



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School East Gosford

2013 Annual Report



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1. Message from Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

Diverse curricula activities initiated by a caring and dedicated team of professionals, well-maintained grounds and facilities and parental involvement combine to offer excellent learning opportunities at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, East Gosford. St Patrick's is blessed with a dedicated and caring staff who have created a loving Christian environment that is the essence of all we do. St Patrick's School is a place where disciples of Jesus are formed and nurtured to achieve excellence in order to make a difference in the world.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

There is a very strong partnership between parents and the school, which contributes significantly to the sense of community at St Patrick's and the nurturing environment in which our children are educated. Parents and teachers alike continue to place great value in working as a team to promote learning and in developing respectful and responsible children. The involvement of parents in school programs and activities is very high, with many parents helping out in canteen, in classrooms, at school carnivals and events and attending important school events such as school and class Masses and assemblies. The P&F remains focused on holding events and activities for students, parents and teachers to maximise the sense of community in the school and further encourage parental involvement and partnering with the school.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

2013 has been a year of opportunities for the students of Year 6. Not only have we been to Canberra, participated successfully in numerous gala days, hit the beach with our surf fun day but also we have played an important part in preparing the students of the school for the 'KidsMatter' launch in Term 2 through our peer support program. This term our fundraising has also helped us to come together as a grade so that we can show our appreciation of school life here at St Patrick's by buying a garden feature for the garden being constructed with the help of our friends from St Edward's, East Gosford.





2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2013:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
177	189	94	9	366

*Language background other than English

2.2 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Enrolment Policy](#)† which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

†Copies of this policy and other policies in this report may be obtained from the Catholic Schools Office website at: <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/about/index.html> or by contacting the Catholic Schools Office.

2.3 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

- a) have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- b) have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications
- c) do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:
 - to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
 - as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

a	b	c	Total
25	0	0	25

Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school's profile page on the *My School* website.

2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2013 was 94%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

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



2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

Staff were asked to provide open responses to the most valued aspects of St Patrick's. The most frequently nominated aspects were:

- professional learning opportunities: new syllabus - English and Maths embedding a consistent programming and teaching approach across the school;
- data tracking system has become embedded within the school reporting system giving ongoing and current academic progress information;
- revitalised Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) card informs parents of an accurate reflection of their child/s behaviour throughout the week;
- purchase of guided readers for Infants and Primary classes;
- play pod initiative on Infants' campus;
- social events and celebrations of staff;
- refined practice in Work Health and Safety (WHS);
- supportive and forward thinking leadership team; and
- KidsMatter launch.

2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

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

The average student attendance rate for 2013 was 96%.

Management of non-attendance: In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the Principal:



- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging;
- maintains accurate records of student attendance;
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise;
- communicates to parents and students, the school's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations; and
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.

The Catholic Schools Office monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system's School Review and Development processes.

2.7 Student Satisfaction

Science has had a greater focus this year and it has been fantastic visiting St Edward's and making use of their laboratories. We also participated in a science fun day again at St Edward's run by the University of Newcastle. Being able to conduct experiments has made science real and we look forward to studying this subject in high school.





3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Patrick's continues a proud history of providing quality Catholic education in Gosford and its surrounding areas. This dates back to 1910 when the Sisters of St Joseph established the school as Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School, Gosford, making it the oldest Catholic Primary school on the Central Coast. The school was established on its present site by the Sisters in 1960. In 1967 St Patrick's became a Primary school catering for K to 6 students. At St Patrick's, Catholic Discipleship is promoted by providing a distinctively Catholic school where Christ's Gospel message is witnessed, acknowledging our faith identity as part of the Broken Bay Diocese and wider Catholic church, and imparting knowledge and understanding of Catholic history, traditions and rituals in our contemporary setting.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

St Patrick's has a strong religious dimension that is evident throughout the school. Children are exposed to a rich variety of Liturgical experiences and have daily exposure to Gospel values through all Key Learning Areas and interaction with staff and parents.

Each term a Liturgical calendar reflects the involvement of children in whole school Masses, Liturgical celebrations and special Feast Days. Children in Years 3 to 6 celebrate Reconciliation once a term. The sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist are received by children from Years 2 to 6. In 2013, we continued the sacramental enrichment days before the children received each sacrament. This again was very well received by both our own children and parents and those from the other local non-Catholic schools who were invited to join us. The school supported the local St Vincent de Paul chapter by holding Mini-Vinnies meetings and collecting items for the Winter Appeal.

