

# Maria Regina Catholic Primary School Avalon

## 2009 Annual Report



Principal: Mrs Kathy Gee

Address: 42 Central Road  
AVALON NSW 2107

Phone: (02) 9918 2608

Fax: (02) 9918 6318

Web: <http://www.mradbb.catholic.edu.au>



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

### 1.1 Message from the Principal

Our annual school report provides information to the community about the progress of our school during 2009. Maria Regina is a welcoming, inclusive school where staff, parents and parish work towards providing our children with a happy, challenging environment.

2009 being our Golden Jubilee Year, we had much to celebrate. Maria Regina School has a rich and successful history having provided a Catholic education for young people in the Avalon area for fifty years. While reflecting on the past we realise the importance of having all stakeholders working together. It is through the combined efforts of the school, family and community that we can truly help prepare our students for the 21st century.

### 1.2 Message from the Parent Body

Maria Regina's Parents' and Friends' (P & F) have a very close working relationship with the school's Leadership team and staff members. It supports the school to achieve goals set out in the strategic plan.

2009 saw another successful year for the Maria Regina community with the highlight being the 50th year Golden Jubilee celebrations.

Throughout the year our parents continued their support of the school with the class parents organising their teams for fundraising and social events.

### 1.3 Message from the Student Body

The Student Representative Council reported that one of the highlights for 2009 was 'Dance Fever', and the 'Young Communicator and Dramatists Program'. The students enjoyed the variety of activities that focused on dance, public speaking and drama. The students had a lot of fun creating props, learning dances from different eras and performing in front of an audience.





## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Introduction

Maria Regina Catholic School is a single stream K to 6 co-educational school, located in the Broken Bay Diocese on Sydney's northern peninsula at Avalon Beach. Students are primarily drawn from the surrounding areas of Avalon, Bilgola, Whale Beach, Palm Beach, Clareville and Newport.

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

The school Vision and Mission statement is reflected in all aspects of school life.

### 2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2009:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
93	71	7	0	164

\*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:

- a) have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- b) have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications
- c) do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:
  - to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
  - as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

a	b	c	Total
15	0	0	15

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 94.3%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2008 to 2009 was 90.0%.

## 2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers indicated strong satisfaction for:

- the professional learning opportunities provided
- the collaborative culture of the school
- willingness of staff to share and support each other
- support of the leadership team
- positive parent feedback.

## 2.7 Student Attendance

YEAR	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	91
1	94
2	91
3	95
4	94
5	93
6	96

The average student attendance rate for the whole school for 2009 was 93%.

**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.

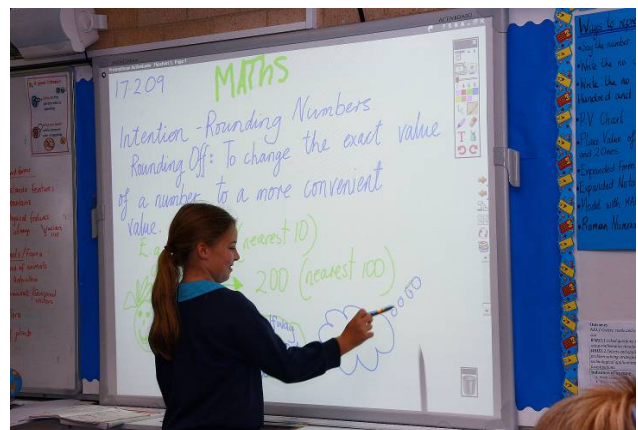
Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.

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 students report that the school provides many opportunities to use technology. This can be done through each class's allocated computer time and through access to computers in every classroom. Students enjoy learning new skills through regular opportunities to use interactive whiteboards, digital cameras and a range of software to create artworks and represent information.

They also like participating in extra activities that are available at school such as the Photography Exhibition and Competitions, Sporting Competitions, Carnivals, Premier's Reading Challenge, Spirituality and Leadership days and excursions. All students enjoyed the Dance Fever program and were very excited when the school came first overall in the Show Dance Competition. The Year 6 students report very positively about the Buddy System. They like helping the Kindergarten students settle into school and being a friend they can always come to. The Year 6 students provide a constant support network for the Kindergarten students, assisting with day-to-day activities ranging from tying shoelaces to helping with reading. Year 6 feel a great sense of responsibility and enjoy being good role models.





