



# St Gerard's Catholic School Carlingford

## 2008 Annual Report



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## **1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community**

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

The purpose of this report is to communicate to staff, parents and our local parish community the achievements and challenges for our school during the 2008 school year.

St Gerard's Catholic School is proud of its Catholic heritage and during 2008 has worked hard to fulfil the school's mission to promote excellent teaching and learning in a nurturing Catholic environment. I am privileged to work with a fine teaching staff who themselves work in partnership with parents to assist our children to become strong in their Catholic faith, and as adults to make a positive contribution to their world. St Gerard's is blessed with a very supportive parent body who worked wholeheartedly alongside the staff and parish to make World Youth Day a uniquely memorable experience.

The two major initiatives in 2008 were: the restructuring of the school executive to form the School Leadership Team with a clear role to support the mission of the school; and the steps taken to develop a framework for teaching and learning which will provide a benchmark against which to measure our professional practice.

I would like to thank all members of the school community, in particular the dedicated teachers, enthusiastic students, and generous parents for their contribution to the successes of 2008.

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

This year has been a great year for the parents and students of St Gerard's Carlingford in collaboration with the school and parish community. The parent community has assisted me in my role as President of the Parents' and Friends' Association (P&F) to support the best interests of the school through activities such as fundraising, assisting with the many school celebrations and activities, and social events for both school and for parents. Thanks to the generous donation of the P&F, the school was able to purchase significant resources to support learning in mathematics.

In all these endeavours, the parent body has shown courtesy, cooperation and goodwill. In particular, I acknowledge their enormous effort to get behind the school during the World Youth Day week. We are indeed fortunate to have such a supportive and generous parent body.

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

As Captain of St Gerard's Catholic School in 2008, I would like to say that St Gerard's is a place where we really do grow in wisdom and faith. We have many opportunities to grow and to learn.

I would like to thank the teachers and staff here at St Gerard's. It is amazing how a teacher can have such a big impact on the life of a student. The teachers here do so much for us, not only in the classroom, but also behind the scenes. Our teachers have organised excursions and camps which are always a highlight of the year. For example, the Year 6 camp this year was so much fun but it could not have happened without the teachers giving up their time for us. The teachers and staff at St Gerard's really care for us as individual people, not just as students, and I would like to thank them for that.

I would also like to thank our families who have supported us throughout our seven years in everything we do, from making our lunches, covering our books, helping in the classroom and tuckshop, cheering us on at carnivals or gala days or encouraging us when we were feeling down. Our parents have always been in the background giving us care and love and the courage to get us through.

I thank my classmates who I have been honoured to represent. All the leadership teams have worked well together: the colour captains, hospitality, liturgy, social justice, environmental and



library leaders have all contributed to the school and inspired younger students to give their best in all areas of school life.



## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Introduction

St Gerard's Catholic School caters for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6 in the Diocese of Broken Bay. The school is located in Carlingford and shares North Rocks Road with the local state secondary school and primary school. St Gerard's is on the border of the Broken Bay Diocese and the Parramatta Diocese and is in a very well established suburb. The majority of the children are drawn from St Gerard's parish and the local area.

The school is tucked away behind the church and has the use of ovals and a variety of open playing spaces.

The school is very important in the life of the parish and community. The school enjoys a positive relationship with St Gerard's Parish. The school has a reputation for excellence in teaching and learning and a welcoming and supportive parent community.

### 2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2008:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
157	169	22	0	326

\*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.

The Enrolment Committee at St Gerard's consists of the parish priest, the Principal and two members of the Pastoral Council who are parents at the school.

†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: School Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Co-Coordinator, Co-Coordinator 2 and Co-Coordinator 1.

The staff are also in leadership positions with Key Learning Areas and major focus teams.

The school has a learning support teacher, a new arrivals teacher (when required), two administrative officers, four learning support assistants, specialist Physical Education, Music teacher and Librarian.

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



- 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
23	0	0	23

## 2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2008 was 95.0%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2007 to 2008 was 77.3%.

## 2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

Staff at St Gerard's expressed their enjoyment and appreciation of the professional learning opportunities offered in 2008. The opportunity to not only deepen knowledge of curriculum areas that were relevant to them, but to also have the time to have ownership of their own learning, was appreciated.

Staff survey findings indicated that they had gained valuable skills and developed new strategies that they could implement in their classrooms.

Working with supportive and professional fellow teachers was strongly cited as an aspect of strength for the teachers. They enjoy positive personal and professional partnerships with each other.

