



Catholic Schools
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

2025

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Joseph's Catholic College

Segenhoe Street, ABERDEEN 2336

Principal: Veronica Rolfe

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About this report

St Joseph's Catholic College (the 'College') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CDMN) which forms part of the broader system of schools governed by Catholic Schools NSW. 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 College community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the College'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 College directly or by visiting the College's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

St Joseph's Catholic College's Vision Statement is "A Christ-centred inclusive community, grounded in service and integrity, nurturing the potential in all." Staff are deeply committed to living this vision with a strong focus on Catholic identity and the development of the whole person within a structured and nurturing learning community. We recognise that a student's development has its greatest outcomes when parents, students, and teachers form strong relationships based on mutual respect and trust.

St Joseph's excellent standing in the local community and its consistently high academic results are directly attributable to the positive relationships staff form with students. St Joseph's has high expectations of our students, hence, the wearing of school uniform with pride, care of our school environment, and the manner in which we relate to others at school, and in the wider community, are pivotal to the formation of well-rounded and spiritually-centred young people.

Parent Body Message

St Joseph's Parents and Friends Association (P&F) assisted the school in funding projects for the development of both students and the school, as well as coordinating events to promote community amongst families.

Meetings were held every term either face-to-face or online and our ever-welcoming and enthusiastic committee continued to be active in all aspects of supporting the school community and families.

At the end of 2025, the P&F dissolved to meet the requirements of the new Diocesan model, FACE (Family and Community Engagement).

It was a great privilege to be involved with St Joseph's community and the P&F would like to thank the Executive Team, staff and volunteers for their continued support.

Student Body Message

St Joseph's Catholic College continues to embody Mary MacKillop's value of "Never see a need without doing something about it," encouraging students to actively contribute to the school community through service, leadership and compassion.

In 2025, students engaged in a variety of opportunities that strengthened both their understanding of the school's mission and their connection to the community. Initiatives such

as Community Days, fundraising for the Scone Food Pantry, InterACTS, visits to Strathearn Village, the St Vincent de Paul Sleepout and the Red Door Community Kitchen enabled students to support those in need while developing empathy and a strong sense of social responsibility. These experiences were supported by the Student Representative Council, School Captains and staff, promoting student voice and leadership across the College. Students were also provided with leadership opportunities through welcoming Japanese exchange students into their homes, further reflecting Josephite values.

Student wellbeing and inclusion were prioritised through peer support, mentoring and the Wellbeing Action Team, fostering a safe and supportive environment. Events such as school carnivals and community activities further strengthened connections between students.

Through these opportunities, students were empowered to actively engage in school life and develop confidence, leadership skills and a commitment to service.

School Features

History of the School

St Joseph's Catholic College traces its origins to 1896 when the Upper Hunter's Catholic educational culture began in Aberdeen. Four Josephite sisters from Lochinvar were sent on a mission to the school's current site to begin a primary school. Public transport for students was essentially non-existent, so a small number of boys began boarding at the Convent. Over time, the boarder population increased, and this required the building of specialised boarding facilities. For most of its history, St Joseph's was a boarding school for primary school-aged boys, and it also served as the local area's Catholic co-educational primary school. 1971 saw the closure of the primary school, and the subsequent transformation of St Joseph's, in 1972, into a regional high school with the brief of serving the educational needs of the Upper Hunter Catholic Community. From this time, St Joseph's has continued to grow and evolve. The school has undergone multiple building programs with an emphasis on information technology and trade training facilities.

Location/Drawing Area

Located in the heart of the Upper Hunter, the school is part of the traditional country of the Wanaruah and Gamilaroi people. Aberdeen is part of the Upper Hunter Shire and the Muswellbrook Parish community. St Joseph's accepts students of both genders from Years 7-12, from areas covered by the Parishes of Denman, Merriwa, Muswellbrook, Scone and Murrurundi. St Joseph's Catholic College is situated within the small town of Aberdeen which is a town of approximately 2000 people. Aberdeen is at the centre of the Upper Hunter region where students travel from Muswellbrook in the south, Murrurundi in the north, and Merriwa in the west. The region is noted for its strong primary industries of cattle, wool, vineyards and horse breeding, as well as mining and electricity production.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The College caters for students in Years 7 – 12. Students attending this College come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2025: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
318	367	46	685

* 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.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2025 was 87.40%. 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
88.21	85.95	86.61	85.53	87.43	90.64

Managing Student Non-Attendance

All schools maintain an accurate register of their student's attendance. Any absences (part or full day) from school are recorded on this register and appropriate intervention strategies are implemented if required.

