

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

2017

SERVICE. LEADERSHIP. JUSTICE.

Together in Christ



St James' Primary School, KOTARA SOUTH

Vista Parade, KOTARA SOUTH 2289

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About the Annual School Report

St James' Primary School is registered by NESAs 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 2017 and gives information about 2018 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

Principal's Message

The Annual School Report outlines the many successes during the 2017 School Year at St James Kotara South. These successes and celebrations included both academic and spiritual enrichment and sporting achievements. The Staff Team continued to immerse themselves in professional development with a focus on building a Professional Learning Community (PLC) with the Australian professional Standards for Teachers used as a framework. The staff continued to experiment with their learning spaces with contemporary classroom design being implemented. The school participated in a wide range of activities, cultural, religious, sporting and academic being successful in a variety of settings. The Annual School Report will assist you in looking at our achievements as well as planning for the future.

Parent Body

2017 was another busy and productive year for the Parents and Friends of St James. In usual fashion, the greater school community has well supported the teachers and school staff which is to be commended. As this is my final year as P&F President, I wish to thank everyone for their support, feedback, and willingness to assist over the past year. It has been an honour to have been assisting the school P&F executive.

Over the course of the year P&F funds were put towards new iPads, science kits, \$25 000 for the new play equipment, as well as some other sundry type expenses such as the annual contribution towards year 2 swimming etc.

Fund raising continued through 2017 with approximately \$30 000 raised through activities such as the Annual Golf Day, Bunnings BBQ, Easter Raffle, Mothers and Fathers Days gift stalls. The school uniform shop also had a very productive year and made enormous financial contributions to P&F Funds.

The parents and friends of the school assisted in many ways over the course of 2017, including the canteen, attending and assisting with reading groups, attending school liturgies and in assisting with sporting events such as the swimming and athletics carnivals.

The parent body continues to be active within the school and enjoys seeing the benefits this brings to enhancing our children's well rounded education and Catholic orientation.

Frances Crampton

P&F President 2017.

Student Body

As our enjoyable seven years at St James comes to a close we would like to express our thanks to all the parents and staff for helping us along the way. We have learnt so much. We have always felt that we have been part of a family, a St James family. Under the care of our teachers we have many fond memories with the excitement and adventure of Kindergarten to our Canberra excursion, the Year 6 Retreat, and our Leadership Days in Year 6. We have been encouraged by our teachers to do our best, serve others and be confident role models for others. We have had seven years of amazing learning and wonderful friendships. We thank the school and parish communities for guiding us in our faith life.

SCHOOL FEATURES

History of the school

St James Primary School had its origins in Garden Suburb where it began on 31st January, 1961. Two Sisters of Mercy ran the school, in a building, which was originally the operating theatre from the Greta Migrant Camp. During that year, the rest of the hospital was transported to Garden Suburb to form more classrooms and a temporary church.

In December 1962, New Lambton Parish was divided and Kotara South Parish was formed. In 1963, the Parish was named St Philip's. A disused colliery building in Kotara South was converted into the church. In 1974, twenty-four acres of land was purchased in Vista Parade, by the parish and the new church was built opposite the proposed school site. It wasn't until 1981 that the school opened in its present setting.

In 2010, St James further expanded to include a multi-purpose hall, new administration building and two state of the art classrooms. The library was completely renovated including the addition of a new computer lab. In 2015 the Father Doran Outdoor Education Area was built to further enhance the facilities available at the school.

In 2016 the Computer Lab was dismantled and a new contemporary learning space was established for Year 2 .

Location/Drawing Area

St James' Primary School, Kotara is a Catholic Co-educational Kindergarten to Year 6 Systemic school in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. It forms part of the Central Region of schools. St James children proceed to St Pius X, Adamstown at the conclusion of their primary schooling. St James neighbours St Columba's, Adamstown, St Joseph's, Charlestown & St Kevin's, Cardiff.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Catholic Imagination and Spirituality

St James Primary School had its origins in Garden Suburb where it began on 31st January, 1961. Two Sisters of Mercy ran the school in a building which was originally the operating theatre from the Greta Migrant Camp. Numerous changes have occurred to the school over the years, culminating in the formation of St James in its present setting in 1981. Since then, the site has experienced numerous changes. 2010 saw the completion of new building works comprising two classrooms, an administration building and school hall. St James forms an integral part of the All Saints Parish encompassing Kotara South, Cardiff and Adamstown.

We, as a school community acknowledge the Awabakal People as the traditional owners of this land. The acknowledgement of Country at Monday morning assemblies emphasises the school's respect for the Awabakal and other indigenous peoples. This has become part of the daily culture of the school.