The focus on staff prayer was another area of deep satisfaction. Staff prayer is separated from all meetings and given its own time allocation before school on Thursday.

Collectively staff noted their appreciation for the community liturgies which we celebrate at the school: class masses, whole school masses, feast days and sacramental celebrations. They love to be involved with the music and the organisation.

The staff reflection day at Mary MacKillop Centre at the end of the year was highly valued.

## 2.7 Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate for 2008 was 95.5%.

## 2.8 Student Satisfaction

Students reported that they love the school camps and excursions, participating in school sporting events and contributing to liturgical dance and music for the whole school masses. In 2008 in particular, all children contributed to welcoming World Youth Day visitors who stayed in their classrooms. Each family sent in washers, soaps, lollies, and Australian souvenirs which the children put into hospitality gift bags with a special St Gerard's message of welcome. The Year 6 students also really enjoy taking on the responsibility of working with their Kindergarten buddy.



### **3. Catholic Life and Mission**

#### **3.1 Catholic Heritage**

On March 3rd 1963 Carlingford was decreed a separate parish from Epping and Father Nolan was appointed Parish Priest. The new parish was named St Gerard Majella and in September 1964 the first school building of three classrooms and offices was opened. The Sisters of Mercy remained at Carlingford until 1980. The first lay principal was appointed in 1981.

The current church was completed in 1972 and Father Nolan continued as Parish Priest until his retirement in 1978. Father Egan was appointed in his place and worked in the Parish for the next twenty-one years. In 2000 Father Colin Blayney was appointed Parish Priest of both Epping and Carlingford.

The current Vision and Mission Statement is the school's compass for the future where each person can genuinely live the values espoused and that staff, students and parents can articulate the beliefs and hopes of the community.

Parents express the view that the school is an extension of family life which supports excellence in teaching and learning within our Catholic beliefs and heritage.

#### **3.2 Religious Life of the School**

The religious life of the school is rich in many areas. The parish priest encourages full participation of children and staff at whole school masses. The children demonstrate great joy as they practise their developing faith which is nurtured by staff and family.

A highlight of the year is the classroom masses. This is an opportunity for children, parents and the class teacher to share intimately in the celebration of the Eucharist.

There is a high parent participation at all liturgical celebrations. Advent, Lent, Year 6 celebrations and the feast of St Gerard are very special liturgical events in the life of the school.

Liturgies for Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day have become an important part of the religious life of our school. The large attendance of parents and grandparents (over two hundred) is a strong indicator of the high value that the community places on these celebrations.

Children participate in prayer circles each morning in their classroom and all classes prepare prayer for the whole school assemblies.

Staff prayer is held regularly and is a highly valued sacred moment in the busy life of the staff. The staff voluntarily prepares and participates in this expression of commitment to their faith.

#### **3.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and the Diocese**

The school values the links with St Gerard's Parish, with the Principal being a member of the Parish Pastoral Council as a way of ensuring that the school is an active supporter of parish life.

There are also many other ways in which the school demonstrates its commitment to parish and diocesan life: teachers attend the Diocesan Mass; Year 6 students attend the Cluster Mass; parents prepare the monthly children's mass; students are junior altar servers; parents participate in the preparation of the sacramental program; in 2008, the parish Youth Coordinator worked with the Religious Education Coordinator and planned reflection days with the senior students.

The school supports the parish sacramental program with units from the new diocesan syllabus being taught in the classroom. Teachers attend special celebrations in the parish, such as First Eucharist, Confirmation and Reconciliation.

St Gerard's values its link with nearby sister school, Our Lady Help of Christians at Epping, and the Religious Education Coordinators of both schools plan liturgical celebrations as a team.



### 3.4 Catholic Worldview

Teachers work explicitly to incorporate the values contained in the school mission and vision statement into their daily interactions with the students. The school acknowledges students who are able to demonstrate the values of respect, responsibility, harmony and cooperation by a special award given by the principal at a whole school assembly three times a term. This is a 'once only' award which encourages every child to strive towards being a recipient during their life at the school. The award is highly valued by the whole school community.

The school newsletter, 'Contact', endeavours to present ideas and reflections to the community with specific reference to the values the school espouses.

The school community has an ongoing commitment to social justice initiatives. Students sponsor an overseas child each year, participate in Mission Week and actively support Project Compassion and any global issues that may arise through the year. Groups of children visit the elderly in the local area twice a term. The social justice team coordinates the raising of funds for Candela in Peru. The Year 4 class and parents make sandwiches to deliver to a charity which supports feeding the homeless on the inner city streets of Sydney. The P&F raises funds to donate to Catholic Missions. Visiting speakers shared experiences of working in overseas missions.