### 3. Catholic Life and Mission

#### 3.1 Catholic Heritage

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

The life of the school is based on Gospel values where the worth of each individual is recognised. Students are encouraged to respond to the invitation of the call to Catholic discipleship. This is achieved by a reflective response to God’s action in our world and particularly in our lives. All members of the Leadership Team are faithful Catholics who are ready to embrace the mission of the Catholic school today and to lead and inspire their staff and parents.

#### 3.2 Religious Life of the School



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

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

Partnership between the school and parish is highly valued and was further strengthened by the arrival of new parish priest of Pittwater. The parish priest was a regular presence within the school and parish community, working collaboratively with the school Leadership Team, the staff and students by celebrating regular Family and Parish Masses, performing Reconciliations and leading the Parish Sacramental Program. A rapport was established between the students and the parish priest and he regularly interacted with students in the school and parish.

Our affiliation with East Timor deepened in 2009, with the support of the parish priest and the school Outreach Team. A staff member volunteered in Term 1 to educate East Timorese teachers in Same, a village in East Timor. In Term 3, the Principal, parish priest and a parent from the school established further connections with East Timor, by visiting Soibada in the mountainous region of Manatuto. The purpose of the visit was to make a personal connection with the school and parish in Soibada and build sustainable, cultural understandings.

#### 3.4 Catholic Worldview

As a Catholic school, Maria Regina seeks to strengthen a shared understanding of the central purpose of our school by modelling the Gospel values of inclusion, compassion, human dignity, justice and service as declared in the school’s Mission Statement. There is a deep commitment to working together to build a community of disciples of Jesus. We proclaim the message by promoting a Catholic Worldview, which embraces the presence of God in our daily life, the Eucharist, the Sacred Scripture and the living tradition of the Church. The Catholic Worldview is carefully embedded in the whole curriculum, promoting an obligation to work to create social and environmental conditions that promote the care and respect of every person and all of creation.

The Photography Competition, ‘Catholic Worldview – Through the Lens of a Child’ was offered again in 2009 and co-ordinated by Maria Regina with entries from all Catholic primary schools in the Peninsula. Photos taken by students portraying a Catholic Worldview could be entered in the categories of Nature, People, Places and Animals.





In 2009 our school Social Justice Team was renamed the Outreach Team. Our Outreach Team consists of various staff members including the school Principal, the Religious Education Coordinator, the Schools Consultant and a number of parents. An Outreach Team member attended cluster and diocesan social justice meetings to broaden our knowledge and initiatives surrounding this important area.

Our school continued to strengthen our affiliation and awareness of East Timor by celebrating East Timor's Independence Day with a variety of activities. These included guest speakers and fundraising initiatives. This day coincided with a visit to our school by Kirsty Sword-Gusmao (Former First Lady and wife of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao). There was an evening of events for the school and local community that began with a cocktail party in the school grounds, followed by a presentation from Kirsty about life in East Timor and the challenges that people face in their country, especially the women and children in the Church. After the screening of the film, 'Where the Sun Rises' featuring the life of Xanana Gusmao, Kirsty answered many questions referring to the theme of the film, forgiveness and reconciliation.

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

### **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 informs staff of upcoming courses offered by the Broken Bay Institute/University of Newcastle as well as inviting them to attend inservices in other religious domains such as liturgy and spirituality. In 2009 a Staff Development Day took place surrounding the theme of the Eucharist and Spirituality. The Leadership Team participated in a course designed for Eucharistic Ministers and revisited the requirements of affective ministry. The Religious Education Coordinator also ensures that the Religious Education accreditation of teachers has been completed or is in the process of being completed for each staff member. The Religious Coordinator communicates regularly with members from the Catholic Schools Office Mission Services team to ensure staff are informed of current procedures and events. One member of staff is studying postgraduate studies in Theology through Broken Bay Institute/Newcastle University.



## 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

The school's Discipline and Pastoral Care Policies were adhered to throughout 2009.

Our school Behaviour Management Policy takes into account the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy and Student Discipline Policy for Diocesan systemic schools in that our approach to discipline has its basis in our pastoral care for each other.