Family, Parish and Diocesan evangelising and catechesis

St James forms an integral part of the All Saints Parish encompassing Kotara South, Cardiff and Adamstown. The school is positively promoted at Parish level, where a close collaboration and connection is evident. Parish involvement in school life is highly valued and a great sense of community exists. Helene O'Neill, appointed as Parish Liaison Officer in the All Saints Parish, worked collaboratively with staff, parents and parishioners in an effort to encourage a more faith filled, involved and energetic school / parish community. The school once again hosted Mercy Day for the region.

The school fully supports the work of the St Vincent de Paul Society through fundraising efforts, evidenced by the generous Food Baskets and cash donated prior to Christmas. A Mini-Vinnies group continued to support the Parish St Vincent de Paul Society. This group was comprised of children from Stage 2 and Stage 3. The Parish Sacramental Program is supported through the school. Religious Educational programs are taught concurrently with Sacramental programs, both supporting and reflecting the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Many staff members assist with Sacramental Programs attending celebrations.

Christian Discipleship

Catholic schools have a religious purpose and a religious life. Our school shares a common mission to educate and form students as disciples of Jesus and is part of the mission of the parish to which we belong. We offer students experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community. We do this as a partnership of staff, parents, parish priest and the Diocese. There is a focus on practical community outreach and support for Catholic agencies such as Caritas Australia (Project Compassion in Lent), the St Vincent de Paul Society (Winter and Christmas Appeals) and Catholic Mission (especially leading to October, which is Mission Month). We have 'Mini Vinnies' and conduct mission project events.

Religious Education and Curriculum

St James comprises a staff of teachers well qualified and accredited to teach Religious Education. The school implements the Diocesan K-12 Religion Syllabus. Each class has structured and integrated lessons that assist in the development and understanding of our Catholic Faith with all classes timetabling RE as a priority. Lessons are integrated across other Key Learning Areas and use information technology, wherever possible. Guest speakers are also organised to address different stages according to syllabus requirements. Throughout the year, teaching staff attended meetings and contributed to the ongoing development of new RE units, aligned with the Diocesan RE Syllabus. During 2017, Year 6 children participated in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Religious Education Literacy Assessment. Once again the students results were outstanding with the average score well above the Diocesan average.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The St James School Community promotes values of respect and responsibility through several awareness and fund raising activities organised by teachers, parents and children. During 2017, the school raised funds for Catholic Mission & Caritas Australia. Mr Richard Cootes, School Liaison Officer for Catholic Mission & staff member at St James, provided ongoing opportunities for reflection and action throughout the year. Various out of uniform days were held to raise funds for Caritas, St Vincent de Paul and Catholic Mission. The Year 6 School Leaders organised the collection of monetary donations each day to contribute

towards the projects funded by Catholic Mission and Caritas.

A Mini-Vinnies team continued to provide support to the local St Vincent De Paul Society. A group of volunteer children from Stage 2 and Stage 3 formed the Mini-Vinnies team. The team was commissioned at a Parish mass where they received their badges.

Year 6 participated in the "Sing out Loud" Program working with the "elders" from Maroba Nursing Home throughout Term 3 and culminating in a performance at Maroba in front of students and families.

Student Profile

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

LBOTE*	SWD*	Indigenous
32	15	5

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

Enrolment policy

St James' 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 2017

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
K	59
Year 1	63
Year 2	41
Year 3	52
Year 4	27
Year 5	59
Year 6	27
Total	328

Student Attendance - K to 6 - PDF

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2017

K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	School Average
94	95	95	95	94	94	94	95.1

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

Student Welfare Policy

St James' Primary School values the uniqueness of every child and endeavours to foster the growth of individuals towards self-discipline. Through the teachers' and parents' pastoral care and discipline, it is anticipated that the children will develop in their self-esteem, self-discipline and a genuine love and respect for themselves and others. By the positive and effective reinforcement and through affirmation of pupils' behaviour, the climate of the school will be one of justice, reconciliation and community. A new well-being program called " Kids Matter" continued to be used with great success. The students also participate in Bounce Back sessions every Monday to help reinforce skills and strategies to build resilience. Our school policy is available and accessible from the school office.

Discipline Policy

The St James Discipline & Pastoral Care Policies outline the procedures for classroom & playground behaviour. Policies were created in the following areas during 2013; Procedural Fairness, Management of Complaints and Grievances and Anti-Bullying. During 2017, St James continued the process of incorporating these three policies with Pastoral Care and Discipline that reflects the context of the school. The policies are available upon request from the Principal or Executive. Pastoral Care Worker, Christine Martin maintained her role through the National Chaplaincy Program, working 2 days a week, running a variety of programs including Seasons for Growth & Lunch Club. She continues to work as a support person for Mini -Vinnies and outreach for families in need. Christine Martin, Helene O'Neil & the Mini-Vinnies team also helped to raise awareness about issues relating to child protection. This initiative was promoted and endorsed through the Catholic Schools Office. A Pastoral care Blog continues to be used for all staff to access regarding the welfare of the students.

