

Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School Epping

2011 Annual Report



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1. Message from Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

This 2011 Annual Report of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School, Epping, provides the opportunity for the school community to reflect on the initiatives and achievements which occurred during the year. It also provides insights and directions for 2012.

Our Lady Help of Christians is a K-6 co-educational parish school where students are valued and difference is respected and celebrated. We are a strong and vibrant Catholic community where the partnership between students, staff, parents and the parish is fostered.

Hospitality and compassion are cornerstones of the school community as commitments are made to meet the needs of the poor in creative and collaborative ways. The Mercy spirit fosters influences and resources to assist the poor in more fully benefiting from and contributing to the common good.

The mission of the school is to maintain commitment to ensuring the respect and dignity of each individual while working in partnership with the parent community.

A dedicated staff focus on professional standards that make explicit the knowledge and skills underpinning outstanding teaching practice where at Our Lady Help of Christians School, excellent teaching is recognised as the single most powerful influence on achievement. 2011 was a year of review and reflection for the school. Highlights of the year are recorded in this Annual Report.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

2011 was another successful year for Our Lady Help of Christians Parent Community.

We welcomed a new Principal to the school. With support from the parent body, purchases were made to improve educational and infrastructure needs of the school.

The highlight of fundraising for the year was the Christmas Markets. A large number of visitors to the school ensured that this was a successful event.

Dads in the Classroom was a very successful programme in 2011 with many Dads helping in the classroom for each of these events.

Parents took the initiative to apply for community grants this year. A Northern Sydney Local Health District Grant promoting healthy living was secured to ensure greater engagement of the parent community.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

Our Lady Help of Christians is a welcoming community where we all feel valued and we are treated with respect by our teachers and our peers. Senior students have many opportunities to carry out their leadership roles, engaging with the entire school and parish community.

There are many times that we are able to come together as a whole school and celebrate. These activities include:

- whole school Masses;
- Dad's in the Classroom activities;
- Book Week Celebrations;
- School Assemblies;
- Buddy Programme;
- Library monitors & School choir;





- STARS Group (Students to assist and represent our school); and
- Social justice fundraising.



2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2011:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
74	54	21	0	128

*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:

- have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- 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
- 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
14	0	0	14

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 2011 was 96%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 100%.



2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers at the school indicated their satisfaction with a busy year offering a range of opportunities to engage in challenging professional development throughout the year. Teachers have engaged in professional dialogue to indicate their goals for the year. Active involvement in learning teams and regular opportunities to share understandings around current pedagogy has ensured that teachers ideas and opinions are valued as leaders of learning. Weekly staff prayer has been a valued spiritual celebration.

A small staff creates a supportive environment where teachers feel appreciated by the parent community.

2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Year	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	96%
1	95%
2	96%
3	97%
4	99%
5	93%
6	98%

The average student attendance rate for 2011 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
- 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

Students regularly participated in school governance through membership of the STARS (Students to assist and represent our school). The STARS manage their own fortnightly meetings with a teacher adviser at all meetings. The STARS relay ideas and information to the Principal and the school leadership team for approval. The major social justice initiative during 2011 was to invite a representative from the Cerebral Palsy Association to the school to create a learning opportunity for the entire school community.

The students performed for the Granny Smith Group, an elderly social group, at a local community hall where the audience showed appreciation for both singing and conversation provided by students from Years 1-6.

During 2011, the students of Years 5 and 6 enjoyed participation in the Diocesan joint musical performance at Waitara.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic School was founded by the Mercy Sisters. Sisters Bede Murphy and Malachy Boyle were the first teachers and founders of the school in 1908.

For the next seventy years the Mercy sisters committed themselves to service and compassion for all in the school community. They modelled a strong work ethic and were dedicated in their role of providing quality education for their students. The Mercy sisters have created a rich heritage for future generations. Their Mercy values of service, compassion and quality education have endured the test of time and continue to be central to the school's mission.

The Catholic Mercy heritage is what sets us apart from other schools. It is the anchor for the current school culture which aims to educate its students to be faith-filled contributors to the world of the future.



