

St Patrick's Primary WALCHA  
Annual School Report to the Community

2017



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**Principal**

Mr Michael Ball

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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St Patrick's Primary is registered by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA). The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale is 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 **School** Consultant who monitors that the School has appropriate processes in place to ensure compliance with all NESA 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**

The staff, students and parents of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School form a close knit educational community which was founded by the Mercy Sisters in 1911.

This report highlights the school's quality teaching and learning experiences and achievements as well as our participation in many events. It reflects the School's Mission Statement and school motto "Growing in Wisdom and Faith". As a school community, our school's mission is to provide an inclusive Catholic environment where the Gospel values of Wisdom and Faith can grow and be nourished. We aim to develop individuals to their full potential and instil in each person a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and respect for the needs of others and for the environment in which we live.

This report reflects on all that has been achieved and realised throughout the year. I hope that all members of the community continue to feel a sense of pride and achievement in our school and that this report portrays that St Patrick's as a small school with a big heart.

### **Parent Body Message**

We are very proud of the activities that have taken place over the past 12 months. We have had quite a good year with fundraising raising over \$10 000.

We achieved this total by running street stalls, business lunches, Mother's and Father's Day gift stalls, student 'Glow' disco and a Tea Towel and Apron drive.

Some of the things that the P&F have purchased this year are: Incursions and excursions for all grades, Mini Minstrels for Years K and 1, classroom stationary, Reading Eggs and Mathletics.

The P&F play a vital role in the social calendar of St Patrick's by providing lunch and sweets at all major carnivals and welcoming new parents to the school. The P&F continues to focus on building community spirit at St Patrick's and remain committed to fundraising that will enhance the education experience of all our children. P&F Representative 2017

### **Student Body Message**

This year saw the school appoint two female school captains. Our year was a successful one for the students of St Pat's. We attended the usual community events such as the ANZAC Day March and Remembrance Service as well as Land Council events put on by our local indigenous leaders. We also joined the students from Walcha Central School for NAIDOC Week events and community events. The highlight of our year was the school performance titled "Be the Change" that the Year 5/6 students wrote and choreographed. Every student and teacher in the school was involved and it was a brilliant night. The school also successfully ran all of the annual events such as Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country carnivals and many children qualified to go the Diocesan Level and some made the Diocesan team to go the the Polding Trials. In conclusion we had a fantastic year and and made sure that we did what our principal asked and worked hard every day to 'Get Smarter.'

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## SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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St Patrick's Primary is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in WALCHA.

St Patrick's is located in Walcha, which is 65km south west of Armidale, 110km East of Tamworth and a two and a half hour drive from the coast either to Port Macquarie along the Oxley Highway or through Nowendoc to Forster. Walcha Shire has a population of 3021 people and supports both a Central School and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. A number of our students travel great distances, with some travelling up to 45 minutes in a bus to get to school.

St Patrick's School, Walcha, was established in August, 1911 by the Sisters of Mercy in what is now St Patrick's Hall. The Sisters provided a Catholic education for the pupils of the Walcha district for 64 years. In 1975 St Patrick's became the first school in the Armidale Diocese to form a School Board, and in 1976, it was the first school in the Diocese to appoint a lay principal. The current classrooms were opened in 1977 and dedicated to the Sisters of Mercy.

Upgrades occurred in 2006 with a new Covered Outdoor Learning Area, Canteen & Amenities Block being completed at the end of the 2006 school year and officially opened in May 2007. In 2011 the School celebrated its Centenary and with funds from the Building the Education Revolution the School has its first purpose built Library and Administration building which were opened in March 2012.

A number of school events are organised to ensure we highlight and acknowledge our traditions, celebrate our learning and special days and showcase our programs. Some of these events include:

- St Patrick's Feast Day
  
- Catholic Schools Week
  
- Kindergarten Orientation and the Transition Program
  
- Literacy Week
  
- Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparent's Day celebrations
  
- STEP days at O'Connor Catholic College
  
- ANZAC Remembrance Day Commemorations

- Mini Minstrels
  
- Presentation night and Year 6 Graduation Mass.

