

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School Waitara

2009 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

2009 marked the third and final year for me as Principal at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School. A major focus for us this year has been to reenergise the school motto making it a part of every day life at Our Lady of the Rosary.

2009 marked the second year of the new Strategic Plan. Progress was made in each of the five goal areas:

- Catholic Life and Mission
- Pastoral Care and Community
- Curriculum Teaching and Learning/ Professional Learning
- Strategic Leadership
- Facilities, Resources and Finances

The initiatives undertaken will be detailed in the body of the report

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

2009 saw the beginnings of a new project for the P & F, that being the landscaping of the lower playground. This project will be completed when the building project is finalised.

The other main achievements for 2009 include:

- the continued ongoing support and increase in revenue for the construction of the playground
- successful introduction and implementation of the fundraising levy
- inaugural Black Tie Welcome Ball
- commitment to strengthening the community link between our school and the parish with the BBQ's at the completion of each of the year masses
- successful community Spring Fair with involvement from all years.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

The student leaders of 2009 contributed enormously to the work of the school. The following leadership teams' achievements are as follows:

- The environment team oversaw the installation of the solar panels which will be linked to the grid early in 2010.
- The Social Justice team launched 'Be More, Not Have More' and Mini Vinnies.
- The liturgy team ran a number of whole school liturgies.
- The SRC raised money for a number of charities through the talent quest and lunch time discos.



2. School Profile

2.1 Introduction

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School Waitara is a Kindergarten to Year 6 primary school located in the Broken Bay Diocese on Sydney's North Shore.

The school was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1898. In 1991, the school was re-located from the Pacific Highway to the new parish site in Yardley Avenue. Students are primarily drawn from the parishes of Waitara and Our Lady Queen of Peace, Normanhurst.

The school enjoys a positive profile in the community with a reputation for excellence in learning and teaching and a strong focus on pastoral care.

2009 was an exciting year for Our Lady of the Rosary as the Parish of Waitara became the Hornsby Parish through amalgamation with Our Lady Queen of Peace Normanhurst.

2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2009:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
223	179	183	1	402

*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.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/about/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

Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school's profile page on the *My School* website.



2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2009 was 94.8%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2008 to 2009 was 90.5%.

2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

The 2009 teacher satisfaction survey responses indicated strong satisfaction on the part of all respondents to the learning opportunities, school life and the values Soli Deo project in 2009. Staff rated the professional development and the developing collaborative culture of the school as prominent highlights of the year.

2.7 Student Attendance

YEAR	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	92
1	93
2	95
3	94
4	92
5	94
6	94

The average student attendance rate for the whole school for 2009 was 94%.

Management of non-attendance: In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the school's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the



principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.

The Catholic Schools Office monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system's School Review and Development processes.

2.8 Student Satisfaction

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is the key student representative body at Our Lady of the Rosary. In 2009 the SRC reported that the students would like to:

- continue to receive acknowledgement of their achievements at a whole school level
- continue to have more community events as a whole school
- continue to engage in across-grade events.

In response to this, learning acknowledgement awards continue to be presented at the Monday morning assembly each week.

During the year we repeated whole school celebrations from 2008, a book character parade for Book Week and a whole school book trivia competition for Literacy Week. In 2009 we held an infants and primary lunch time disco. These events were prominent in the students' reflections on the year.

Our Lady of the Rosary held a Soli Deo Day to culminate the term of work engaged in during Term 3. This day was an across the grades event.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

A strong Mercy tradition exists at Our Lady of the Rosary, emphasising justice, inclusion, care and respect, a legacy of the Sisters of Mercy who established and ran the school from 1898 until 1979. During 2008 student leaders researched this history, selecting past community figures to name the four sporting houses and give focus to social justice work. This information became a part of the Opening School Mass in 2009 to remind the community of our heritage.