While parents/carer are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their child at school, school staff, as part of their duty of care, play a vital role in providing a continuum of active support including universal, targeted, and individualised strategies when supporting students with attendance concerns. Documented attendance plans may be developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern.

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 2025	
% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling	25 %
% of students attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification	98 %

Post School Destinations

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

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

The percentage of students and their post-school destination can be broken down into the following categories:

* University - 64%

* Employment - 34%

* Gap Year - 2%

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

Note: The data presented reflects the most current information available at the time of reporting. Variations in data currency may occur where staff updates are pending. Differences between tables are due to variations in staff inclusion criteria; therefore, minor discrepancies in reported numbers may occur.

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2025:

Total number of staff	105
Number of full time teaching staff	59
Number of part time teaching staff	20
Number of non-teaching staff	26

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 (NSW). Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher is voluntary.

The following table describes the accreditation status of teachers at St Joseph's Catholic College in 2025:

Conditional Teachers	6
Provisional Teachers	4
Proficient Teachers	64

Catholic Identity and Mission

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)

Christian Discipleship

St Joseph's is a Christ-centred inclusive community, grounded in service and integrity, nurturing the potential in all. It encourages the involvement of students, families and wider staff in discipleship opportunities. For example, the Year 7 Reflection Day in Term 1 is followed by a family welcome barbecue and 'Get to Know the Teachers' activity for all new students and their families.

For students in Years 7–10, we provide opportunities for Spiritual Reflection that complements the Religious Education program and community service priorities of the school such as the InterACTS program (students give up a week in the summer school break to work with special needs clients) as well as have several opportunities to support Catholic charities such as Caritas and St Vincent de Paul. Students in Years 11 and 12 participate in three-day Retreat programs concentrating on servant leadership and life beyond the school gates.

Religious Education and Curriculum

The classroom instruction of Religion aims to foster an understanding of Catholic beliefs and practices within the framework of Religious Literacy. This approach integrates content with the same level of demand, creativity, and rigor as other Key Learning Areas. Emphasis is placed on active learning and creative pedagogy, enabling students to engage with the material at various levels and through diverse learning modes.

For students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and Stage 6 Studies in Catholic Thought, a new curriculum has been introduced, focusing on enquiry-based learning. This curriculum provides students with the opportunity to explore their own spirituality and religious beliefs while addressing significant questions throughout their learning journey. The course is designed to empower students to take ownership of their faith journey, with staff providing guidance and support to enhance their learning experiences. Studies of Religion allows students to engage in various areas of religion within our world and students focus on Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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 in the Diocese.

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 embeds capabilities and priorities within curriculum content points in all KLAs. These include literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, and personal and social capability.

Digital technologies continued to evolve as valuable learning tools within classrooms throughout the year. Staff utilised Compass to provide daily lesson plans and employed Microsoft OneNote to support effective collaboration and resource sharing.

Whole-staff professional learning in 2026 was anchored in the Quality Teaching Framework. Throughout the year, staff engaged in targeted professional learning to design, refine, and implement high-quality assessment tasks. This work prioritised improving student learning outcomes by ensuring assessments were inclusive, accessible, and clearly aligned with learning intentions. A significant highlight of the process was the strong collegial and collaborative approach among staff, with rich professional conversations that deepened understanding and enhanced the overall quality of assessment development.

The school's Aboriginal Support Teachers and Aboriginal Worker provided valuable opportunities for staff and students to strengthen their understanding of the histories, cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the local community.

The school curriculum offers a comprehensive range of subjects, including Religious Studies, Languages, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and Its Environment, English, Physical Education and the Arts. These subjects are structured within stage-based descriptors that outline the knowledge, skills, and capabilities students are expected to acquire at each developmental level.

