

2017 Annual School Report

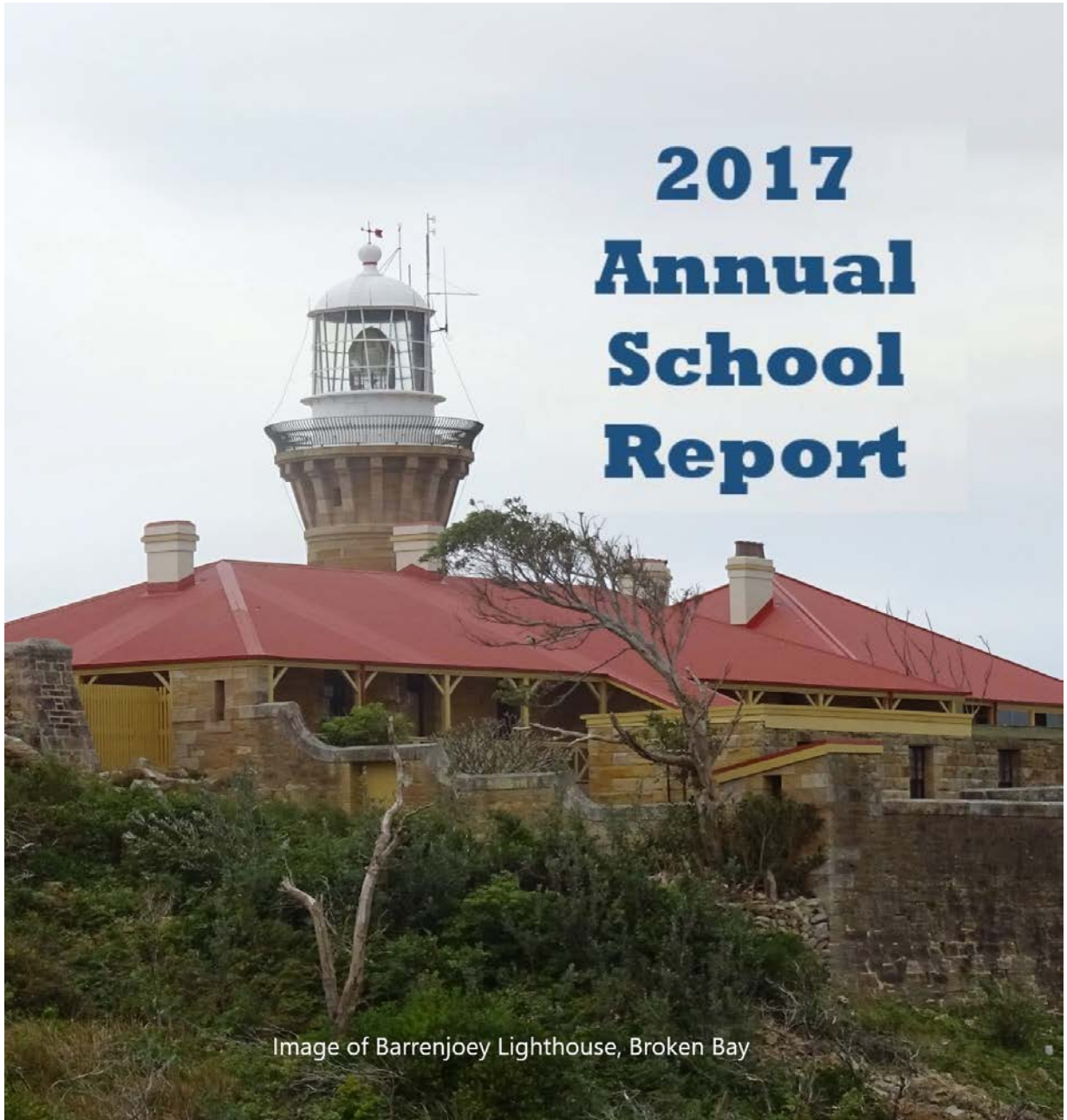


Image of Barrenjoey Lighthouse, Broken Bay



St Agatha's Catholic Primary School, Pennant Hills

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Agatha's Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Diocese of Broken Bay. The CSO as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education.