During 2013 the children and staff have been enriched by a wide variety of prayer experiences. Each Friday morning, the school staff gathers to participate in communal prayer. Each class has prayer during the day at regular intervals, both formally and informally, and have prayer tables that display the colours and symbols of the liturgical seasons throughout the church year. Weekly assemblies are held and begin with the St Patrick's school prayer. Prayer assemblies have been held for Lent, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, Advent and Mission Week. Feast Days and special seasons are celebrated through Masses and Liturgies. In particular, the school's patron, Saint Patrick, was commemorated with a special Mass on the 18th of March.

In 2013 the school continued with the prayer practice called the "Examen". Each day at a set time the students have been given the opportunity to pray about and reflect upon on their day using a simplified form of spiritual examination as practiced by St Ignatius of Loyola.





3.3 Catholic Worldview

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School aims to present quality education as an expression of the Catholic Worldview. We therefore seek to offer opportunities to apply that Worldview to all aspects of life both within and outside the school. The Catholic Worldview is evident within the school's Key Learning Areas and policies. Each week the newsletter includes a reflection on the week's Gospel providing a Catholic Worldview perspective and an outline of upcoming Liturgical events. Throughout the year St Patrick's was involved in a variety of social justice initiatives. We have had a variety of collections for Project Compassion and St Vincent de Paul. The children were actively involved in Mission week activities with money raised going to the Salvatorian project in the Philippines.

3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Accreditation Policy for Staff in the Diocesan School System in respect to the Mission of the Church](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

Five teachers are currently undertaking a Masters in Religious Education, in addition to the school's program of staff spirituality and professional learning opportunities.



4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Behaviour Management and Student Discipline](#) Policies including Student Welfare and Anti-Bullying, which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

Derived from the Diocesan policies, St Patrick's Catholic Primary School has developed a Pastoral Care Policy and Support Document and an Anti-Bullying Policy in consultation with the school community. The implementation of the Pastoral Care policy promotes the ongoing formation of students in self-discipline, responsibility and faith. In 2009, a Behaviour Management Framework was implemented called Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL). This approach has a strong emphasis on teaching appropriate behaviours and providing systems of support to bring about these positive behaviours. In 2013 KidsMatter, an Australian Primary Schools Mental Health initiative, was officially launched to improve the mental health and wellbeing of our students. Both these approaches are strongly supported by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Many support structures exist for families within the St Patrick's school community. The class teachers, Learning Support Team, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Co-ordinator, Parish Priest and the Principal all work closely with parents during the year to provide appropriate support for each child and their family. Where necessary, families were referred to the School Counsellor and, where needed, to local health and counselling agencies for professional support. Our Care Group provides meals and support for families in times of crisis.

4.4 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a [Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures](#) which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.5 Work Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for WHS and complies with the Australian Standard for WHS Management Systems. The WHSMS adopted by the CSO for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a 'safe and supportive' environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant CSO personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with WHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual WHS Plan. External WHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

In 2013 the school continued to focus on addressing the learning needs of the students, particularly in the areas of Reading and Number. The school leadership team was involved in leading professional development, resourcing these areas and modelling classroom practice.

All teachers began the year by conducting a Mathematical Assessment Interview (MAI) on their students to identify their mathematical understanding in number, and hence their point of need. This informed the grouping of students and their subsequent teaching and improved the students' learning.

Intervention groups in Numeracy were established and assisted teachers to meet specific needs of students which resulted in improving the confidence of these students to participate more willingly in class lessons. An extension program in Numeracy was continued for students in Stages 2 and 3 which allowed selected children to expand their understanding and mathematical skills by spending time problem solving with peers of similar ability.

5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 3 and 5 undertook tests as part of the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3**, students placed in Band 1 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are performing at a standard deemed to be above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 and 6 are “at proficiency”.
- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are performing above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 7 and 8 are “at proficiency”.
- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions.
- State data for band distributions is sourced from the School Measurement and Reporting Toolkit (SMART2), developed by NSW Department of Education and Communities. All national data and state figures for the percentage at or above national minimum are sourced from the NAPLAN Summary Report (Preliminary Results for Achievement) published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). All school data is sourced from SMART2. Because figures are rounded and exempted students are not included in Band distributions, percentages may not add up to 100.
- In the 2013 cohort, there were **(41)** students in Year 3 and **(44)** students in Year 5.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are shown separately for Years 3 and 5. Additional information can also be accessed from the *My School* website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>).



