

Maria Regina Catholic School Avalon

2007 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

At Maria Regina I am very fortunate to be working with a team of dedicated highly qualified professionals who bring with them a variety of educational and personal experiences. Maria Regina is a community where staff, parents and parish work towards providing children with a happy, challenging environment. We strive to make a difference as a community by embracing and celebrating the uniqueness, creativity and achievements of each individual. We have a successful preschool to Kindergarten Transition Program and cater for gifted and high achieving students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Information technology is an integral part of the school day for all students.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

We are a very happy small school community. All children mix very well across all ages. We have a very dedicated and experienced staff, and children and parents enjoy their company. We have wonderful resources. The library, computers, and facilities are all exceptional.

We like the way the children are given many extracurricular choices especially in music. We enjoy the social activities such as the cinema night, class masses and picnics which enhance our already happy community.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

Maria Regina Catholic School, Avalon is a very special school that provides us with lots of opportunities. You can be a member of the School Concert Band, the Training Band, the School Choir, different sporting teams, and the Student Representative Council (SRC). In Year 6 there are many leadership roles including School Captain, Vice Captain, Colour House Captain, Library Monitor, Liturgy Monitor, and Information Technology Monitor. As Year 6 students, we love the Buddy system. We are teamed up with a Kindergarten student and help them to settle

into school. We enjoy different activities with them throughout the year.

We love the technology available at our school. We are lucky to have flat screen computers in the library and opportunities to use the many laptops in the library and in the classrooms. We enjoy using the digital cameras and learning Photoshop.

We also enjoy the games we have for sport and the wonderful equipment we have available to us. We also like participating in all the extra activities that are available at school such as the Challenge-a-thon, Photography Exhibition, Sporting Competitions, Carols Night, Spirituality and Leadership Days, School Disco and Excursions

Our school is small which makes it very easy to make friends and get to know everyone. The teachers are kind, friendly and understanding and help to make learning enjoyable.



2. School Profile

2.1 Introduction

Maria Regina Catholic School is a single stream K to 6 co-educational school, located in the Broken Bay Diocese on Sydney's northern Peninsula at Avalon Beach.

Students are primarily drawn from the surrounding areas of Avalon, Bilgola, Whale Beach, Palm Beach, Clareville and Newport.

The school enjoys a positive reputation for academic standards, a nurturing, pastoral environment and the engagement of students in a range of key learning opportunities.

The school Vision and Mission Statement are reflected in all aspects of school life.

2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2007:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
83	69	9	0	152

*Language background other than English

2.3 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 and administered within the school through the school's enrolment committee comprising the Principal, parish priest, a teacher and a parent.

†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.

2.4 Staff Profile

The School Leadership Team consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal and the Religious Education Co-ordinator. Teaching staff jointly contribute to the implementation of the Annual Strategic Management Plan. This year there were seven classroom

teachers with part-time Physical Education (0.2), Music (0.2), Teacher-Librarian (0.4), Learning Support (0.2), Literacy Facilitator (0.2), three Learning Support Assistant and Senior Office Administrator (1.0).

The NSW government requires that this report details 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
13	0	0	13

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2007 was 95.0%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2006 to 2007 was 92.3%.

There were minimal staff changes this year. A teacher who has been at the school for many years took long service leave and another permanent teacher was granted



leave without pay to extend her year's maternity leave. Both temporary positions were filled by very competent and experienced teachers.

2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers commented on the sense of community and the cohesive staff. Several staff have been teaching at the school for many years and are very positive about the academic standards and the collegial support they receive. Teachers are happy with the facilities and working conditions. They feel that the children are generally well behaved and motivated to learn and the parents are very supportive.

2.7 Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate for 2007 was 95.7%.

2.8 Student Satisfaction

At the end of the year, student leaders conducted a survey with students across all classes to assess their satisfaction with the school environment, teaching and learning and the various sporting, fund raising, social and other special occasions held during 2007.

The survey found that students enjoyed the variety of playground areas which enabled them to find an area to suit their style of play. The students at Maria Regina particularly enjoy creative arts and commented on the various opportunities they have to participate in music, drama, photography, art and craft.

The students enjoy our school assemblies and performances which provide opportunities for all students to be involved. The opportunity to have their work published in the 'Curriculum Corner' of the Maria Regina weekly newsletter was also commended by students.

