

# 2024

## Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



### St Clare's High School

Davis Street, TAREE 2430

Principal: Anthony McCudden

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

## About this report

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St Clare's High School (the 'High School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CDMN). The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the High School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the High School's improvement journey is documented in the Strategic 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 High School directly or by visiting the High School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

## Message from key groups in our community

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### Principal's Message

St Clare's High School has again achieved in a variety of areas during 2024. The collective efforts, expertise and commitment of staff, students and parents has resulted in many outstanding achievements and fostered a deep sense of belonging and connectedness within our school community. With a clear commitment to Catholic faith development, inspired by Gospel Values and the exemplary lives of St Mary of The Cross MacKillop and St Clare of Assisi, our mission to Connect, Learn, Aspire, Respect, and Engage gives a wonderful foundation as we nurture the gifts and talents of the young people entrusted to our care.

The highlights of 2024 have been spread across many facets of school life, inside the classroom, on the sporting fields, in the creative arts and performance spaces, and in a commitment to outreach and supporting others in need. From high level performances and competitive events to special assemblies, reflection days, camps, and retreats, each occasion has played a pivotal role in shaping the lives of our students and in building a strong sense of accomplishment and achievement for our whole school community.

The success of our Year 12 cohort in the Higher School Certificate (HSC), the continued success of our students involved in the Virtual Academy and ASPIRE programs, the amazing achievements of many of our sporting teams, along with many individual standout performances throughout the year, all give evidence to the strength and character of our school community. Added to this, our students were involved in a variety of Social Justice outreach activities and fundraising ventures which have made a significant impact on the lives of others.

The success of 2024 for St Clare's High School comes as a result of the unwavering support and involvement of students, teachers, and support staff. Volunteering at the Taree community kitchen, fundraising for St. Vincent De Paul, participating in events, and collaborating on various initiatives have strengthened the connection and understanding of what it truly means to be a part of St. Clare's. Our students have demonstrated their commitment to making a difference.

Our best wishes go to the graduating students of 2024 and to the staff and students who have moved on to other ventures in 2025. We hope that the values and lessons learned as members of the St Clare's school community hold them in good stead for their futures.

Our thanks go out to everyone who played a role in making this school year a success. To our dedicated teachers and staff, thank you for your unwavering commitment to education. To parents, thank you for your continuous support and partnership. And to our students,

thank you for contributing to the greatness of St. Clare's with the enthusiasm, passion, and joy you shared with us every day.

### **Parent Body Message**

St. Clare's holds a high standing within the broader community, with its staff recognised for their enthusiasm, dedication and commitment to fostering a positive work ethic in students, enabling them to excel. Unfortunately, the Parent and Friends (P&F) group disbanded in 2022 due to attendance issues.

In 2025, St. Clare's will undergo a transition to a new framework known as FACE (Family and Community Engagement). This initiative, implemented by the Diocese, aims to ensure that community engagement remains pivotal in shaping the school's future.

Opportunities for parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's education were provided throughout 2024. These opportunities included, but were not limited to, parent/teacher evenings, information nights, graduation ceremonies and awards presentations. Open lines of communication and opportunities to meet and discuss their child's academic progress, pastoral care and wellbeing are made to all parents. Further information about progress is also available to parents through a parent portal of our student management system.

### **Student Body Message**

The student body is led by the School Captains and the Senior Student Leaders. They are supported by House Leaders and Student Representative Council (SRC) members who represent each CLARE class across the school. Representatives from Years 7 to 12 and the School Captains all contribute to the SRC who provide a voice for the wider student body. The SRC is an effective means for this communication. In 2024 the SRC were responsible for many fundraising and community service initiatives and gave wonderful witness to our school values. They also provided a solid platform for student voice to be heard and actioned upon. The SRC were called to serve and provide witness in many school events and always represented St Clare's with distinction and pride.

## School Features

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Catholic Secondary classes began in Taree in 1926 conducted by the Sisters of St Joseph, Lochinvar. Due to growing numbers a new secondary school, Rosary High, was built in 1962. Despite this new building further expansion was necessary and a new school was built on the present site in Davis Street, Chatham called Taree Catholic High School. The school was officially opened and dedicated to the memory of Father Thomas Mulcahy on 31 January 1971. In 1986 the school began classes in Years 11 and 12 and the name was changed again to St Clare's High School to follow the custom that Diocesan schools are named under the patronage of a saint whose qualities can be imitated by the school community.