3.2 Religious Life of the School

The school is committed to educating the students in the Catholic faith. The staff worked to assist students to develop their relationship with Jesus. This has occurred in a variety of ways throughout 2011:

- the prayer and liturgical life of the school is valued and students are actively taught respect and protocols around worship;
- the Religious Education Co-ordinator, Staff and Students worked together, with input from the Parish Priest, to write a school prayer to be used when the school community gathers for special events;
- the school community worked with Andrew Chinn to write a school song. The song will be ready for recording in early 2012;
- the Religious Education Co-ordinator and Staff prepared whole school and class Masses and other liturgical celebrations during the year, ensuring that all students, teachers and parents had opportunities to be actively involved in the prayer life of the school;
- the whole school gathered on Monday and Thursday for prayers and assembly and a morning greeting;
- all classes set aside time each day for prayer;
- the staff met each Friday for morning prayer and reflection; and
- the Year 6 students led the school Thursday assembly in prayer.

As a Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Broken Bay we work in partnership with parents and parish.

This year all the students from Our Lady Help of Christians joined with the school community from St Gerard's, Carlingford in a combined school Mass to celebrate as one Parish of Epping and Carlingford.

- The choir and children from a variety of classes sang for the elderly parishioners, the Granny Smith Club and the Beecroft Nursing Home several times during the year. This was a source of great delight for both students and parishioners.
- The Religious Education Co-ordinator liaised with the sacramental coordinator during the year and school parents acted as hosts and group leaders for the parish based program. Teachers attended the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist.



- School and parish parents assisted with a Children's Mass each month. The morning tea served afterwards continued to be popular with the families.
- All of the Year 6 students attended the Year 6 Diocesan Cluster Mass and Mission Mass and staff attended the Diocesan Staff Mass. These were valued opportunities for the students and staff to be connected with the larger system of schools to which we belong.
- Primary classes attended parish Masses each term.
- Families from the school participated in the annual parish Mass and picnic.
- A Welcome Mass on Sunday for the new Kindergarten students was held to acknowledge the new students for 2012.
- Masses were celebrated in classrooms with Stage 2 classes.
- Hampers were collected by the school to donate to the St Vincent De Paul Organisation.

3.3 Catholic Worldview

The Catholic Worldview is the Catholic lens through which we, as Catholics, interact with the world. It is a tangible expression of the call to Catholic discipleship. The Catholic Worldview pervades all aspects of the school's life including its policies, practices and procedures.

Staff participated in weekly prayer each Friday morning. Individual members of staff are rostered on for organising, preparing and leading prayer.

Daily prayer took place each morning in all classrooms. This allowed children time to listen to God's call, reflect upon their lives and to talk to God. A prayer table and sacred space was a feature in every classroom. These were updated to reflect the current liturgical season.

The students in Year 6 participated in reflection days co-ordinated by the Parish Youth Worker and the team of support staff.

Social justice initiatives gave children a sense of proactive engagement with Catholic discipleship. The students were provided with numerous opportunities to engage in outreach activities.

In Term 1, the school supported Project Compassion. Fundraising initiatives were conducted in each classroom. This was supported by learning about the work of Caritas.

In Term 3, money was raised to support the Catholic Missions in Peru. A representative working in the Missions informed the children of how the money would be used and the life experienced by the people living in these needy areas.

In Term 4, money was raised for the Cerebral Palsy organization. A representative of the organization visited the school and explained her experiences of living with Cerebral Palsy.

3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a policy on the [Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

In 2011, the teachers engaged in Professional learning as they engaged in a Staff Development Day about assessment in the area of Religious Education. The Year 6 Religious Education test completed for the first time in Broken Bay Diocese was a data sample used for the purpose of this exercise.

The teachers also studied modules to be introduced in 2012 with a Mercy focus. The Mercy sisters were the founding order at Our Lady Help of Christians School.



4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Student Discipline](#) Policies 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

The staff completed their annual review of the Behaviour Management Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Pastoral Care Policy. All these policies were examined under the lenses of the Diocesan policies and changes were made to link school policies with Diocesan policies.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

The welfare fund that had been established in previous years continued and funds were used from this source to support the needy families within the school community.

The School Counsellor from the Catholic Schools Office continued to support the school and interacted with several students and their families during 2011. These needs were identified by classroom teachers in consultation with the Principal.

4.4 Resolving Issues

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

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

4.5 Occupational Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for OHS and complies with the Australian Standard for OHS Management Systems. The OHSMS 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 OHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual OHS Plan. External OHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.

During 2011, Our Lady Help of Christians School successfully completed an external audit of the management system.



