St Joseph's Primary School, Uralla

