

St Brigid's Catholic College, Lake Munmorah

Annual School Report to the Community

2014



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Principal

Mrs Julie Terry

ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Brigid's Catholic College (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) 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 also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

SECTION ONE: MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

St Brigid's Catholic College is a Catholic secondary school in the Diocese of Broken Bay and exists to educate and form young people in Catholic discipleship, offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community.

St Brigid's opened its doors in 2014 to Year 7 students. We pride ourselves on being a welcoming school community that values the close relationship between staff, parents and students.

The College motto, 'Inflaming Hearts and Minds in Christ', signifies our belief that St Brigid's is a hope-filled community of learners, where all are respected, challenged and supported to be the very best person they can be. It is hoped that our students are impassioned and that their hearts and minds are set afire with the love of life and learning through the experiences that are offered to them at our College.

As you will gather from reading this report the College has had a wonderful founding year. The feedback from students and families is very affirming and we will continue to build on the achievements of our first year together as community.

Parent Body Message

When my child started high school it was a time of nervousness and great excitement. I worried that I would not be involved in his school life and longer and that I would be 'left out of the loop'. I have since learned that this fear is redundant at St Brigid's Catholic College.

Our family has been welcomed into the school community and encouraged to participate in many ways. This has included involvement in decision making processes (eg uniform selection), invited to Masses and liturgies, welcomed to contribute to missionary projects, encouraged to attend sporting events such as the swimming and athletics carnival.

Communicating with the school has also been excellent. Whether it be via telephone, email, or letters I have found communicating with the staff at St Brigid's easily accessible, prompt and professional. I have never felt like a nuisance or been left waiting for a response.

Attention to detail is another great attribute of St Brigid's. Regular and thorough feedback has been provided about my child's journey of academic and personal growth. I feel that our relationship with St Brigid's is based on mutual respect and trust. Our family is proud to be a part of the college.

Student Body Message

Our first year at St Brigid's has been filled with many opportunities and positive experiences. Our transition into secondary school was an easy one. The highlight of Term 1 was the Year 7 camp where we made new friends and were challenged to do things we had not done before. Leadership opportunities have been through House Leaders and Student Representative Council. The House Leaders have helped to build team spirit during the year but especially for the Swimming and Athletics Carnivals. The SRC has been involved in raising social justice awareness, fundraising for Caritas and St Vincent de Paul. All leaders have represented the college at different times, at parent information nights and community open days. The staff are very approachable and make learning interesting, especially through the use of our laptops. Year 7 has been a very enjoyable time for the foundational students of St Brigid's.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

School Features

St Brigid's Catholic College Lake Munmorah, is a Catholic systemic secondary school.

St Brigid's Catholic College was established in 2014 to serve the broader Lake Munmorah community. It is situated in the parish of St Mary's, Toukley and has a direct connection with St Brendan's and St Mary's Catholic Schools which are the main feeder schools. St Brendan's Church is conveniently located on the grounds of the primary school just across the road from St Brigid's and the College community comes together to worship in this sacred space. Our Parish Priest has been generous in his time in celebrating Mass, and being a part of our Religious Education program.

The College, being a developing school, has an extensive building program planned. The current facilities house a contemporary learning environment which aesthetically appeals and is conducive to young people learning and teachers teaching. Construction of more specialist facilities including a junior hospitality kitchen and a woodwork room are already underway for opening in 2015.

The College is committed to establishing relationships of trust and respect with our families. ParentNet is the parent group and morning tea meetings have occurred once per term during the year. Parent participation is highly valued and the College has hosted family barbeques, information evenings and welcome parents, caregivers and extended family members to our functions.

Students are involved in a variety of co-curricular programs including representation in the Broken Bay Secondary Schools Sports Association and NSW Combined Catholic Colleges Sports Association competitions. Each week students have a lesson dedicated to providing them with a choice of activities. We call this our Inflamm Project. The activities offered included sport, gardening club, social justice group, a group which visited and supported Kindergarten students at St Brendan's Catholic School, a multimedia group and a drama troupe. The interests of students were taken into consideration.

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 2014. Additional information can be found on [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
35	34	2	69

* Language Background Other than English

As a school in a population growth area, enrolments are forecast to grow substantially as the college expands into the higher year groups and the reputation of the college is more widely known in the local community.

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 2014 was 93.00 %. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	93.00 %

The average student attendance was 93%. 91% of students had less than 15% absences. Six students had above 15% non-attendance. The college worked closely with families to ensure that these children were monitored and where appropriate, provided with counselling services to enable school attendance.

