

2025

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Joseph's PS

49 Brown Street, DUNGOG 2420

Principal: Mrs Lisa McNeilly

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

About this report

St Joseph's PS (the 'School') 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 School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

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

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

Welcome to the St Joseph's Dungog Annual Report for 2025.

In 2025, the students were provided with extensive opportunity to participate in a variety of learning, sporting and cultural experiences. All students were involved in Book Week activities and dressing up, school spelling and maths Bees, community Christmas carols performance, Grandparents day, and a variety of excursions and incursions. Our Diocesan pathway sports continued with students participating in swimming, cross country, athletics and for those interested in Years 5 and 6 both Winter and Summer sports trials. Several of our students representing at Diocesan level. Stage Two and Stage Three students attended soccer and netball gala days. Stage One participated in a Tag gala. School sport opportunities for swimming and basketball were supported with accredited coaches delivering the programs to our students. For 2025 we had the good fortune to have access to a musical staff member who coordinated our school performance- St Joseph's goes global. They also worked with our whole school culminating with our performance in the Dungog Street Fair. The students also enjoyed a cultural incursion of "Musica Viva" exploring the concept of Life is an echo. Our celebration of NAIDOC Week came on the last last day of Term 2 with a whole school celebration to explore elements of local Aboriginal culture. Kinder to Year 4 classes travelled to the Hunter Valley Zoo to learn about the animals there. In November Years 5 and 6 went on a 2-day excursion having active fun at the Great Aussie Bush Camp. Our continued SIP priority in 2025 (final year in our 3-year SIP focus) was to embed and improve the quality of teaching and student learning in mathematics - with a particular focus on Agreed Practices, Learning Intentions, co-constructed Success criteria and descriptive feedback for students. Staff embraced the opportunity to attend PD to develop their skills and transfer knowledge to the classroom setting. I would like to thank all involved in the St Joseph's community in 2024 and look forward to the 2025 school year with all the opportunities available to enhance curriculum delivery, student engagement and provide opportunities for combined local community activities.

Parent Body Message

The school population again increased in 2025 which continues the single stream for classes. In 2025 the PEG (Parent Engagement Group) model continued with a change of name to FACE(Family and Community Engagement). Parent volunteers continued to operate the Uniform shop-a very helpful service which is much appreciated. Our meetings during the year were consistently attended by a handful of parents keen to support the school and learn about the educational focus and strategies used at school. The options for continued parent engagement were co-ordinating the Mother's Day High Tea, the Father's

Day lunch and discussing and voting on the releasing of funds for resource purchases for the school including transport to excursions, speech pathology sessions each week for kindergarten, sports equipment and transport to LARA for end of year carolling. We were kept informed of school happenings by the principal's report tabled at the FACE meeting and then pushed out in COMPASS with the minutes of the PEG meeting. For non-FACE related information, we were kept informed through the monthly Parent Journal and the school newspaper. We were also very glad to have many opportunities to engage with our children at school through open classroom opportunities, morning teas, a book parade, sporting events, class liturgies and masses and Sunday Parish masses. Our school canteen was also open again and volunteers assisted with the preparation of lunches several times each term and the sale of ice blocks at lunchtime.

Student Body Message

Term 1 was such a special time for all of us. We had the privilege of helping our buddies settle into big school and guiding them through their new routines. It was wonderful to see their confidence grow each day. We also celebrated our start-of-year Mass, which reminded us of the importance of community and faith. A highlight for many of us was receiving our 2025 student leader badges—a proud moment that marked the beginning of our leadership journey.

Term 2 was full of surprises! In Week 4, we experienced a massive flood that lasted an entire week—something we'll never forget. Despite the challenges, we still enjoyed some amazing experiences, like visiting the Newcastle Theatre for DioSounds. Watching the performances together brought Year 5 and Year 6 closer as a stage and reminded us how music can unite people.

Term 3 was packed with excitement! We had our school musical, which meant lots of afternoons spent practicing dances, songs, and lines. It was hard work, but seeing it all come together was incredible. We also took part in the Newcastle Permanent Maths Competition, challenging ourselves with tricky questions and learning to think outside the box. And of course, the Touch Footy Gala Day was a highlight—we headed to Maitland Park to play against other schools, and proudly represented our own. It was a day full of fun, teamwork, and school spirit.

Term 4 was the perfect way to finish the year. We celebrated World Kindness Day and Remembrance Day, reminding us of the importance of compassion and gratitude. We enjoyed the Netball Gala, a trip to James Theatre, and the much-anticipated Year 5/6 camp. Camp was unforgettable—whether it was running through the mud run or cooling off with snow cones, we laughed, learned, and grew closer as friends. By the end of it all, we had strengthened our teamwork and created memories that will last a lifetime. To top it off, tomorrow we shared a movie together—*Inside Out 2*—which will be the perfect way to reflect on our emotions and friendships.