Throughout the year students represented the school at Diocesan and Polding (State Catholic Schools) levels in sports such as swimming, cross country and athletics.

Parents have numerous opportunities to be involved in many aspects of school life. The P & F actively supports the school through fundraising and community building events. The School Board advises the principal and Parish Administrator in areas of policy, budgeting and maintenance works. Parents are always welcomed at assemblies, prayer and church celebrations. We encourage parents to visit and work in classrooms throughout the year.

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## SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

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### 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 2017:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
42	52	0	94

\* 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 2017 was 89.57%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	91.00%
Year 1	90.00%
Year 2	90.00%
Year 3	90.00%
Year 4	89.00%
Year 5	89.00%
Year 6	88.00%

### 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;
- 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 School Consultant will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies, if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.



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## SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

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The following information describes the staffing profile for 2017:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
8	5	13

\* This number includes 4 full-time teachers and 4 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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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:

<b>Term 1</b>	Analysis of Student Data, Child Protection, Literacy Pedagogy-Reading
<b>Term 2</b>	Spirituality Retreat, R.E Programming, Core Catholic Principles and Values
<b>Term 3</b>	The 14 Parameters (Sharratt), R.E Programming, 7 Steps to Writing
<b>Term 4</b>	14 parameters, 7 Steps to Writing

Professional development of each staff member is highly valued at St Patrick's. Professional learning took many forms, including: whole school staff days, subject specific inservices and a familiarisation programs for NSW Syllabi for the Australian Curriculum provided for us by the Catholic Schools Office. There was a particular focus on the work of Lyn Sharratt (14 Parameters), Literacy and Religious Education in 2017.

### Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the categories determined by NESA:

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>		<b>Number of Teachers</b>
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	8
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

St Patrick's 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.

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. St Patrick's School is for many students the only link they have with the Catholic Church. As a result, the school tries to ensure that the students have regular exposure to prayer, liturgy, the Mass and the Sacraments. Each day, morning assembly begins with the school prayer (led by our School Captains).

Throughout the day, students participate in class and individual prayers. The children attend Masses on alternate Fridays with a rostered class undertaking preparation of the Mass, this was a part of the students ongoing Faith Formation. In 2017, St Patrick's School was involved in three Sacramental programs – Confirmation, Reconciliation and First Eucharist - as part of the St Patrick's Parish Sacramental preparation. Members of staff were involved in the preparation of Sacramental classes and proclaiming the Word at the weekday and Sunday Masses.

The students of St Patrick's have 180 minutes of Religious Instruction in the classroom each week. The students, to gain a better understanding of the mission of the Catholic Church on a more universal scale, were involved in various fundraising activities to support the charitable works of CARITAS Australia and the Catholic Missions. During the year, the work of these charitable organisations was outlined to the students by guest speakers and through the use of multimedia resources. Students were encouraged to contribute to the Project Compassion boxes throughout Lent. Multiple fundraisers were held to raise money for the Catholic Missions in Term 3.

Individual teachers accepted opportunities to attend spiritual formation and reflection days throughout the year including an REC Retreat Day; Teachers Retreat Day; Staff Retreat Day and Spirituality afternoons; New Employees Retreat Day and the R.E.C. Conference held over three days.

Throughout 2017 the Parish Administrator regularly visited the school. Parishioners were invited to special school Masses, liturgies and celebrations throughout the year. These included Masses for the reception of the Sacraments of First Eucharist and Reconciliation, special Feast days, Opening School Mass and Graduation Mass, Presentation Night and School Assemblies.

Students in Years 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used

to inform future teaching and learning in Religious Education

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<b>Our School's average result (as a mark out of 50)</b>	
Year 6	27.6

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## SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

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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.

Curriculum development in 2017 was focused on the continual improvement of pedagogy in English and Mathematics in accordance to the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum. In addition a focus was made in the continued implementation of the History and Geography curriculum.