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 [*Guidelines for the Management of Student Attendance in the Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System*](#) (password required).

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2014:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
8	3	11

* This number includes 8 full-time teachers and 0 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

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.

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	8
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

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	Establishing our culture
Day 2	Understanding By Design as a curriculum planning framework and using an inquiry approach
Day 3	Staff pastoral care in an establishing school

Teaching and Learning at St Brigid's is based on an inquiry approach and curriculum design uses the Understanding by Design framework of Wiggins and McTighe. It has been imperative that as an establishing school with a particular teaching and learning paradigm that staff are given many opportunities to engage in their own learning. A partnership with the University of Newcastle has been invaluable. Staff meetings held once each week were used as further opportunities for professional learning in the areas of Mission, Pastoral Care and Teaching and Learning.

SECTION FIVE: MISSION

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay exist to educate and form young people in a Catholic Community of Discipleship; offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community. Mission is therefore the philosophical core of all the priority areas and of our schools. The Broken Bay K-12 Religious Education Curriculum was launched in 2005 by Bishop David Walker. This curriculum provides teachers with the opportunity to develop engaging and challenging learning experiences for their students and is comprised of three sections: (i) foundations (ii) syllabus (iii) modules. A distinctive feature of the syllabus is a statement of the Catholic Worldview that is integral to all that we do. It provides insights on the purpose of life and how we live it. In the words of Bishop David Walker, it is 'experiencing life through the eyes of our Catholic faith'.

Catholic Life and Mission underpins life at St Brigid's Catholic College. The College aims to foster a spirit of inquiry and a reflective disposition to learning, so as to provide students with a strong foundation for making realistic, life-giving choices in their faith journey.

At St Brigid's we strive to create a dynamic faith community in which each student will internalise Christian values and become vitally involved in the promotion and practice of justice. Our aim is for all students to be 'life giving' members within their communities, lived out through the school motto 'Inflaming Hearts and Minds in Christ' and College values of compassion, courage, wisdom and stewardship.

We are fortunate to have St Brendan's Church easily accessible to us for worship and our Parish Priest is generous in giving his time to us in celebrating Eucharist and, at times, being a guest speaker at our Religious Education lessons. We begin our year with St Brigid's Feast Day, which occurs on the 1st February, being celebrated as our opening Mass.

Prayer is central to our day and we have adopted our interpretation of the Ignatian Examen as a daily prayer. We stop each day before lunch to reflect on the day that has been, to give gratitude for the things in our lives that bring us joy, and to ask God's help to repair any damage to relationships that we may have been responsible for during that time. Acknowledging that God is always present in our lives ends the prayer.

We celebrate Inflammation Week during the week after Pentecost Sunday. During this time we showcase the learning of our students. In 2014, Religious Education projects which were videos made by our students, were presented on one of the nights. Student work was also displayed.

Students are engaged in social justice activities including Project Compassion, St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas appeals, as well as assisting Kindergarten students at St Brendan's Catholic

school one lesson per week. Education about the needs of others and our compassionate response is a central theme as compassion is one of our core values.

Secondary Curriculum

The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) syllabuses for secondary education. The BOSTES Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA), Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE), Languages, Technological and Applied Studies (TAS) Years 7-10 / Technology Years 11-12, Vocational Education and Training (VET). In 2014 the School implemented the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, History and Science for the required student year groups. Information about the phase-in period for the new syllabuses can be found on the [BOSTES](#) website. 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.

St Brigid's aims to foster a lifelong love of learning in all of our students and every student is encouraged to strive to achieve their personal best as they progress through each academic year. To educate students so that they are equipped with the skills they will need to be 21st Century global citizens, an inquiry approach to teaching and learning has been adopted at St Brigid's. This approach was implemented in the Religious Education program, with all staff part of the Year 7 Religious Education team. Collaborative planning and co-teaching were key to the program as was the partnership with the University of Newcastle through which the staff were supported in their curriculum design. The quality of the work produced by students was outstanding. Some staff were able to embed this approach in their other teaching discipline throughout this year and have enthusiastically embraced this pedagogy in their classrooms. This model will be further embedded into all other Key Learning Areas in 2015.

The Learning Support Teacher was involved in a co-teaching role during the year. This has proven to be an effective use of their skills and a benefit to those students who find access to learning more challenging than their peers.

St Brigid's students have a dedicated laptop for their use. This enables guided research in the curriculum areas. It also enables students to communicate their learning in many and varied ways, including the creation of multimedia presentations.