School Features

St Joseph's school has been in existence for over 130 years. The sisters of St Joseph (four in total) arrived in Lochinvar in 1883 from Bathurst where they were founded in 1875. Within the next few years, the sisters had established convents throughout the whole Diocese including Dungog in 1888. On Saturday 24 November of that year, four Sisters of the Order of St Joseph's arrived in Dungog. Catholic schooling commenced here just two days later. Catholic schooling has continued for 130 years since these founding Sisters began all those years ago. Since its foundation in the 1880's, the St Joseph's School has grown at a steady pace. Additions and renovations to the present site were made in 1913, 1923, 1952, 1976 and more recently major renovations were completed in 2007/8 and in 2010. In 2020, 2021 and 2022 further renovations and remodelling occurred. The Sisters of St Joseph concluded their teaching presence in the school at the conclusion of the 1986 school year. However, the school maintains close links with the Sisters and with the traditions that were woven into the very fabric of the school for all those years. Historical memorabilia, artistic presentations and photographs are on display in both the school and in the adjacent St Mary's Parish Hall. Current School Features St Joseph's is a single stream school with excellent classroom and playground facilities. All classrooms feature up to date technology including student laptops, interactive televisions and hover cams to assist with curriculum delivery. Furniture is modern, fresh carpets and wet areas all air conditioned for effective climate control. Our playground is extensive offering many different play spaces; fields for running and ball games, full sized basketball court, covered play equipment area, large, covered sand pit, mud kitchen zone, dry creek bed exploration area and passive game and shaded quiet zones. In addition we have a well stocked library and attached withdrawal room. In conjunction with the Parish we also make use of the beautiful Parish hall for incursions, assemblies and book fairs.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Years K – 6. Students attending this School 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
80	62	6	142

* 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 89.07%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group						
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
89.40	91.61	85.74	90.79	87.12	88.81	90.01

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/carers 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.

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	23
Number of full time teaching staff	6
Number of part time teaching staff	11
Number of non-teaching staff	6

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.

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

Conditional Teachers	0
Provisional Teachers	0
Proficient Teachers	16

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)

The Catholic Identity of St Joseph's has been promoted through a variety of prayerful and liturgical activities- with the recital of our School Prayer and School Vision Statement at the start of each week (also included in the Family Engagement handbook) and with the praying of appropriate classroom prayers during the school day. In 2023 the school was able to celebrate the Opening School Mass with the whole school community. We were also able to gather and celebrate together for class/Parish masses, Holy Week, Easter, Sunday school/ Parish Masses, Advent and Christmas. We finished the year with the end of Year Mass and passing of the light ritual for Year 6.

During 2025 the opportunity to forge strong links with the Parish were enhanced with open classroom opportunities, student attendance at Friday Mass, sharing of school newspaper with the Parish community and Parish Priest regular presence at school and staff functions. Many of the local parishioners are extended family members of our students and they were able to witness our liturgy and prayer times through attendance at and viewing images in our school newspaper and in our COMPASS feeds sent to our family groups. In 2025 Sacramental Programs were offered by our Parish Priest Father Andrew Doohan.

The school acknowledges the importance of Religious and faith development programmes for both staff and students. All members of the St Joseph's staff participated in a Formation day in Term 1 exploring liturgy. The improvement agenda in 2025 continued with the incorporation of a common understanding of core KLA practices and the use of common strategies such as Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, Descriptive feedback and case management meetings. These common understandings provide teachers with the necessary

scaffold to provide informed, differentiated and challenging teaching to learners who are better informed and able to articulate their understanding of learning.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education and Languages.

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.

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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.

The school took part in a number of competitions beyond the school designed to extend and challenge all students involved. Quite a number of students took part in the Premier's Reading Challenge and senior students took part in the annual Newcastle Permanent Mathematics Competition. School based competitions such as science design challenges and environmental sustainability projects in our Stage 2 and 3 classes were also popular and produced innovation and creative thinking. These challenges took many different forms from video to physical prototype. In 2025 our school continued to foster a greater student awareness of stewardship of the earth with students maintaining the school composting and food propagation stations. Students continue to show environmental responsibility by reducing their lunch box packaging, caring for our outside environment by planting and weeding in our gardens and using water sparingly. The opportunity for external Debating and Public Speaking competitions across our Lower Hunter Cluster continued in 2025. Our students were involved in Spelling and Maths Bees challenges as well as in their own classrooms with class presentations demanding an oral component. . A directed whole school focus on sustained and continuous student improvement continues in 2025. Using the work of Lynn Sharrett "Clarity" and with the guidance of the school Pedagogical Mentor we

continue to implement the 14 parameters of system and school improvement. We particularly focus on parameters 1, 14, and 6. This focused us on our shared beliefs and understandings, the shared responsibility and accountability and the case management approach specific to the teaching and learning in our school. In 2025 we also continued with case management meetings as regular components of our staff meeting time with a set process for initial and follow up discussion. PLT time is used for staff stage collaboration.

