



# Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School Epping

## 2012 Annual Report



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## **1. Message from Our School Community**

### **1.1 Message from the Principal**

We have much pleasure in presenting to the school community the 2012 Annual Report of Our Lady Help of Christians School which highlights the teaching-learning journey and achievements this year. Students are encouraged to strive for excellence in a stimulating classroom environment where they are challenged by dedicated teachers to develop their talents through a vibrant, contemporary curriculum.

Our mission is to prepare our students to respond in faith to a changing world and to respect and nurture each child.

Our Lady Help of Christians School is a welcoming, inclusive school where we work in respectful partnership with the parents and parish community to ensure that we prepare our children for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through challenging learning experiences.

### **1.2 Message from the Parent Body**

The parent community is appreciative of the opportunities provided for our children during 2012. The teachers are dedicated and keen to support the learning of each student. There have also been many chances for children to showcase their talents during 2012 through our first School Concert in many years.

There are many aspects of the warm and hospitable community that encourages parents, teachers and children to work together to make the school a happy place.

### **1.3 Message from the Student Body**

The student leaders reported that there have been many happy learning memories in 2012. The school concert was a highlight, followed by Night of the Notables. Trialling and using the new Active Expression devices to help us learn was very exciting.

We had Movie Night under the COLA for the first time and it was lots of fun.





## 2. School Profile

Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic School is part of the Parish of Epping and Carlingford located in the Broken Bay Diocese, on Sydney's North Shore, in the centre of the shopping area of Epping. The school is a two minute walk from Epping station and located on the parish grounds, behind the church. With a main entrance from Cambridge Street, the school can also be accessed from Oxford Street, which is the main street in Epping.

The school caters for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6. Students are drawn mainly from Epping, North Epping, Carlingford, Cheltenham, Beecroft, Eastwood and Marsfield. The school enjoys a positive profile in the local community and can be proud of its reputation for excellence in teaching and learning and a strong pastoral environment.

### 2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2012:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
73	59	19	0	132

\*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.cso.brokenbay.catholic.edu.au/resources/index.html> or by contacting the Catholic Schools Office.

### 2.3 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report details 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
16	0	0	16



## 2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2012 was 97%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2011 to 2012 was 93%.

## 2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers reported high levels of satisfaction in the school with Teachers expressing pride in their commitment to working as a team for the benefit of each student. They also value pastoral care and professionalism in their teaching and learning environment. They felt that the partnership with parents is a strong benefit to working successfully to improve learning outcomes.

They feel the core business of teaching and learning is supported with opportunities for staff to undertake professional learning. The staff also indicated that pastoral care and the building of community were strengths of the school.

## 2.6 Student Attendance

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

The average student attendance rate for 2012 was 97%.

**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**

There is a high level of student satisfaction at Our Lady Help of Christians School evidenced by the level of participation and excitement in all aspects of school life. The students are happy to come to school, enjoy opportunities to arrive at school early to participate in the choir, respond well and appreciate the opportunity to trial Active Expression Devices to enhance their learning and they enjoyed working on the eco garden during 2012. They are proud to 'show off' their school on Open Days or when visitors come to the school. They appreciate student awards which recognise their achievements.



### 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 2012:

- the prayer and liturgical life of the school is valued and students are actively taught respect and protocols around worship;
- the school community embraced the newly composed school prayer and it is now embedded in daily routines and formal occasions;
- the new school song was launched in Term 3 during a whole school Mass and will be incorporated in future whole school celebrations;
- traditional prayers (Angelus and Novenas) were introduced and parents were encouraged to participate;
- the Staff participated in collaboration with the parish Sacramental Coordinator in a retreat for First Holy Communion; and
- St Gerards School Carlingford and Our Lady Help of Christians held a combined schools Mass at Epping.

#### 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. The 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. During the year students and families have responded to community and global needs through Project Compassion and St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.



The Catholic Worldview is embedded in the whole curriculum, promoting an obligation to work to create social and environmental conditions that promote the care and respect of every person and all of creation. During 2012, Our Lady Help of Christians School through the student leadership team, promoted awareness for the charitable organisation 'Mercy Works' through fundraising.

### 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.

In accordance with our strategic plan, professional learning through staff meetings were facilitated. Topics included Mercy Works and the history of the Mercy charism. Staff attended a Staff Development Day at Our Lady of Mercy Convent, Parramatta to adapt Religious Education Modules about the Mercy Story 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 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

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

Our Lady Help of Christians School has supportive and welcoming class mother representatives who support the school community by acting as a link between the classroom, teacher and parents. All classes have two to three class mothers who provide a network of contact and support for all families. Their role within the school engages the community to promote pastoral care such as welcoming new families and fostering new relationships between parents and students. The class parent network supports parents when a family is in need of extra assistance, e.g. when a baby is born, illness or bereavement.