### 3.5 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.

With leadership from the Religious Education Coordinator and education officers from the Catholic Schools Office, staff explored the spirituality of the role of teacher, at a Staff Development Day held at Mary MacKillop Centre, North Sydney.

All classroom teachers are accredited to teach Religious Education or are involved in the process as they are accredited in other dioceses.



## **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**

While having the guidance of the diocesan policies, St Gerard's recognises the need to revisit policies and procedures in the area of pastoral care. Review of the current Student Management Policy was cited as a need for 2009.

The pastoral care of students is crucial to their positive wellbeing. It is also essential for a good learning environment within the school.

### **4.3 Pastoral Care of Families**

St Gerard's strives to build community in every possible way. The care of families is crucial to an authentic functioning school.

There are formal supports in place for our families. The North Shore Cluster has a school counsellor who works with families and children. St Gerard's was very fortunate to have this service in 2008 and to access support from other members of this team when any family in the school required immediate assistance. Parents are sometimes referred to Centacare or other appropriate agencies.

Informal support processes include opportunities for parents to meet with the Principal when issues arise or they need specific support. Parents are also encouraged to speak to their child's teacher who liaises with the Principal.

Parents also support each other through the class parent network, especially when there is illness or bereavement.

### **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.



## 5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

### 5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

#### *Framework for Learning*

This year the school staff revisited beliefs about learning and teaching with a view to articulating our shared beliefs about learning. This was an ongoing process throughout the year and resulted in the development of a draft set of beliefs about learning. This will become a guide for challenging 'best practice' in the future.

#### *Review of 2007 end of year testing data*

The teachers participated in guided discussion led by the Assistant Principal around testing data with a view to informing their teaching and learning programs for 2008. 'At risk' students were identified, along with those students who required significant extension to their learning programs.

#### *Learning Support Program*

Students from Kindergarten to Year Six who need learning support are monitored and assisted through the school Learning Support program. The program is supported by a Learning Support teacher and three learning support assistants who work under the guidance of the classroom teacher to support a broad range of differentiated learning.

#### *Starting points for learning*

In 2008, there was a major change to the school Kindergarten Orientation process with the aim of identifying 'starting points' in literacy learning. Parallel workshops facilitated by the principal and the Education Officer-Parent Liaison from the Catholic Schools Office were conducted for parents to induct them into the learning culture of the school.

#### *Enrichment opportunities*

There are many opportunities at St Gerard's to pursue an interest in a particular key learning area.

An Extension Maths program, 'Come on Kids', was introduced in 2008 and involved students from Years 3 and 4. It is an independent online enrichment course and challenges those students talented in mathematics.

In 2008, students were also given an opportunity to become motivated and explore aspects of science through Science Challenge, a statewide program for primary students. Four of our students competed in the NSW Young Scientist 2008 competition and were finalists for their stage group.

All students from Years 2-6 participated in a school-based public speaking program which assisted students to prepare and deliver speeches for an audience. This is a very successful way of supporting their literacy learning in the areas of speaking and listening.

Children who are talented writers participate in creative writing workshops with other talented students across the diocese.

### 5.2 Student Achievement

2008 was the first year of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). As a result of this new initiative, several points should be noted:

- A national minimum standard replaces the national benchmark of previous years.
- It is not possible in 2008 to provide comparisons with previous years' data.
- Students who were exempted from a test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.

In the 2008 cohort, there were 54 students in Year 3 and 47 students in Year 5.



Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables where band distributions and percentages of students achieving the national minimum standard are outlined separately for Year 3 and Year 5. In Year 3, the highest band that a student can achieve is Band 6. In Year 5, the highest band that a student can achieve is Band 8.

#### Year 3 band distributions and % of students at or above national minimum:

		Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6 (+)	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	School	0	4	7	15	49	25	100
	National	6.1	12	17.7	23	21.7	17.7	92.1
<b>Writing</b>	School	0	0	9	15	35	42	100
	National	2.9	6.5	15.6	28.7	27.4	17.2	95.4
<b>Spelling</b>	School	0	4	9	33	24	31	100
	National	5.9	10	19	25.9	21.9	15.5	92.4
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	School	0	0	9	29	20	42	100
	National	6.6	10.7	17.3	23.3	21.3	19.1	91.7
<b>Numeracy</b>	School	0	2	16	33	25	24	100
	National	3.3	10.9	22.9	28	20.9	12.4	95

Band distributions at Year Three demonstrate that for every test area, the school percentage of students in the top two bands exceeds national rates. It is also pleasing to note the very low percentages of students in the bottom two bands. This suggests that the school's intervention program, including both extension and remedial groups, is making a difference to successful learning for students. Numeracy was a minor focus this year (it was a major focus for two years previous), so it is pleasing to see that our Year Three students have achieved such good results this year. The very strong results in Band 6, in all test areas, is worthy of note.