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 James' 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

School Improvement Plan

The focus for 2017 continued to be the development of a Professional Learning Community directly aligned with the Australian Professional Standards approach to teacher performance and development in order to develop a clear vision of what effective teaching looks like in particular in the key learning areas of Writing, English and Maths. A levelled comprehension skills program continued to be used (Cars & Stars) as well as "agreed practices" in Maths were adhered to. Professional development was also focussed on improvements in the teaching of writing as well as a focus on differentiation as we became a Gifted Education School. The development of school wide collaborative practice with conversations in teams based on improvements in "the craft of teaching" to enable growth in student outcomes in writing was a specific goal for 2017.

School Academic Priorities

Key improvements achieved this year	Key improvements for next year
<p>The Staff Team met in Professional Learning Teams on a regular basis with considerable development in a more collaborative approach to their practice. Individual professional learning plans were developed by each teacher based on the Australian Professional Standards. Analysis of data related to Literacy and Numeracy to inform teacher planning, teaching and assessment took place with a focus on NAPLAN, Cars & Stars Reading Comprehension Data, Pat Maths and Reading Online. Teachers became more familiar with the Numeracy Continuum to assist in tracking student progress. A focus on improving the outcomes of our gifted children was begun.</p>	<p>The Staff Team will have a proactive approach to raising student levels of achievement with Professional Learning Teams working on the differentiation of programs to accommodate opportunities for student engagement in higher levels of learning. The Learning Support Teacher will investigate and provide details of planning and strategies to further enhance the learning of our GE students. Explicit targets will be set for improved achievement in writing and a growth in NAPLAN results. The Staff Team will also target comprehension strategies with the continued implementation of the Cars & Stars Comprehension Program K-6.</p>
<p>The Staff Team attended a wide variety of professional development opportunities where they developed their skills in the teaching of reading using The Seven Steps Writing Program. This framework assisted them to develop a greater understanding of the four crucial questions that drive the work of teachers in collaborative teams: What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? How will we respond when a student knows it? There was a real focus on ensuring that students learn, a focus on results and a sharing of strategies, materials and talents of teachers within the teams.</p>	<p>The Staff Team will engage in a continuous cycle of professional development using the Professional Practice & Development Framework (PP&D). Leaders will assist teachers to identify priorities and goals for their professional growth and develop Smart Goal Action Plans based on the Australian Professional Standards. Continued familiarisation of the Standards will take place at Staff Meetings and through the PP&D process. Formal and informal observations of classroom practice will take place with PP&D leaders and the Principal. Teachers will reflect and evaluate their practice during this process.</p>
<p>The Staff Team continued to use and teach the twelve (Cars & Stars Program) important reading and comprehension strategies in order to improve our literacy results. They provided crucial and relevant differentiated instruction, created structure and continuity, facilitated instructional planning and ensured consistent record keeping utilising the Cars & Stars Comprehension Resource as a basis for improvements. Children were tested and placed at appropriate levels, taken through each of the skill areas to master the use of each strategy.</p>	<p>The Staff Team will be engaged in improved teaching performance through continued professional learning in the teaching of writing and the integration of technology. Professional development will focus on the implementation of "The Seven Steps in Writing" as well as the integration of technology using ipads and laptop computers across the curriculum areas.</p>

Academic Achievements

Year 6 children completed the Diocesan RE Literacy Assessment, achieving outstanding results. Stage 3 children also participated in and were successful in the Diocesan Debating Competition. Several students from Year K-6 participated in the Diocesan Public Speaking with two students reaching the Diocesan Finals. Year 6 participated in the Science and Engineering Challenge.

Students in Year 6 who achieved the highest results in English, Maths, HSIE, Science and Creative Arts were awarded a prize at an end of year Awards Assembly.

Cultural achievements

Throughout the year, the St James school community participated in an array of cultural experiences. Every

Monday morning, the staff and children pay tribute to our Indigenous ancestors by reciting an acknowledgement of ongoing Indigenous culture and ancestry prior to the National Anthem. More than 120 children represented St James at the ANZAC March, organised by the Adamstown Returned Services League on ANZAC Day. All students participated in a school ANZAC Service. School Captains travelled to Sydney to attend the National Young Leaders Day. The school acknowledged Year 6 students who demonstrated outstanding qualities of leadership and citizenship with The Fred O'Leary Citizenship Award and the Sharon Claydon Award for Emerging Leadership being presented at the end of year Awards Assembly. Year 5 students attended a Diocesan Leadership Day organised by the RE Team at CSO. St James is fortunate to have a school brass band in addition to a string ensemble. The band and ensemble provided two exceptional concerts during the year to all members of the school community. We have a number of children now learning the piano and guitar with a performance by the students in Term 4.