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 PS for 2025 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	35%	54%
	Reading	60%	66%
	Writing	74%	76%
	Spelling	45%	62%
	Numeracy	70%	64%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	71%	63%
	Reading	76%	73%
	Writing	71%	65%
	Spelling	65%	69%
	Numeracy	65%	69%

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School'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 School 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 School'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 School. The School does not permit or condone the use of corporal punishment by any School personnel or non-School individuals, including parents, as a means of discipline in the School. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the School's website.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School 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 School'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 School 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 School'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 School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the 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

The school received a great deal of positive feedback during the year from the parent body of the school. Annual School visit observations also parent survey and the Tell Them From Me Survey conducted in 2024.(TTFM) indicated that students were supported, well looked after and challenged. Parents and carers also appreciated the high expectations that were being set at the school and they saw the school as a safe, happy and inclusive learning environment for their children. They also indicated that parent/teacher communication was effective and two way. Our Kindergarten intake for 2025 was 23 students, another large Kindergarten intake for our school. Many new families to the area chose St Joseph's on the advice and recommendation of friends and acquaintances in the local community. Connections of home and school link by sending videos of school happenings to parents via the COMPASS app. Communication is made available through the fortnightly parent Journal and school newspaper which is sent to each family electronically. We also welcomed several new families during the 2025 school year citing our reputation as a major reason for choosing to enrol their children at our school.

Student satisfaction

The students expressed their appreciation of the Pastoral Care and support offered to them at St Joseph's. Students indicated they were thankful for the opportunities to take part in our open classroom opportunities, our sporting events and the involvement of qualified coaches, our excursions and incursions. Also popular are our special canteen lunches, tabloid afternoons and the opportunity to attend community functions such as visiting LARA and participating in the Dungog Street Fair Carols. Our students also enjoyed the opportunity to dress up for Book Week and have student voice through the suggestion box on the playground. Students also commented that they feel safe at our school and know who they can go to for support if they need it. Students understand that they are the priority in our school and their opinions are valued and most importantly that they have the power to make positive changes in their own lives, their local community and the world at large.