Our whole school approach to bring about positive behaviour, called Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), continued to be developed throughout 2009 with regular PBL meetings (including representation by the Catholic Schools Office), collection of data and ongoing professional development of staff (particularly new staff and casual teachers). This approach has a strong emphasis on teaching appropriate behaviours and providing systems of support to bring about these positive behaviours. This policy recognises that staff, students and parents all share the responsibility for behaviour management, with a positive and pastoral outlook for all.

### 4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Maria Regina has supportive and welcoming class parent representatives who support the school community by acting as a link between the classroom, teacher and parents. Their role within the school engages the community to promote pastoral care such as welcoming new families and fostering new relationships between parents and students. In 2009 a Class Parent Coordinator was elected to oversee the various roles of our class parents.

A parent representative of the school attended Parent Council information meetings which were held on four occasions throughout the year.

Maria Regina students have access to a school counsellor if required. The school can also assist parents in acquiring suitable counselling for families through Centacare. Families affected by the financial crisis and who may have been struggling to meet school fee payments were offered flexibility and support.

### 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

Staff meetings on assessment, analysis of data and tracking processes in the Key Learning Area of Mathematics were refined and the Numeracy Policy was reviewed. All teachers trialled tracking scaffolds, focused on improving student number facts and problem solving skills. Gifted students in mathematics attended extension classes with students from neighbouring Catholic schools.

Stage two and three students were encouraged to read daily for ten minutes to assist with generating a love of reading, while library lessons focused on narrative structure. An external consultant assisted staff with a whole school approach to teaching spelling.

As a staff we recognise the need to address bullying, resilience, social skills and self-esteem. Our school committed to using the Friendly Schools and Families (FSF) Program in all classes. The aim of the program is to help schools and parents prevent bullying. As well as classroom teaching/learning activities, we have developed draft policies and clearer procedures and introduced playground activities to prevent or reduce bullying and strategies to help students cope with social difficulties.

Behaviour and Pastoral care policies were reviewed and written incorporating the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program (PBL). All staff have developed a proactive approach to defining, teaching and monitoring appropriate behaviours. The data gathered informs appropriate action. The program is evaluated regularly and practices are adjusted to make sure the process is achieving effective results for our school.

The integration of technology into teaching and learning continues to be a focus for 2009. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards and access to laptop computers. Dedicated professional learning sessions have been held to ensure teachers are confident in utilising the interactive whiteboards in their teaching and learning. This technology enhances lessons and supports learning using interactive activities. All students have access to computers in their classroom. There is daily access to a bank of laptops and a wireless network.

### 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 26 students in Year 3 and 23 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
<b>Reading</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	0	25	33	13	29	92
		State	3	9	17	22	21	26	96
		National	4	11	18	23	20	22	94
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	9	5	27	45	14	100
		State	4	10	17	24	23	21	95
		National	6	12	18	23	22	18	93
<b>Writing</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	4	8	25	50	13	92
		State	2	5	13	29	32	19	97
		National	3	6	15	30	29	16	96
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	0	9	9	36	45	100
		State	2	5	13	28	31	22	98
		National	3	6	16	29	27	17	95
<b>Spelling</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	4	0	17	33	42	4	89
		State	4	7	16	24	23	25	95
		National	6	9	19	25	20	19	92
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	9	5	18	41	27	100
		State	3	7	16	26	25	22	96
		National	6	10	19	26	22	16	93
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	4	8	25	42	21	92
		State	4	8	13	21	24	30	95
		National	6	9	14	21	23	26	93
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	0	14	27	32	27	100
		State	4	9	16	24	24	23	95
		National	7	11	17	23	21	19	91
<b>Numeracy</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	8	17	29	17	29	92
		State	3	10	20	27	22	16	96
		National	4	12	23	27	20	12	94
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	5	14	36	27	18	100
		State	2	9	20	28	23	17	97
		National	3	11	23	28	21	12	95

As a direct result of the Year 3 NAPLAN data, the school implemented a whole school approach towards the teaching of Spelling. NAPLAN spelling results were examined by the staff and education specialists to devise a whole school approach to ensure quality teaching practices. Numeracy was a diocesan-wide focus for 2009. Maria Regina participated in numerous professional development days throughout 2009 with the core purpose of improving Numeracy within our school. Regular staff meetings were allocated throughout the year to Numeracy and Spelling.



