

St John the Baptist Catholic School Woy Woy South

2008 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

2008 proved to be a monumental year for the St John the Baptist Catholic School community. We celebrated strong NAPLAN results in Year 3 and 5, indicative of strong learning gains in our literacy and numeracy programs. A new vision and mission for the school was launched which reflected community contributions and involved key stewardship by our school board. The school underwent external review to evaluate all aspects of school life and as a result a new three year strategic management plan was launched. General school plant improvements were made with upgraded student amenities completed, financed generously by the Improving Our Schools Commonwealth Government money. Significant investments were made in upgrading our information, communication and learning technologies (ICLT) with interactive whiteboards proving a successful tool in the learning and teaching process. For the first time for quite a number of years the school at the end of 2008 was busily preparing for three classes of Kindergarten which typified a spike upward of increased enrolment numbers. A revised code of conduct and new uniform policy was unveiled with an emphasis on high expectations and standards which has led to a settled and positive school atmosphere and environment. At the conclusion of 2008 there was much to celebrate and look forward to as we move forward to a hope-filled future.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

In 2008 the school community was served well by an active Parents' and Friends' Association (P&F) and a School Board. The year was particularly busy with the school undergoing Tier 1 and Tier 2 review. Throughout its stewardship role the School Board produced information critical to the direction of our school for the next three years. The school and the parish continue to strengthen their partnership through the addition of the assistant priest as a member of the School Board. The parents felt included in all key decision making operations throughout 2008 and were pleased to see action in improving the physical site and resource needs for the students.

There were multiple opportunities for the parents to be involved in school life, ranging from fundraising activities, school socials and helping out in the classrooms. Parents have noticed a new direction for the school under the new leadership team which began at the beginning of this year. The introduction of a revised code of conduct and effective pastoral care policies have been well received by the parents. 2008 was a positive year for all involved in our growing school community.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

Students felt well represented by the Student Representative Council in helping to make decisions at the school. All students understood the new code of conduct and what it meant to be a responsible student at St John the Baptist. In 2008 some classrooms received interactive whiteboards which helped with learning. The school purchased seventeen new notebook computers and we were able to use these at our desks free from wires. The technology improvements made the learning fun. The younger students felt that the older students helped them in the playground and to understand and abide by the code of conduct. Some children who were doing well in mathematics were able to participate in 'Come on Kids', an online enrichment program. All grades had incursions or excursions which made the learning fun and in general, as a consequence of the new code of conduct, the majority of the students felt they were learning and playing in a safe school environment.



2. School Profile

2.1 Introduction

The school is part of the newly named Woy Woy Peninsula Parish community. It sits on a large parcel of land at 21a Dulkara Road in South Woy Woy. Enrolments in 2008 remained steady at 343 students. The school services a wide geographical area, as far down as Patonga to the south, McMaster's Beach to the east and Kariong to the North. The majority of families who are a part of the community come from lower-middle socio-economic backgrounds. Many parents make the commute to Sydney for work or own small businesses. St John the Baptist school, although Catholic in name, is viewed in the community as the only genuine alternative to the multitude of public schools that service the area on the Central Coast known as the Peninsula. In 2008 the school went through a self review and external review process to validate and evaluate all policies, programs and plans that had been operating in the school. As a result of this review a new strategic plan was devised that will be the blueprint for what we do over the next three years.

2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2008:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
168	175	10	18	343

*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.

†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 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
23	0	0	23



2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2008 was 95.6%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2007 to 2008 was 89.5%.

2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

In general, staff satisfaction was high in 2008 and a number of staff noted areas of improvement in the school. There was a feeling through the new leadership and addition of new staff that many positive things were taking place. These included a new code of conduct which emphasised respect for oneself, others and belongings. Children understood the consequences and these were carried out so that all students knew of the expectations. Improvement in the physical site and investment in ICLT were areas of commendation. Staff felt that the school was now better equipped to educate students for the 21st century. The increased involvement and partnership with the church and parish was seen by staff as a positive and created a greater feeling of community.

The introduction of a new approach to science learning and teaching and thorough assessments in mathematics were two areas of improvement in curriculum. There were many opportunities for staff to receive professional development in a host of areas including TESOL, ICLT and literacy. In general, the staff felt supported by the school leadership team throughout 2008.

2.7 Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate for 2008 was 94%.

