

2025

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St John the Baptist PS

12 Victoria Street, MAITLAND 2320

Principal: Ms Katherine Gardner-Ferguson

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

About this report

St John the Baptist 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

The 2025 Annual School Report provides our community with a clear and transparent account of our school's achievements, growth, and priorities throughout 2025. It fulfils our responsibility to share how we have enacted our mission and vision, strengthened learning and wellbeing outcomes, and continued to nurture a vibrant Catholic community grounded in the Dominican tradition.

Throughout 2025, St John the Baptist Primary School remained committed to forming curious, capable, and compassionate learners. Our focus on high-quality, evidence-based teaching continued to drive improvement across all learning areas, supported by professional learning in mathematics, the implementation of new NSW syllabuses, and the ongoing development of Deep Learning competencies. Students engaged in rich learning experiences, showcased their work, and benefitted from targeted, data-informed support.

Guided by our vision to be a community of faith and belonging, we strengthened our Catholic identity through formation opportunities, exploration of Aboriginal spirituality, and whole-school celebrations that deepened understanding of our Dominican charism. Student wellbeing remained central, with programs such as Grow Your Mind, Zones of Regulation, peer support, and transition partnerships ensuring every child felt safe, known, and supported.

I extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff, families, and students for their commitment to our shared mission. Together, we continue to grow a flourishing school community.

Parent Body Message

In 2025, our parent community continued to play an essential role in shaping the welcoming, supportive, and connected culture of St John the Baptist Primary School. The partnership between families and staff remained a defining strength of our school, contributing to the sense of belonging that is felt so strongly across our community.

This year marked the final chapter of our Parents and Friends Association. We acknowledge with gratitude the many years of service, commitment, and leadership offered by countless parents through the P&F. In particular, we recognise the retirement of our long-serving P&F State representative and the resignation of another valued representative. Their dedication has strengthened our school and helped establish the strong foundations on which family engagement will continue to grow through the new FACE model in 2026.

Through the generous support of parents, a range of resources and experiences were made possible in 2025. Fundraising efforts enabled the purchase of new sports equipment for all students, board games for wet-weather play, and additional mathematics resources to support hands-on learning. Families also contributed to much-loved community events including the Family Christmas Night, Student Christmas Fun Day, and Pyjama Day—events that continue to nurture joy, connection and school spirit.

This year also saw the implementation of a strengthened communication process designed to ensure clarity, consistency, and connection between home and school. This renewed focus has helped us continue building meaningful relationships with families and enhance their engagement in their children's learning.

Student Body Message

In 2025, student voice remained central to the learning and wellbeing culture of St John the Baptist Primary School. Students were actively involved in shaping their school experience through meaningful leadership, structured feedback, and opportunities to contribute to daily school life.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) continued to be a strong forum for student leadership, providing a platform for students from across the school to share ideas, raise concerns, and participate in decision-making. SRC leaders supported whole-school initiatives and modelled the values of respect, responsibility, and service.

This year, all students participated in a comprehensive Wellbeing Survey, enabling them to share insights about their sense of safety, connection, and engagement at school. The data gathered informed whole-school wellbeing planning and helped staff tailor support to meet student needs.

Peer mentoring strengthened relationships across Kindergarten to Year 6, with older students guiding younger peers in learning routines, playground expectations, and positive friendships. Lunchtime groups—including interest clubs, quiet-play spaces, and supported social groups—offered inclusive options for students seeking connection or additional guidance. Extra staffing during lunch breaks provided targeted support to students needing help with friendships, regulation, and safe play.

School Features

St John the Baptist Primary School has a long and proud history within the Maitland community. Established by the Dominican Sisters, the school has grown from a small parish school to a thriving contemporary learning community that continues to honour its Catholic identity and Dominican charism. Our tradition of faith, learning and service remains central to school life, shaping the way students learn, connect and contribute to the wider community.

The school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6, providing high-quality education within a supportive and inclusive environment. We welcome families from diverse backgrounds and work in close partnership with Chisholm Region Parish. Throughout 2025, students actively participated in parish celebrations, including our involvement in the celebration of Blessed Carlo Acutis' recognition towards sainthood. The school choir also proudly represented our community at the Diocesan Launch of Catholic Mission Month, strengthening the connection between faith and service.

Students experienced a broad range of learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Year 6 attended their annual excursion to Canberra, exploring civics, democracy and national institutions, while Year 5 took part in the Great Aussie Bush Camp, developing teamwork, resilience and leadership. Many students excelled in sporting pathways, representing the region and the Diocese at state level in swimming, athletics, tennis, cricket, touch football and basketball.

Academic extension and enrichment continued to be a strong focus. Students participated in ICAS assessments, the Virtual Academy, and the Diocesan Showcase through choir. Several students represented the region in debating at diocesan level, while others were selected for diocesan and regional competitions in mathematics, spelling and public speaking.

The school has also continued to grow its facilities to better support contemporary learning. In 2025, significant building works included the refurbishment of the Year 2 roof and major landscaping of the school oval. The installation of new turf and an upgraded irrigation system will ensure high-quality playing surfaces for many years to come, enhancing student wellbeing and active play.

