



Catholic  
Schools Office  
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

# ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

# 2015

SERVICE † LEADERSHIP † JUSTICE  
*Together in Christ*



## St Francis Xavier's Primary School, BELMONT

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## About the Annual School Report

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) as a member of the Catholic system in the Diocese of Maitland - Newcastle.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development in 2015 and gives information about 2016 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act, 2008.

The information in this Report is complemented by the Catholic Schools Office website and school websites where other publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained.

## Messages from Key School Bodies

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### Principal's Message

This is a school community based on quality relationships – staff, parents and students enjoy relationships that are respectful and genuinely caring of each other, the children are “childlike” and take delight in simple things and they appreciate what is done for them, they are happy.

The parents at SFX are supportive of the staff and what we do and are appreciative of what is done for their children.

The school offers comprehensive education programmes that nurture the development of the whole child and in 2015 this was especially true for the performing arts as our musical “Cinderella” demonstrated so beautifully, acting, singing and dancing, every single child in the school rose to meet the challenge – as once again did the staff.

St Francis Xavier’s participates in many extra-curricular activities – sporting, cultural and intellectual – we may not always win but we always compete and we do so in good spirit

So to sum it all up St Francis Xavier’s is like many other schools, an ordinary place where extraordinary things happen. Please take the time to read this report as a way of learning more about SFX and the challenges and successes of the 2015 School Year.

### Parent Body

St Francis Xavier's is a truly Catholic School. The staff are not on gifted educators they are also incredibly caring and will always go that extra yard to ensure that the children, our children, are provided with the knowledge, skills and values which will assist them in later life.

St Francis Xavier's is a wonderful community to be a part of and the school is the centre piece of this community. The school is not simply a place of education it is a welcoming environment that offers opportunities for engagement and participation for everyone in the community.

As a parent body we are always welcomed into the school and made to feel that our input is valued and that we are truly partners with the school in our children's education.

### Student Body

St Francis Xavier's is a really good school to go to. The teachers are really great, they don't just teach us they help us and care for us. The school offers so many great things for us to do and because we are a small school everyone knows each other and is your friend.

The excursions and camps that we get to go on are fantastic and we always have people and groups coming into the school to show us really cool things.

This is a great school to come to.

## SCHOOL FEATURES

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### History of the school

St Francis Xavier's (originally known as St Joseph's) Primary School Belmont first opened its classroom door on the 31 January 1950 with an initial enrolment of 62 children (26 boys and 36 girls). The school was staffed by the Sisters of St Joseph from Lochinvar, hence the original dedication of the school to St Joseph the patron of their Religious Order.

The school has undertaken several building and infrastructure projects since it first opened as the needs and expectations of the children and the community we serve have changed. Over the last decade we have seen major extensions and alterations to the learning areas around the school as well as the expansion of the playgrounds, the construction of play equipment and the installation of soft fall surfaces in a variety of areas around the school. More recently the school has undertaken major infrastructure works with fibre optic internet access, high speed wireless and video conferencing facilities installed.

### Location/Drawing Area

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is situated behind the Belmont CBD on the eastern side of Lake Macquarie nestled between the Lake and Belmont Lagoon in the City of Lake Macquarie. St Francis Xavier's is part of the Lakes Region one of the six geographic regions that makes up the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

The drawing area comprises Belmont, Belmont North, Belmont South, Marks Point, Pelican, Valentine Croudace Bay, Jewells and Floraville.

St Francis Xavier's belongs to the feeder area for St Mary's High School Gateshead.

## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Catholic Imagination and Spirituality

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is situated on the land of the Awabakal people and we acknowledge this each Monday morning and at other significant events. Familiarising the children with the Awabakal culture and Dreaming Stories is another way we acknowledge the heritage of this area and cultivate respect for the legacy of the Awabakal people.

The schools' ethos reflects our history and connection with the Sisters of St Joseph. The feasts of both St Joseph, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and St Francis Xavier are observed by the school community each year, whilst at Morning Prayer we call upon the intercession of Mary MacKillop, St Francis Xavier and St Joseph in the routine of our day.