The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), approved by the School's Consultant, demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and the CSO. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

The Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, reliable and objective information about educational and financial performance measures as well as School and system policies. This information includes summary contextual data, an overview of student performance in state and national assessments, a description of the achievement of priorities in the previous year and areas for improvement. Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders.

Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

SECTION ONE: MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

The School takes pleasure in presenting this report. The School has enjoyed an exciting and stimulating year in 2017. Guided by our rationale which is to 'inspire and challenge our children to know, think and value' we continued to develop learning across the School.

Congratulations to the teachers, administration staff, students and parents for their contribution to the learning that has taken place at our School. This report celebrates 2017's outstanding programs and achievements. The staff have once again delivered quality, Catholic education aimed at improving student outcomes in all areas of the curriculum.

Details of many highlights of the year are included in this report and I hope you enjoy reading about your children's and our School's achievements. I thank everyone who contributed information to this report and to students, staff and parents who responded to surveys.

Parent Body Message

Parents and carers are a valued and integral part of the St Agatha's community. 2017 was a year reflective of the spirit of cooperation and dedication to advancing the wellbeing of our children. The School's parent body, guided by the Parents and Friends (P&F) association, strives to be family friendly. The implementation of a fund raising levy reduced the time commitment required by the community to participate in fundraising activities, while still providing many opportunities to build social networks within our school community. We achieved this by providing opportunities for all parents and carers to be involved and engaged in our School community. We are also committed to supporting our School in its strategic direction. Some of the P&F initiatives held in 2017 included the Welcome Back BBQ, movie night, Kids Disco, trivia night, parents dinner dance, fun food days, and Mother's and Father's day stalls. The P&F is also proud to fund the 'Reading Eggs' program and support technology in our classrooms as well as contribute to upgrades to our play spaces. The partnership of parents and the School has been fundamental to working towards our goals and achievements this year.

Student Body Message

Students are very proud of their School and the learning opportunities that are provided by the teachers. We have an exciting learning environment with a variety of technology available to us. Students are given a wide range of leadership roles each year starting as early as Year 2, where we have a Student Representative Council (SRC) captain chosen for every class. In Year 5 and 6 we also have leadership positions being school captains, sports leaders, social justice committee members and library monitors. Every student at the School is encouraged to reach their full potential.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

School Features

St Agatha's Catholic Primary School Pennant Hills, is a Catholic systemic co-educational school.

The School has a strong commitment to Catholic mission and the history, traditions and rituals of the Catholic faith. The School has identified a series of Catholic values including respect, responsibility, justice and love and these values permeate the life of the School.

The belief that each person has a different potential for spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical development is one that is held by all at the School. The role of the Catholic school in enhancing faith development is valued and acknowledged as is the role in providing a welcoming Catholic community and being an integral part of the St Agatha's Parish.

The School is committed to:

- enhancing faith development within a welcoming Catholic community
- being a school of excellence in teaching and learning
- treating all as individuals with their different potential for development
- providing a safe and caring environment for learning.

Features of the learning environment include a multi-purpose hall, dedicated library and modern classrooms. We have recently refurbished our Stage 3 classrooms into contemporary learning spaces. Consultation between the Parish, parents, staff and students regarding the design of these buildings occurred to ensure that learning spaces are aligned to the School's vision for learning.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2017. Additional information can be found on [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
189	186	136	375

* Language Background Other than English

Student numbers have decreased in recent times with the changing demographics of the local area. Development within the area will potentially impact future enrolments with an increase in apartment living.