#### Year 5 band distributions and % of students at or above national minimum:

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	School	0	4	20	24	18	33	100
	National	7.5	13.6	23.9	26	18.1	9.3	90.9
<b>Writing</b>	School	0	2	12	41	27	18	100
	National	5.9	11.8	25.3	29.3	17.9	8.3	92.5
<b>Spelling</b>	School	0	4	12	24	31	29	100
	National	6.8	12.8	24.9	28.2	18.2	7.6	91.7
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	School	0	6	6	27	31	31	100
	National	6.6	11	21.2	26.4	19.9	13.4	91.9
<b>Numeracy</b>	School	0	8	24	37	18	12	100
	National	5.9	17.4	28.9	25.7	13.9	6.6	92.6

Band distributions at Year Five demonstrate that for every test area, the percentage of students in the top two bands exceeds national rates. Further explicit modelling and teaching will be worked on by the school, as a way to lift results of those students performing in the middle bands, especially in the area of writing. 2009 will see a professional learning focus on reviewing the school literacy plan, as a way of checking the continuity of learning in all areas of literacy. Teachers will continue to set challenging targets for students who need to lift their performance in areas of literacy.



### 5.3 Extracurricular Activities

#### *Parish life*

A student hospitality team serves morning tea for elderly parishioners at the Healing Mass morning tea once a month.

Students are trained as altar servers for the parish masses.

#### *University of New South Wales competitions*

In the University of New South Wales Mathematics Competition, 76 students participated. St Gerard's received 3 High Distinctions, 11 Distinctions and 21 Credits.

In the Maths Olympiad 1 child received the Gold medal for a perfect score, 3 children scored in the top 10% and 5 scored in the top 25%.

In the NSW University Science Competition, 43 students participated. St Gerard's received 2 High Distinctions, 7 Distinctions and 16 Credits.

In the NSW University Competition for Computers, 48 students participated. St Gerard's received 3 High Distinctions, 7 Distinctions and 17 Credits. One student was awarded a gold medal for excellence.

In the NSW University English Competition, 61 students participated. St Gerard's received 1 High Distinction, 14 Distinctions and 13 Credits.

In the NSW University Writing Competition, 45 students participated. St Gerard's received 3 High Distinctions, 8 Distinctions and 9 Credits.

In the NSW University Spelling Competition, 51 students participated. St Gerard's received 1 High Distinction, 14 Distinctions and 14 Credits.

#### *Musical events*

St Gerard's has a school choir which participates in local eisteddfods and performs at special functions. In 2008 the choir increased in number and performed at whole school events. The senior and junior bands expanded in 2008, with sixty children having specialist lessons. They perform at school functions as well as special musical evenings for their parents.

#### *Community work*

A group of children who exhibit excellent interpersonal skills visit the Chesalon Aged Care Facility and develop a relationship with a selected resident. Skills training is provided before the program begins each year. Children visit twice a term.

#### *Chess*

St Gerard's offers chess coaching by the NSW Academy of Chess.

#### *Sporting opportunities*

- Soccer and netball gala days
- Representative teams: rugby league, cricket, soccer, netball
- Diocesan representative opportunities for cross country, athletics and swimming.

### 5.4 Professional Learning

All teachers participated in a range of professional learning activities in 2008.

The average expenditure on professional learning, per teacher, in 2008 was \$586.