The School Counsellor from the Catholic Schools Office continued to support the school and interacted with several students and their families during 2012. 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.





## 5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

### 5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

Our Lady Help of Christians School is committed to providing quality education that strives to meet the needs of every child. Teachers use inquiry learning as an effective way to engage learners. During 2012, there were a number of areas of focus as part of the learning process to develop skills and dispositions for lifelong learners.

#### **Target setting**

*At the beginning of the year Classroom Teachers were asked to formulate specific targets in Numeracy, Spelling and Reading. Teachers used current assessment data to inform the targets that were set. Programmes were modified to include strategies designed to focus on these targets. Staff meetings were set-aside for professional dialogue about student progress and to review the achievement of targets.*

#### **Spelling focus**

*In addition to specific spelling targets, teachers were also challenged to reconsider the way they teach Spelling. Teachers participated in professional development focussing on teaching Spelling. Attention was given to identifying individual learning needs and tailoring learning programs appropriately.*

#### **Comprehension**

*All teaching staff attended a comprehension professional development in-service at the Catholic Schools Office. The day helped teachers to further understand the nature and role of comprehension in the development of student ability to read effectively. Teachers were exposed to numerous strategies that allowed Literacy to permeate across all Key Learning Areas.*

#### **Information Technology**

*New technologies have been introduced to all classrooms to enhance teaching and learning. Some of these technologies include hover cameras, flip cameras, 'ActivInspire' and 'ActivExpression' devices. Students and teachers have visited other schools in the Diocese to become more familiar with the ways these new technologies can be used in the classroom.*

#### **Ready-set-Grow**

*A teaching staff member attended a garden and composting workshop run by Hornsby Shire Council. The school then built its own no-dig garden bed and compost bin. The school initiated a 'crunch-n-sip' programme, whereby food scraps were consciously collected to facilitate composting. Stage 2 teachers integrated the 'Ready-set-Grow' initiative into their Science and Technology program.*

### 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 Summary Report (Preliminary Results for Achievement) published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). All school data is sourced from SMART2.
- In the 2012 cohort, there were 19 students in Year 3 and 16 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 *MySchool* 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
<b>Reading</b>	State	3.5	10.1	15.6	20.6	23.8	26.4	94.8
	National	4.5	9.3	15.7	21.5	21.5	25.5	93.5
	School	0	5.6	5.6	50	11.1	27.8	100
<b>Writing</b>	State	1.7	5.0	13.8	22.3	41.3	15.9	96.3
	National	2.7	4.9	13.7	30.0	31.9	14.8	95.3
	School	0	0	0	16.7	44.4	38.9	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	3.4	7.5	13.4	25.4	20.2	30.1	95.5
	National	4.0	8.9	17.5	23.8	22.1	21.8	94.0
	School	0	11.1	0	33.3	5.6	50	100
<b>Gr. &amp;Punct.</b>	State	5.1	7.4	12.7	19.0	22.0	33.7	94.6
	National	5.0	8.0	14.4	21.1	22.1	27.5	93.0
	School	0	11.1	0	5.6	27.8	55.6	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	3.8	9.3	20.2	27.8	21.2	17.7	95.0
	National	4.2	11.4	21.7	27.4	20.9	12.5	93.9
	School	0	5.6	11.1	44.4	16.7	22.2	100

The Year 3 results indicate strengths in Grammar and Punctuation, Spelling and Writing. 82% of our students achieved the top two Bands in Writing, well above the state and national average. In Grammar and Punctuation, 82% also achieved the top two Bands.

In the area of Numeracy for Year 3, almost half of our students achieved the top two Bands with results in number/ patterns/algebra and data/measurement/space/geometry being above the state average.



### Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	State	7.7	10.0	22.8	24.5	21.5	13.6	93.1
	National	6.2	11.6	22.1	26.5	19.5	11.9	91.8
	School	0	0	0	35.7	28.6	35.7	100
<b>Writing</b>	State	5.5	8.4	34.1	28.8	14.5	8.7	93.8
	National	5.8	12.6	30.1	30.1	14.1	5.3	92.2
	School	0	0	14.3	28.6	35.7	21.4	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	3.8	11.3	17.9	26.1	24.5	16.5	94.4
	National	5.4	11.7	22.2	27.1	20.3	11.3	92.6
	School	0	7.1	7.1	35.7	0	50	100
<b>Gr. &amp;Punct.</b>	State	7.8	12.8	20.8	23.5	14.5	20.7	92.3
	National	7.6	12.5	22.0	25.0	17.9	13.0	90.4
	School	0	0	7.1	21.4	7.1	64.3	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	5.2	11.8	23.9	28.0	15.4	15.8	94.7
	National	4.6	13.5	25.7	27.5	17.1	9.6	93.4
	School	0	0	0	50	21.4	28.6	100

In all areas of the NAPLAN testing, the percentage of Year 5 students in Bands 7 and 8 is well above the national average particularly in Grammar and Punctuation, Spelling, Numeracy, Writing and Reading. 100% of our students achieved above the national minimum standards in all areas. School results are showing consistent growth.

Teacher professional development in the area of Spelling has supported our results with 50% of our students in the top Band of Spelling.

### 5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

Students at Our Lady Help of Christians School participate in weekly sport and Physical Education with a specialist teacher. They also engage in interschool sport gala days. In 2012 we participated in athletics, swimming, cross-country, netball, soccer, cricket, rugby league and union and had visits from various sporting associations. Children are also given numerous sporting opportunities to represent their school at Cluster, Diocese and State level.

There are also many other activities for students to engage in such as:

- the opportunity for students in Years 3-6 to participate in the UNSW Assessments for English, Science and Mathematics;
- School Concert;
- the Primary Public Speaking Competition;
- Debating Program Years 5;
- Chinese language Mandarin Stars;
- Recorder groups;
- Choir;
- A3 Music Festival;
- Night of the Notables;
- Table Tennis Competition; and
- Eco garden activities.





## 5.4 Professional Learning

### Whole Staff Professional Learning:

Our teaching staff is highly qualified and share a willingness to participate in activities that can further develop them professionally and therefore have a positive impact on the teaching and learning of the students. An ongoing commitment to professional learning for all staff is a key strategic goal at Our Lady Help of Christians School. All teachers participated in a range of professional learning opportunities during 2012. The weekly staff meetings held each Thursday afternoon for one hour were dedicated to professional learning.

The Leadership Team attended several forums in 2012 as part of the Leading Learning Program. This is a Diocesan Schools System initiative supported by the University of Auckland's Centre for Educational Leadership designed to build leadership capabilities across teams and the school as a whole. It challenges leaders to think about what constitutes effective teaching and the importance of relational trust. The professional learning agenda focused on pedagogy and sharing innovative learning practices to improve student outcomes and to build leadership capacity.





## 6. Strategic Initiatives

### 6.1 2012 Priorities and Achievements

- We have explicitly linked the charism of the school curriculum and co-curricular life through continuing to develop the Mercy story at Our Lady Help of Christians School and introducing Religious Education Mercy modules from Kindergarten to Year 6.
- Agreements about effective assessment plans and teacher professional development around spelling and comprehension strategies was effective.
- Community building has been an ongoing priority and during 2012, we showcased student talents at a School Concert.

### 6.2 2013 Priorities and Challenges

- Enhance teacher practice through professional learning opportunities exploring a range of models to diversify the curriculum to respond to student needs
- To develop a universal language of behaviour expectations and give student voice and leadership to the school community



## 7. Parent Participation

### 7.1 Introduction

The Parents and Friends Association plays a major role in helping to build a warm, friendly and positive school community by organising social events for all families to attend, assisting with any pastoral care if needed and helping to raise funds for the school. Social and fundraising events included:

- the Welcome BBQ for new families;
- P&F Social Night;
- Class functions;
- Mother's Day Stall;
- Father's Day Breakfast;
- School Disco;
- Markets; and
- Dads in the Classroom Activities.



Parents involve themselves in the life of the school by assisting in numerous ways such as:

- attending parent forums;
- attending school and class Masses as well as special liturgies;
- Reading;
- Carnivals;
- Library;
- Canteen; and
- Social Justice.



Parent participation is highly valued at Our Lady Help of Christians School.