Our Catholic identity is part of who we are and is reflected in the quality of our relationships. Throughout the year specific feast days and seasons of the Church are recognised through whole school liturgies and masses. Our Catholicity is also celebrated each year during Catholic Schools Week.

We believe that building and maintaining a truly Catholic school cannot be left to chance; it must be lived each day by all members of the community but particularly by the staff.

### Family, Parish and Diocesan evangelising and catechesis

St Francis Xavier's Primary School Belmont is part of the East Lake Macquarie Parish. The REC from our school is part of the Parish Sacramental Team, volunteering as group leader, so that the children in our school can prepare for and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation, Eucharist and Reconciliation, and their families find this Parish experience positive and life affirming. Senior Primary students attended Masses of Healing and Anointing that are held each term at all three Parish Mass Centres.

As a school community we have opportunities during the year to attend Mass and we also celebrate major feasts of the Church with Liturgies of the Word that take place at Morning Assembly. As a community we read and reflect on the Sunday Gospel at Monday morning assembly to help set our Christian compass, sharing in Christ's mission, for the week ahead.

### Christian Discipleship

The staff at SFX realise that they must nurture their own faith if they are to successfully nurture that of the children within their care. With this in mind Staff Prayer is an important aspect of our formal time together with teachers exploring varieties of form to enhance how we pray. This sharing of form and substance is reflected in the quality of individual class and whole school prayer, especially our Sunday Gospel reflection.

Our students are encouraged to live their call to discipleship through participation in our Values Program and Peer Support Program. These programs assist our students know and live Gospel values and good Citizenship. Our senior students are trained as Peer Support Leaders and benefit from the positive skills, attitudes and understanding incorporated in this Positive Behaviours Program.

There is a Religious Staff Development Day organised each year by the Religious Education Coordinator to assist staff spiritual formation or develop contemporary pedagogy in Religious Education.

### Religious Education and Curriculum

At St Francis Xavier's we are committed to best practice, and Religious Education is no exception. With the help skilled staff and Kindergarten teacher who wrote new Early Stage 1 units, we have been proactive in staff sharing of DEEP pedagogy teaching practices and assessment ideas. We share our pride and confidence in our locally created Diocesan Religion Teaching Units, fully endorsed by Bishop Bill as the most up to date and educationally sound teaching units available. The staff commitment and skill set positions our school well in this new pedagogical era of Religious Education. We are encouraging and supporting new ways of teaching Religion as a priority KLA, with learning tasks that require students to use all four quadrants of the brain. We are looking at ways of integrating Religion with other KLAs such as English, History, Geography, Creative Arts and PDHPE. Our REC attends Assembly days to keep up to date with CSO initiatives on curriculum, teaching pedagogy, teaching strategies, programming and assessment. These days are also

valuable networking and spirituality development opportunities.

### Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

St Francis Xavier's Primary School Belmont is a Catholic faith community that values and celebrates the dignity and uniqueness of the individual. Our educational focus is based on Gospel values embedded in an inclusive, nurturing environment which encourages everyone to shine the light of Christ in the world.

We promote the active partnership of home, school and parish in the shared responsibility of educating the whole child.

We celebrate our faith traditions, prayer life and actively bear witness to the Gospel.

We embrace the dynamic nature of education.

We provide quality education in a challenging, nurturing environment that caters for and respects the unique needs of each child.

We provide education that helps develop values that will enable individuals to contribute positively to the wider community.

A just environment is nurtured where individuals are treated with respect. We insist on politeness as a simple sign of the respect each individual should hold for the other. Teachers as well as children are expected to treat and speak to each other in a manner that reflects the Catholic nature of our school community.

## Student Profile

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The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

LBOTE*	SWD*	Indigenous
4	14	0

\*Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE); Students With Disabilities (SWD)

### Enrolment policy

St Francis Xavier's Primary School follows the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office *Enrolment Policy 2013*. This Enrolment Policy has been devised in order to accommodate the needs of families seeking a Catholic education. It aims to set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices and assist the system of Catholic schools to provide schooling, where possible, for all Catholic children who seek enrolment, cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources and to encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Copies of the Policy are available from the school, or from the Catholic Schools Office website. Parents concerned about school fees should ensure they make contact with the school. Diocesan provisions (including standard discounts for those with a Health Card) exist to help in this area, and the Principal can also exercise discretion where genuine need exists.