This is a school community where students and staff enjoy a friendly and supportive environment, where a wide range of social justice, religious and cultural activities are passionately pursued, and where students appreciate the pastoral support generously provided by a qualified and committed staff.

St Clare's is a coeducational, regional Catholic High School servicing Taree, Forster/Tuncurry, Wingham, Gloucester, Krambach and Bulahdelah parishes. The school is staffed by lay teachers employed by the Diocese of Maitland – Newcastle.

## Student Profile

### Student Enrolment

The High School caters for students in Years 7 – 12. Students attending this High School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2024: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
294	326	51	620

\* Language Background Other than English

### Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Policy](#) applies to all school enrolments within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. School authorities manage local enrolment processes and procedures in a manner consistent with the rationale and guiding principles articulated in this Enrolment Policy and accompanying [Enrolment Procedures](#). 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.
- Establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices.
- Assist the system of Catholic schools to:
  - provide schooling, where possible, for children of Catholic families who seek enrolment
  - cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources
  - encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

### Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2024 was 80.92%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group					
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
85.49	81.66	81.14	77.32	80.86	79.02

## Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The High School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, High School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

High School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the High School community
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern
- the Professional Officer for School Enrolment is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom the High School's strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

## Senior Secondary Outcomes

The table below sets out the percentages of students undertaking vocational training in their senior years as well as those attaining the award of Higher School Certificate (or equivalent vocational education and training qualifications).

Senior secondary outcomes 2024	
% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling	10 %
% of students attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification	95 %

## Post School Destinations

Each year the High School collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort.

Approximately 65% of the 2024 cohort chose a university pathway post school while others pursued apprenticeships, TAFE, a Gap Year, or full-time work.

Non Atar – 6/63, VET 5/63

Destinations:

University - 41

Apprenticeships/Traineeships - 4

Gap Year - 3

TAFE - 3

Work – 12



## Staffing Profile

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### Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2024:

Total number of staff	90
Number of full time teaching staff	48
Number of part time teaching staff	22
Number of non-teaching staff	20

### Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this High School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Diocesan Schools System (systemic schools) at these levels is as follows:

- Conditional 155 teachers
- Provisional 71 teachers
- Proficient 1953 teachers
- 4 Highly Accomplished teacher

Additionally, there are a number of teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the High School.

## Catholic Identity and Mission

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Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle participate, under the leadership of the Bishop and in partnership with parents and parishes, in the mission of the Church to provide quality education in the context of a living Catholic Christian tradition. Within this context, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle educate from and for vibrant, welcoming and diverse communities with a particular commitment to the poor; for justice, integrity and peace; and with hope for the future.

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

- From and for the community of faith
- From and for excellence in learning
- In a rigorous, creative and critical pursuit of truth

(Adapted from: The Catholic School's Office Diocesan Vision Statement, 2016)

St Clare's High School is a regional school drawing students from across the Manning Valley and Great Lakes regions from both Catholic and non-Catholic feeder schools.

We have a visible presence of our clergy being Fr Kevin Corrigan and Deacon Vince Ryan. Both of whom are very supportive with staff and student formation and attend our staff days as well as our student reflection days.

In 2024, our school community was influenced by the theme of our Diocese 'Follow Me- Love in Action'. This theme informed our calendar of school events, our student and staff formation days and helped navigate a path of Christian living. Our school community balanced daily prayer, mission work, evangelisation, Religious education and traditional Catholic celebrations.

Our St Clare's feast day was focused on the theme. We were joined by the Emmanuel Worship youth team who talked about their own lives of following Jesus and our guest speakers Carol Healey and Deacon Vince Ryan who discussed the real works of Love in Action through our local Vinnies and soup kitchen. We also had a cameo film clip from MGL sisters Therese and Judy who helped to articulate this theme to the students through their YouTube clip: [St Clare's Feast Day](#)

We focused on staff achieving accreditation to their correct level of AWTL. With middle leaders attending the 'Well Springs' formation day, new staff attending 'Faith Story Witness' and all staff attending 'Follow Me- a Path of Service'. In this day we linked in with other

schools around the diocese and everyone did some active community service of their choice in our local community.

We continued our School Improvement Goal (SIP) improving the 'Catholic Culture' within the school. Such as promoting our Vision and Mission statements into our website, staff email banners and whole school gatherings. Pushing faith based imagery in our school newsletter and Facebook page. We also continued to promote visible symbolism around the school, including daily prayer into Compass newsfeed for students, parents and staff, working with the student leadership team to promote Catholic events and initiatives and continuing to develop parish and school partnerships.

