

St Nicholas' Primary TAMWORTH
Annual School Report to the Community

2016



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Principal

Mr Stefan van Aanholt

ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Nicholas' Primary is registered by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW. The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The *Annual School Report to the Community* provides parents and the wider 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 information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School's Annual Improvement Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the School community and the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale. This *Report* has been approved by the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale in consultation with the Regional Consultant who monitors that the School has appropriate processes in place to ensure compliance with all Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, NSW requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to School newsletters and other regular communications. Further information about the School may be obtained by contacting the School or by visiting the School's website.

Principal's Message

As a community of Faith, the students of St Nicholas School experience Catholic Education, worship and personal spiritual reflection in a creative, dynamic and vibrant way.

A very important aspect of life at St Nicholas is the involvement of our parents. We encourage parents to become as engaged as possible in their child's education and we use a variety of methods to communicate with them.

Our educational practice is based on the principles of Professor John Hattie's research and visible learning philosophy. We expect students to strive for "2 more marks" in all they do.

Our "Manners Matter" initiative ensures that students are encouraged and reminded on a regular basis to display behaviour that is polite and courteous.

I thank all members of our school community, staff, parents and the parish community for their commitment and I am honoured to lead such a wonderful community.

Parent Body Message

This year has been a very exciting one for the school community as we have seen the commencement and near completion of Stage 1 of the building program.

St Nicholas parents have once again shown what an asset they are to our school community. Over \$30 000 was raised over the year by holding various fundraising activities. St Nicholas parents are heavily involved in all aspects of school life, both at school and for extra curricula activities. Their representation on the School Board has provided independent, objective advice to the school executive in financial management, policy development and other aspects of school life.

Student Body Message

Being captains has been an amazing experience. In our role as school captains, we have attended numerous Masses including; an ANZAC Memorial Service, an Australia Day gathering, representing our school at a Catholic Schools Week Mass at the Armidale Cathedral, a Remembrance Day Service and a Mass to end The Year of Mercy. We led St Nicholas School in the ANZAC Day March. We made an appearance at the Sydney Olympic Park for Young Leaders Day.

We had a look at the new buildings of our school and shot a video. We have had many opportunities to encourage students to aim for 2 more marks, go with the flow and LIFT.

We have learnt that it takes a lot of responsibility and leadership to be role models for our school. We have learnt that we must always set a great example through our actions and words.

To be leaving St Nich's is going to be very tough. We are thankful that our school has given us a wonderful education and prepared us for high school and life after school. We are going to miss all our friends that we have been at school with for several years as they might be going to another school. The best part is that we still have memories that have all been involved with school.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

St Nicholas' Primary is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in TAMWORTH.

In January this year the school commenced stage 1 of a 2 stage building project that will dramatically enhance the school's infrastructure, aesthetics and pedagogical practice. Over the 2 stages the school will see the establishment of 15 flexible learning spaces, 4 seminar rooms, a new library, new toilet facilities, upgrades to the school's sporting and play areas as well as the beautification of the school grounds.

This project will see the school move into a 21st Century educational environment with the latest computer technologies and collaborative teaching practice and pedagogy. We strive to develop a Catholic Professional Learning Community that focuses on learning for all in the school community, collaboration between all stakeholders, a culture of continuous improvement and results orientation within the framework of our Catholic faith. The school invests heavily in the professional development of teachers and staff so as to ensure that we keep abreast of the latest teaching practices and ideas.

To assist with the educational delivery the school has a number of support staff including two Leaders of Pedagogy, Educational Assistants, Minilit paraprofessionals, Teacher Librarian, ICT Assistant and Student Support Teacher.

Students in Year 3 through to Year 6 have access to their own chrome book and the younger students have ipads to enhance their use of technology in the learning process.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a vast range of extra curricula activities including a number of summer and winter sports, debating, public speaking, choir, guitar, piano, chess, and Tournament of the Minds to mention a few. A highlight this year was the performances of our Year 5 and 6 students in the Captivate extravaganza.

The school encourages parental participation in the life of the school and the educational journey of their children. Parents are provided with numerous opportunities to be part of the life of the school including: volunteering in our Friar's Tuckshop, supporting learning in the classroom, guest speakers, fundraising events, assisting with sporting teams, School and Parish Masses, cooking breakfasts and many more.

Effective communication with parents is established through a weekly electronic newsletter, email, an interactive website that includes Pinterest and Youtube, regular parent meetings and Yearly and Half Yearly Reports.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds. The following information describes the student profile for 2016:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
228	247	17	475

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment 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 Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the Armidale Catholic Schools Office website at;

<http://www.arm.catholic.edu.au>

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2016 was 94.57%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	94.00%
Year 1	95.00%
Year 2	94.00%
Year 3	94.00%
Year 4	95.00%
Year 5	95.00%
Year 6	95.00%

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;
- 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;
- 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 School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2016:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
27	15	42

* This number includes 22 full-time teachers and 5 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	3%
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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.