SECTION EIGHT: PASTORAL CARE AND STUDENT WELLBEING

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies 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 (2011) (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 to create safe schools that foster wellbeing for learning and positive, caring relationships. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

St Brigid's provides a caring educational community where each student is known and nurtured as an individual. Our approach to pastoral care stems from our fundamental belief that relationships are the key to success in teaching and learning, and effective personal development. Each student has a Mentor Coach who interviews them individually during the year and assists the student to reflect on their learning and contribution to community and set goals for the short term. Parents and carers receive personal feedback after these meetings from the Mentor Coach. This close relationship enhances the wellbeing of each student as they are known individually by a caring adult.

St Brigid's has the services of a College Counsellor one day per week. St Brigid's has become a MindMatters school. Mental health and wellbeing of our students are seen as paramount.

St Brigid's has a house structure which creates other connections between students. Student leadership is attached to the houses.

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.

Restorative Justice Principles underpin our behaviour management system. This philosophy places relationships at the centre, and repairing those relationships after mistakes are made is key to developing a sense of social responsibility in students.

Mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities. We encourage students to reflect on their misbehaviour, compassionately repair any damage that may have been done to others, and to move forward with new insights into themselves.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is 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.

At St Brigid's Catholic College we have a pastoral program which educates and encourages pro-social behaviour in our students as well as an expectation that time at school is to be safe for everyone. Students know that bullying will not be tolerated. A survey was conducted in 2014 which provided the college with information about the places and frequency of bullying occurring. It was pleasing to us that students reported that they felt very safe and supported at the college and that they felt confident to report instances of bullying and that they would be followed up. Cyberbullying is an issue which is becoming more prevalent. Each report has been managed according to our college procedures which include support for the victim and for the person exhibiting bullying behaviours, parent involvement and restorative practices to repair damaged relationships.

Complaints and Grievances 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.

Families are encouraged to contact the college if they are unhappy with any element of the college experience for them. It is clearly outlined in the diocesan policy as to how to report a complaint or grievance, and this encourages dealing with the matter at the lowest possible level of intervention unless this is not possible.

It is our commitment that through open communication with families issues are addressed in a timely fashion when raised. Parents have commented that our communication with them indicates our desire to work in partnership with them.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Through our Religious Education and pastoral programs, the dignity of the human person is articulated as being at the centre of all our interactions. We speak of the need to give respect no matter what the circumstance, even when we ourselves are not being respected. We reinforce with students that respect is not earned by others, it is freely given.

Our awards system for Effort and Behaviour encourages and rewards students who are respectful and responsible in the learning environment. Students who are noticed being respectful or responsible are acknowledged with merits. At times, if appropriate, students are acknowledged at assembly for acts of kindness towards others or where they show responsibility by their actions.

Rules of engagement in all areas of school life were formulated by the students themselves and are present in all classrooms and learning spaces. These agreed ways of being with each other are referred to when students are not behaving in a manner which reflects these rules.

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.

Key Improvements Achieved

Mission Key Improvements: The story of St Brigid and the centrality of Christ to her life was a focus for the Religious Education program. A unit on Catholic discipleship and the high quality of the student projects showed the depth of learning that occurred in this unit. The four College values of Compassion, Stewardship, Wisdom and Courage, were chosen from the life of St Brigid.

Teaching and Learning Key Improvements: Sixty two percent of students were below benchmarks at the beginning of 2014 on reading comprehension; by the end of the year sixty two percent were above. A 1:1 laptop environment supported the inquiry approach to teaching and learning. A partnership with the University of Newcastle provided staff with professional learning around use of the Understanding by Design framework for curriculum design and an inquiry approach, particularly in Religious Education.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Key Improvements: The Mentor Coach role was established as a teacher who has responsibility for a group of students and who meets with them on a one to one basis in a Coaching Conversation to help students reflect on their overall growth and set goals for the future.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

Mission: The papal exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, will inform our work in Mission in 2015. We are all called to live out our lives as Christ's disciples in joy and love. Making this real and a lived experience for our students is one of the goals for 2015.

Teaching and Learning: Literacy and numeracy interventions will remain a focus for 2015. Further embedding the inquiry approach into all Key Learning Areas will occur as a priority. The Flame Model of Learning will be established across all Key Learning Areas utilising a team approach to planning and delivery of the curriculum based on the success of this approach in Religious Education in 2014.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing: Restorative Practices will continue to be a focus for 2015 including professional development for staff into the processes. Mentor Groups will consist of students from different year groups as a vertical grouping. Coaching Conversations will continue. Communication with home will continue to be enhanced as the infrastructure for a parent portal is established.