Sporting achievements

Throughout 2017, the children of St James participated in many sporting activities encompassing a broad range of sports. All classes also experienced weekly gymnastics lessons for one term provided by Primarily Active. Year 2 children participated successfully in an intensive swimming program, provided by Bellyflops Swim School. In addition to school athletics and swimming carnivals, numerous children participated in gala days involving netball, soccer, touch football and rugby. During Term 4, as part of leadership training, Year 5 students organised and ran a skills program using tabloid sports for all children from Kindergarten to Year 6. Children represented the school, Central Region, & Diocese at athletics, swimming, netball, football, tennis, hockey and basketball. Several children represented PSSA Polding at State Championships including swimming, football, hockey, athletics & cross country.

Student Achievements

Performance in National Testing

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 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 2017		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	94.12%	73.90%	0.00%	10.00%
	Writing	88.24%	74.40%	0.00%	7.50%
	Spelling	92.16%	68.80%	3.92%	13.10%
	Grammar	98.04%	75.00%	0.00%	10.50%
	Numeracy	90.20%	67.10%	0.00%	11.40%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2017		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	90.91%	63.00%	1.82%	14.60%
	Writing	56.36%	47.90%	1.82%	19.40%
	Spelling	94.55%	63.00%	0.00%	14.10%
	Grammar	85.45%	59.90%	1.82%	17.50%
	Numeracy	90.74%	57.60%	0.00%	14.60%

Staffing Profile

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).	19
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	20
Total non-teaching staff	9
Grand total	29
Percentage of teachers who are indigenous	0

Teacher Attendance

96%

Teacher Retention

The Teacher Retention for 2017 was 100%.

Professional Learning Undertaken

There was a variety of Professional Development undertaken during the 2017 school year. The whole staff team attended The Seven Steps to Writing Success Inservice to support the targeted writing goal on our School Improvement Plan. Stage 3 teachers also attended professional development days to support the teaching of Maths and how to address the needs of Gifted students in this Key Learning Area. Teachers attended the Safety Town development day and Focus on Reading. The staff also worked collaboratively on developing compliant Scope and Sequences in a variety of KLAs and developing units of work and assessment plans. CSO personnel led input sessions around Assessing and Reporting across all KLAs, with extra input in assessment in RE. Staff attended field trips to APPLE to support the identified goal of IT professional development.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

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

The high level of parental involvement in all aspects of school life is astounding and indicative of the high level of parent satisfaction. There is excellent attendance at P&F meetings with parents also providing assistance with curricula programs involving Religious Education, Literacy, numeracy and involvement in sport programs. Parent satisfaction is also evident by the organisation and support of parents through community days and fundraising initiatives such as the Golf Day, attendance at the Welcome BBQ, Bunnings BBQ and working bees held throughout the year.

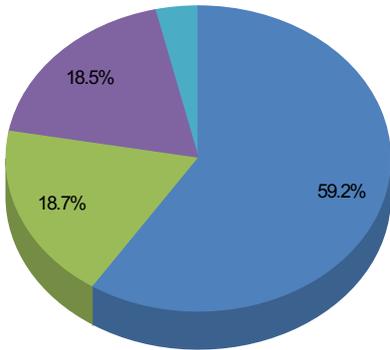
Student Satisfaction

Class based discussions and activities completed across the school indicate that the children of St James feel happy and safe in a caring and nurturing environment.

Staff Satisfaction

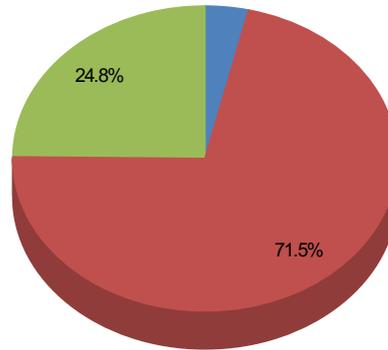
St James is blessed to have such a wonderful community of staff, children, parents and friends. The high level of collegiality and pastoral care amongst staff members is indicative of the high level of satisfaction communicated by all staff. Staff members also attend school functions during weeknights and weekends, often providing assistance and support to fundraising efforts but also as a means of socialising with the extended school community.

Income



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (59.2%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (18.7%)
- Fees and Private Income (18.5%)
- Other Capital Income (3.6%)

Expenditure



- Capital Expenditure (3.7%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (71.5%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (24.8%)

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 2017 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,314,035
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$729,647
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$724,312
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$141,746
Total Income	\$3,924,094

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$137,816
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,695,191
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$935,680
Total Expenditure	\$3,768,687

For the 2017 year the St James' Primary School received \$14,354 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

This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, NESA, The Parents 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:

St James' Primary School

KOTARA SOUTH

Phone: 4952 2414

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