Enrolment Policy

The School follows the [Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). The policy encourages the local Catholic community, under the leadership of the parish priest and principal, to look upon the time of enrolment as a potential occasion for ongoing evangelisation. The policy calls upon parents to examine their present faith commitments, to develop their role as prime educators of their children in faith and to immerse themselves in the communal, liturgical, ministerial and service dimensions of the parish. Copies of this policy and other policies in this Report may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for the School in 2017 was 94.25 %. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group						
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
94 %	93 %	94 %	95 %	95 %	95 %	94 %

Managing Student 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 NSW Education Act (1990) 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 CSO and the relevant Department of Education 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 CSO monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's School Review and Development (SRD) processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the [*Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance in the Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System*](#) (password required).

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

Staffing Profile

The NSW government requires that this Report detail the number of teachers in particular categories. The following table sets out this information. Further information about can be obtained from the [My School website](#). The following information describes the staffing profile for 2017:

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category	25
Category (i): those having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines	25
Category (ii): having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education qualifications	0
Total number of staff	32
Number of full time teaching staff	18
Number of part time teaching staff	7
Number of non-teaching staff	7

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning (PL) can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the CSO. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking staff professional learning. Individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes. The following table provides specific information relating to the focus of three of these staff development days.

Day 1	Comprehension strategies and ways to improve student skills in this area
Day 2	Cultures of Thinking and Thinking Routines linked to spirituality
Day 3	Current thinking about how to teach spelling

SECTION FIVE: MISSION

As a Catholic community, the School shares in the mission of the local Church: “The Diocese of Broken Bay exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, gathered as friends in the Lord and sent out to be missionary disciples.”

In partnership with parents as the first faith educators of their children and the local parish community, the School seeks to educate and form young people in the Catholic faith. The School provides formal Religious Education as well as retreats, spirituality days and social justice opportunities in which students are invited to serve others, especially the poor and those who are marginalised.

The School’s Religious Education (RE) program is based on the Broken Bay K-12 Religious Education Curriculum and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging and challenging learning experiences that explores the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it.

Faith formation opportunities are provided for students, staff, parents and caregivers. Students regularly celebrate Mass and pray together. Students are invited to participate in age appropriate sacramental and missionary activities aimed at living out their mission as disciples of Jesus.

The School has a rich tradition that began with the Good Samaritan Sisters at the Parish School of St Joachim's in Yarra Road, Thornleigh in 1928. In 1954, the School moved to its present site in Trebor Rd, Pennant Hills. The School continues to support a strong relationship with the Parish and works in partnership with the Parish for the formation of students in Catholic discipleship. The liturgical life of students is very important so there were numerous opportunities for students to engage in their faith through attendance at Parish masses, participation in the sacrament of Penance, and celebration of family Mass once a month. Students take an active role during the Masses through readings, prayers of the faithful, procession of the gifts, enactment of the Gospels, singing and liturgical dances.

The School's 2017 mission goal, as documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP), was to work towards increased numbers of students being able to demonstrate their understanding of God's mission and Word through engagement, deep thinking and responses to quality RE assessment tasks. Teachers were engaged in professional learning to develop quality RE programs and tasks that allow students to delve more deeply into scripture by making thinking visible through the use of strategies such as Ron Ritchhart's *Thinking Routines*. This goal will continue in 2018 to ensure that the students' thinking is challenged to move from surface to deeper learning.

One of the things that make St Agatha's special is the strong Parish community. The Priests regularly visit the children in their classrooms each term and spend time discussing such things as ritual, traditions, sacraments and scripture. The School supports the Parish sacramental program by aligning the RE modules taught in class with this program. Students in Year 2 receive the sacrament of Confirmation and students in Year 3 receive the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. A number of prayer services for significant events and feast days were celebrated throughout the year including Holy Week, Easter, and Mother's and Father's day. Year 6 students participated in the Diocesan North Shore cluster Mass and met with the Bishop; and student leaders represented the School at the annual Diocesan Mission Mass.