### Actual Enrolments 2015

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
K	26
Year 1	23
Year 2	11
Year 3	24
Year 4	21
Year 5	14
Year 6	11
Total	130

### Student Attendance - K to 6 - PDF

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2015

K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	School Average
96	94.6	94.6	99	98.5	95	97	96.9

## Managing Student Non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents and guardians, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The compulsory years of schooling is age 6 to 17. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve issues relating to non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act, (1990), the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation. The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including student and parent interviews, reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program, development of a school-based attendance improvement plan, referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies and support from school - based personnel. If a range of school-based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Catholic Schools Office.

## Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

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### Student Welfare Policy

The emotional and physical well being of our students is at the heart of what we do at SFX. Regardless of the quality of teaching programmes, or a teacher's expertise, if a child does not feel secure, if they do not feel valued as individuals and happy within themselves, then all else is for nought. We focus on the child; we take the time to really know each one and to nurture each according to their needs.

An active buddy system and Peer Support programme also enhanced student care at SFX in 2014. Our strong anti-bullying philosophy goes hand in hand with the continued development of resilience within the children.

A number of programs and initiatives were done in 2014 to support our beliefs and stance on student welfare one of the most successful was Lunch Club. The Lunch Club runs twice a week for about 30 minutes in the library during the lunch break. The purpose of lunch club is to provide quiet activities as an alternative to the playground areas.

- *Pastoral Care and Anti-Bullying Policies reviewed in 2013. No change in 2015. Policy available from the School Office.*

### Discipline Policy

At SFX discipline is formative rather than punitive. The aim is to not only maintain a high standard of behaviour but to also assist in the development of the children's acceptance of responsibility for, and the consequences of, their actions. Our Discipline Policy is found within the broader Pastoral Care Policy with clearly stated guidelines for equitable practices and procedural fairness. In the management of unacceptable student behaviour society is best served when individuals accept accountability for their actions, the ideal being an individual who regulates their behaviour from a moral sense of what is right and not from fear of reprisal.

All policies relating to discipline are based on procedural fairness.

- *Pastoral Care and Anti-Bullying Policies reviewed in 2013. No change in 2015*
- *Policy available from the School Office.*

The full text of the School's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers. *St Francis Xavier's Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy* is reviewed regularly and is available on the school website.

### Complaints and Grievances

The school has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy (2013), developed to provide a consistent approach for all Diocesan schools. This policy aims to address the concerns of Parents / Carers and the wider community. These concerns may include children's learning, behaviour and welfare, school organisation and management, student health and safety issues.

A copy of this policy and the informative parent brochure is available from the school office, school website or is available on the Catholic Schools Office website.

## School Improvement

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### School Improvement Plan

Improving the teaching of mathematics and lifting the performance of high achieving students in mathematics were the key areas of our School Improvement Plan. We believe that by targeting these key areas we will increase the capacity of teachers to provide learning opportunities in knowledge based environments that are current, based on good pedagogy and best practice. We also believe that these two areas are of fundamental importance to the enhancement of student learning and equity of opportunities. According to ACARA high achieving students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities drawn from the Australian Curriculum and aligned with their individual learning needs, strengths, interests and goals therefore it essential that teachers have access to resources that are relevant, accessible, engaging and able to improve student outcomes. Research clearly indicates that teachers are the most significant factor in student performance and achievement therefore we believe that providing opportunities for teachers to engage in professional learning we are increasing their capacity to provide rich and up to date learning experiences for all students.