Excursions, science days, Grandparents Day, Mother's Day Assembly, Fathers Day Breakfast, Carols Night, Swimming and Athletics Carnivals, Gala Day sports, Challenge-a-thon, Octopus Workshops,

school picnic and visiting groups were all mentioned as highlights for our students.

Teachers and staff were described as caring and accessible, teaching and learning as interesting, challenging and providing a variety of choice.

Students repeatedly mentioned development in their knowledge and use of technology such as laptops, cameras and audio visual equipment.





3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

Maria Regina Catholic School has a rich past and was opened by the Good Samaritan Sisters in 1959. The school both then and today continues to "strive to make a difference."

The life of the school is based on Gospel values where the worth of each individual is recognised. Students are encouraged to respond to the invitation of the call to Catholic discipleship. This is achieved by a reflective response to God's action in our world and particularly in our lives.

3.2 Liturgical Life

A strong emphasis on prayer, liturgy and Eucharistic celebration is prevalent within the Maria Regina community. Students attend regular Parish and School Masses and experience the first rite of Reconciliation each term. Family Masses, in which a class coordinates the Mass, have been celebrated each term providing a rewarding opportunity for both school and parish to celebrate together. Maria Regina is actively involved in the parish sacramental programs for Confirmation, Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Sacred spaces in each classroom, in the office foyer and staffroom, reflect the prayer practice that is evident within the school community. Staff prayer is valued and provides an opportunity to pray together each week. A prayer roster encourages shared leadership amongst the staff. There are three Year 6 Liturgy Monitors that work closely with the REC to further enhance the liturgical life of the school. Symbols and colours of the Church's seasons are given prominence throughout the school and important feast days or holy days are recognised and celebrated by our school community.

3.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese

Partnership between the school and parish is highly valued and was formalised half-way through the year with the formation of the

Pittwater Parish (Sacred Heart, Mona Vale and Maria Regina, Avalon.) The school works closely with the parish supporting the parish sacramental programs. Students are involved in parish celebrations such as masses and liturgies and the local catechists are also encouraged to participate in these celebrations. Our school helps to keep our school community informed of parish events through announcements at assemblies and by publishing information in the weekly newsletter.

Year 6 students participate in the annual Peninsula Year 6 Cluster Mass and the Diocesan Mission Mass. Our school captains accompanied the REC to attend the 150th Anniversary of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan Mass at St Mary's Cathedral. Our school annually attends the Feast of the Assumption Mass with students and staff from Mater Maria Catholic College, Warriewood. Staff attended the Diocesan Schools Staff Mass at the beginning of the year. Teachers supported preparations for World Youth Day by attending the Mass to welcome the WYD08 Cross and Icon to Pittwater Parish.

Our Parish Priests and Sisters of Divine Zeal with whom we work closely are a presence within our school. The parish priest visits the classrooms to speak to the children as a way of supporting our Religious Education modules. The parish priest plays an important role in the school's enrolment process. The ordination anniversaries of our clergy members are acknowledged and celebrated where possible. The Principal or a member of the leadership team attends monthly Parish Council meetings to discuss school and parish issues.

3.4 Religious Education Curriculum

The staff of Maria Regina School is committed to deepening the students' faith through dialogue, meaningful experiences, liturgy and learning. Integrating information, communication and learning technologies has been an integral part of this commitment through the use of CEnet (CASTnet), which has allowed teachers to access the *myclasses* pages developed by



the Mission Services Team at the Catholic Schools Office to support the RE curriculum.

To build competence and confidence with the teaching of Religious Education, the teaching staff have participated in professional development to assist them in planning and implementing modules of work. A whole school approach to Religious Education module planning has been adopted. New Religious Education resources have been purchased following consultation with staff about areas of need in Religious Education.

School assemblies have provided an opportunity for students to share their learning in Religious Education as well as being regularly featured in the school newsletter's 'Curriculum Corner'. The Outstanding School Spirit Award is a coveted award which is presented to a student displaying exceptional school spirit at Maria Regina. A local business sponsors the award, which is presented ten times a year forming a positive community link with the school.