Teachers undertook professional development in programming R.E Lessons as well as developed our ability to use student data to direct future teaching and learning in our classes.

St Patrick's continued to utilise the Best Start Program to assess Kindergarten students in their first weeks of entering school. From this assessment planning and programming was put in place to best meet the needs of these individual students. This assessment continued to be ongoing throughout the year. All staff continued to use the Literacy Continuum to plot children and track progress in learning. Individual Plans were written and implemented for students on integrated funding and our Educational Assistant worked with them to achieve the set outcomes. The students entered various competitions in support of the local community.

The Students from Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 participated in a fortnightly Mini Minstrels music program presented by the New England Conservatorium of Music (NECOM). Some primary students participated in the University of New South Wales ICAS tests for Mathematics, Spelling, Writing, Technology and Science. A number of students received Distinctions and credits in the various subjects.

St Patrick's has under the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan (LNAP), received an proportionate allocation of teacher time to support and monitor the implementation of the K-2 Diocesan Learning Enhancement Strategy.

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

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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 2017		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	36.00%	51.60%	0.00%	10.00%
	<b>Writing</b>	45.00%	44.60%	0.00%	7.50%
	<b>Spelling</b>	18.00%	45.60%	18.00%	13.10%
	<b>Grammar</b>	45.00%	55.50%	27.00%	10.50%
	<b>Numeracy</b>	9.00%	39.80%	0.00%	11.40%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2017		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	29.00%	37.00%	14.00%	14.60%
	<b>Writing</b>	10.00%	15.80%	24.00%	19.40%
	<b>Spelling</b>	15.00%	34.30%	24.00%	14.10%
	<b>Grammar</b>	24.00%	35.40%	43.00%	17.50%
	<b>Numeracy</b>	10.00%	27.90%	29.00%	14.60%

### **Student Welfare Policy**

No changes to 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.

No changes to 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.

### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention 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 *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**

As a staff and community, we continued to implement a Positive Behaviour for Learning program which targeted an approach where students were increasingly recognised for the efforts. This involves finding the core values of the school, the expectations of the school and the rewards and acknowledgments of the school. More community gatherings were created where students and parents would come together to acknowledge the achievements of the students.

St Patrick's was involved in a wide variety of community service activities throughout the year including participation and representation at official ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day Services. The students were encouraged throughout the year to take responsibility for their own actions. The use of the You Can Do It Program was incorporated to selected classes on a needs basis. Many children volunteered to attend and perform at the local Carols by Candlelight.

The Year 6 students as part of their leadership role undertook the GRIP Leadership program. One aspect of the leadership responsibilities of the primary classes is to be a buddy to an infant's student. This gives younger students an older child that they can go to for help and support.



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 2017**

#### Catholic Core Principles and Values and Religious Education

- Continue to develop the use of the C.C.P&V document into Key Learning Areas;
- Improve R.E Pedagogy by analysing previous student data and implementing a viable and essential curriculum

#### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy

- Implement the Catholic Schools Office - Armidale's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy Literacy
- Improve Literacy pedagogy in particular student's growth in writing according to the Literacy Continuum

#### Teacher Capacity and Collaboration

- Staff use the AITSL standards to create personal learning plans to drive professional development
- Staff continue to implement the required stages of creating a Professional Learning Community
- Staff work in Professional Learning Teams to analyse students progress and create suitable teaching and learning opportunities to cater the student's needs.

### **Priority Key Improvements for 2018**

#### Faith Formation

- Catholic Principals and Values
- Faith Formation and Well Being Framework

#### Learning

- Collaborative Inquiry Initiative
- 7 Steps to Writing Implementation

## Collaboration

- Learning Intentions and Success Criteria
- SMART Data

## Capacity Building

- Staff Personal Learning Plans
- Learning Walks

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**

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.