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

All seven Key Learning Areas (KLAs) were taught across all seven grades (Religious Education, Mathematics, English, Personal Development Health and Physical Education, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment and Creative Arts). These KLAs are formulated by the NSW Board of Studies and schools are required to follow and implement the different curriculum. The units of content are covered in a two year Stage cycle ensuring a balance across content.

Following the Annual Plan for 2007 - 2010, Our Lady Help of Christians engaged in a complete review of the school.

Numeracy was the focus of professional development during the year. The school completed a two year project called 'Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning' (LTLL) in conjunction with the Australian Catholic University and Catholic Schools office. Teachers worked on professional development during staff meetings about explicit teaching of numeracy, they worked with an outside consultant to work on an inquiry model to further their own development and they learnt more about using data to reflect on classroom practice.

As a result of the review process and the professional development in the area of numeracy during 2011, teachers will use the framework used for the LTLL as a basis for future direction.

5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 3 and 5 sat 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 Training. All national data and state figures for the percentage at or above national minimum are sourced from the NAPLAN preliminary summary report published by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). 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 2011 cohort, there were 24 students in Year 3 and 14 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	3.7	10.5	18.2	21.2	17.5	29.0	95.4
	National	4.1	10.4	17.3	21.2	20.8	24.2	93.9
	School	0.0	0.0	4.2	16.7	16.7	62.5	100
Writing	State	2.0	4.0	12.4	20.7	43.0	17.8	96.4
	National	3.0	5.3	14.5	29.1	30.2	15.9	95.0
	School	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	45.8	45.8	100
Spelling	State	3.6	6.9	18.3	20.6	25.9	24.6	94.6
	National	5.2	9.7	17.7	24.7	22.6	18.1	92.8
	School	0.0	0.0	4.2	20.8	25.0	50.0	100
Gr. & Punct.	State	4.5	6.7	15.1	24.2	21.9	27.6	94.6
	National	5.0	8.8	15.0	21.0	21.6	26.7	93.0
	School	0.0	0.0	8.3	16.7	12.5	62.5	100
Numeracy	State	2.8	11.8	19.7	26.5	21.5	17.6	96.7
	National	2.4	11.4	23.8	27.3	19.9	13.3	95.7
	School	0.0	8.3	4.2	20.8	20.8	45.8	100

100% of the students in Year 3 from Our Lady Help of Christians achieved above the National minimum in Reading, Writing, Grammar and Numeracy. 100% of students were in the top three bands in Writing. More than 90% of students in Year 3 performed in the top three bands in Reading, Writing, Spelling, and Grammar and Punctuation. 87% of students in Year 3 performed in the top three bands in Numeracy.

These results indicate that these children are being well extended and have high levels of skill in these areas. The challenge in Numeracy will be to extend this cohort of children to further develop their knowledge and skills by providing explicit teaching in targeted areas that need to be strengthened. The school has taken a particular focus in numeracy teaching and learning over the past twelve months and it is expected that this will begin to have further impact in the years ahead.

Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	State	7.2	11.0	26.0	21.0	19.2	15.6	93.1
	National	6.7	13.8	23.2	25.7	18.1	10.7	91.5
	School	7.1	7.1	14.3	14.3	28.6	28.6	93
Writing	State	4.5	7.2	30.9	30.7	17.4	9.3	94.8
	National	6.0	11.9	26.5	30.7	16.3	6.6	92.1
	School	0.0	7.1	14.3	28.6	7.1	42.9	100
Spelling	State	4.8	8.9	24.4	26.8	21.6	13.6	93.8
	National	6.8	12.7	24.7	28.0	17.9	8.1	91.3
	School	7.1	14.3	14.3	0.0	57.1	7.1	93
Gr. & Punct.	State	6.5	8.7	20.7	23.0	24.8	16.3	93.5
	National	6.3	11.0	20.5	25.3	20.1	15.0	91.9
	School	0.0	14.3	21.4	0.0	21.4	42.9	100
Numeracy	State	4.1	9.8	27.7	29.3	13.7	15.4	95.4
	National	3.8	13.5	27.8	28.2	16.1	8.8	94.4
	School	0.0	0.0	21.4	42.9	21.4	14.3	100



100% of the students in Year 5 from Our Lady Help of Christians achieved above the national minimum in Writing, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. In the area of Reading and Spelling, 93% were at or above the national minimum.