3.5 Catholic Worldview

As a Catholic school, Maria Regina seeks to strengthen a shared understanding of the central purpose of our school by modelling the Gospel values of inclusion, compassion, human dignity, justice and service as declared in the school's Mission Statement. There is a deep commitment to working together to build a community of disciples of Jesus. We proclaim the message by promoting a Catholic worldview, which embraces the presence of God in our daily life, in the Eucharist, in the Sacred Scripture and in the living tradition of the Church. The Catholic Worldview is carefully 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.

The staff further strengthened their understanding of and commitment to a Catholic worldview through professional development led by the Mission Services Team of the Catholic Schools Office. The staff of Maria Regina Catholic School will

continue their professional development of Catholic worldview over the coming years.

To further develop students' understanding of Catholic worldview, a Photography Competition was established titled, 'Catholic Worldview – through the lens of a child.' This competition was coordinated by our school at Avalon and Sacred Heart, Mona Vale. Photos could be entered into a number of categories which portrayed a Catholic worldview.

This year, our school has strengthened our focus on social justice. One teacher took on the role of Social Justice Coordinator and attended Diocesan Social Justice Meetings throughout the year. Fundraising events such as a Social Justice Breakfast, Gold Coin Mufti days and a Year 6 Fete raised money to promote an awareness of social justice.

Our school has also become a member of the East Timor Friendship Schools Program as part of our social justice plight. We are in the process of obtaining a 'sister' school in a poverty-stricken area of East Timor. This year the Principal, the REC and the Social Justice Coordinator attended an Afternoon Tea with Kirsty Sword-Gustmao (East Timor's First Lady) to further establish our link with the ALOLA Foundation that she has established to promote education and women's health and welfare in East Timor.

To further strengthen our links with East Timor and to assist with Father Chris Riley's 'Youth Off the Streets' program, our school hosted four East Timorese orphans for a day. Our school responded to a request by Father Riley to host the four children and provide them with a welcoming environment and an opportunity to experience life in an Australian school.

During the year students and families have responded to community and global needs through dialogue, prayer and service. The school has supported the St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas Hamper Appeals, Project Compassion during Lent, Catholic Mission during Mission Week, and the ALOLA Foundation (East Timor).



3.6 Parent Participation

Parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children. Maria Regina has an active and supportive Parents' and Friends' Association which meets regularly, providing pastoral, social and financial support. Currently two of the school's parents are members of the Diocesan Parent Council. Their roles include broadening opportunities for informing and engaging the Maria Regina community in professional development opportunities available to parents throughout the clusters within the diocese.

Parents and caregivers participate in the life of the school and parish through the sacramental programs, liturgies and masses, parish ministries, parent information sessions, assisting with excursions, fundraising, exhibitions and by joining parent committees. Parents are always enthusiastic visitors at assemblies, as helpers in our classrooms and the Learning Resource Centre. The weekly newsletter is used as a vehicle to communicate to the community the various aspects of Catholic life and mission.

3.7 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.

Professional learning refers to the development of teachers' professional expertise. In the area of Catholic life and mission this occurs in a variety of ways. In 2007, under the guidance of the Religious Education Co-ordinator and the Mission Team Advisor, teachers at Maria Regina further developed the Religious Education Curriculum modules.

The Religious Education Coordinator informs staff of upcoming courses offered by the Broken Bay Institute as well as inviting them to attend seminars such as social justice meetings. This year one member of staff attended the Ministry for Teachers I course

and undertook postgraduate studies in Theology.



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

Maria Regina has a Pastoral Care Policy which, through its practice, respects the dignity of the individual. A clear and just Behaviour Management Policy has been implemented.

Our Leadership Policy promotes leadership in students from all classes and further supports the Behaviour Management and Pastoral Care Policies. All Year 6 students held a leadership position in 2007. A successful "buddy" program between Kindergarten and Year 6 helped the Kindergarten children students gain a sense of belonging and settle into the pattern of school life. This year Stage 3 had a Leadership Day as part of our Leadership Program. This day was shared with three other schools on the Peninsula (Sacred Heart, Mona Vale; St Joseph's, Narrabeen and St Rose, Collaroy) and looked at what constitutes a good leader. Year 6 had a Spirituality Day with Sacred Heart, Mona Vale which was held at Mater Maria Catholic College, Warriewood to reflect on their primary school journey.