Band Distributions (%) – Year 3

		Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	State	2.8	9.7	16.3	24.6	18.7	27.9	96.3
	National	2.8	8.7	17.3	23.5	22.6	23.2	95.3
	School	0	7.9	13.2	31.6	23.7	23.7	100
Writing	State	2.0	5.5	15.2	23.1	37.0	17.2	96.1
	National	3.1	5.2	14.3	28.8	29.9	16.7	95.0
	School	0	0	2.6	15.8	50	31.6	100
Spelling	State	4.4	5.6	17.6	22.8	24.3	25.3	95.5
	National	4.2	9.2	17.2	24.9	23.0	19.5	93.9
	School	2.6	5.3	23.7	26.3	23.7	18.4	97
Gr. & Punct.	State	3.2	7.5	14.2	20.7	23.7	30.7	96.4
	National	2.8	7.2	14.8	22.3	24.0	27.1	95.3
	School	2.6	2.6	23.7	23.7	21.1	26.3	97
Numeracy	State	2.8	8.3	21.5	28.7	24.8	14.0	96.5
	National	2.3	9.9	23.9	30.4	20.6	11.0	95.8
	School	0	0	13.5	35.1	35.1	16.2	100

Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	State	1.8	9.4	22.6	28.9	22.1	15.3	97.0
	National	1.9	9.9	23.4	30.0	21.9	10.9	96.2
	School	0	12.2	19.5	29.3	26.8	12.2	100
Writing	State	6.3	8.8	32.3	29.7	15.2	7.8	93.1
	National	6.4	11.8	28.1	31.8	15.0	5.1	91.7
	School	7.3	7.3	31.7	39	12.2	2.4	93
Spelling	State	5.5	8.1	21.1	27.3	24.7	13.2	94.4
	National	5.0	11.7	23.1	27.9	19.5	10.9	93.1
	School	7.3	9.8	17.1	34.1	26.8	4.9	93
Gr. & Punct.	State	4.6	9.3	21.8	22.3	23.1	19.0	95.8
	National	3.3	10.5	22.7	28.3	21.2	12.0	94.8
	School	4.9	17.1	12.2	26.8	24.4	14.6	95
Numeracy	State	5.1	15.1	25.7	26.4	13.0	14.8	94.0
	National	4.7	15.4	26.4	26.7	15.7	9.3	93.4
	School	2.4	9.8	36.6	31.7	14.6	4.9	98

It is pleasing to note that in Year 3 there is a higher percentage of children above the national benchmark than both the State and National percentages in ALL areas. This trend was continued in Year 5 in the areas of Reading and Numeracy where our greatest professional learning has occurred with a focus on catering for a diverse range of learners.

We have implemented significant precision around the teaching of Reading across the school in the last three years. The high percentage of students achieving minimum standards (100% in both Years 3 and 5) in 2013 is testament to the focus on the Reading differentiation strategies implemented and developed. Similarly, the high percentage of students achieving minimum standards (100% in Year 3 and 98% in Year 5) in 2013 compared to National figures, is testament to the focus on the implementation of a range of teaching strategies to improve student understanding in Mathematics.



5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

Students were given the opportunity to participate in choir, private music lessons (keyboard and guitar), chess and board games; various inter-school and Diocesan sporting events, surf safety days at Terrigal Beach for all primary children, a two week intensive swimming program for children in Years 1 and 2, Public Speaking competitions, National Young Leaders Day and the Peer Support program.



5.4 Professional Learning

This year, Staff Development days were dedicated to:

- Staff spirituality (the place of life stories through meditation and storytelling in scripture using Lectio Divina);
- aligning English teaching and learning programs with the whole school Scope and Sequences based on the new NSW English Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum;
- planning, programming and preparation for the introduction of the NSW Mathematics syllabus for the Australian Curriculum;
- Leading Learning – Australian Curriculum;
- Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) & anaphylaxis training;
- The school's leadership team continued to participate in the Leading Learning Forums that are part of a partnership between the Diocese of Broken Bay and the University of Auckland; and
- There were many staff meetings devoted to teaching reading, small group instruction, differentiation, growth points in Number, point of need lessons and resourcing both learning areas.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2013 Priorities and Achievements

The 2013 priorities, named in the 2012 annual report, were addressed as follows:

Catholic Life and Mission: To consolidate the “Examen” prayer technique right across the school.