**Staff development days** (all staff)

- Teacher Spirituality
- Talking, Listening, Assessing, Grammar

**Staff meetings** (all staff)

- Learning beliefs and authentic learning
- Religious Education: World Youth Day
- Rethinking Learning Support processes and roles
- Professional Standards: interacting with students, fellow teachers, parents
- Mathematics - authentic learning
- Literacy - determining standards for reporting
- Analysis of BST data
- Virtual classroom Come on Kids (Numeracy)
- Workplace Bullying
- Fire training for World Youth Day

**Leadership development**

- Leadership Team Meetings with focus on readings and discussion (weekly, 5 staff)
- Developing Capabilities for Middle Leaders - CSO (1 staff)
- Literacy Teacher Leaders' Support program K-6 (3 staff)
- Leadership development for assistant principals (1 staff)
- Workshop for Supervisors of New Scheme teachers (2 staff)
- Numeracy Teacher Leaders' Support Program K – 6 (2 staff)
- Cultivation of the moral character of teaching and learning (1 staff)
- Choice theory (2 staff)

**Curriculum development / Pastoral Care**

- Certificate of Primary Mathematics Education (1 staff)
- PDHPE Primary Network (1 staff)
- Primary Social Justice Network Meeting (1 staff)
- NAPLAN writing and marking (3 staff)
- K-6 literacy for beginning, casual and returning teachers (2 staff)
- Primary REC network meeting (1 staff)
- ICLT Primary Facilitators Network Forums ( 1 staff)
- Transition from home to school (2 staff)
- Seasons for Growth (2 staff)
- 'Circle time' (2 staff)



### **Mandatory training**

- OHS First Aid Day 1 and 2 (2 staff)
- OHS cash in transit (1 staff)
- Child protection briefing (all staff)
- Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (all staff)

### **Conferences**

- Catholic Librarian Conference (1 staff)
- ACEL 'New Metaphors in Leadership for Schools' ( 2 staff)

### **Administrative**

- PLUSS Module 1: PFW Query and mail merge (1 staff)
- Module 2 PFW Reporting and Excel (2 staff)



## 6. Strategic Initiatives

### 6.1 2008 Priorities and Achievements

The main areas in the 2008 Annual Plan which were achieved in 2008 were:

#### ***Catholic Life and Mission***

We continued to live the Vision and Mission Statement as a faith community, focussed on authentic learning.

Best practice in teaching and learning was developed in reference to the new modules being taught in Religious Education.

The unique opportunity for Christian hospitality was supported by participating wholeheartedly in World Youth Day.

#### ***Curriculum Development***

Literacy and numeracy continued to be a focus with a spotlight on listening and speaking strategies. Authenticity in learning is being challenged and the development of a 'big picture' around teaching and learning resulted in a draft framework being developed. This will act as a reference point for consistent best practice.

#### ***Quality Teaching and Learning***

Professional learning in the analysis of the BST results was carried out with staff. Teachers were able to use this information to inform teaching and learning programs.

There was a focus on English and mathematics to ensure excellence in these Key Learning Areas and to reinvigorate staff skills in teaching in these areas.

Staff worked on differentiation, both within the class program and individual programs, to meet the needs of all students. Assessment was also reviewed in the light of quality teaching and learning.

### 6.2 2009 Priorities and Challenges

#### ***Catholic Life and Mission***

- To continue building parish and school links through joint participation of World Youth Day.
- Deepen the religious literacy and faith formation of all staff.

The participation of students, teachers and parents in the joint parish community response to World Youth Day was outstanding. The community assisted with clearing out classrooms and restoring them to order, serving breakfast, transporting pilgrims to places, home stay, organising and distributing food packs, interacting and working with pilgrims.

Participation in a professional learning day of informed reflection about the 'Spirituality of Teaching' was highly valued by the staff. They had opportunities to challenge their understandings about Christian Discipleship and to explore the influence that their teacher role has, on the children in their care.

#### ***Curriculum Development***

- To develop a literacy and numeracy facilitator within the staff.
- To explore explicit strategies in teaching mathematics (open tasks) and literacy (listening and talking).

Nominated teachers attended the professional day for school literacy and numeracy facilitators. Their learning was rich and significant and they were able to make an impact on quality teaching in their classrooms. The challenge is to plan ahead and structure time for all teachers to benefit from



this learning. Continuity of learning between stages needs to be prioritised for next year, beginning with Literacy.

Learning in Numeracy teaching continued as a minor focus this year. The P&F supported the classroom teachers by raising money to purchase significant amounts of new, updated 'hands on' resources for each teacher to use to support authentic learning and explicit teaching, particularly in open tasks. The challenge is to have this reflected in class programmes.

### ***Quality Teaching and Learning***

- Develop coherent framework to guide quality teaching and learning.
- Review core beliefs about Learning.

A process was developed to facilitate an ongoing discussion about the school approach to teaching and learning. It was successful in producing a draft framework. This will act as a guide to our teaching and learning processes and act as a point of reference for future work in curriculum. The challenge for next year is to look at this framework in relation to the teaching of science.