The active Student Representative Council (SRC) allowed students to represent their peers and to participate in decision making in school initiatives such as conservation, social justice and fundraising for charities. The SRC attended the Diocesan Mission Mass and the Inaugural Mass for the establishment of Pittwater Parish.

This year, Information Technology Monitors from each class were chosen to monitor and maintain the school computers and

equipment. They were presented with a badge and given a role description.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Nominated class parents supported the school community by acting as a link between the classroom, teacher and parents. Their role within the school engaged the community to promote pastoral care and school activities.

There is a very supportive parent body at Maria Regina Catholic School. This is particularly evident through the display of pastoral care for families in need. 2007 has been a difficult year with the death of four parents and a number of other parents suffering from severe illnesses. The whole school support has proved to be invaluable for those families in need.

Several parents attended the Parent Council information meetings which were held on four occasions throughout the year.

4.4 2007 Initiatives

- Year 6 Spirituality Day
- Stage 3 Leadership Day

4.5 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.



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Curriculum Overview

Maria Regina offers the mandatory courses across the six Board of Studies Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Human Society in its Environment
- Science and Technology
- Creative and Practical Arts and
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

Religious Education is also designated as a Key Learning Area.

Literacy and numeracy are seen as the key to all learning and allocation of prime time is mandated throughout the school.

Our school embraced the diocesan focus on pedagogy and professional learning for all staff through a significant number of initiatives. The Quality Teaching Framework was implemented across the Key Learning Areas with a particular focus during Terms 1 and 2 on literacy.

In Terms 3 and 4 the school embarked on a new integrated learning model across all Key Learning Areas. The integrated model of teaching and learning proved to be engaging and challenging for our students. Teachers were given extra time and resources to support and plan these units in stages with an external expert consultant, the school integration co-ordinator and the teacher librarian.

The integration of technology into the teaching and learning process continues to be a strong focus. Our students have access to computers in every classroom with a bank of 10 desktops in the library and the use of 25 laptops for day-to-day learning.

After reviewing our beliefs about teaching and learning and researching current ideas and practice, the teaching staff developed a new Home Learning Policy with a consistent

format K-6. This was trialled during term one and all stakeholders (students, teachers and parents) were surveyed for feedback. After further refinement the new policy was developed.

5.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning

Staff professional development was planned each term to develop and implement strategies for excellence in teaching and learning. Through professional dialogue and a shared understanding, the staff implemented various strategies to support students to take responsibility for their learning.

Teachers focussed on reviewing and consolidating mathematics and literacy teaching and learning. Basic Skills results were analysed to inform this process. Consistent practices, language and processes were investigated. Specific time was allocated at staff meetings to share practice.

Optional three way interviews (parent/child/teacher) were carried out at the end of Term 2 after the Semester 1 reports were distributed. Semester 2 reports were sent home at the end of the year with an opportunity to arrange an interview with the teacher. Teachers were available to discuss students' development throughout the year.

5.3 Significant Initiatives

A series of professional development sessions with St John's, Narrabeena were presented by an educational consultant from the University of New England. The content was based on his research with underachieving gifted students. He advised on methods to identify such students through testing and suggested interventions which his action research has shown to be successful.

A program was implemented to support students K-6 experiencing difficulties in the area of literacy. A teacher, with a specific interest, knowledge and experience in this area, was appointed with a one day allocation to provide opportunities for planning, modelling and evaluation. She also conducted regular professional development



sessions with the teachers. Appropriate tools and strategies were formulated to support, motivate and engage these students. Their progress was continually tracked with records of completion and achievement used to align programs and resources that reflected the students' needs and interests.

The Starfish Program was continued, to enable a smooth transition for students into Kindergarten. Pre-schoolers who had enrolled for 2008 were invited to attend five sessions to experience school life. While the children participated in craft, sport, library and computer experiences, their parents were able to network with other parents and were informed about many aspects of our school, for example policies and procedures.

During Term 4 our Octopus Program operated with teachers and parents nominating an area of expertise in which to conduct an hour long workshop. Students formed interest groups across all grades and participated in workshops for four consecutive weeks. This culminated in a presentation by each group to the school community, providing feedback about the knowledge, skills and expertise gained during their sessions. Groups included Italian, chess, Photoshop, cooking, dance, relaxation techniques and sign language.