The Parish and School have a joint approach to Social Justice. They work hard with fundraising initiatives and social justice education. The School has a Social Justice committee made up of students nominated by their peers. Fundraising and education initiatives included support for Caritas during Lent, St Vincent de Paul's *Winter Appeal*, Catholic Mission and the global community, and Christmas hampers to those less fortunate, through the Parish.

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM, LEARNING AND TEACHING

Primary Curriculum

The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for primary education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology (S&T), Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). In addition to this, the School implements the Diocesan Religious Education syllabus. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

Throughout 2017, a variety of special programs and initiatives were offered to students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

As part of the 2017 School Improvement Plan (SIP) there was a focus on best practice in literacy and the creation of tasks and activities that meet the needs of each student. All teaching staff participated in coaching cycles to ensure consistency of practice in the teaching of comprehension skills. Staff conducted professional learning during the English block with a focus on the explicit teaching of comprehension skills, identified best practice in the assessment of comprehension skills, and used student writing samples to measure success.

The School continued to use the principles of *Extending Mathematical Understanding* (EMU) with all students across K-6 completing the *Mathematical Assessment Interview* (MAI) to enable teachers to target instruction at the student's point of need. The aim of this approach to Mathematics is to ensure all students have a solid conceptual understanding of number including counting, place value, addition and subtraction and multiplication and division.

All classes have a library lesson each week where they have one-to-one access to iPads. In library lessons, students are explicitly taught research skills and ways to present their knowledge and understanding in digital and multimedia formats.

The learning support team continued to work with both teachers and students to ensure that students who require differentiated programs are able to reach their potential. This includes providing support for students who require enrichment.

The School continued to offer a variety of extracurricular learning opportunities for all students. These included:

- School choir
- public speaking competition for Year 1-6
- gifted and/or talented programs including the Maths Olympiad, chess club and chess coaching
- team and individual sports, as well as cross country, athletics and swimming - Diocesan, Polding and state levels in softball, rugby league and AFL
- lunchtime coding club
- lunchtime drama classes
- lunchtime art classes
- school band - with strong involvement in both the junior and senior sections
- environment / gardening club.

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists the School's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in the aspects of literacy and numeracy compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand. Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions. Additional NAPLAN student performance information can also be accessed from the [My School website](#).

NAPLAN RESULTS 2017		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	89.74 %	55.50 %	2.56 %	10.50 %
	Reading	79.49 %	51.60 %	0.00 %	10.00 %
	Writing	82.05 %	44.60 %	0.00 %	7.50 %
	Spelling	74.36 %	45.60 %	0.00 %	13.10 %
	Numeracy	53.85 %	39.80 %	2.56 %	11.40 %

NAPLAN RESULTS 2017		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	56.25 %	34.40 %	8.33 %	17.50 %
	Reading	64.58 %	37.00 %	6.25 %	14.60 %
	Writing	52.08 %	15.80 %	4.17 %	19.40 %
	Spelling	47.92 %	34.30 %	6.25 %	14.10 %
	Numeracy	41.67 %	27.90 %	6.25 %	14.60 %

NAPLAN Comments

Students in Years 3 and 5 sat the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in May 2017. In both Year 3 and Year 5 the percentage of students placed in the top two bands was significantly higher than national figures for Reading (over 27 percentage points above). Similarly, the percentage of students placed in the lower two bands was significantly lower than the national figures in Reading. There were no students in the lowest two bands in Year 3 Reading, Writing or Spelling.

Sustaining strong results in literacy and numeracy is a reflection of focussed professional learning that has supported the School's strategic improvement goal 'to improve outcomes for all students through a focus on quality tasks, assessment and feedback'. The School will continue to focus on these areas in 2018 with a focus on improving students' comprehension skills.