In addition to the core KLA subjects, St Joseph's provides a broad selection of elective courses such as Foreign Languages, Music, Drama, Agriculture, Humanities and a variety of

Technology subjects. These electives enable students to pursue personal interests while developing additional skills that support future pathways and employment opportunities.

Students also engage in a range of extracurricular activities, including sporting teams, debating, public speaking, Enviro Group and agricultural show teams. Participation in these programs supports the development of leadership skills, social confidence and a strong sense of connection and belonging within the school community.

Overall, the curriculum aims to provide students with a well-rounded, holistic education that prepares them effectively for post-school pathways, including university, vocational education, employment and lifelong learning.

Several students successfully completed workplace traineeships in conjunction with their Higher School Certificate studies in fields such as Electrical, Early Childhood, Manufacturing and Fabrication, Human Services and Beauty Services. Additionally, students undertook external TAFE courses in Electrotechnology, Automotive and Animal Care as part of their HSC study pathways..

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

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 Joseph's Catholic College for 2025 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 7	Grammar and Punctuation	48%	62%
	Reading	62%	69%
	Writing	53%	64%
	Spelling	60%	72%
	Numeracy	60%	69%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 9	Grammar and Punctuation	44%	56%
	Reading	55%	65%
	Writing	56%	61%
	Spelling	68%	72%
	Numeracy	70%	66%

Higher School Certificate (HSC) Diocese

The results of the College'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%.

Students in Year 12 2025 had great success overall, with the top academic student achieving an ATAR of 96.35. Six students were recognised in the Distinguished Achievers List with nine Band 6's between them. Several students successfully completed School Based Traineeships in conjunction with their Higher School Certificate.

Higher School Certificate	<i>Percentage of students in the top 2 bands (Bands 5 and 6)</i>					
	2023		2024		2025	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
Chemistry	0 %	38 %	9 %	39 %	25 %	15 %
English (Advanced)	40 %	67 %	58 %	68 %	41 %	28 %
English Extension 1	100 %	94 %	100 %	96 %	100 %	95 %
German Beginners	-	-	0 %	53 %	100 %	23 %
Human Services Exam	0 %	18 %	0 %	19 %	33 %	7 %
Mathematics Extension 2	-	-	100 %	86 %	100 %	84 %
Music 1	100 %	69 %	100 %	68 %	71 %	29 %
Studies of Religion I	100 %	49 %	69 %	44 %	50 %	19 %
English Extension 2	-	-	-	-	100 %	88 %
Construction Exam	-	-	-	-	33 %	18 %

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The College's approach to pastoral care and wellbeing is guided by the [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#).

This policy provides a framework for the development and implementation of policies, programs, resources, and practices at all school levels. Its purpose is to support and enhance the wellbeing of students and all members of the school community, fostering a climate of care within a Catholic educational context.

The College is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and academically rigorous environment. A strong emphasis is placed on nurturing and maintaining positive, respectful relationships among staff, students, and parents, with the wellbeing of all at the forefront.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The College's behaviour management and student discipline procedures align with the Catholic School's [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Schools Behaviour Management Policy](#). These policies uphold the dignity and responsibility of each individual, promote positive student behaviour, and ensure respect for the rights of all students and staff. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited at the College. The College does not permit or condone the use of corporal punishment by any College personnel or non-College individuals, including parents, as a means of discipline in the College. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the College's website.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The College implements the Catholic Schools [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) which is adopted by all schools within the Diocese. This policy provides a framework for school communities to collaboratively prevent and address bullying, fostering respectful relationships and responding to individual needs with sensitivity and care. The Catholic Schools Leadership team monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the Anti-Bullying Policy may be accessed on the College's website, the administration office or on the Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle website.

Complaints Handling Policy

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) is implemented by the College and all schools in the diocese. This policy acknowledges that misunderstandings and differences of opinion may arise and provides a structured process for resolving such matters respectfully and constructively. By addressing concerns within a framework of dignity, respect and truth, the policy reflects the values of the Catholic faith and offers opportunities to model the love of Christ in contemporary contexts. The Catholic Schools Leadership team monitors the implementation of this policy in our schools.