As part of the Visual Arts program, students in Stage 3 presented the inaugural 'Driftwood' Exhibition to the Avalon community. This was a display of photographs taken by the students following a term of input and feedback from a well known, local photographer.

5.4 Student Achievement

Assessment is multi-faceted and should improve the quality of teaching and learning for all students. Data from one such assessment used at Maria Regina is the Basic Skills Test. Feedback from external forms of assessment is used in conjunction with other assessments, such as running records, observation survey and continuous observation and analysis of work samples. Staff update curriculum policies and plans

with resources being purchased to support teaching and learning in the classrooms.

Literacy – Reading and Language

In **Year 3**, 2007 there were 21 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 3 who achieved each band at the school and also in the State.

	School	State
Band 5	38	19
Band 4	38	28
Band 3	19	26
Band 2	5	15
Band 1	0	11

76% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 47% across the State (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 3 student performance in Literacy (Reading and Language) to statewide performance and illustrates trends in student performance over time. Since 2001 the average scaled score for Maria Regina has consistently been above the State performance.

Year	School	State
2001	57.3	50.6
2002	51.8	50.6
2003	56.0	50.6
2004	54.2	50.5
2005	54.9	50.8
2006	52.6	50.7
2007	55.9	51.2

Writing

In **Year 3**, 2007 there were 21 students who sat for the Writing Basic Skills Test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 3 who achieved each band at the school and also in the State.



	School	State
Band 5	29	16
Band 4	43	32
Band 3	29	32
Band 2	0	12
Band 1	0	8

72% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 48% across the State (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 3 student performance in Writing to statewide performance and illustrates trends in student performance over time. Since 2001 the average scaled score for Maria Regina has consistently been above the State performance.

Year	School	State
2001	56.1	49.0
2002	56.1	51.5
2003	52.7	51.1
2004	55.9	51.2
2005	55.1	50.1
2006	54.6	50.2
2007	54.6	50.8

Literacy –Reading and Language

In **Year 5**, 2007 there were 25 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 5 who achieved each band at both the school and also in the State.

	School	State
Band 6	40	27
Band 5	48	26
Band 4	12	26
Band 3	0	14
Band 2	0	5
Band 1	0	1

88% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 53% across the State (Bands 5 and 6).

The following table compares Year 5 student performance in Literacy (Reading and Language) to statewide performance and illustrates trends in student performance over time. Since 2002 the average scaled score for Maria Regina has consistently been above the State performance.

Year	School	State
2001	57.7	57.1
2002	62.0	57.8
2003	63.3	57.5
2004	61.3	57.4
2005	62.9	57.0
2006	62.4	57.3
2007	63.0	57.5

Writing

In **Year 5**, 2007 there were 25 students who sat for the Writing Basic Skills Test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 5 who achieved each band at the school and also in the State.

	School	State
Band 6	68	23
Band 5	20	32
Band 4	8	28
Band 3	4	12
Band 2	0	2
Band 1	0	0

88% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 55% across the State (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 5 student performance in Writing to statewide performance and illustrates trends in student performance over time. Since 2001 the average scaled score for Maria Regina has consistently been above the State performance.



Year	School	State
2001	57.8	56.3
2002	63.6	57.1
2003	59.1	56.4
2004	58.8	56.6
2005	62.0	56.2
2006	59.7	56.7
2007	62.5	57.2

Numeracy

In **Year 3**, 2007 there were 21 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 3 who achieved each band at the school and also in the State.

	School	State
Band 5	38	19
Band 4	24	27
Band 3	33	26
Band 2	5	20
Band 1	0	9

62% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 46% across the State (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 3 student performance in Numeracy to statewide performance and illustrates trends in student performance over time. Since 2001 the average scaled score for Maria Regina has consistently been above the State performance.

Year	School	State
2001	58.1	52.4
2002	54.9	53.0
2003	59.0	52.8
2004	54.5	52.3
2005	58.7	53.6
2006	52.2	53.3
2007	57.3	53.1

Numeracy

In **Year 5**, 2007 there were 25 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 5 who achieved each band at both the school and also in the State.

	School	State
Band 6	56	33
Band 5	32	22
Band 4	12	24
Band 3	0	15
Band 2	0	6
Band 1	0	1

88% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 55% across the State (Bands 5 and 6).