2.8 Student Satisfaction

In 2008 the students felt safer in the school as a result of the new code of conduct. Students felt that those children who did the bullying were being dealt with appropriately through the minor and major breaches of the new pastoral care and discipline policy introduced in 2008. The senior students appreciated new toilet facilities and in general all students enjoyed the open playing spaces. However, there is a feeling of dissatisfaction around the lack of playground equipment which they would like addressed. The students felt safe at school and believed the teachers were doing their best to teach them well. The introduction of the interactive whiteboards and new notebooks was well received by all students. Year 5 enjoyed their time at Bathurst and Year 6 loved learning in Canberra. Opportunities were also created for students to be involved in excursions and incursions and students were able to participate in fun days such as the disco, family barbeque, concert and fundraising days.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St John the Baptist Catholic School was established in 1922 by the Sisters of St Joseph. The sisters remained as teachers and administrators until the first lay principal was appointed in 1992. The school chapel was dedicated to Blessed Mary MacKillop in recognition of the wonderful contribution by the Sisters of St Joseph. The feast day of Blessed Mary MacKillop is celebrated with a liturgy. Currently our student liaison officer works a few days a week as a pastoral support person for many students at the school. The school is a faith community, where students are encouraged to live their lives by following the gospel values. Our Code of Conduct is based on these values and we foster a love for God and mutual respect for everyone. We are an integral part of the wider parish community of Woy Woy and work co-operatively with them in their various ministries.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

Prayer is a daily part of the life of the school. Every morning the school assembles and recites the school prayer. Each classroom, the office foyer and staff room have a prayer space and everyone prays regularly. The school staff gathers together each Friday morning to participate in communal prayer. Students attend Mass regularly either at the school or at the Church and children from Year 3 to Year 6 have Reconciliation once per term. This Liturgy is prepared and given by the parish priest.

2008 began with Ash Wednesday Mass at the Church for all primary students, while the younger grades had a Liturgy at school. This was followed a week later by our Opening School Mass for the whole school. At this Mass the Captains were inducted and made their school pledge in front of the school and parish community. The staff and student representatives were also commissioned at this Mass to serve God and others daily.

Year 6 students participated in the Central Coast Cluster Mass at Warnervale.

Many teachers attended the annual Diocesan Staff Mass and all students participated in liturgies for the feasts of St Patrick, Joseph and the Annunciation.

In Term 1 our school was under review. Religious Education was thoroughly assessed in the school and we demonstrated all mandatory requirements.

The life of Jesus from Palm Sunday up to the Crucifixion was reverently and prayerfully re-enacted in a Kindergarten to Year 6 liturgy on Holy Thursday at the school.

Project Compassion was generously supported by all students as they vigorously collected money to help build toilets for their poorer neighbours.

Many children attended parish-based Eucharist sessions and made their First Holy Communion over the Easter season.

After Easter Stage 3 celebrated an Easter Mass together and the school community was involved in workshops and an evening concert with a modern Catholic singer/songwriter.

In Term 2 the children were involved in liturgies for Anzac Day, Mother's Day and the feast of the Sacred Heart.

The whole school celebrated the feast of our patron, St John the Baptist, with a Mass at Church, followed by a concert and school / parish barbeque at the school.

Most Year 2 children completed their parish Confirmation sessions and were confirmed by the Bishop in June.

World Youth Day 08 was a focus for the children this term. Our leaders welcomed the Cross and Icon at St Edward's. Our parish also hosted the Cross and Icon and many of our children took part



in these liturgies and attended the many events in Sydney. Some of our teachers were volunteers and also attended World Youth Day.

In Term 3 we had an Aboriginal elder visit and explain her painting to the school community and our indigenous children participated in an Aboriginal Liturgy.

There were liturgies in honour of Blessed Mary MacKillop and Mary at school. We had a huge toiletries drive and some Year 6 leaders helped distribute these to the companions from Mary Macs at the Parish.

Stages 2 and 3 attended Mass at the Church for the feast of the Assumption and we began monthly participation of Sunday Parish Masses on a regular basis. A different stage was encouraged to attend and children did the first and second readings and sang with the parish choir at these Masses.

In Term 4 many Year 2 children made their reconciliation through the parish.

The children participated in liturgies for All Saints and All Souls.

All grades completed Mission modules and our leaders attended the Diocesan Mission Mass at Waitara.

We had a Year 6 Graduation Mass with the whole school community and the parish priest helped present school awards in the Church.

The school year ended with a religious concert. Every student participated in The Christmas Story Concert at Woy Woy High School, which was attended by over six hundred people.