### ***Pastoral Care and Student Management***

- Develop and publish a communication for parents about school anti-bullying strategies.
- To offer practical pastoral care for students; Seasons for Growth for those experiencing trauma or grief in their lives.

Parents were pleased to receive a document about the school's anti-bullying strategies. The challenge for next year is to engage staff in professional learning about behaviour and student management. The Seasons for Growth program was well received and the children included in this program were very pleased to be involved. Their teachers and parents reported that the children experienced an improvement in self-esteem and personal confidence.

### ***School Buildings and Facilities***

- To oversee maintenance of the new grounds and facilities.

The beautiful grounds at St Gerard's continued to be well maintained by a gardening group funded by the parent community. A small team of parents painted and cleaned the assembly areas and school toilets. Next year an upgrade of the area outside the Kindergarten classrooms will be a focus.



## 7. Parent Participation

### 7.1 Introduction

Parent participation is one of the great strengths of St Gerard's. As a school we work hard to continue the culture of 'shared values' which provide the platform for our good relationships, and success as a school community.

Parents work in partnership with the classroom teacher on a number of levels: parents assist with learning groups in the classroom, meet both formally and informally to discuss the learning needs and the emotional development of the children, assist with camps and excursions, give talks to the class on particular areas of experience, assist with all school sporting events and with transport.

On a school level parents: assist with canteen, attend small working bees, manage the uniform shop, complete Library tasks for the Librarian and assist with parent prayer.

The P&F raise funds for the school and this has enabled the school to resource many Key Learning Areas in mathematics and literacy this year.

The P&F Executive is divided into the following portfolios:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Publicity
- Faith Development
- Parent Communication
- Maintenance
- Fund Raising
- Social
- Clothing Pool and Events Sign

The parents publish a newsletter every week that becomes part of the school newsletter.

Parents welcome new members to the community and hold many social events that focus on the social aspect, rather than fundraising.

### 7.2 Parent Satisfaction

At St Gerard's school, parents feel welcomed and valued. The school has a community spirit, a real family feel to it, with parents commenting on the warmth that exists across parent, teacher and student relationships.

The faith development through whole school and class liturgies is appreciated by the parents. The Monday morning assemblies, class assemblies and award opportunities, are positive elements of school life.

Parents expressed deep satisfaction with the academic and sporting achievements of the school.

Parents valued the commitment of the dedicated teachers to the individual learning needs of their children. They were appreciative of the pastoral care that the teachers show to each child.

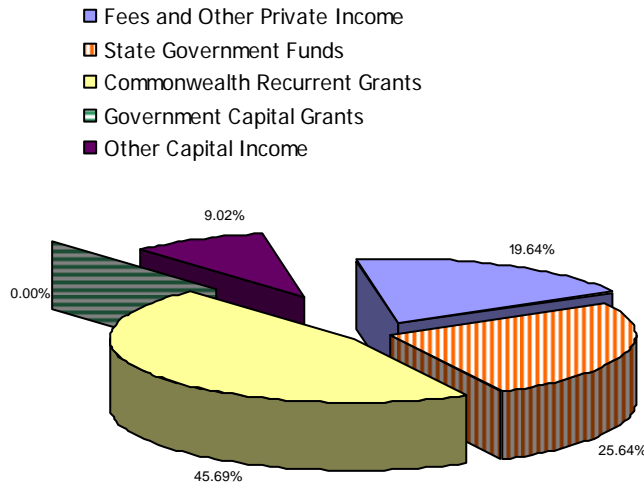


## 8. Financial Report

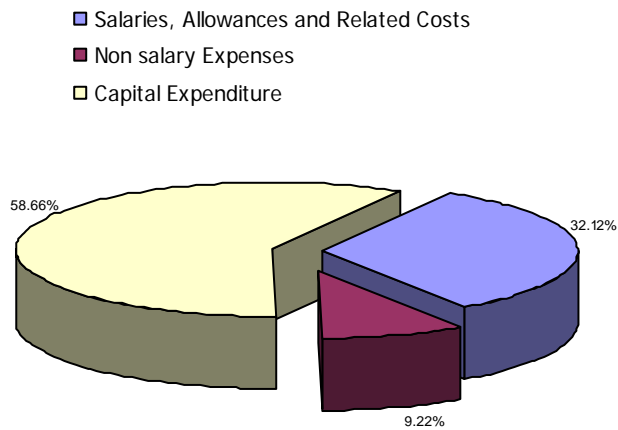
Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

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

### Income



### Expenditure



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