**Band Distributions (%) – Year 5**

			Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	0	14	32	14	41	100
		State	5	12	19	25	22	15	94
		National	7	13	21	25	21	13	92
	<b>2008</b>	School	17	17	50	0	17	0	83
		State	6	12	23	26	20	12	94
		National	8	14	24	26	18	9	91
<b>Writing</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	0	5	55	14	27	100
		State	4	10	26	33	19	8	95
		National	6	12	27	31	17	7	93
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	0	33	33	17	17	100
		State	4	10	24	31	20	9	95
		National	6	12	25	29	18	8	92
<b>Spelling</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	5	14	27	18	36	100
		State	4	10	22	26	21	15	95
		National	6	13	26	26	18	10	92
	<b>2008</b>	School	17	0	33	33	17	0	83
		State	5	10	22	29	22	12	95
		National	7	13	25	28	18	8	92
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	0	9	23	27	41	100
		State	5	10	18	25	22	19	94
		National	6	11	20	26	21	15	92
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	17	17	32	17	17	100
		State	5	10	20	26	21	16	94
		National	7	11	21	26	20	13	91
<b>Numeracy</b>	<b>2009</b>	School	0	0	18	36	23	23	100
		State	3	11	24	28	19	14	96
		National	4	14	27	28	17	8	94
	<b>2008</b>	School	0	17	50	33	0	0	100
		State	5	15	26	26	17	10	94
		National	6	17	29	26	14	7	93

It was pleasing to note that 100% of Year 5 Maria Regina students achieved at or above the national minimum standard in all test areas.

As stated above, our school focus will be on the areas of Spelling and Numeracy in a continued effort to improve outcomes for all students.

**5.3 Extracurricular Activities**

**Public Speaking**

This year Maria Regina employed a specialist teacher to develop speaking and presentation skills for students. Weekly lessons incorporated the skills of public speaking, drama and debating. Throughout the year, the students had opportunities to perform in front of various audiences and in Term 4 a school debating team represented Maria Regina in the Peninsula Debating Competition. Two Year 6 students also represented our school in the Peninsula Public speaking Competition at St Paul’s, Manly.

**Music**

This year the training band and concert band continued to grow and performed at whole school events and musical evenings. Band camp was held with several other peninsula schools in preparation for performing at the Mater Maria Catholic College Marana Music Festival.



## 5.4 Professional Learning

Teachers participated in a range of professional learning opportunities. These included extended staff meetings, Peninsula cluster meetings, Diocesan and external conferences.

The school's focus for professional learning was informed by the annual goals which specifically targeted Numeracy and Spelling.

Members of the leadership team and co-ordinators attended meetings to analyse NAPLAN data and look at our future direction to raise standards in Numeracy.

### ***Professional learning at extended staff meetings included:***

- Numeracy
- Literacy
- Spelling
- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
- Using interactive whiteboards

### ***Staff Development Days included:***

- Numeracy
- Meditation and the Eucharist
- Consistency in Teaching and Learning K-6
- Programming



## 6. Strategic Initiatives

### 6.1 2009 Priorities and Achievements

- **Provide opportunities for a parent forum to further understand the whole school commitment to Positive Behaviour for Learning.**
  - Information about Positive Behaviour for Learning regularly placed in the newsletters.
  - A parent forum was held in Term 2.
  - Positive Behaviour awards presented regularly at whole school assemblies.
  - Information session at Starfish Transition Program.
- **To continue to gather and analyse a range of student work samples and performance and reflectively develop an action plan for future learning. Special focus will be given to numeracy.**
  - Action plan for numeracy developed during the year.
  - Teachers workshopped at twilight meetings held with school staff as well as joining with other schools in the northern cluster.
  - Numeracy Scope and Sequence implemented.
  - Numeracy Curriculum Map developed to ensure content is covered and all outcomes addresses.
- **To ensure interactive whiteboards are used effectively to support student learning.**
  - Teachers work collaboratively to share ideas and practice.
  - All teachers use interactive whiteboards daily in their teaching and learning.