### School Academic Priorities

Key improvements achieved this year	Key improvements for next year
<p>This year saw significant resources put into improving how mathematics was taught throughout the school. The implementation of the new mathematics syllabus was the catalyst for this and the overall results were excellent. The teachers were exposed to numerous professional learning opportunities and the school invested in resources that were up to date and linked to the new syllabus and the latest pedagogical practices.</p>	<p>Lifting the performance of high achieving students in mathematics</p> <p>As a school community we have identified, through the analysis of data collected over quite a few years, that our high achieving and talented students in mathematics are not sustaining their levels of achievement as they progress through primary school. We see this as an area of significant concern and have for many years been implementing strategies to assist these students to reach their potential and remain positively engaged with the mathematics curriculum. We have seen improvement over the last few years however we as a school community believe that this is still a priority</p>
<p>The achievements of our high achieving students in mathematics saw significant improvement this year. Our results on standardised testing within the school was very good and indicated that our goal was being achieved. The key to the success was the allocation of resources and a change in pedagogical practices from Kindergarten to Year 6. Open ended problem solving and ensuring that high achieving students are constantly challenged and engaged as well as being encouraged and taught how to think mathematically were the corner stones of this improvement.</p>	<p>Improving the teaching of mathematics across all stages.</p> <p>Research (Baumert, J., et al. 2010 &amp; Hill H.C., Rowan, B., &amp; Ball, D.L. 2005) clearly indicates that pedagogy and teachers mathematical knowledge have an impact on student achievement in mathematics therefore as a school we believe that improving the teaching of mathematics is fundamental to improving student outcomes and engagement in mathematics.</p>
<p>The pedagogical content knowledge of our staff has improved significantly this year due to the allocation of funds towards the professional development of the staff. Research clearly notes that PCK is a significant factor in improving academic excellence. Teachers need to not only know what to teach but also how to teach.</p>	<p>Improving mental computation K-6</p> <p>As a school community we have identified improving the capacity of all students K-6 in mental computation. Our analysis of data and teachers observation has indicated that the students' skills, knowledge and use of strategies are not at an appropriate level. Mental computation is an important foundation to mathematical competency therefore we believe that improving this will also assist in improving mathematical achievement across the school.</p>

## Academic Achievements

Our academic achievements this year were once again very good. Our completion of the Premiers's Reading Challenge across all grades was again excellent. We also continue to be one of the best performing K-6 schools in our local area according to the NAPLAN data. We also had good results in the Newcastle Permanent Mathematics Challenge and the University of NSW National Mathematics Assessment. We also had great results in the NSW Religious Education Literacy Assessment and the Science and Engineering Challenge. Overall we continued to demonstrate a high level of academic achievement across a variety of Key learning Areas.

## Cultural achievements

Our school places a high priority on ensuring that all children are given the opportunity to showcase their talents across all aspects of school life. This year we held our third whole school musical at the Hunter School of performing Arts and once again many of our children demonstrated their prowess in the performing arts. In addition to this major cultural event we had numerous outside artists and performers visit the school as well as our children going on excursions to local cultural events like ASPIRE and the

Newcastle museum. The children in Year 4, 5 and 6 went to Canberra and toured the National Museum, Art Gallery and Library.

### Sporting achievements

As a school community we believe that education extends beyond the classroom and the school and is about experiences and opportunities. Therefore we endeavour to provide a variety of rich experiences across as many areas as we can. The children participate in a gymnastics program for 10 weeks, inter-school competitions in a variety of sports as well as swimming and athletics carnivals. In addition to these the school also provides opportunities through one day and short program experiences. This year we saw our children achieve success across a variety of sports including swimming, athletics netball and soccer. Our junior soccer team won the Macquarie Cup Soccer Tournament and the Diocesan Soccer Gala Day.

## Student Achievements

### Performance in National Testing

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for student 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 School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are 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.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	70.83%	71.10%	8.33%	12.90%
	Writing	87.50%	75.80%	8.33%	9.30%
	Spelling	62.50%	65.20%	4.17%	16.70%
	Grammar	66.67%	73.20%	20.83%	12.60%
	Numeracy	41.67%	60.80%	29.17%	16.80%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	84.62%	57.90%	7.69%	20.00%
	Writing	92.31%	52.40%	0.00%	19.50%
	Spelling	76.92%	60.80%	0.00%	14.60%
	Grammar	69.23%	60.90%	0.00%	18.60%
	Numeracy	76.92%	55.80%	0.00%	17.60%

## Staffing Profile

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### Staff Qualifications

Qualifications and Experience	Number of Staff
I. Teachers with teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).	13
II. Teachers with qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by NOOSR but lacking formal teaching qualifications	0

### Workforce Composition

Number of Staff	
Total teaching staff	12
Total non-teaching staff	6
Grand total	18

Percentage of teachers who are indigenous	0
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### Teacher Attendance

94%

### Teacher Retention

Between 2014 and 2015 there was no change in staffing.