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

Parents have been invited to respond to two surveys during 2014. The feedback on satisfaction with the college was overwhelmingly positive. Parents commented on the sense of welcome, which made them feel comfortable in contacting the college staff. All reported very high satisfaction with the opportunities that their children have experienced in their first year of secondary school. When asked to comment on any areas for improvement, in every case, parents indicated that they wanted the college to continue doing what was already established. The only queries raised by one respondent were lockers and access to external sport. These were responded to in the subsequent newsletter.

Student Satisfaction

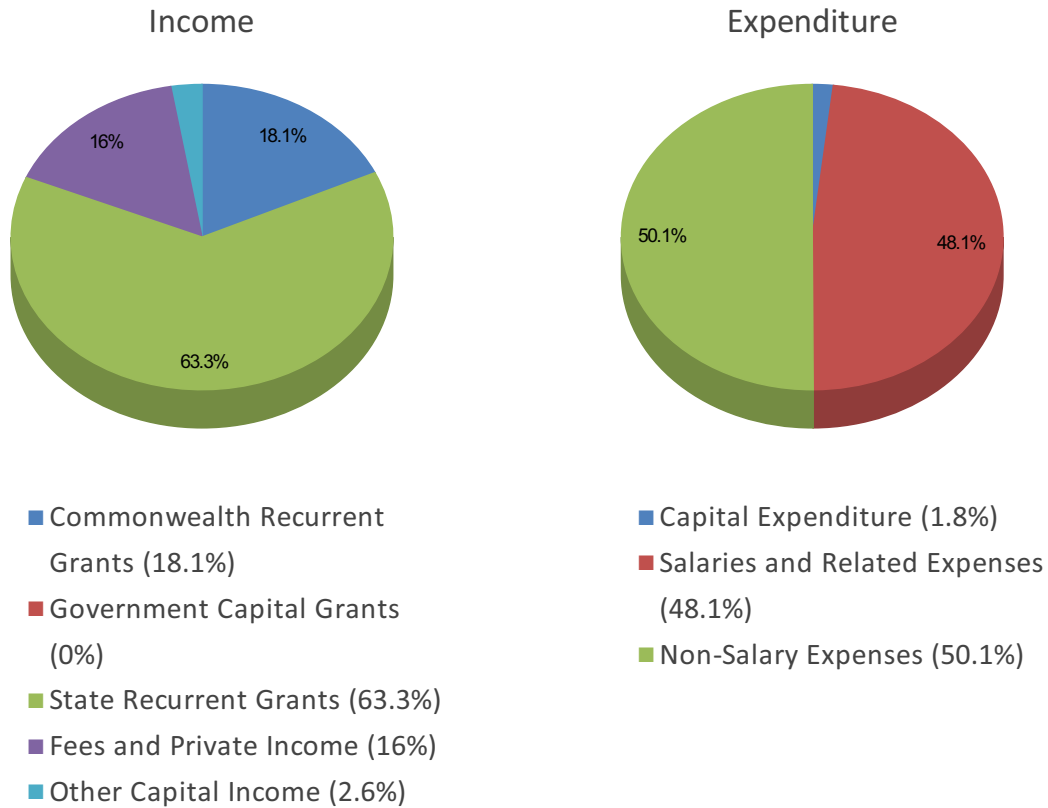
Students have been surveyed twice during the year. Overall satisfaction was in the very high category. They reported opportunities for leadership, that matters of concern were dealt with fairly and in a timely fashion, that peer relationships were very positive and a culture of no tolerance to bullying existed. Students reported that they felt comfortable in seeking assistance from staff. Students commented that they felt their transition to secondary school was a positive experience. They commented that they were enjoying learning in the secondary context.

Teacher Satisfaction

Staff have been engaged in leadership of this community through consultative processes as we establish the college procedures, routines and policies during the first year. They have been supported through professional development opportunities and the partnership with the University of Newcastle. Staff meetings have provided the opportunity for discussion and collaborative teamwork has been essential as we build culture together. Staff social functions are held often and all staff attend when able. The opportunity to be with each other outside of the normal school day is seen as an important facet of building the staff community. A staff development day was dedicated to staff wellbeing which is indicative of the importance placed on staff pastoral care. All staff are returning in 2015.

SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Consistent with the BOSTES 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	\$286,083
Government Capital Grants	\$0
State Recurrent Grants	\$1,002,112
Fees and Private Income	\$253,370
Other Capital Income	\$41,564
Total Income	\$2,232,347

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure	\$42,220
Salaries and Related Expenses	\$1,144,957
Non-Salary Expenses	\$1,191,002
Total Expenditure	\$2,378,180