NAPLAN data is available to study the progress of cohorts of children from Year 3 to Year 5. Data collated from the SMART website allows us the opportunity to study differences amongst schools in supporting the progress of specific cohorts of children through school.

Maths Olympiad

Talented mathematicians in the primary classes are offered the opportunity to participate in extension activities with an emphasis on problem solving. Each year a team of upper primary students enters the Australian Primary Schools Mathematical Olympiads that is held throughout South-East Asia where over 30,000 students participate. This year we entered a team of ten students from Years 5 & 6 in the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad Competition. This competition was comprised of five competitions throughout the year where the children were involved in rigorous problem solving activities.

5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

At Our Lady Help of Christians, the students are given opportunities to actively participate in a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Some of these include:

- Year 5 Debating (organised by local Rotary Club);
- Maths Olympiad (students from Year 5 and 6);
- Mandarin Language classes after school;
- Australasian School Competitions (Years 3 to 6, voluntary);
- School choir;
- Young Leaders Day (School Leaders);
- Public Speaking (Years 2 to 6) and Diocesan Public Speaking Competition
- Sports:
 - Cross country team
 - Swimming team
 - Athletics team
 - Soccer and netball gala days
 - Diocesan selection for sports (netball, softball, cricket, rugby, touch football etc)
 - School netball and soccer teams.



5.4 Professional Learning

Whole Staff Professional Learning:

- Religious Education and the new Religious Education Tests.
- Religious Education and incorporation of Mercy units into the Scope and Sequence.
- CPR – update.
- How to use the interactive whiteboards to support teaching and learning.
- Numeracy development.
- Analysis of data.



- NAPLAN analysis.
- Child Protection.
- School Review process.

Selected staff members:

- OHS Training.
- Finance and Budgeting for Schools.
- Educational leadership.
- Learning Support within the curriculum.
- ACTivate Life Long Learners Catholic Teachers Librarians Conference.
- ICLT in the Primary Classroom.
- Mentoring Program.





6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2011 Priorities and Achievements

The major priority and achievement of 2011 was to engage in a process of School Review. The school also successfully engaged in an Occupational Health and Safety audit.

2011 was the final year of a two year project, Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning. The Australian Catholic University, Catholic Schools Office and a number of schools in the Broken Bay Diocese were involved in the project.

6.2 2012 Priorities and Challenges

A major focus for the teachers and school community in 2011 will be:

- implement the recommendations and strategies suggested by the School Review process;
- continue to raise the profile of Our Lady Help of Christians in the local community;
- embed good practice initiatives developed in 2011 to improve student outcomes, particularly focusing on Mathematics; and
- continue to develop explicit targets in Mathematics, Spelling and Reading.





7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

There is a strong sense of community at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic School and parents are actively involved in all aspects of school life. The Parents and Friends Association (P&F) represents families and friends of the school and provides a vital link between parents and the school. The P&F provided extra support with the catering and other involvement needed for the School Review process in 2011.

Parents at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic School value education and are interested in all that pertains to their child's learning. The P&F is very active and involved in raising funds for the benefit of students, enhancing the profile of the school and strengthening ties within the school community. It is a very strong and active organisation and is an integral part of this school.

The P&F meets once each Term with the Executive meeting an additional four times. There is an annual election of office bearers to the Executive Committee. Their role is to facilitate, coordinate and organise activities within the Association.

The school promotes and encourages the concept of parents supporting the class teacher in optimising the learning opportunities for the children. Teachers value and appreciate the extra support provided by parents.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from parents about the school was received at P&F meetings, through the use of random interviews with parents before and after school and at a range of events throughout the year including social events and occasions such as parent/teacher meetings.