The School held the equivalent of five staff development days this year with areas of focus as follows:

Term 1	Curriculum Development for 2016.
Term 2	Implementation of the Catholic Principles and Values document in all Key Learning Areas with a particular focus on the Sanctity of Life.
Term 3	Staff, student and parent well being delivered by psychologist Andrew Fuller.
Term 4	Redesigning learning for effective practice in flexible learning environments and working collaboratively for student success.

St Nicholas as a Professional Learning Community values teacher professional development as a priority. Professional learning takes many forms including; staff development meetings, staff development days, visits to others schools and dioceses, conferences, a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office and individual programs based on teachers' Professional Learning Plans.

Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the categories

determined by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, NSW:

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	27
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Nicholas' Primary 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 school has continued to incorporate the Catholic Principles and Values statements mandated by Bishop Michael Kennedy into the programs for All Key Learning Areas. Staff also attended a professional development day on the principle of The Sanctity of Life

Our Parish Priest Father Jose (Joe) Adriano and Assistant Parish Priest Father Joseph Armah visited the school on a weekly basis. Father Joe and Father Joseph administered Reconciliation to Years Three to Six once a term and regularly spent time in all classrooms engaging with the students.

With the support of Father Joe and Father Joseph there were two whole school Masses celebrated each term. The school also celebrated four Feast days and special events. These included the Opening School Mass, Ash Wednesday Mass and the Feast of Saint Joachim and Anne for Grandparent's Day. All parents, families and friends were invited to attend these Masses and parents, students and staff participated in a variety of ministry roles including Eucharistic Ministry. Each term there were also opportunities for families to attend Family Mass on the first Sunday of the month at St Nicholas Parish. Staff also attended the First Friday Mass each month at St Nicholas Parish to again foster the importance of praying and gathering as one community. Four students participated in altar server training and are now regular altar servers at weekend and school masses.

Throughout the year the Sacramental Programs of First Holy Communion and Confirmation were offered and delivered to students in Years Three and Six. Parents and other family members participated through meetings and home programs The Sacrament of Confirmation was supported with a retreat that was attended by St Nicholas Parishioners, Bishop Michael Kennedy, teachers and the candidates.

Daily prayer continued for staff, students and parents throughout the year with school leaders leading the school community in prayer at assemblies and special events. Weekly memo meetings, staff meetings, monthly Board meetings, and Parents, Teachers and Friends meetings also began with prayer. Another part of the prayer life of the school was the opportunity offered to pray the Rosary during the month of October. Prayer was also included in each edition of the school's newsletter.

Students in Years 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.

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

The school provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, NSW 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.

This year the school was selected by BOSTES for a random monitoring visit and all areas audited were deemed compliant.

During 2016 the focus on quality teaching and learning continued to be centered on a 'new' pedagogical framework, based on the research of John Hattie and others, which was introduced in 2014. We call it the LIFT (Learning Is Forever Together) Program. The 3 key acronyms which form the core of the program are WALT (We Are Learning To), WILL (What It Looks Like) and WILT (What I Learnt Today). The school's philosophy is that all learning must be visible to assist students with their learning. The students must see clearly what they need to produce. An educational mantra at the school is that everyone strives for, '2 more marks'.

Teachers worked collaboratively throughout the year to assess, plan and reflect on the teaching and learning as well as the introduction of the 'new' Mathematics syllabus.

The school uses data to inform all of its practice. Data includes results from SENA (Numeracy), PM Reading Benchmarks, NAPLAN, ACER PAT Testing, the Year 6 state wide Religious Education Test, student attendance, AEDI and A-E Reporting. Infants students who were identified as requiring additional support in literacy were placed in the MiniLit (Meeting Initial Needs in Literacy) Program devised by Macquarie University and older students were placed in the MultiLit Program and Reading Comprehension Program.

The school has advanced the use of technology in the classroom with all students having access to interactive technology including ipads and SMARTBOARDS as well as electronic books and laptop computers. All infants classes are fitted with Redcat sound systems to amplify and clarify language in the classroom. The school has also moved to engage students more fully with the introduction of chromebooks and the Google suite of educational apps for primary students.