### 7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from parents about the school was received at P&F meetings, through the use of random interviews and 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:

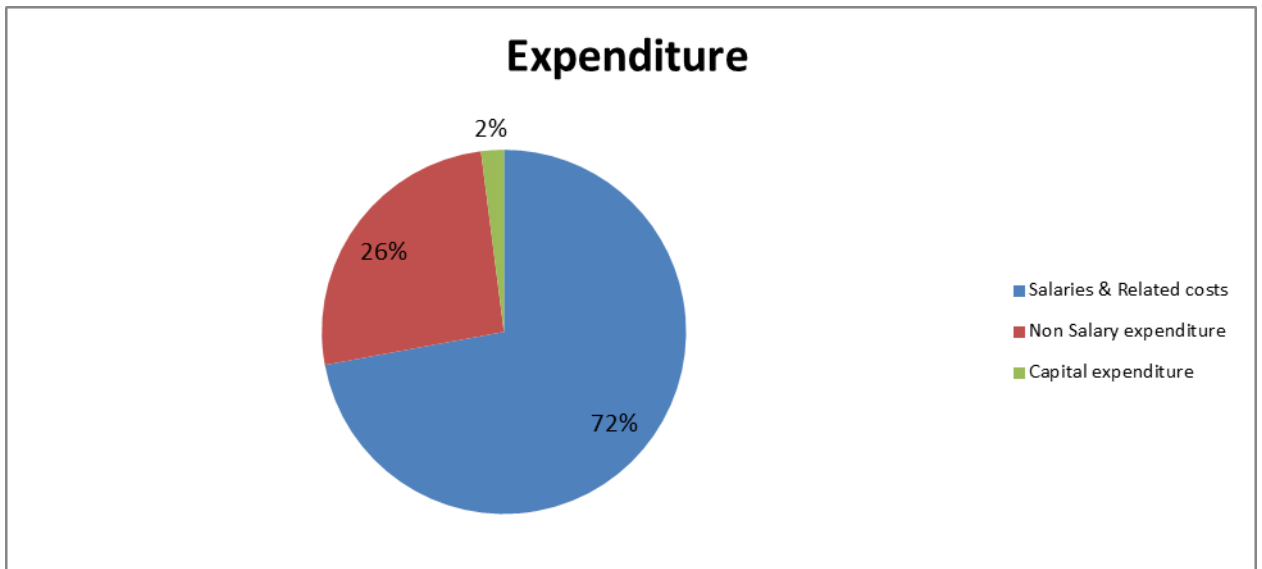
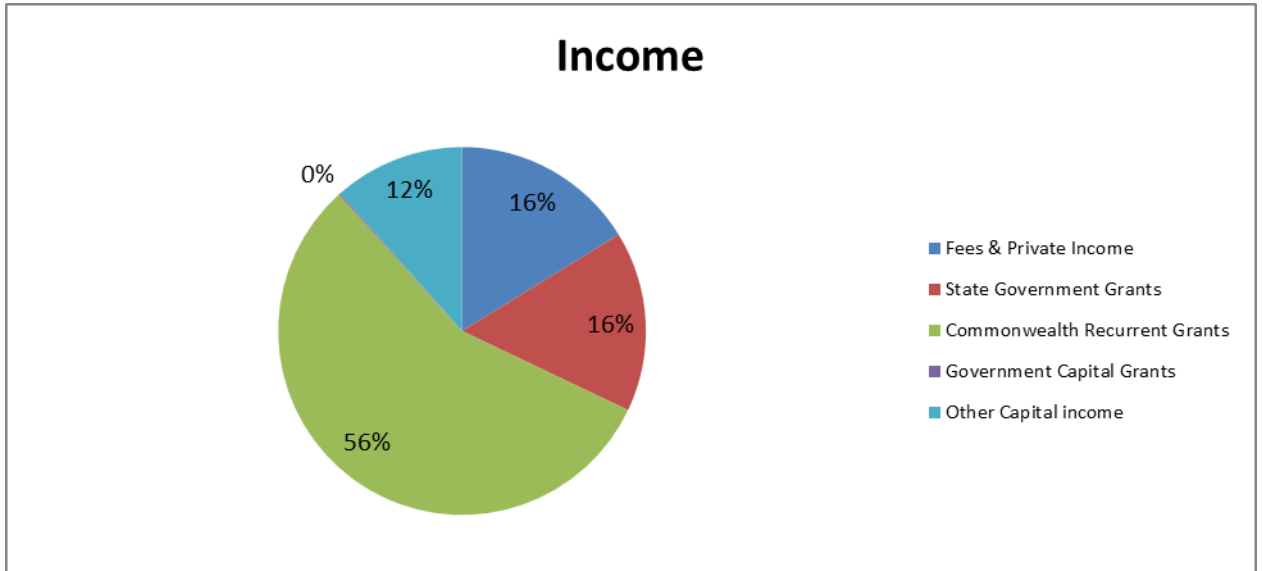
- parents were positive about new technology introduced during 2012;
- parents appreciate the partnership that parents have with the school;
- parents responded positively to Performing Arts opportunities; and
- parents appreciate the school's caring and safe environment where the staff genuinely care about each child's wellbeing.





## 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, Diann Hynes.