Data from these sources revealed that

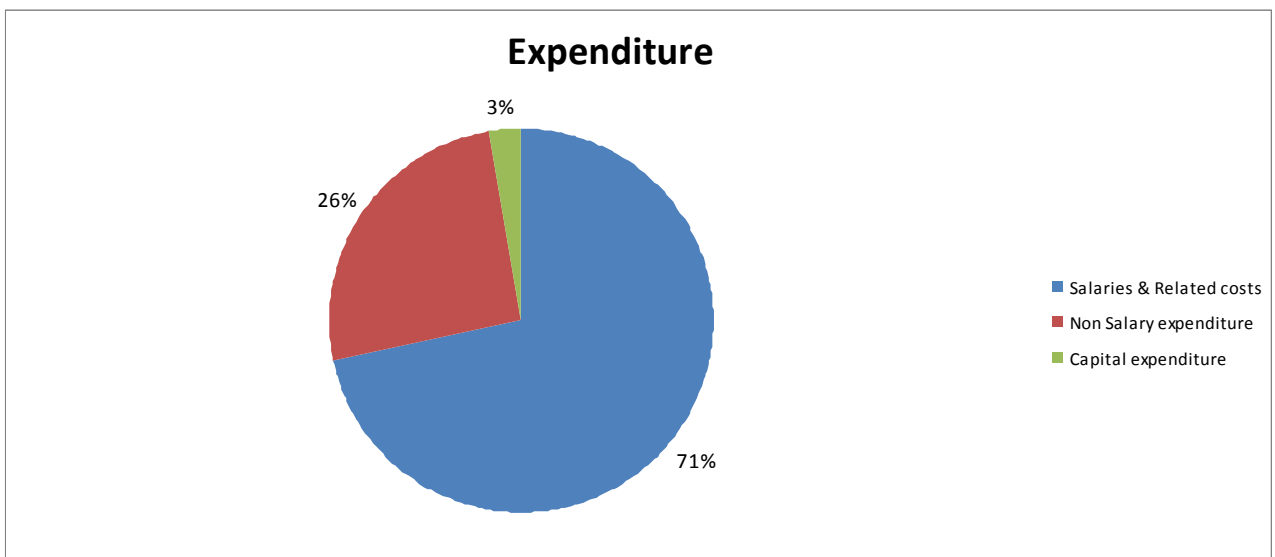
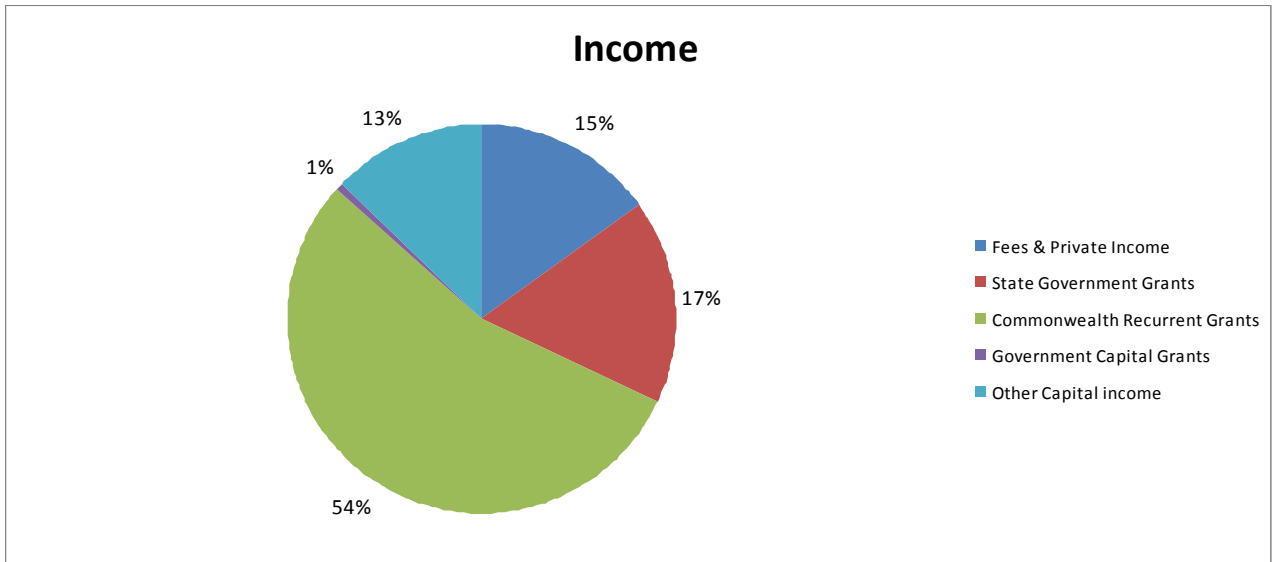
- parents responded positively to engaging in a busy year at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic School. The P&Fs' strong sense of community assisted in meeting the busy schedule and relationships were further developed;
- continued support for the involvement of the school with the Parish through children's liturgy;
- the involvement of the students at weekly assemblies is appreciated by the parent community; and
- parents appreciate the partnership that parents have with the school.





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 is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report at <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/resources/annrep.html>



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