In 2017 Parents were surveyed by an independent specialist corporation. Parents were offered the opportunity to provide feedback across 28 different areas. 41 parents (51% of parents offered) responded a 'Good' rating to all but one area. The parents identified that the school provided a safe place for their child and had an interest in their child as the two highest ranking answers.

**Student Satisfaction**

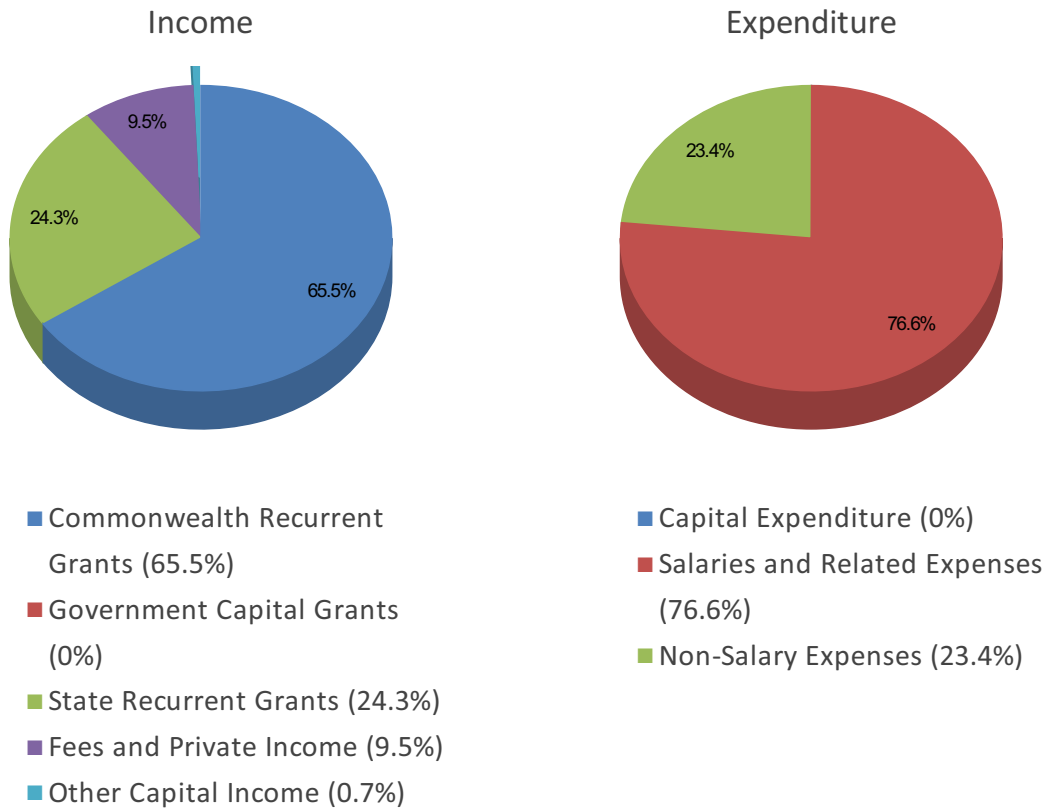
In 2017 Students in Years 3 and 6 were surveyed by an independent specialist corporation. Students were given the opportunity to provide feedback in 22 different areas. The students gave a 'Good' ranking to all but 3 areas. The highest ranking responses were that the school encourages students to do their best and care for each other.

**Teacher Satisfaction**

In 2017 the Staff was surveyed by an independent specialist corporation. The staff was given the opportunity to provide feedback in 40 different areas involving their position. All but 5 areas were given a "Good' rating and the others a "Satisfactory' ranking. The highest score was given to the question regarding job satisfaction and recommending the school to other teachers to work at. . No areas requiring attention were identified.

While the survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction in every area, the comprehensive reports will be analysed closely by the Leadership Team and School Advisory Council to identify areas of priority for school improvement

**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 2017 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$1,019,721
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$378,221
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$148,463
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$10,787
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,557,192</b>

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$583
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$1,137,299
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$347,262
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$1,485,144</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 Diocesan 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.