Servant leadership is developed in all students and formalised by Year 5 in a program of physical, emotional and spiritual support for Kindergarten and their families.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

Throughout 2009 staff, parents and students were involved in numerous liturgical celebrations centred around the Church's liturgical calendar as well as those commemorating other significant events such as the opening and end of the school year, the Year 6 North Shore Cluster Mass, Year 6 Graduation, Parish Family Masses, the Diocesan Mission Mass, Mother's Day, Harmony Day, Father's Day, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

In 2009 we were fortunate to have a Christian singer/song writer lead us in a whole school Holy Week performance.

The Parish's comprehensive sacramental program (Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation) was supported by diocesan curriculum modules in the relevant grades.

Throughout 2009 OLOR embarked on a social justice program through the Caritas Be More campaign. The Be More activities included a Project Compassion appeal called Pigitas, a Fair Trade excursion in Term 2, Tree Day in Term 3 and the establishment of a Mini Vinnies group, of which all Year 6 students were members. The Mini Vinnies group conducted a Winter Sleepout in Term 3, Night Patrol Cupcake baking in Term 3 and Christmas hampers and a giving tree in Term 4.

Throughout 2009 school community prayer life included weekly school prayer at assembly, daily classroom prayer, weekly staff prayer and monthly staff prayer reflections.

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

Our Lady of the Rosary school has continued to develop a strong relationship with our Cathedral Parish, evidenced by the liturgy planning team which includes the Religious Education Coordinator and the Parish Priest. In 2009 classes continued to attend one of the Parish Masses each week and Parish Family Masses were held for years K-6. These provided valuable opportunities for students, their parents and teachers to share responsibility with other parishioners for liturgical ministries such as reading, Eucharistic ministry, processions and choir. It has helped to establish routines between parish and school.

Strong school support of parish projects was evident through information given at assemblies and grade meetings and through regular school newsletter entries by the Religious Education Coordinator.

3.4 Catholic Worldview

'At Our Lady of the Rosary, our Catholic Worldview informs the way that we live, learn and teach. We believe that God's love for each of us is central to our relationships'.

As a result of our work on values education in 2008, where the staff and students engaged in a process to align the ten statements of the Catholic Worldview with Our Lady of the Rosary values and Mission Statement, in 2009, a Kindergarten to Year 6 program was developed to revisit our



motto, 'Soli Deo', and align it with the nine core values. This weekly activity culminated in a Soli Deo Day that brought together our Mercy history, our motto and our feast day.

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.

The Religious Education Coordinator and the mission services representative conducted a series of professional development sessions on the Labora liturgy planning tool.

The Religious Education Coordinator continued to work with classroom teachers to cooperatively plan lessons in Religious Education which were either modelled or team-taught. The Religious Education Coordinator and classroom teachers worked with an Education Officer-Mission Services from the Catholic Schools Office to develop learning sequences for modules of work.



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

Dialogue continued with staff and parents in relation to the School Review recommendations about celebrating success as a community. Principal's awards commenced in 2009 to publicly celebrate the learning of each child.

A social skills program, playground sport skills and the Rock and Water program were provided as a direct result of the identification of social skill developmental needs in the student body resulting in a significant reduction in the number and severity of pupil referrals to the leadership team.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

A long term commitment was made by the P&F to work on further developing the community life of the school. Many current initiatives were acknowledged as being of great community benefit, such as Permanent Pantry, Men in the Morning and the Class Parent Network with associated picnics and social events and an inaugural Annual School Ball was held. A commitment to whole school events was perceived to be essential in order to become one strong Catholic community.

4.4 Resolving Issues

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

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

4.5 Occupational Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for OHS and complies with the Australian Standard for OHS Management Systems. The OHSMS adopted by the Catholic Schools Office for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a 'safe and supportive' environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant Catholic Schools Office personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with OHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual OHS Plan. External OHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

During 2009 a number of special programs which supported student learning were established. They included:

- Development of the pedagogy used to facilitate learning in writing. Our school-based literacy mentor provided a program of professional development in Writers' Notebook for the primary staff. Four teachers undertook training in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Four teachers attended the Future Directions in Literacy Conference.
- Development of the pedagogy used to facilitate learning in numeracy. Our school-based numeracy mentors provided a program of professional development in using assessment data, mental strategies and visualising for the staff. Eight teachers attended the ORIGO Conference in Wollongong, seven teachers attended the Mathematical Association of NSW Conference in Sydney and two teachers completed the Certificate in Primary Mathematics Education through the University of Sydney.
- The mathematics enrichment program, Come on Kids, was run for gifted mathematicians in Years 2 and 4. An infants mathematics enrichment day was held in Term 4.
- A science enrichment day for Kindergarten to Year 6 was held during Science Week 2009.
- Curriculum mapping Kindergarten to Year 6 was further developed in 2009. Teachers began entering their teaching programs in the curriculum mapping software.
- Kindergarten commenced a development play component of the literacy block which provided increased opportunities for children to develop oral language skills prior to writing.
- Two teachers attended the diocesan boys' education program.

5.2 Student Achievement

2009 was the second year of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy. Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3** students in Band 1 are working below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are working at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are working above the national minimum standard.
- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are working below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are working at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are working above the national minimum standard.
- In the 2009 cohort, there were 59 students in Year 3 and 52 students in Year 5.
- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the National Minimum Standard in that test area.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are 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.



Band Distributions (%) – Year 3

			Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	2009	School	0	0	2	15	31	53	95
		State	3	9	17	22	21	26	96
		National	4	11	18	23	20	22	94
	2008	School	4	12	12	19	31	23	96
		State	4	10	17	24	23	21	95
		National	6	12	18	23	22	18	93
Writing	2009	School	0	2	0	24	38	36	95
		State	2	5	13	29	32	19	97
		National	3	6	15	30	29	16	96
	2008	School	0	2	12	15	33	38	100
		State	2	5	13	28	31	22	98
		National	3	6	16	29	27	17	95
Spelling	2009	School	0	0	0	14	32	54	95
		State	4	7	16	24	23	25	95
		National	6	9	19	25	20	19	92
	2008	School	2	4	15	23	23	33	98
		State	3	7	16	26	25	22	96
		National	6	10	19	26	22	16	93
Grammar & Punctuation	2009	School	0	0	4	16	36	45	95
		State	4	8	13	21	24	30	95
		National	6	9	14	21	23	26	93
	2008	School	0	4	12	31	17	37	100
		State	4	9	16	24	24	23	95
		National	7	11	17	23	21	19	91
Numeracy	2009	School	2	4	7	25	31	31	93
		State	3	10	20	27	22	16	96
		National	4	12	23	27	20	12	94
	2008	School	0	2	19	44	19	15	100
		State	2	9	20	28	23	17	97
		National	3	11	23	28	21	12	95

In Literacy, it was very pleasing to note that the percentage of students achieving at Band 6 (and at Bands 5 and 6 combined) was above national figures in every test area. All aspects of literacy emerged as a strength which indicate the explicit teaching and a focus on writing have been effective strategies for improving student learning. There was a significant increase in the number of students achieving results in the top band in reading when compared with results for the 2008 cohort. It is also pleasing to note that the percentage of students in lower bands was less than the national figures and less than previous years in all areas of literacy. Extensive professional development that occurred in numeracy during 2008-2009 has resulted in improved numeracy especially in the area of number. Although results in measurement and data have been pleasing, it still remains an area of concern. Approaches to the teaching of skills in this area will again be reviewed and there will be continued development in this area in 2010.



Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

			Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	2009	School	0	8	14	10	49	20	98
		State	5	12	19	25	22	15	94
		National	7	13	21	25	21	13	92
	2008	School	0	6	20	13	31	30	100
		State	6	12	23	26	20	12	94
		National	8	14	24	26	18	9	91
Writing	2009	School	2	2	8	37	29	22	96
		State	4	10	26	33	19	8	95
		National	6	12	27	31	17	7	93
	2008	School	2	4	7	35	28	24	98
		State	4	10	24	31	20	9	95
		National	6	12	25	29	18	8	92
Spelling	2009	School	2	8	6	31	37	16	96
		State	4	10	22	26	21	15	95
		National	6	13	26	26	18	10	92
	2008	School	2	4	9	37	39	9	98
		State	5	10	22	29	22	12	95
		National	7	13	25	28	18	8	92
Grammar & Punctuation	2009	School	2	2	6	25	39	25	96
		State	5	10	18	25	22	19	94
		National	6	11	20	26	21	15	92
	2008	School	0	11	11	9	33	35	100
		State	5	10	20	26	21	16	94
		National	7	11	21	26	20	13	91
Numeracy	2009	School	0	4	27	24	16	29	98
		State	3	11	24	28	19	14	96
		National	4	14	27	28	17	8	94
	2008	School	0	9	17	37	20	17	100
		State	5	15	26	26	17	10	94
		National	6	17	29	26	14	7	93

The results in Year 5 were similarly pleasing. Although there was a clustering of students in Bands 6 and 7 in overall literacy, the areas of reading and grammar and punctuation showed as particular areas of strength with fewer students in the lower bands and an increased percentage of students in the upper bands. Although results in spelling have been pleasing, it still remains an area of concern with only slight improvement in results. Extensive professional development that has occurred in numeracy during 2008 – 2009 has resulted in improved numeracy in Year 5 especially in the area of number where there has been notable movement of students towards the upper bands. There has been minimal growth in the area of measurement and data which indicates the need to review expected standards and the ways of teaching measurement in 2010 in order to enable more students to achieve at higher levels.

5.3 Extracurricular Activities

Children at Our Lady of the Rosary had the opportunity to participate in many extracurricular events and activities including:

- intra-school Kindergarten to Year 6 Public Speaking Competition and the Year 6 Diocesan Public Speaking Competition
- intra-school chess competition
- Maths Olympiad
- Gateways Enrichment Program for Year 6 students



- Rock and Water Program
- Active After School Program
- Taekwondo
- Da Vinci Decathlon
- Drama workshops
- Wakakirri
- International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (formerly The University of New South Wales Competitions)

5.4 Professional Learning

Five whole staff development days were held in 2009:

- Term 1: Review of existing school policies
- Term 1: Primary Connections
- Term 2: Curriculum Mapping
- Term 3: Cluster Staff Development Day
- Term 4: Spirituality Day

Other major professional learning programs:

- The Play and Literacy Conference in Melbourne was attended by two staff providing extra support for the developmental play program in Kindergarten.
- Our school-based numeracy mentors provided a program of professional development in numeracy for the staff. Seven teachers attended the Mathematical Association of NSW Conference in Sydney, eight staff members attended the Origo Maths Conference in Wollongong and one mentor and one staff member completed the Certificate in Primary Mathematics Education through the University of Sydney.
- The Principal and Assistant Principal attended the Primary Years Conference in Adelaide.
- Four teachers attended the Future Directions in Literacy Conference conducted by The University of Sydney.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2009 Priorities and Achievements

The following achievements reflect the strategic priorities identified in 2008 for 2009:

- The agreed practices which have flowed from professional development in mathematics have been written into the school mathematics policy.
- Parent education was facilitated by diocesan parent educators in the area of mathematics through a two night course run in Term 2.
- Our improved practice in mathematics and literacy resulted in greater representation of students in the higher bands in the NAPLAN tests. This was particularly the case for the Year 3 cohort.
- Curriculum mapping commenced using Techpaths software allowing flexible access to Kindergarten to Year 6 planning and assessment documents by all staff. Science units and mathematics outcomes have been loaded.
- Primary Connections, the Academy of Science teaching program, was implemented Kindergarten to Year 6.
- Enrichment initiatives were a whole school project:
 - Gateways project in mathematics and visual arts
 - Infants mathematics enrichment day
 - K-6 science enrichment day
 - Writing enrichment for Year 2 boys
 - Da Vinci Decathlon

6.2 2010 Priorities and Challenges

In 2010 it is planned that:

- there will be an increased focus on gathering and analysis of data so as to better inform learning and teaching
- the agreed practices which have flowed from professional development in mathematics will be consolidated through deeper teacher understanding in numeracy, improved numeracy teaching across all grades and refined processes in mathematics programming
- parent education workshops will be conducted by school staff in the areas of numeracy and literacy
- there will be analysis of the school's Scope and Sequence especially in Science and History, in light of publication of the Australian Curriculum documents
- there will be whole staff professional development in Positive Behaviours for Learning as the school's pastoral care policy is reviewed
- staff will be supported through professional development, with the installation of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms, as part of the Pride program
- enrichment initiatives will continue with participation in:
 - Gateways project in Science and Visual Arts
 - Enrichment days
 - Maths Olympiad; Tournament of the Minds
 - Da Vinci Decathlon.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

During 2009 parents participated in the:

- P&F Association
- Class Parent Network
- Playground Development Committee
- Finance Committee.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

During Kindergarten 2010 interviews for enrolment of siblings, parents were specifically asked about aspects of the school with which they were happy and those with which they had issues or concerns. The Principal explained that this was an opportunity for feedback which would assist the school to improve its performance.

Parents expressed their confidence in the work the school was doing in literacy and numeracy. It was also felt that the parent body's understanding of the Pastoral Care Policy and of the school's practices in this area have greatly improved. Dialogue regarding celebrating success was positively noted as was increased involvement in gala days in sport.

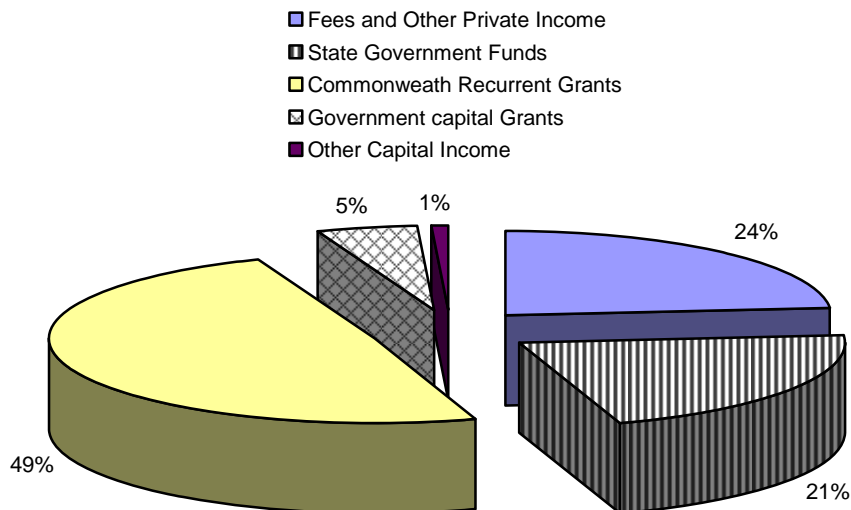


8. Financial Report

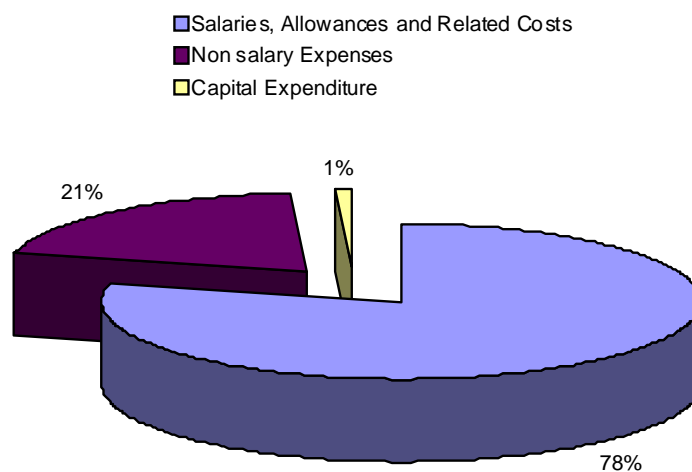
Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

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

Income



Expenditure



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the Schools Consultant, Diann Hynes.