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the *Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. This policy is underpinned by the guiding principles from the *National Safe Schools Framework (2013) (NSSF)* that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a pre-requisite for effective learning in all Catholic school settings. The *Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Learning for the Diocese of Broken Bay Schools System* (the 'Framework') utilises the NSSF ensuring that diocesan systemic schools meet the objectives of the NSSF at the same time as meeting the diocesan vision for pastoral care and wellbeing. The framework includes ten pathways that are intended to assist school communities create safe and supportive environments that foster positive relationships which enhance wellbeing and learning for all students. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO. There were no changes made to this policy in 2017.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned to the Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools. Policies operate within a context of social justice, compassion, reconciliation and forgiveness. The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours whilst ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO. There were no changes made to this policy in 2017. Note: the policy on the CSO website is the updated policy for implementation in 2018.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying guidelines and procedures are based on and informed by the *Anti-Bullying Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools* and is aligned to the *Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools* and other related wellbeing policies and guidelines. All students, their families and employees within Catholic education have a right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. Anti-Bullying policies support school communities to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO. Changes were made to this policy in 2017 to reflect evidence based practice and to clearly articulate roles and responsibilities of members of the school community.

Complaints Handling Policy

The School follows the *Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. A distinctive feature of this policy is to ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and confidential manner at the lowest appropriate management level in order to prevent minor problems or concerns from escalating. The expectation is that complaints will be brought forward and resolved in a respectful manner recognising the dignity of each person concerned in the process. The policy recognises that a number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO. There were no changes made to this policy in 2017.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Clear structures and processes have been established to assist students to be respectful and responsible. The School's *Positive Behaviour for Learning* (PBL) team consists of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and members of the leadership team, including the principal. The team meets twice a term to discuss and respond to the needs that arise from the data collected across the School, in the playground and classrooms. Parents are informed of the PBL focus for the fortnight through the newsletter and on the school notice boards. This communication also includes the poster so that parents can continue the conversation and reinforce ideas at home. PBL posters are displayed around the School highlighting the school rules and the behaviour matrix. Posters are replaced regularly to reflect the focus for the fortnight.

SECTION NINE: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Strategic planning ensures a common purpose and agreed values are established. In Broken Bay systemic schools, this common purpose and agreed values along with goals, targets and key improvement strategies are documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This SIP is a three year planning document and is used to record the School's progress in working towards priorities for improvement in three domains: Mission, Pastoral Care, Learning and Teaching. School improvement planning is supported systemically by the Diocesan *Leading Learning* initiative. This initiative is research based and has been developed in partnership with the University of Auckland. Building on *Leading Learning* in the Learning and Teaching domain, the Diocesan *Learning Principles* guide improvement strategies toward high quality contemporary learning.

Key Improvements Achieved

In 2017, the following areas of our School Improvement goals were achieved:

Goal 1 - Catholic Life and Mission

- We increased the numbers of students who were able to demonstrate their understanding of God's mission and Word through engagement, deep thinking and responses to RE assessment tasks.

Goal 2 - Learning and Teaching

- We were able to improving student growth in Progressive Achievement Test data, for Reading and Mathematics, particularly in the areas of Measurement, Space and Geometry. Our NAPLAN results in Reading were significantly improved due to teacher professional learning that impacted classroom practice.

Goal 3 - Pastoral Care

- We implemented Component 3 of *KidsMatter* and held parent and carer education sessions to help them implement aspects of this program at home.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

By the end of 2018 the School will work towards these targets:

Goal 1 - Catholic Life and Mission

- students will be able to show an increase in deep, reflective thinking in their responses during RE lessons and assessment tasks, which will be reflected in their semester reports;

Goal 2 - Learning and Teaching

- decrease the number of vulnerable students as indicated on the MAI in Place Value and Multiplication and Division;

Goal 3 - Pastoral Care

- improve the quality of student to student and student to teacher relationships as measured by school survey data and student focus groups.