Retention Rate - 100%

### Professional Learning Undertaken

Teachers attended a variety of Professional Development opportunities utilising the expertise of CSO personnel and other qualified professional organisations. In addition to sourcing outside agency we also did a lot of professional development as part of our staff meeting routine. This was done by a variety of staff members and quite often followed on from external inservice opportunities. Our major focus was in mathematics and therefore a high percentage of our Professional Development was targeted in this area. However staff also attended inservices related to new syllabuses, unpacking NAPLAN data, using and understanding the literacy and numeracy continuums and faith Accreditation.

## Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

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

### Parent Satisfaction

St Francis Xavier's is seen by the parent community as a good school where the children learn in a safe and happy environment. Indeed many children continue to return to catch up with their "old" teachers and to keep us informed of their progress. The retention and selection of new staff is also rated highly by the parents. Another indicator of parent satisfaction and connectedness is attendance at school functions. Overall parents are very satisfied with what the school does and how it does it.

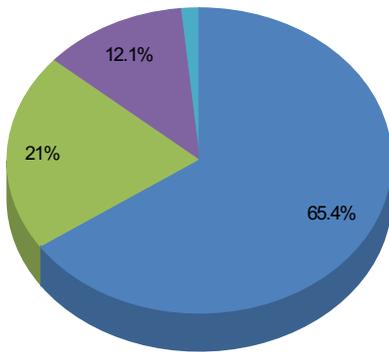
### Student Satisfaction

St Francis Xavier's has a wonderful student population who personify the key values that the school is built on. An indicator of their satisfaction is the very low rate of unacceptable behaviour that occurs both within the classroom and the playground. The children demonstrate a high respect for the staff and the school which is a reflection of how they feel about the environment they are working in.

### Staff Satisfaction

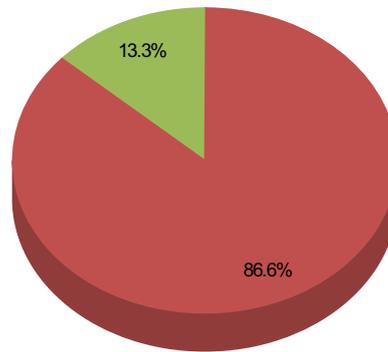
The low staff absence rate and the high staff retention rate are clear indicators of staff satisfaction at St Francis Xavier's Primary School. The staff are part of the decision making process through consultation and opportunities for feedback. The staff feel that their opinions and educational experience are rated highly and they are respected by the school community and seen as professionals who can be trusted to provide the best educational opportunities for the students.

Income



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (65.4%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (21%)
- Fees and Private Income (12.1%)
- Other Capital Income (1.6%)

Expenditure



- Capital Expenditure (0.1%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (86.6%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (13.3%)

This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire. School Financial Information for the 2015 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$1,063,501
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$340,983
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$196,624
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$25,569
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,630,531</b>

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$1,291
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$1,330,884
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$205,197
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$1,537,372</b>

For the 2015 year the St Francis Xavier's Primary School received \$3,854 as Interest Subsidy. Our school community is appreciative of the support it received from the NSW State Government under the Interest Subsidy Scheme

**Notes**

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.

3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

## Report Access and Publication

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This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, The Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW, The Parent and Friends Association, the Parish Priest and to all parents.

Copies of this school's Annual School Report are available to the general public. Persons wishing to access a copy of the report should contact:

**Miss Louise Outram**

**St Francis Xavier's Primary School**

**BELMONT**

**Phone: 4945 2404**

For further information relating to the Diocesan Policy please refer to: <http://mn.catholic.edu.au>