The full text of the [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) may be accessed on the College's website, the administration office or on the Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle website.

Community Satisfaction

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 College has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the College 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

St Joseph's Catholic College strives to maintain a close relationship with its parent community. The college organises a number of parent information evenings and other formal meetings to advise parents of issues such as assessment and policy consultations. Parents are invited to visit the college to meet with teachers and leaders.

Parents had the opportunity to meet with their child's teachers, attend P&F meetings and events, award ceremonies etc at school. The consistent message from parents is that they feel welcomed at St Joseph's and are provided with opportunities to express their opinions and assist in the organisation of the school. This is reflected in the level of school enrolments which continues to rise steadily.

Student satisfaction

Student satisfaction at St Joseph's Catholic College in 2025 is reflected through positive engagement, strong participation and ongoing opportunities for student feedback.

Student voice is gathered through a range of processes, including opportunities given to the student body, feedback from the Student Representative Council and regular communication between students, leaders and staff. Informal feedback from wellbeing programs and classroom environments also contributes to understanding student experiences.

In 2025, students demonstrated high levels of satisfaction through their involvement in academic, sporting and extra-curricular activities which contributed to a strong sense of belonging and school spirit. A diverse range of extracurricular opportunities further supported student engagement and achievement. Students particularly valued opportunities to contribute to social justice initiatives and connect with their peers.

The strong collaboration between students and staff ensures that student perspectives are valued and acted upon, fostering a positive environment where students feel heard, supported and motivated to participate fully in school life.

Teacher satisfaction

Throughout 2025, teachers continued to show a strong sense of commitment to their work, even as the pace and complexity of the school year remained high. Staff frequently commented on how busy the day.to.day demands were, yet they also recognised the positive impact their efforts were having on students and on the school as a whole.

A major focus this year was strengthening our practice through Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) and ongoing work in Quality Teaching for Assessment. Teachers invested considerable time in learning, trialling new strategies, and refining routines. This work has helped create more consistent expectations across the school and encouraged deeper professional discussion about what quality assessment looks like in different learning areas.

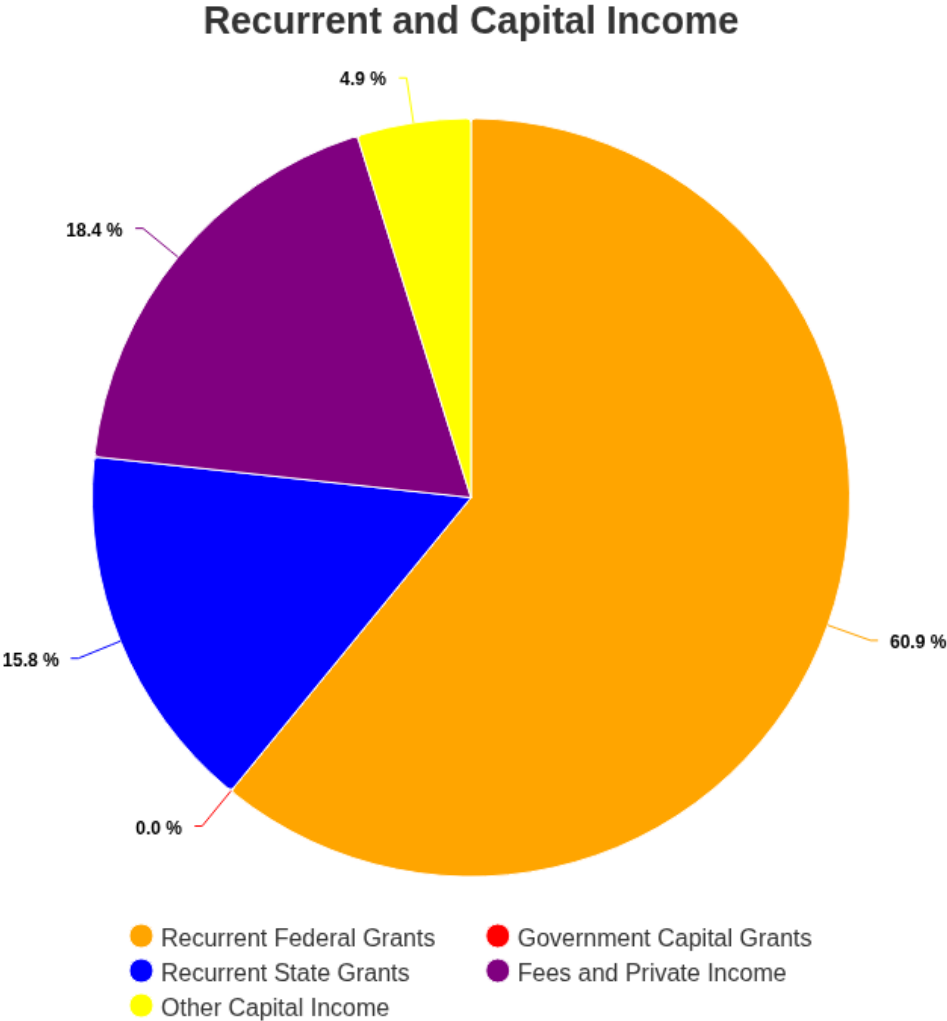
Their involvement in professional learning, team planning, and reflective conversations highlighted a shared belief in the value of continual growth. Many teachers reported feeling positive about progress made and optimistic about the direction the school is heading for 2026.