SECTION TEN: COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, a variety of processes have been used to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

The School community is very enthusiastic, providing support for staff and children. Parents express their pride in this community and pride in the many outstanding achievements of the children. Throughout 2017, parents and carers had opportunities for development with information sessions offered in areas of the Mathematics syllabus through EMU workshops, 'Mathematics in the morning' and seminars on a range of topics including child development and spirituality. These sessions were all very well received by the parent community as demonstrated by feedback received. P&F general meetings also provide the forum for parents to review priorities. In 2017, the P&F worked with the Broken Bay Diocese and Federal MP, Julian Lesser, to ensure funding for our valued Catholic schools so they remain an affordable choice for parents.

Student Satisfaction

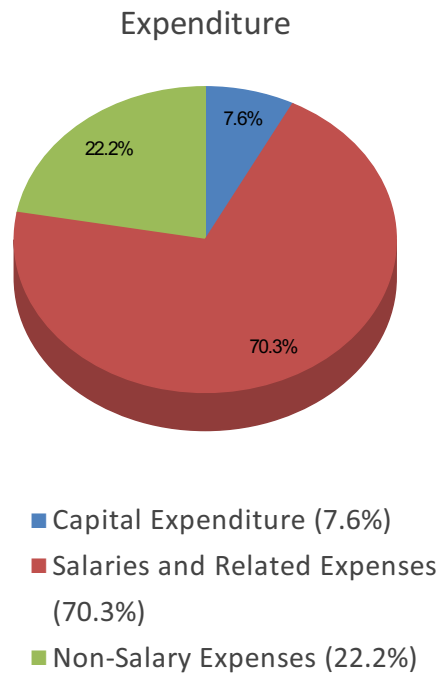
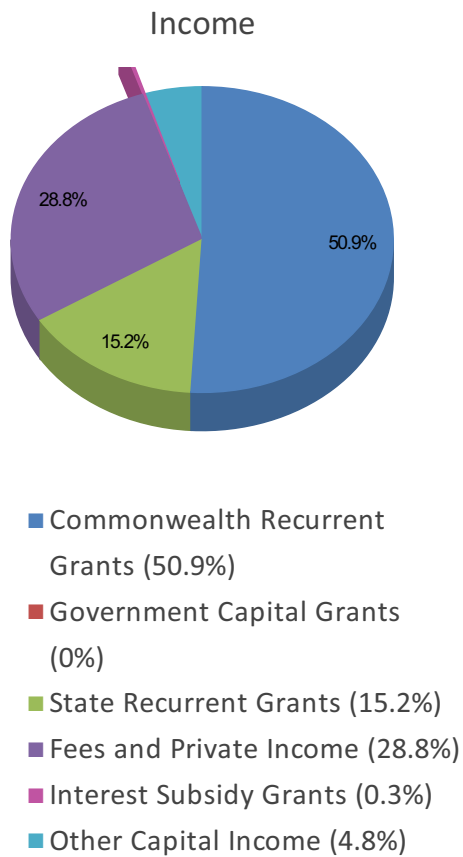
The 2017 student wellbeing survey indicated a high level of student satisfaction with the School. *KidsMatter* has had a significant impact on the School and students have indicated that the pastoral care and high standard of teaching and learning provided to them was highly valued. The survey also indicated that students really valued their teachers and what they provided. They also appreciated the friendships they developed with their peers and have indicated that they feel safe at School.

Teacher Satisfaction

During the Tier 2 School Review process teachers identified that they wanted to actively contribute to the direction of the School with their ideas and opinions. The School leadership team values this and continues to provide opportunities for teachers to participate in professional learning. All members of the teaching staff are actively involved in learning teams and meet on a regular basis to share their understandings about contemporary pedagogy.

SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Consistent with the NESAs requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the [My School website](#). Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the [Broken Bay Diocese Annual Report](#).



RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants	\$2,464,848
Government Capital Grants	\$0
State Recurrent Grants	\$734,411
Fees and Private Income	\$1,394,038
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$14,151
Other Capital Income	\$231,365
Total Income	\$4,838,813

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure	\$377,336
Salaries and Related Expenses	\$3,502,520
Non-Salary Expenses	\$1,104,681
Total Expenditure	\$4,984,537