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

In 2008 we identified the need to improve school/parish relations in our review process. Throughout the year we invited the parish priest to morning tea and also invited him to speak to several grades when they were studying the sacraments. We worked closely with the Sacramental Co-ordinator and supported the parish with the Sacramental Programs and resources.

We celebrated St John the Baptist's Feast Day with a Mass and concert and invited the parish to attend our school and provided transport for those who needed it.

The 9:15.a.m. Sunday Parish Mass was especially targeted to involve our students more fully in the Eucharist. At this Mass the school children read the readings and the choir children sit and sing with the parish choir. The parish organist and cantor come to the school during the week of the Mass and work with the choir children at lunch time.

Two staff members are part of the Social Justice Apostolate of the Parish and the school's Social Justice Co-ordinator who runs the Mini Vinnies group at school works closely with the St Vincent De Paul of the parish to co-ordinate food and Christmas appeals.

The Religious Education Co-ordinator is a parish Council member and member of the choir, Liturgy Team and Social Justice Apostolate of the parish.

The Principal attends Parish Council meetings and gives a school report to the council monthly.

The P&F are part of a roster to serve morning tea after Sunday Mass and many parents assist with Sacramental Programs, with Children's Liturgy on Sunday mornings and parish fetes.

World Youth Day was a huge focus this year and our school leaders attended the World Youth Day Cross and Icon liturgy at St Edward's. Our parish also hosted the Icon and Cross and many of our students attended this parish liturgy led by our parish priest.

Many staff members attended the annual Diocesan Staff Mass and our new Principal and Assistant Principal were inducted at this Mass.



Our school leaders also attended the Diocesan Mission Mass at Waitara.

3.4 Catholic Worldview

All the modules in Religious Education covered at school highly emphasise the Catholic Worldview. The school has a vibrant Student Representative Council and Mini Vinnies group who consistently work and reflect the Catholic Worldview in a practical way for the students of our school. The Catholic Worldview is also evident as a perspective in some Key Learning Areas in teachers' programs.

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.

During 2008, one teacher completed her Master of Theology and one continued her Master of Theology through the Broken Bay Institute. Another teacher continued his Certificate of Religious Education.

The Religious Education Co-ordinator attended all relevant Religious Education Meetings and the Diocesan Conference.

The Social Justice Co-ordinator and the Religious Education Co-ordinator attended a Religious Education Workshop Day at Somersby conducted by the Mission Services team of the Catholic Schools Office. All staff participated in the Diocesan Faith Formation course on Jesus run by an Education Officer-Mission Services.



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

In 2008 the new code of conduct for students was introduced into the community with a clear expectation of student behaviour for the classroom and the playground. A considerable amount of time was given over to all staff to model for the students the expectations around behaviour. This was the first step in a three year process to introduce Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) into the school as a way of pastorally catering for the differences that exist in our community. By year's end, units of work on PBL were being developed with a major statement about the sorts of learners we have at St John the Baptist being developed early in 2009. The school, as part of the wider system of Broken Bay Diocese, followed and implemented Diocesan policy around the pastoral care and management of students and families.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

In 2008 the school was fortunate enough again to employ a Family Liaison Officer whose role was to provide services to link families in need with other support agencies within the Catholic sector and the broader community. Working in a team with the school counsellor and student liaison officer, the Family Liaison Officer provided support to all families in need of assistance.

Throughout the year a number of students required counselling as a result of parental marriage breakdown, anxiety issues and for emotional and social intervention. The student liaison officer, together with key staff, worked in unison to care for the individual student. Seasons for Growth continued in 2008 and was attended by over twenty children who had, or were experiencing, some form of family breakdown.

The school continued to provide food for needy families both at school and to be sent home. A stronger link was forged between school and the parish in catering for families that were experiencing financial hardship.

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

The Tier One and Tier Two school review process undertaken in 2008 formed the foundation of self-review into the practices of teaching and learning at St John the Baptist Catholic School. The staff recognised through this process that Curriculum Teaching and Learning was an area of recommendation and began the process of working towards achieving the suggested areas of challenge made by the external panel who visited the school as part of the comprehensive review process.

In 2008 a variety of initiatives were undertaken to address the needs of the students. These included, but were not limited to, the establishment of a Gifted Writers group led by a staff member with considerable experience and expertise in this area. To resource this group, the school was the only Primary school in the Broken Bay Diocese to successfully submit a proposal for a national literacy and numeracy award grant. The students were both challenged by, and enjoyed, the writing tasks and the work produced was of a very high standard.