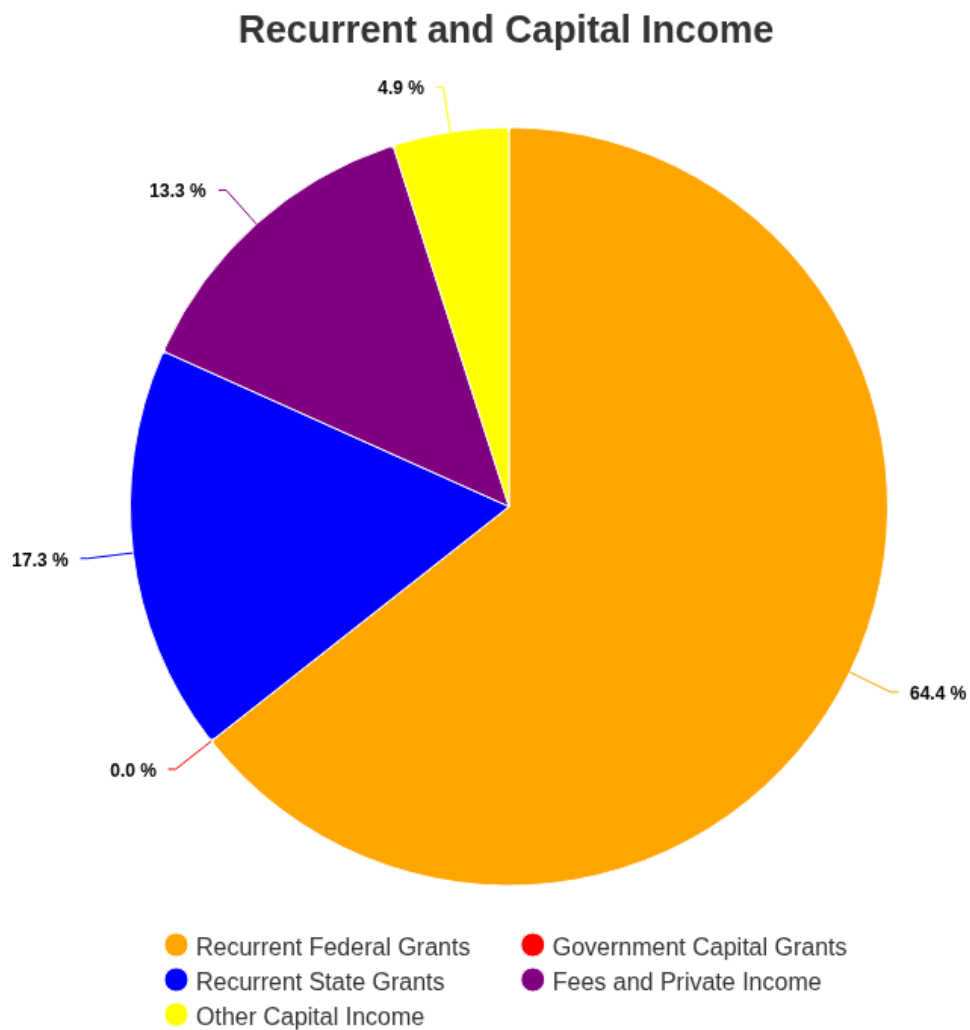
Teacher satisfaction

Our 2024 TTFM survey and our 2024 annual school visit report revealed that teachers and staff in general are happy that the school has direction and a clear plan for educational and pastoral focuses. Teacher attendance is very high- a strong indication of workplace satisfaction and community inclusion. The staff regularly get together to celebrate and share a meal after school hours. Father Andrew is also an honorary staff member regularly socialising with us both at school and outside of it. Several of the teachers play touch football and netball together outside of school. At the end of 2025, eleven members of our staff all participated in gaining their Bronze Medallion qualifications together. The motivation for this was so we could continue to run an aquatics program for our students- an area we felt needed attention. Support for each other is also evident in the positive relationships the staff share among each other. During the holidays, board game evenings and movies out are a frequent feature. Our staff is a mix of experience and youthful enthusiasm making it a dynamic and blessed place to work and be.

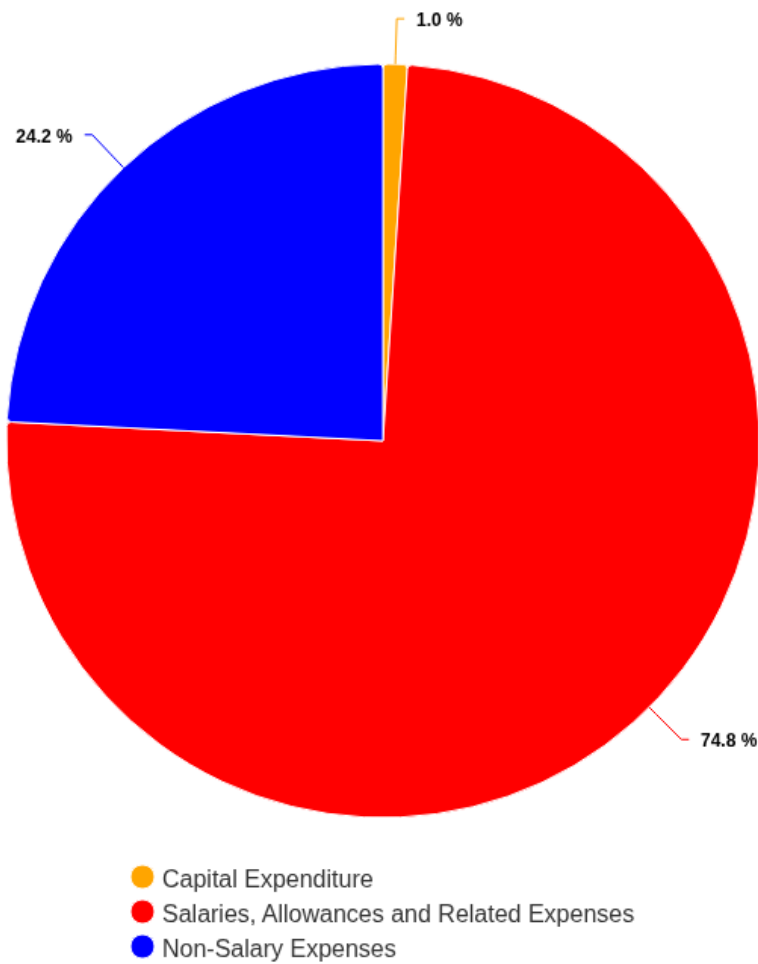
Financial Statement

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