Overall, teacher satisfaction remained steady, supported by a strong culture of collaboration and professional purpose.

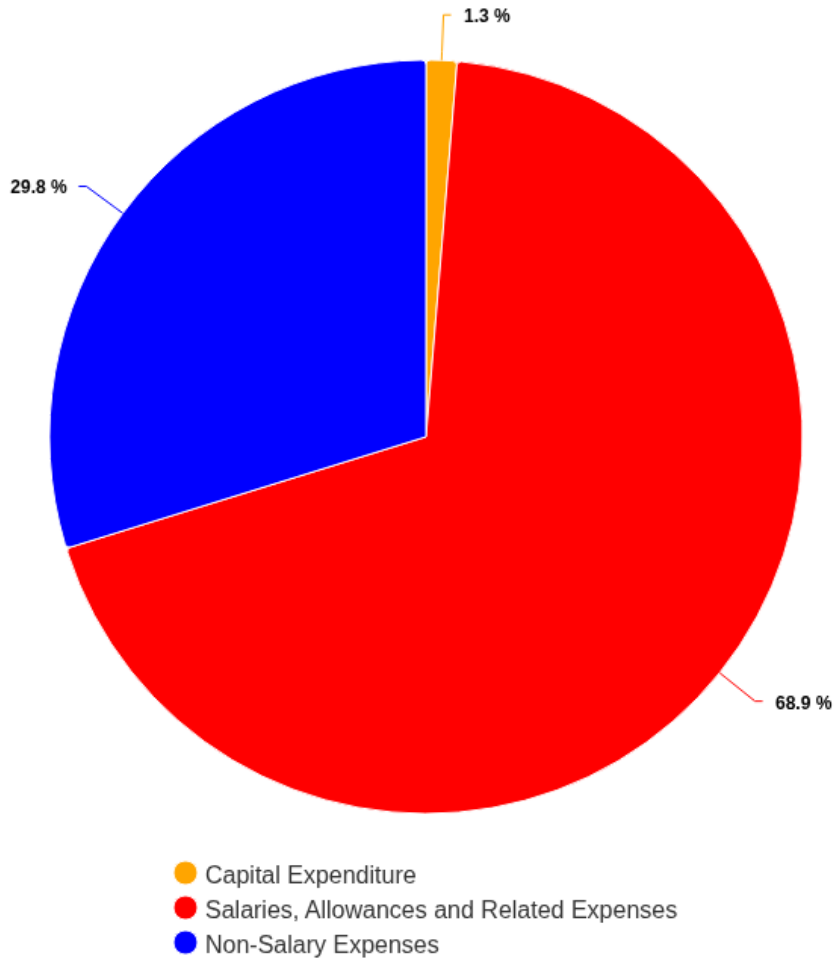
Financial Statement

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 2025 year is detailed below:



Recurrent and Capital Expenditure



END OF 2025 REPORT