St John the Baptist Primary School remains a place where students are known, valued and encouraged to grow academically, spiritually and socially. Our commitment to providing rich learning experiences, strong community partnerships and a vibrant Catholic identity ensures that every child has the opportunity to flourish.

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
197	200	17	397

* 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 90.66%. 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
92.04	91.06	88.94	91.41	91.26	89.64	90.28

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	44
Number of full time teaching staff	16
Number of part time teaching staff	14
Number of non-teaching staff	14

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 John the Baptist PS in 2025:

Conditional Teachers	0
Provisional Teachers	0
Proficient Teachers	27

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)

Catholic Life of the School

In 2025, St John the Baptist Primary School continued to express its distinctive Catholic identity through faith formation, community partnerships and a deep commitment to living our mission and vision each day. Grounded in the Dominican tradition, our school nurtured a culture where prayer, reflection, justice and service were central to learning and relationships.

A significant focus this year was Aboriginal spirituality. All staff participated in formation experiences led by the Aboriginal Education Team from the Catholic Schools Office, helping deepen our understanding of Country, culture and the shared story between Aboriginal and Catholic traditions. These sessions were strengthened through follow-up discussions at staff meetings and woven into whole-school events. Students engaged in termly formation that explored Aboriginal perspectives within our faith tradition, and in Term 4, parents and carers were invited to join their children in combined formation sessions, strengthening family participation in spiritual learning. Learning Support Assistants were also offered formation activities tailored to their roles, ensuring inclusive access to spiritual growth for all staff.

Our partnership with St John the Baptist Parish remained a vital expression of our Catholic life. Monthly year-level Masses, a combined staff Mass each month with All Saints College, and termly whole-school and community Masses ensured that liturgical celebration remained central to school life. The parish connection was further strengthened through our combined NAIDOC liturgy with St Nicholas and the All Saints community, celebrating culture, identity and faith in unity.

The Dominican charism continued to guide and shape our school culture. Prayer table symbols and Dominican elements were visible across all learning spaces, offering students daily touchpoints with our tradition of truth, contemplation and service. This year, the pillars of the Dominican way, Prayer, Study, Community and Service, were explicitly embedded and strengthened within our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework. These pillars helped guide student expectations, inform language around behaviour and wellbeing, and support a consistent, faith-filled approach to forming compassionate and responsible learners.

Across all aspects of school life, students were encouraged to act with kindness, lead with integrity and contribute to the flourishing of our community. Through service initiatives, liturgical participation and daily faith-filled actions, the school continued to nurture a distinctive Catholic culture grounded in tradition, enriched by Aboriginal spirituality and enlivened by meaningful partnerships with families and parish.

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.

In 2025, St John the Baptist Primary School strengthened teaching and learning across Kindergarten to Year 6 through sustained curriculum development, professional learning and collaborative practice. Staff prepared for the implementation of new NSW syllabuses in PDHPE, Science, HSIE and Creative Arts, developing updated scope and sequences and building confidence through Catholic Schools Office professional development. A strong focus was placed on embedding First Nations perspectives and creating meaningful cross-curriculum links.

Our partnership with St Joseph's, East Maitland continued to enhance professional learning, with both schools deepening their use of Fullan's Deep Learning pedagogy. Combined and school-based professional learning supported teachers to integrate the six global competencies through purposeful learning design. Curriculum Catch-Ups between teaching teams, the Principal and Assistant Principal ensured ongoing support, clarity and consistency in planning, assessment and reporting.

The Hour of Power (HOP) Learning Support Program remained a key feature for Kindergarten to Year 3, offering targeted small-group differentiation in English and Mathematics. Assessment data continued to show strong growth for students involved in the program, highlighting its effectiveness in strengthening foundational skills.

The school completed the final year of its whole-school numeracy focus, with professional learning centred on Peter Sullivan's Launch–Explore–Summarise–Connect model. This supported teachers to design challenging tasks, promote reasoning and enhance mathematical thinking.

Technology continued to enrich learning across all stages. The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program for Years 4–6 entered its sixth year, while iPads in Kindergarten to Year 2 and laptops in Year 3 provided a smooth pathway into the BYOD environment.

Through strong professional learning, updated curriculum structures and targeted support, St John the Baptist Primary School remained committed to delivering high-quality learning experiences that promote deep understanding and support every student to thrive.

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 John the Baptist 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	52%	54%
	Reading	70%	66%
	Writing	88%	76%
	Spelling	57%	62%
	Numeracy	73%	64%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	78%	63%
	Reading	80%	73%
	Writing	69%	65%
	Spelling	78%	69%
	Numeracy	78%	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

Parent satisfaction at St John the Baptist Primary School in 2025 remained very positive. Feedback from the Parents and Friends Association (P&F), informal conversations and the most recent biennial parent survey (completed in 2024) continued to guide improvement and reflect strong confidence in the school.