The following table compares Year 5 student performance in Numeracy to statewide performance and illustrates trends in student performance over time. Since 2002 the average scaled score for Maria Regina has consistently been above the State performance.

Year	School	State
2001	59.0	60.3
2002	65.3	60.2
2003	65.7	60.0
2004	63.7	60.7
2005	64.8	60.4
2006	65.7	61.5
2007	68.2	61.9

The scores in the table below indicate the average growth achieved by students who sat for the BST in 2005 as Year 3 students and again in 2007 as Year 5 students, in Literacy (Reading and Language), Writing and Numeracy at Maria Regina and for the same cohort of students in the State. The expected growth in BST scores is between 6-7. The following table indicates that this cohort of students demonstrated the expected growth



in Writing and exceeded the expected growth in Numeracy and Literacy.

Average Growth achieved by students who sat for the BST in 2005 as Year 3 students and again in 2007 as Year 5 students

2007	School	State
Literacy (Reading and Language)	7.7	6.81
Writing	6.7	7.17
Numeracy	9.2	8.45

The Commonwealth Government has developed National Benchmarks that describe the minimum acceptable standards for Year 3 and 5 students for Reading, Writing and Numeracy.

The following two tables outline the:

Percentage of Students in Year 3 who have surpassed the National Benchmarks since the school has had access to this data

	Reading %	Writing %	Numeracy %
2004	100	n/a	100
2005	100	100	100
2006	92	100	100
2007	100	100	100

In 2006 there were twelve students from Year 3 who sat for the Basic Skills Test. One student did not achieve the National Benchmarks in all areas. This student had been previously identified with special learning needs, but was not exempt from the test. This year 21 students sat for this assessment and all achieved above the National Benchmark in Writing, Literacy and Numeracy.

Percentage of Students in Year 5 who have surpassed the National Benchmarks since the school has had access to this data:

	Reading %	Writing %	Numeracy %
2004	100	n/a	100
2005	100	100	100
2006	100	100	100
2007	100	100	100

All Year 5 students have achieved above the National Benchmark in Reading, Writing, and Numeracy in both 2006 and 2007.

5.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies

Information, communication and learning technologies (ICLT) continued to be a significant area of development at Maria Regina in 2007. There was capital expenditure on hardware (including ten laptops, some printers and a portable interactive whiteboard) and software.

A timetable was structured to ensure maximum usage of the computers across all stages. Parents with computer expertise assisted teachers with student education with various software programs, in particular Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0. Computers were also available in each classroom as a resource.

An Information, Communication and Learning Technologies coordinator and a technician ensured regular maintenance of computer hardware and software. The Information, Communication and Learning Technologies Coordinator attended the Diocesan Learning days.

Stage 3 students were taught Photoshop and given a Visual Arts project to complete for the term. The impressive results were displayed to the whole Maria Regina community at our weekly assembly.

Following a Visual Arts focus on photography, a photographic exhibition called 'Driftwood' was held for the Avalon community and the Stage3 students' photographs were displayed. Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 also entered a Camera House photographic competition with Maria Regina winning ten of the top twelve awards.

5.6 Professional Learning

All teachers participated in a range of professional learning initiatives in 2007. Teachers were encouraged to engage in professional learning to enhance their educational knowledge and skills.

The leadership team met weekly for professional reading and dialogue. The leadership team participated in two day



conferences for Principals, Assistant Principals and Religious Co-ordinators.

Maria Regina staff joined with several other schools to attend several sessions on reversing underachievement in gifted students.

The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators attended regular sessions at the Catholic Schools Office to support them in their leadership roles.

All teachers attended adult faith formation sessions and professional development around strategies to support a consistent approach to teaching an integrated curriculum.

Our school literacy co-ordinator conducted regular sessions with teachers to provide strategies to support, motivate and engage students in literacy. One staff member attended a two-day inservice to understand and use the Observation Survey.

Other areas of participation included teacher induction, occupational health and safety training, first aid course, library Athena training, child protection inservicing and various technology related opportunities.

Teachers with particular curriculum responsibilities had the opportunity to participate in subject related in-services provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

The average expenditure on professional learning per teacher in 2007 was \$1,345.