A range of curricula and extra curricula activities was available for students to discover and develop their individual talents. These included:

- Various Excursions both locally and intrastate

- Tournament of the Minds
- Catholic Schools Celebrate
- Debating and Public Speaking
- Sporting pathways to state and national level.
- School House competitions
- Dance and lip sync contests
- Opportunities for students to have tuition in guitar, ukelele and piano
- Various lunch clubs such as lego, chess, ipad and dance
- Individual Plans for students experiencing difficulty
- Eisteddfod performances

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	57.50%	49.40%	4.10%	11.50%
	Writing	63.00%	48.80%	1.40%	6.20%
	Spelling	58.90%	46.40%	4.10%	12.40%
	Grammar	63.00%	52.50%	4.10%	9.60%
	Numeracy	54.20%	35.60%	4.20%	13.40%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	43.30%	35.30%	1.70%	15.50%
	Writing	33.40%	17.20%	5.00%	18.10%
	Spelling	48.40%	29.80%	1.70%	17.20%
	Grammar	46.60%	36.30%	1.70%	15.00%
	Numeracy	26.70%	28.30%	8.30%	16.50%

Student Welfare Policy

St Nicholas Primary School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- minimises risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of children
- has in place student welfare policies and programmes that develop a sense of self worth and foster personal development.

Students and staff have access to counselling by Centacare on request.

The school's Pastoral Care Policy is based on the Bishop's Commission Policy Pastoral Care in The Catholic Systemic Schools of the Armidale Diocese.

No changes were made to this 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.

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.

St Nicholas Primary School bases its Discipline Policy on the Bishop's Commission Policies Pastoral care in The Catholic Systemic Schools of the Armidale Diocese, Policy on Suspension, Expulsion or Exclusion of Students. These policies are based on procedural fairness and are discussed with students on a regular basis. The school's Discipline Policy is contained within the school's Pastoral Care Policy.

The school's Manners Matter Program is a pro-active way to support students in understanding right choices and behaviour. The school also acknowledges students who have displayed positive, supportive and caring behaviour.

No changes were made to this 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.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale has established a *Student Anti-Bullying Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Diocese. 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 policy this year.

The full text of the *Anti-Bullying Policy* may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Diocese of Armidale has established a *Staff Grievance Policy* which is implemented by our school in the Diocese. Each school also has an individual Grievance Policy and Procedure for dealing with matters at a school level. The rationale for these policies 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 our contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policy. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the individual policies may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

At St Nicholas School we regard good manners as showing respect for other people but it also shows how we have respect for our own good standards and behaviour. Manners are a habit and so become part of the makeup of the school. They are a thread intentionally woven throughout the fabric of St Nicholas School.

Our 'Manners Matter' initiative ensures that students are encouraged and reminded on a regular basis to display behaviour that is polite and courteous.

... standing up to let an adult or elderly person sit down.

... looking a person in the eye when you shake hands.

... saying 'excuse me' when you walk in front of someone.

... addressing people by name.

... saying "please" and "thank you".

... being patient and selfless - letting someone go in front of you or picking up something

for another person.

... holding a door open for another person and saying thank you to another person when they hold a door open for you.

These are just a few of 'life's little lessons', but they are taught and modelled each day by teachers and students.

An extensive student leadership program is in place at the school which seeks to support students develop their skills and sense of responsibility.

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 School's Office Annual Improvement Plan. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Schools Consultant.

Key Improvements Achieved in 2016

The school uses the National Improvement Tool to guide its Annual Improvement Plan.

Priority Key Improvements for 2016 that were achieved included:

- The incorporation of Catholic Principles and Values into the English and HSIE Programs
- The establishment of SMART targets for Year 6 Religious Education state wide examination
- Ongoing development of the Diocesan Learning Enhancement Strategy including MiniLit
- Parent Reading and Numeracy Workshops were very successful
- Teachers Professional Learning Plans were implemented
- Data walls were expanded across each grade
- Professional Learning Teams were established as well as Year Group Teams, a Pedagogical (LIFT) Practice Team, a Google Team and a Well Being Team
- The school also developed as a Catholic Professional Learning Community

A very significant area of improvement in 2016 was the upgrading of the school's facilities and infrastructure.

The school's website has a copy of the school's Annual Improvement Plan if you wish to explore this topic further.

Priority Key Improvements for 2017

The school uses the National Improvement Tool to guide its Annual Improvement Plan.

In 2017 the 3 areas selected are: Faith Formation, Analysis and Discussion of Data and An Expert Teaching Team.