To develop the skills of our talented mathematics students, a group was established to work through 'Come on Kids', an online enrichment program for gifted students in Kindergarten to Year 4. The program was well received by students and parents and will continue in 2009.

A number of high needs children in the Year 2 cohort were given support to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills. This support was in the form of extra teacher and aid time and provided both one-on-one and small group tuition. Targetted students benefited greatly from the additional support.

From results of the 2007 Basic Skills Test, a number of students in Years 4 and 6 were identified as being below the national benchmark in achievement. Through the provision of a teacher, extra support was given to these students to develop the skills needed to reach an appropriate level.

Through the review process, assessment was identified as an area of need. Practices were put in place to improve assessment as part of the learning process at St John the Baptist Catholic School. These included an expectation that whenever possible and appropriate, assessment for, and as, learning strategies were to be used. This included use of student-made and teacher-made rubrics.

To inform the teaching of mathematics, clinical interviews were conducted in Kindergarten to Year 2, while Years 3 to 6 completed other diagnostic assessments.

The Go Maths program was adopted by St John the Baptist staff in 2007. 2008 saw the beginning of a process of review to determine the best way to use the resource. Expectations around programming were discussed and this will continue to be a major focus in 2009.

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 48 students in Year 3 and 37 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
Reading	School	0	4	10	15	46	25	100.0
	National	6.1	12	17.7	23	21.7	17.7	92.1
Writing	School	0	0	10	25	35	29	100.0
	National	2.9	6.5	15.6	28.7	27.4	17.2	95.4
Spelling	School	0	2	8	31	31	27	100.0
	National	5.9	10	19	25.9	21.9	15.5	92.4
Grammar & Punctuation	School	0	4	8	19	21	48	100.0
	National	6.6	10.7	17.3	23.3	21.3	19.1	91.7
Numeracy	School	2	2	13	25	42	17	98.0
	National	3.3	10.9	22.9	28	20.9	12.4	95.0

Band distributions at Year 3 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 and in some cases no percentages in the bottom two bands. This suggests that our early intervention programs (including extension and enrichment programs) are successful in meeting specified targets. In numeracy key teachers across stage 2 and 3 were provided with professional development using the Quality Teaching Framework to design and implement units of work to enrich, extend and individualise learning for all students, in particular students who had previously been identified as gifted and or talented. More than half of the Year 3 students achieved in the top two bands which is a pleasing result. In 2008 a renewed focus on streamlining the effective literacy block was undertaken as a result of a new leadership team established during the year. As a result some teachers participated in professional development in the areas of assessment as, for and of the learning process to further improve educational outcomes for all students, particularly Year 3. The school was very pleased with the NAPLAN results for this group of students.

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
Reading	School	3	11	30	11	30	16	97.0
	National	7.5	13.6	23.9	26	18.1	9.3	90.9
Writing	School	3	11	14	43	27	3	97.0
	National	5.9	11.8	25.3	29.3	17.9	8.3	92.5
Spelling	School	0	11	22	30	32	5	100.0
	National	6.8	12.8	24.9	28.2	18.2	7.6	91.7
Grammar & Punctuation	School	0	11	22	38	19	11	100.0
	National	6.6	11	21.2	26.4	19.9	13.4	91.9
Numeracy	School	5	8	22	41	16	8	95.0
	National	5.9	17.4	28.9	25.7	13.9	6.6	92.6

Band distributions at Year 5 were particularly pleasing in reading and numeracy, where the school percentage of students in the top two bands exceeded the national rates. In all other areas the students performed well with the majority of students represented in the upper band levels. The school as part of a review undertaken by the new leadership, placed renewed focus on effective



literacy block time as well as providing professional development for staff to design and implement programs to effectively cater for individual differences in this cohort. The school also dedicated many resources in supporting high needs students in the areas of literacy and numeracy which, based on the solid results, is a strong indicator that such intervention has worked for this group of students. Although there were no areas of great challenge for the school, nevertheless a review of spelling will be undertaken in 2009 to further bolster the strong results recorded by these students in the 2008 NAPLAN.

5.3 Extracurricular Activities

Students exhibiting strong performances in mathematics were afforded an opportunity to participate in an online enrichment program known as 'Come on Kids'. All students identified by teachers from Kindergarten to Year 6 were set mathematics challenges and working mathematically problem solving tasks to complete in an online environment. This was a successful program that will continue in 2009.