6. Extracurricular Program

Visual Arts

- Students participated in gifted art classes with several students entering Operation Art and Artfest.
- 'Driftwood' Photographic Exhibition

Music

Band

- There were significant changes to the structure of the band during 2007. A new band director was employed and a band committee set up by the parents. A training and a concert band were formed and there was a significant increase in the number of band members. The introduction of individual musical performances at the weekly assembly also lifted the profile of the band. The band also participated in the Marana Music Festival and the Yamaha music festival
- Private music lessons in piano, guitar and violin were available and students regularly had an opportunity to perform for the community.
- Music evenings gave music students the opportunity to perform in Term 1 and Term 3.
- The band performed at school events such as Grandparents' Day and Open Day and the Carols Evening.

Transition to High School

- Stage 3 students participated in a transition to secondary school program at Mater Maria Catholic College, Warriewood called the "Links" program. The children experienced science, drama, gymnastic and music activities at the high school.

Sport

Sport is a significant aspect of school life and the students had many opportunities to participate.

- Students represented the school at swimming, athletics and cross country cluster and diocesan carnivals.

- Students were able to participate in a variety of sporting events, gross motor program, netball, rugby league, soccer, basketball, touch football and eagle tag.
- Talented students had the opportunity to participate in summer and winter sports with several students progressing to Polding trials.

Excursions

- The students in Stage 3 experienced a two-day excursion to Canberra as part of their unit of work on 'How Did the Discovery of Gold affect the Lives of Australians?'
- All other classes participated in one day excursions which enriched their understanding of their units of work.

Incursions

- Guest presenters were invited to enrich the curriculum, for example, an Antarctic explorer provided a valuable insight into his experiences and the drama students from Mater Maria performed a play about bullying.

School Assemblies

- Weekly assemblies led by Year 6 enabled recognition of individual achievements and class presentations, Class Merit Awards, Friendship, Uniform and Environment Awards and Outstanding School Spirit Award. The weekly assembly also provided the opportunity for individual musical performances.

Liturgical Events

- All classes attend parish daily masses on a rotating basis. All classes co-ordinate a parish family Mass which is celebrated on the last Saturday evening of each month.
- All classes participated in Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparents' Day liturgies.

Community

- The students, parents and friends were involved in many community building



activities, such as the Father's Day Breakfast, Pink Ribbon Day, Challenge-a-thon and Christmas Carols Evening.

- Students and teachers participated in the ANZAC Day March coordinated by the Avalon (RSL) Returned Services League

Leadership

- Year 6 and Kindergarten Buddy Program.
- School Captains visited State Parliament House.
- Student Representative Council met twice a term.
- Leadership Day with Catholic schools of Sacred Heart, Mona Vale; St Joseph's, Narrabeen and St Rose, Collaroy Plateau.

Premier's Reading Challenge

- Students from K-6 had the opportunity to participate in the Premier's Reading Challenge.



7. Strategic Initiatives

7.1 2007 Priorities and Achievements

- Support initiatives of the newly formed Pittwater Parish
- Co-operatively plan parish liturgies and promote community participation
- Use Literacy facilitator model to support structures to build shared practice
- Analyse data and develop action plan for future learning
- Review and evaluate current assessment practices
- Apply a consistent approach to integrated curriculum development
- Provide opportunities to promote all students as leaders
- Develop a shared understanding and commitment to Behaviour Management
- Formalise process of induction and transition to school

7.2 2008 Priorities and Challenges

- Articulate "who we are" as a Catholic school
- Revise school Vision Statement to ensure ownership
- Develop a more consistent use of Information, Communication and Learning Technology in Religious Education
- Continue to build and consolidate the Social Justice Team
- Use staff learning to build a learning community
- Identify features of "best practice" professional learning by reflecting on experience
- Use assessment data to set challenging and realistic targets for literacy and numeracy
- Streamline programming

- Continue to use appropriate instruments to identify gifted and special needs students
- Support the Peninsula Community of Schools Project
- Provide information on and support World Youth Day 2008
- Develop an effective leadership team committed to building relationships, increasing learning gains of students and school improvement
- Provide a range of connected leadership positions across the school
- Develop a shared understanding and commitment to behaviour management
- Ensure ongoing compliance
- Develop a culture of awareness of best practice conservation
- Strengthen link with Friendship School in East Timor and continue to support the Aloia Foundation.