Our Religious Education department has upgraded resources including new bibles sets for all classrooms and sacred spaces in each Religious classroom space.

Our charitable fundraising appeals are centered and informed through our Catholic identity and in line with our Catholic calendar (Lent- Project Compassion, Winter Vinnies appeal, Mary MacKillop fund appeal for local students and Advent Vinnies appeal). Therefore, our staff and students are developing an awareness of purposeful and intentional Christian living.

## Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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### Secondary Curriculum

The Secondary Curriculum follows the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO).

The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science, Technological and Applied Studies, Human Society and its Environment, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Creative Arts, Languages, and Vocational Education and Training. The Curriculum is structured around the outcomes and content for each KLA and provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding through assessment. The curriculum incorporates a focus on capabilities and priorities, including literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, and personal and social capability.

St Clare's follows directions from NESA and CSO to ensure we fulfill the curriculum requirements for Stages 4, 5, and 6. Professional learning in faculty groups ensures syllabus documents are reviewed and updates are included in preparation for planning and teaching. Currently, staff are working on the planning and implementation of new syllabus documents into their faculties. We are working collaboratively with our feeder schools to enable primary students to participate in special immersion days at St Clare's, including Open Days, Orientation for Year 6 students, and targeted orientation for students requiring learning support. Additionally, Peer Support activities in Term 4 highlight the relationship between Year 6 and Year 10 students as they move into Year 7 and Year 11. The continuation of the much-valued Gifted Education Mentor position has provided support to gifted students and professional learning to teachers on differentiation and resourcing. The Pedagogical Mentor role has continued to be an integral part of the Clarity process and evolving the data wall and use of Learning Walks and Talks. The targeted literacy program continues for students who are below their reading age. We have witnessed significant growth in students who have participated in this program. Professional learning for staff has taken on a more targeted approach with PPD used as a guide for meeting the needs of the staff and the school improvement plan to meet school goals. The Staff meeting format was modified to be increasingly focused on professional learning to enhance staff skills and student outcomes. This pre-planning of professional learning to meet specific needs (for example, use of data and use of Compass learning tasks to monitor student learning, engagement, and provide feedback) continued and assisted St Clare's staff to work towards meeting our annual school goals. St Clare's continued its involvement in the Clarity Project and launched several aspects throughout the year. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria have been embedded

with students, and many have seen improvements in student outcomes. Students and staff continue to benefit from Learning Walks and Talks. Work on utilising the Assessment Waterfall is continuing. St Clare's offers a wide range of course options in addition to the mandatory curriculum. Students are able to pursue courses of interest as an elective in Stage 5 and program of study in Stage 6.

## Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

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### NAPLAN

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participate in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

NAPLAN is a nationwide measure through which parents/carers, teachers, schools, education authorities, governments and the broader community can determine whether or not young Australians are developing critical literacy and numeracy skills. NAPLAN results allow parents/carers and educators to see how students are progressing in literacy and numeracy over time - individually, as part of their school community, and against national standards. NAPLAN is made up of four domains of:

- reading
- writing
- conventions of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation)
- numeracy.

NAPLAN results are reported against proficiency standards with four levels of achievement to give parents and carers, teachers and schools clearer information on how students are performing:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

The percentage of student achieving at Exceeding and Strong proficiency standards in NAPLAN at St Clare's High School for 2024 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 7	Grammar and Punctuation	52%	61%
	Reading	63%	67%
	Writing	62%	65%
	Spelling	67%	72%
	Numeracy	69%	67%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 9	Grammar and Punctuation	47%	55%
	Reading	65%	63%
	Writing	58%	61%
	Spelling	71%	72%
	Numeracy	64%	63%

### Higher School Certificate (HSC) Diocese

The results of the High School's Higher School Certificate (HSC) candidature are reported for particular subjects. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top two bands and shows comparison with results from previous years.

NB: A number of new syllabuses were implemented this year which means there was a change in either subject name and/or course number. For this reason, results from previous years may appear as 0%. Some courses no longer run and therefore will show as 0%.

The cohort of 60 students achieved 17 Band 6, 2 E4, and 74 Band 5, 2 E3 results. Four students achieved an ATAR above 90, with Phoebe Hinchcliffe achieving the School Dux ATAR of 94.20. Year 12 Drama (two Band 6, five Band 5) had eight students nominated for OnSTAGE, showcasing exceptional HSC Drama performances. One Dance student received a Dance CALLBACK nomination and Pre-Professional Sydney Dance Company Scholarship. Drama and Music consistently perform above state average, with upward trends in Ancient History, Earth & Environmental Science, and English Advanced. Of the 29 courses, 11 saw learning gains at the higher end of student distribution. Reflection and analysis of these results must inform planning and teaching to 'bump up the bands' and assist students to

achieve their best. Ancient History, Community and Family Studies, Construction, Drama, Earth and Environmental Science, English Extension 1, Music 1, and SOR2 were above state and school averages.