Students were also provided opportunities to participate in band, keyboard, chess, debating and public speaking as well as being provided pathways to reach the highest representative levels in individual and team sports.

5.4 Professional Learning

The average expenditure on professional learning, per teacher, in 2008 was \$743.

In 2008 the newly assembled leadership team settled into the task ahead for the school year. During Terms 1 and 2 staff busily prepared for school review for the NSW Board of Studies and Catholic Schools Office known as Tier 1 and Tier 2. As a result of this review, external professionals spent two full days in the school reviewing documentation and evidence to prepare a document of commendations and recommendations that was to be used in the design of the new strategic plan for 2009 -2011.

Staff development days were dedicated to the review process, as well as staff spirituality and Primary Connections linking science with literacy.

During 2008 the school introduced SiPS into the school curriculum which was a new way to teach and learn science based on the Commonwealth Government's Primary Connections units of work. Staff undertook professional development and began to teach from these units at the beginning of Term 2.

Some teachers were supported in completing a postgraduate Certificate in Primary Mathematics Education, as well as TESOL certification. At the end of 2008 the staff began the process of introducing Positive Behaviour for Learning as a new approach to pastoral care and student welfare in the school which will take root in 2009.

Information, communication and learning technologies continued to be a focus of investment and development at the school in 2008. Staff meeting time was given over to the introduction of the use of Scootle as a tool in the learning process. Interactive whiteboards, laser printers and bulk purchase of notebooks were made in 2008 to provide teachers with the necessary tools to educate children for the 21st century.

Some staff are continuing on their higher education journey with enrolment in the Certificate of Religious Education. In 2008 one staff member completed a Master in Educational Leadership. Opportunities were also provided for stage 2 and 3 teachers to receive input on how to differentiate the curriculum in mathematics based on the Quality Teaching Framework.

Learning teams were established in 2008 in the areas of Curriculum Teaching and Learning, Pastoral Care and Student Welfare and Catholic Life and Mission. Staff meeting time was given over to these teams to develop ideas and policies that were to continue into 2009.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2008 Priorities and Achievements

In 2008 the school underwent review through the Tier 1 and 2 processes. As a result a new three year strategic management plan was devised that will be the blueprint for the school for 2009-2011. The new vision and mission statements were commissioned and a new revised school prayer was introduced. Go Maths was embedded into the Kindergarten to Year 6 mathematics programs as a resource for learning and teaching development. The Quality Teaching Framework continued to be used by staff, particularly stage 2 and 3 teachers, in designing and implementing mathematics programs that catered for the individual differences of students from Years 3 to 6. A literacy adviser was employed to review current literacy block practices in the Kindergarten to Year 2 classrooms and was able to model effective new strategies to meet the growing demands of all students.

Primary Connections Science link with literacy was introduced into the school in Term 2 and continued upgrade of information, communication and learning technologies was introduced into the school. Plant facilities were continued to be upgraded and water saving measures were introduced via the installation of water tanks and new dual flush toilet facilities, as a result of a grant from the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change. The school celebrated the introduction of the second satellite class for students on the autism spectrum and the school prepared busily for the first ever national tests known as NAPLAN.

6.2 2009 Priorities and Challenges

In 2008 a Catholic Life and Mission team was established to strengthen partnership between the school and the Woy Woy Peninsula Parish. In 2009 the focus of this team will be to unite all in the wider community to participate in, gain access to, or have an appreciation of, the many services that exist to support the families of the school. These include, but are not restricted to, St Vincent De Paul, Centacare, Mary Macs Kitchen and wider community social services and agencies.

Catholic Schools Week 2009 will also be the focus of attention by the school to promote itself in the wider community as a genuine caring and strong learning community.

In 2009 the school will introduce a new pastoral care and student welfare approach based on Positive Behaviour for Learning. The school will produce a succinct and clear statement on what it means to be a learner at St John the Baptist Catholic School and how to treat each other as we work and play. This will also entail a revised updated code of conduct as well as development of units of work to combat bullying and to build resilience in students.

The school will continue to embed into the teaching and learning programs the link with science and literacy framework introduced in 2008.

In 2009 the school will develop an expectation around professional learning and introduce professional readings and dialogue as part of staff meeting time. As a result, rigorous and robust discussion is hoped to develop greater understanding and consistency around how best to achieve optimum results for students across Kindergarten to Year 6. Along with this, staff will be asked to develop individual goals for professional and personal development in 2009 to provide greater focus to their craft as educators.