8. Parent Participation

8.1 Introduction

Last year the Broken Bay Catholic School Parent Council (DPC) released a new model constitution which was approved by both civil and canon lawyers, the Director of Schools, and the DPC. All Parents' and Friends' executives within the Diocese were asked to examine the new constitution and move to adopt it. Maria Regina Parents' and Friends' (P&F) adopted the new constitution in Term 4, 2007.

The P&F has a very strong working relationship with the school principal and staff. The P&F is responsible for helping raise funds for the school for new and updated equipment and resources. In the past 12 months the P&F has raised funds to help with the purchase of laptop computers, the upgrade of library computers and the purchase of interactive whiteboards.

The school was successful in obtaining a grant for the installation of water saving devices such as rain water tanks and new toilets. The P&F has agreed to put funds towards refurbishing the toilet blocks and undercroft to help complete this project.

The P&F also runs a very successful canteen one day per week and was able to purchase an upright, stand-alone freezer and pie warmer.

In conjunction with helping raise funds for the school the P&F plays a major role in helping to build a warm, friendly and positive school community by organising social events for all families to attend and assisting with any pastoral care if needed.

Class Parents are an integral part of the parent community. Social and fundraising events included Welcome to New Parents Cocktail Party, the Trivia Night, morning teas, class functions, Mother's Day Stall, Father's Day Breakfast, and Christmas Party.

A group of nominated class parents, K to 6, liaised with class teachers and the P&F Social Committee to organise parent support in the classroom, including excursions, fundraisers, pastoral care, literacy, art, numeracy and

social events. These groups provided a network of opportunity for valuable community interaction throughout the school.

Parents involve themselves in the life of the school by assisting with:

- parent forums;
- school and class masses as well as special liturgies;
- reading groups;
- technology;
- carnivals;
- coaching;
- the library;
- gross motor activities;
- creative arts;
- involvement in classrooms;
- support of school based events such as sport, excursions.

Parent participation is highly valued at Maria Regina. Parents contribute to the consultation process including policy development and strategic planning.

8.2 Parent Satisfaction

Through discussions and feedback from parents, it has been noted that they value the open communication between staff and the availability of staff to discuss needs and concerns. From data gathered for the school review, parents identified the following as strengths:

- core Catholic values modelled and evident;
- opportunities for student leadership;
- holistic approach to education;
- curriculum which caters for the individual;
- great community spirit;
- every child has a chance to "shine";
- dedicated and caring teachers;
- small caring environment;



- comprehensive teaching and learning;
- personalised attention;
- opportunities for all children;
- quality leadership and staff;
- communication between parents and the school;
- approach to behaviour management;
- use of technology;
- teachers are dedicated and approachable;
- pastoral care.



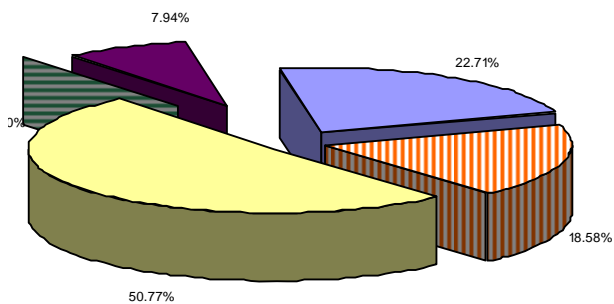
9. Financial Report

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report.

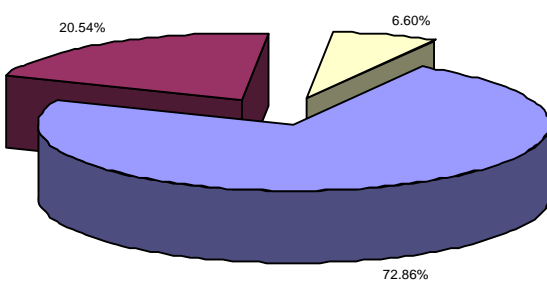
Income

- Fees and Other Private Income
- State Government Funds
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants
- Government Capital Grants
- Other Capital Income



Expenditure

- Salaries, Allowances and Related Costs
- Non salary Expenses
- Capital Expenditure



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