Throughout 2013 the “Examen” prayer technique was embedded in the daily routine: at a set time the students were given the opportunity to pray about and reflect upon on their day using a simplified form of spiritual examination as practiced by St Ignatius of Loyola.

Learning and Teaching: To improve student Mathematical understanding in the number strand.

To improve student Literacy skills, particularly in Reading.

In 2013 the school continued to focus on addressing the learning needs of the students, particularly in the area of Reading and Number. The school leadership team were involved in leading professional development, resourcing these areas and modelling classroom practice.

All teachers conducted a Mathematical Assessment Interview (MAI) on their students at the beginning of the year to identify their Mathematical understanding in number, and hence their point of need. This informed the grouping of students and their subsequent teaching and improved the students' learning.

Intervention groups in Numeracy were established and assisted teachers to meet specific needs of students which resulted in improving the confidence of these students to participate more willingly in class lessons. An extension program in Numeracy was continued for students in Stages 2 and 3 which allowed selected children to expand their understanding and Mathematical skills by spending time problem solving with peers of similar ability.

In Literacy, the school focused on the daily English block, in particular the components of shared reading, explicit teaching and small group instruction followed by independent taskboard tasks. The school believes it is important that we have a consistent practice across the English block so students know their learning expectations and routines, no matter in which class they are. The school had a major focus on teaching Reading, in particular guided, reciprocal and Book Club reading sessions. Data walls were displayed to track the reading levels of the students across the school. This created a professional dialogue that assisted teachers in sharing Reading strategies and programs that in turn had a marked improvement on the reading levels of their students.





Pastoral Care: To foster an effective home/school partnership within the school community.

A range of opportunities were provided for parents to engage in the school community which included:

- parent sessions on teaching Reading and Spelling;
- parent sessions on resilience and student well-being;
- Dinner Dance and Trivia night;
- School Review parent forum;
- school website amended to include more information on learning and teaching matters as well as mental health information; and
- KidsMatter launch day activities.

6.2 2014 Priorities and Challenges

The following goals have been identified for our School Improvement Plan 2014:

Teaching and Learning:

To improve the valued learning outcomes of English and Maths:

- by Jan 2015, the number of students identified as vulnerable on MAI measures will decrease within the cohort;
- by Nov 2014, increase the number of students in PAT Maths stanine 7-9 within the cohort;
- by Feb 2015, the number of students identified as vulnerable on reading levels will decrease within the cohort; and
- by Nov 2014, increase the number of students in PAT Comprehension stanine 7-9 within the cohort.

Pastoral Care:

To improve the mental health and wellbeing of students.

Catholic Life and Mission:

To provide a rich contemporary prayer and Liturgical experience for students.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

P&F meetings continue to provide an important forum for parents to come together to contribute to school decision-making and share their views in relation to key issues affecting the school. Parents are highly active in the school with many parents volunteering to assist with the running of the canteen, in classrooms, at school carnivals and events, and in running Mothers' and Fathers' Day stalls and morning teas throughout the year on various occasions. There have been a number of key events held during the year which encouraged parents, school staff and the parish community to come together in a social setting – the biggest events being the Dinner Dance and the Trivia Night. These events were very successful and feedback from those who attended was very positive. Parents regularly support important school events such as school and class Masses and school assemblies. The activities carried out by parents and the P&F provide a financial contribution to the school which this year has contributed to the purchase of computers, levelled Readers, fabric for Infants' classroom walls and the redesign of a playground area.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