Some preliminary work will be undertaken on learning about the new national curriculum due for release in 2010. Also staff development days will be set aside for staff to begin introduction of enquiry-based integrated units learning midway through 2009. This will largely be the work of the learning framework team who will also attempt to design a curriculum map to streamline delivery of the mandated NSW Board of Studies Key Learning Areas.



A teacher coach will be engaged to work with teachers to improve general literacy and numeracy understanding for all of the Key Learning Areas. Work will continue on developing staffs understanding of assessment of, for and as learning processes.

A review of Go Maths will be undertaken as well as some intensive work on spelling with elements of First Steps Spelling reintroduced into the school for greater consistency. A stronger tracking of data will be introduced as well as exploration of improved ways to communicate results to parents.

Continued investment in information, communication and learning technologies will take place with purchasing of new notebooks, interactive whiteboards and the introduction of a fail safe wireless system and microwave architecture.

The school plant site will continue to be upgraded with new pathways and garden areas created to soften the hardness of the physical site.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

The school was served well by the formal parent structures established to build community. These were the school board now in its third year of operation and the P&F. The school board was instrumental in gauging community expectations for preparation of the review process. Its work has been very important in providing stewardship around important school decisions, strengthening the links between community and the school principal in the strategic decision making process.

The P&F continued the good work of building community through social events such as the welcome barbeque and trivia night. In 2008 the P&F helped fund the purchase of an interactive whiteboard and contributed to funding the upgrade of the physical plant site.

Both forums allow parents to understand strategic decision making and be genuine partners in the education of the children. Good community building occurred in 2008 largely through the works of these important representative bodies.

Parents were able to offer vital support within the classroom and with educational experiences outside of the school in 2008. Parents are instrumental in developing the whole child and in the educational process. In 2008 parents were afforded many opportunities to strengthen the school-home partnership and appreciated open days and performances that highlighted the school in a positive light.

At all times, parents are provided with weekly communication and information via the school's website, newsletters and term overviews.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Overall, parents were pleased to be consulted as part of the school review process held in the first half of 2008. Feedback from this process was vital in reviewing the operations of the school and to positively plan for the future. Parents felt that the school kept them informed of current events and were pleased that the newly assembled leadership team was addressing issues around bullying and academic standards.

Parents felt that, in general, there were ample opportunities for them to be involved in their child's education and appreciated the social events that were organised.

Parents would like to see the school continue down the path of improving the resources for the children to use in their learning, particularly the purchase of information, communication and learning technologies. All parents were looking forward to continued strengthened partnerships between home and school in 2009.

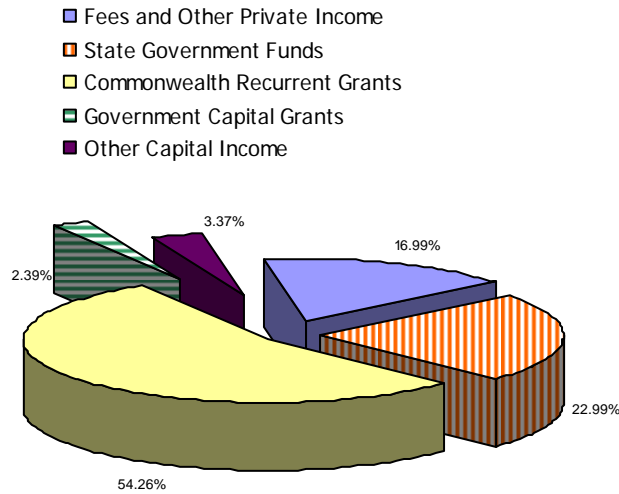


8. Financial Report

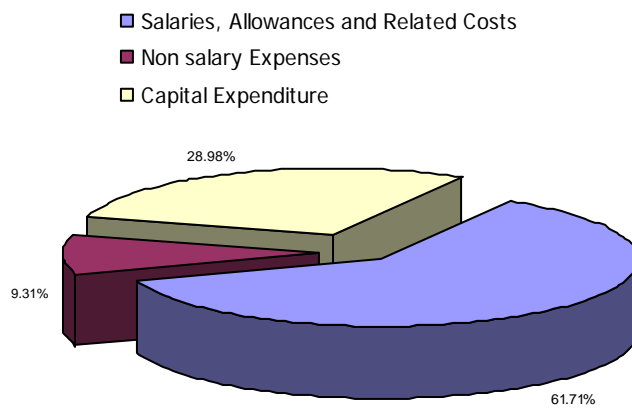
Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

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, Frances Reynolds.