### 6.2 2010 Priorities and Challenges

- To further strengthen our links with East Timor through collaboration with the parish and local council
- To continue to develop a shared understanding of commitment to Behaviour Management
- Review and evaluate current assessment practices
- Review and evaluate Numeracy Plan
- Introduce Asian language and culture to stage 2 and 3 students





## **7. Parent Participation**

### **7.1 Introduction**

We are fortunate to have a very supportive and committed parent body. Parent involvement throughout the year continued with parents assisting in the classroom, on excursions and in the school canteen. Whole-school planned activities and celebrations included Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparents' Day.

In 2009 the parents took on a major role of organising the celebrations for the 50th Jubilee Anniversary which included a dinner dance for over 250 people in a marquee in the school grounds. The detailed organisation ensured attendance of past principals, teachers, students and parents as well as the publication of a 50th Jubilee book.

### **7.2 Parent Satisfaction**

At Maria Regina parents feel welcomed and valued. The school has a strong community spirit with parents commenting on the warmth that exists across parent, teacher and student relationships.

Parents value the commitment of the dedicated teachers and are appreciative of the pastoral care that the teachers show to each child. Parents are involved in the partnership of their child's education. They feel they are very well informed through the school newsletter and are encouraged to provide feedback. They enjoyed participating in the professional learning opportunities offered by the school in literacy and Positive Behaviour for Learning.

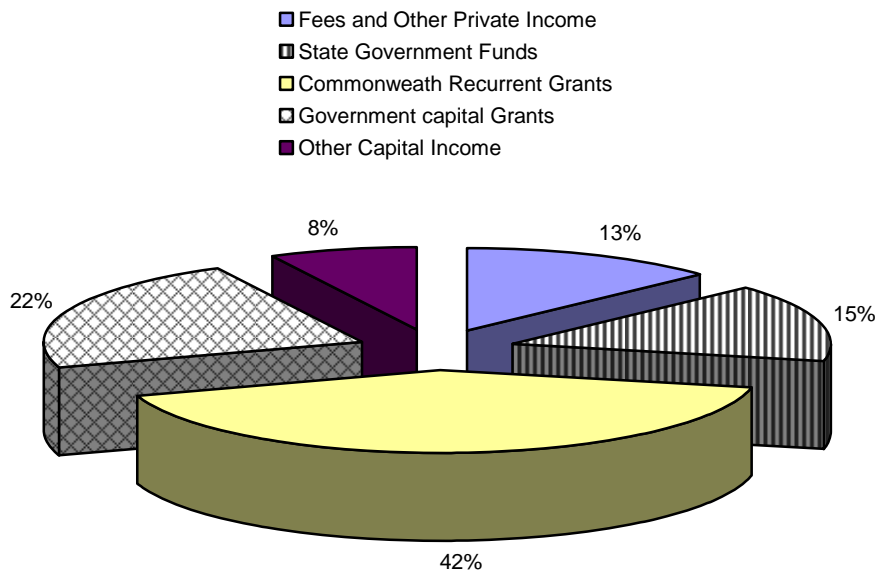


## 8. Financial Report

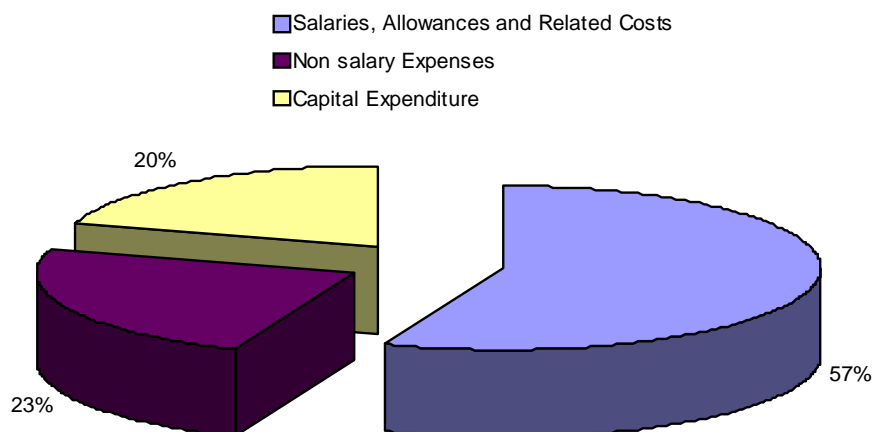
Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

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, Michelle Smith.