Higher School Certificate	Percentage of students in the top 2 bands (Bands 5 and 6)					
	2022		2023		2024	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
Agriculture	0 %	26 %	100 %	31 %	50 %	31 %
Ancient History	22 %	34 %	40 %	33 %	50 %	37 %
Drama	100 %	59 %	86 %	60 %	70 %	62 %
Earth & Environmental Sci	33 %	32 %	-	-	33 %	33 %
English (Advanced)	72 %	67 %	73 %	67 %	69 %	68 %
English Extension 1	100 %	93 %	100 %	94 %	100 %	96 %
Japanese Beginners	-	-	100 %	37 %	100 %	40 %
Music 1	100 %	70 %	100 %	69 %	100 %	68 %
Studies of Religion II	33 %	46 %	29 %	46 %	71 %	47 %



## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### Pastoral Care Policy

The High School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#).

The Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2022 aims to provide a framework for the policies, programs, resources and practices implemented at system and school level with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students, and all within its school community. It refers to the overall climate of care that exists within a Catholic school.

The environment is designed to be safe and inclusive, one that promotes academic rigour. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and the wellbeing of all.

### Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The High School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned with the Catholic School's [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Schools Behaviour Management Policy](#). The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours whilst ensuring respect for the rights of all students and staff. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this High School. The High School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by High School persons and non-High School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the High School. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the High School's website.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

The Catholic Schools Office has established an [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) which is implemented by our school and all schools in the diocese. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The CSO monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the Anti-Bullying Policy may be accessed on the High School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

## Complaints Handling Policy

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has established a [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the diocese. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. CSO monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) may be accessed on the High School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

## Community Satisfaction

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Consultation with parents, students and teachers is valued and sought. Their feedback contributes to the planning and the achievement of improved outcomes for students. This year, the High School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the High School from parents, students and teachers. The school undertakes extensive surveying of all stakeholder groups every 2 years. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

### Parent satisfaction

One main survey was used throughout 2024 to gauge parent satisfaction, along with opportunities for parents to provide feedback through parent information evenings and Parent/Teacher conferences. The main survey that was completed was a 'Tell Them From Me' survey. The 'Tell Them From Me' survey data highlighted the strengths of St Clare's in terms of the school's support for student learning and student behaviour, the welcome provided and felt by parents and caregivers, and the support provided to allow parents to assist their child(ren) with their learning at home. Parents also indicated their high satisfaction with the communication of key information and events that occur throughout the year.

### Student satisfaction

Two main student surveys were completed throughout the year to gain feedback on how the school operates and supports student's learning and wellbeing. These surveys took the form of a 'Tell Them From Me' survey, along with a 'Student Voice Project' administered by the Catholic Schools Office. Added to this, feedback was gained through student focus groups and through feedback from the Student Representative Council. These surveys indicated a very high level of satisfaction on how St Clare's deal with a variety of issues and supports students in their learning and in their personal development. The feedback from these surveys and the SRC highlighted the school's strengths in:

- Promoting a positive Catholic Culture where Catholic beliefs and values are lived out by everyone in the school community.
- Support for student wellbeing by providing people and structures that encourage growth and offer advice for students when needed.
- Providing a well-maintained and well-resourced school environment.
- Students also gave a high rating in their willingness to recommend their school to others.

## **Teacher satisfaction**

During 2024 staff were given a variety of opportunities to provide feedback and evaluation on different programs and activities that are run within the school. They also provided feedback through the 'Tell Them From Me' survey. The following areas were highlighted as strengths of St Clare's:

- Collaboration with colleagues to support and address learning needs of students.
- High expectations placed on student learning and achievement.
- Feedback provided to students to enable them to grow and improve performance on set tasks.
- The use of Technology to support and guide learning.
- The collaboration with parents and caregivers to support student learning and outcomes.
- The use of data to inform practice and to identify areas of potential growth.

## Financial Statement

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 2024 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2024	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$10,413,396
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$2,739,322
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$2,764,549
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$15,526
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$701,238
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$16,634,031</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$605,657
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$12,047,562
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$5,196,985
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$17,850,204</b>

### 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.

END OF 2024 REPORT