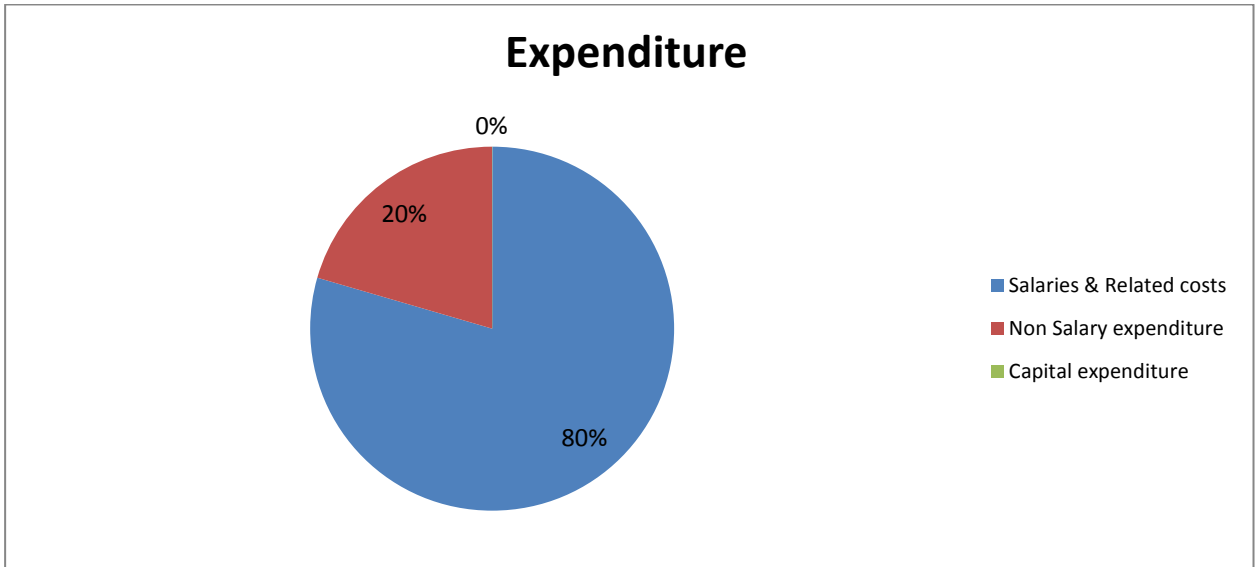
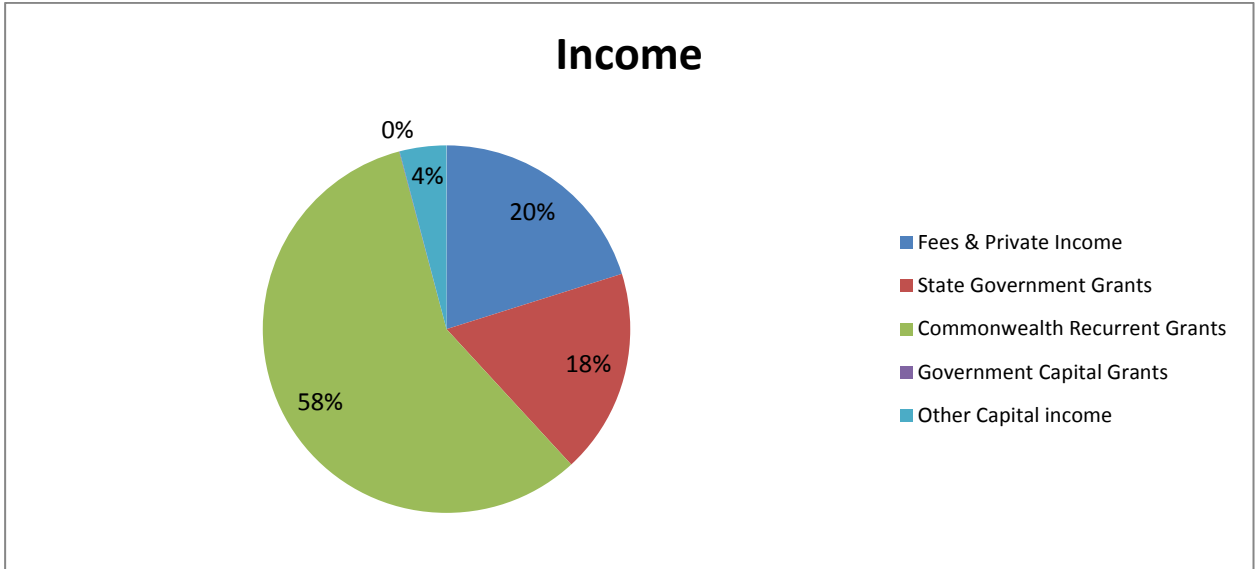
Parents regularly share their views and thoughts on the school in both formal settings such as P&F meetings and more informally. The feedback provided by parents in the School Review conducted in 2013 was very positive, with a strong focus on parents valuing the nurturing environment provided to students, the fact that the staff genuinely care for students and parents and that St Patrick's strikes an excellent balance in terms of focus on academic learning, sporting and other areas of development and developing well-rounded young people with strong values.





8. Financial Report

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below. More detailed financial data is available on the "myschool" website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au>. Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the Diocesan school system Annual Report, which will be available at <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au>



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School's consultant, Frances Reynolds.