Priority Key Improvements for 2017 include:

- The incorporation of Catholic Principles and Values into all KLA Programs

- Ongoing development of the Diocesan Learning Enhancement Strategy including MiniLit
- Data walls to be enhanced and expanded across each grade
- Enhancing the school as a Catholic Professional Learning Community
- A very significant area of improvement in 2017 will be the completion of the school's major building works with the completion of a new library and flexible learning spaces for our Year 5 and Year 6 students. This will see all the students at the school working in flexible and collaborative spaces that require new and creative teaching practices. The school will focus heavily this year in ensuring our teachers and support staff are best equipped to utilise these spaces for enhanced educational outcomes.

The school's website has a copy of the school's Annual Improvement Plan if you wish to explore this topic further

SECTION TEN: 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 has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

This year, as they have done for the past few years, the Catholic Schools Office commissioned a Queensland based company, MYP Corporation to conduct parent, staff and student surveys of the St Nicholas School community. The 5 areas surveyed were: Leadership, Resources, Catholic Ethos, Teaching/Learning and Improvement Process. The results are based on a 5 point scale: 4-5 An excellent outcome, 3-4 A fair to good score, 2-3 A poor result, 1-2 There are significant issues 0-1 Very poor result.

Parents rated the school 4.39 on Leadership, 4.17 on Resources 4.17, on Catholic Ethos 4.16, on Teaching and Learning and 4.09 Improvement Processes. The results and comments made in the survey help inform the School's Annual Development Plan. The average score was 4.19

This data is important in helping the school plan for the following year as well as addressing pressing concerns as soon as possible.

Student Satisfaction

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Students rated the school 4.48 on Leadership, 4.03 on Resources, 4.44 on Catholic Ethos, 4.42 on Staff Engagement and 4.24 on Improvement Process. The results and comments made in the survey help inform the School's Annual Development Plan. The average score was 4.30.

This data is important in helping the school plan for the following year as well as addressing pressing concerns as soon as possible.

Teacher Satisfaction

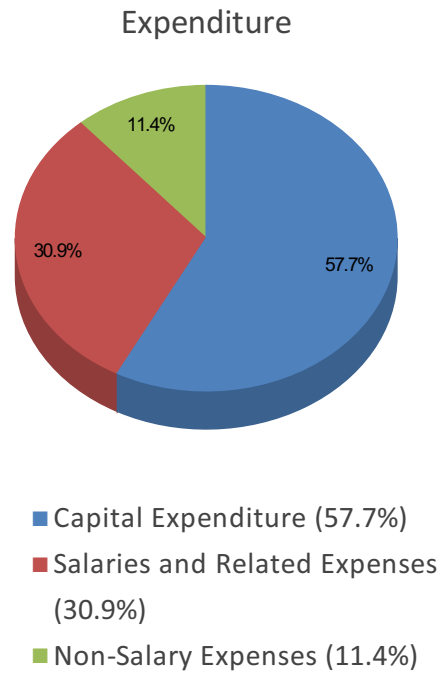
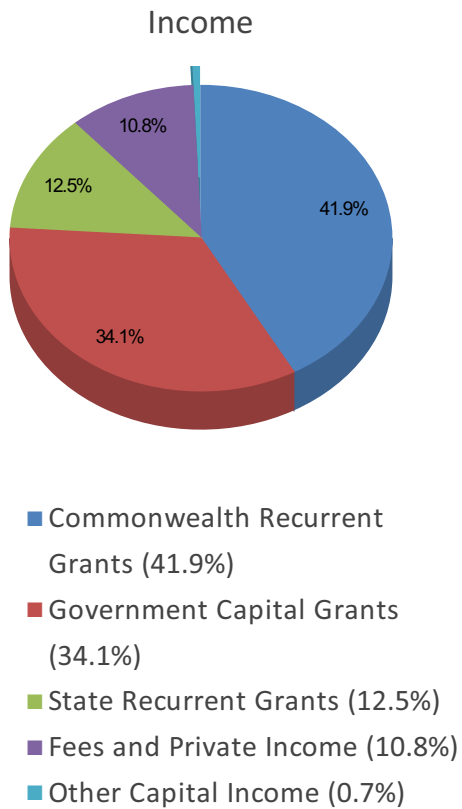
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Teachers rated the school 4.28 on Leadership, 4.38 on Resources, 4.35 on Catholic Ethos, 4.22 on Staff Engagement and 4.20 on Improvement Process. The results and comments made in the survey help inform the School's Annual Development Plan. The average score was 4.24

This data is important in helping the school plan for the following year as well as addressing pressing concerns as soon as possible.

SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT



This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire. School Financial Information for the 2016 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$3,680,264
Government Capital Grants ²	\$2,993,300
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$1,095,815
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$946,454
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$61,540
Total Income	\$8,800,368

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$7,081,519
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$3,787,298
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,403,522
Total Expenditure	\$12,272,339

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.