Parents consistently noted that their children feel safe, supported and well known by staff. They valued the school's focus on wellbeing, positive behaviour and academic progress, as well as the strong relationships formed between families and teachers.

The P&F highlighted appreciation for the clearer communication processes implemented in 2025 and acknowledged the dedication of staff and the responsiveness to student needs.

Overall, parents expressed trust in school leadership, pride in the school's Catholic identity and gratitude for the caring, connected environment that supports each child to thrive.

Student satisfaction

Student satisfaction at St John the Baptist Primary School in 2025 was strongly positive. Year 6 exit surveys, the wellbeing survey and Student Representative Council (SRC) feedback showed that students feel safe, supported and proud to belong to the school. Year 6 students spoke highly of their learning, leadership opportunities and the strong relationships they formed with teachers. Many highlighted camps, peer mentoring and community events as experiences that strengthened their sense of belonging.

Wellbeing survey results indicated that students across all year levels feel connected to peers, trust their teachers and understand behaviour expectations. They valued the support available when needed and appreciated the range of programs and lunchtime groups offered.

SRC feedback further confirmed that students feel heard and respected, with their ideas contributing to school improvements.

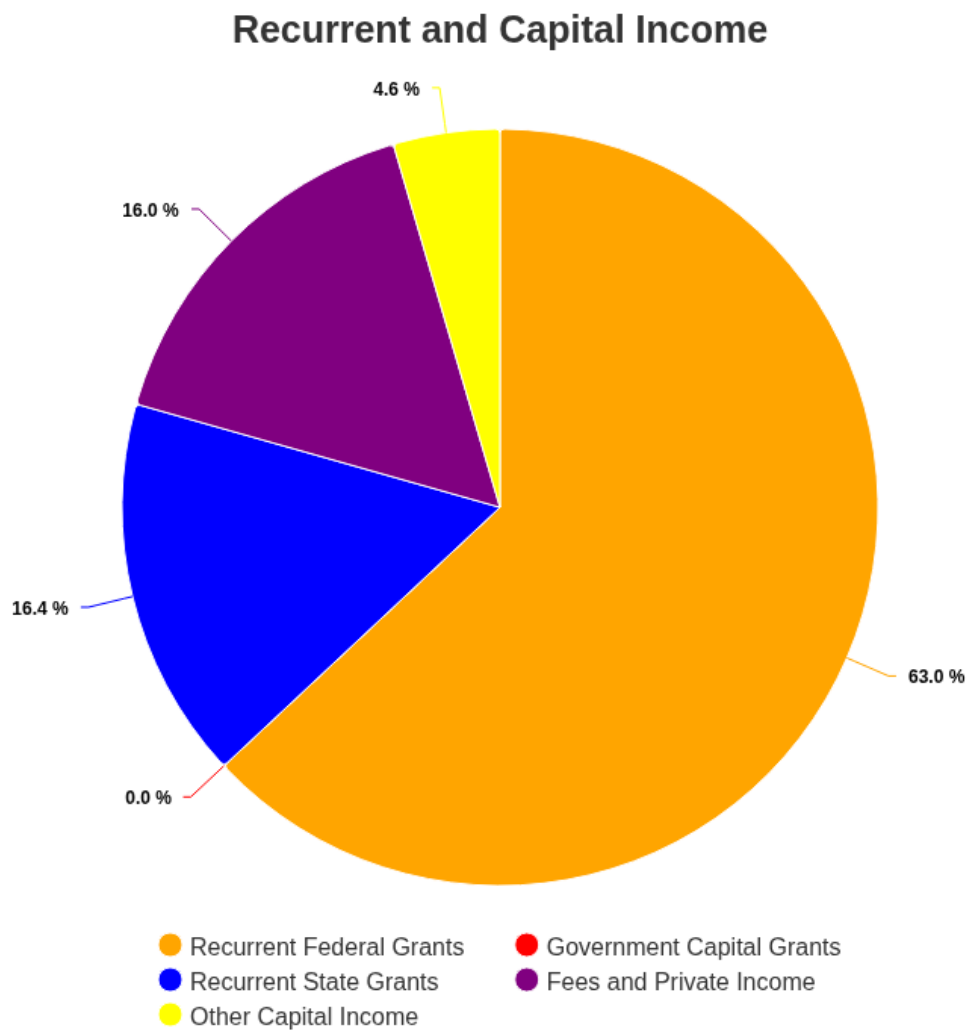
Teacher satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction at St John the Baptist Primary School in 2025 was strong, reflected through Tell Them From Me survey results, staff meetings and Curriculum Catch-Ups. Teachers reported feeling supported, valued and well informed. Regular staff meetings and structured Curriculum Catch-Ups provided opportunities to collaborate, plan effectively and respond to student needs. Staff highlighted that these processes strengthened clarity, consistency and teamwork across the school. Teachers valued the professional learning opportunities offered throughout the year and appreciated the open communication with leadership. Overall, staff reported high levels of satisfaction with the collaborative culture, shared decision-making and the positive relationships that contribute to a supportive and professional working environment.

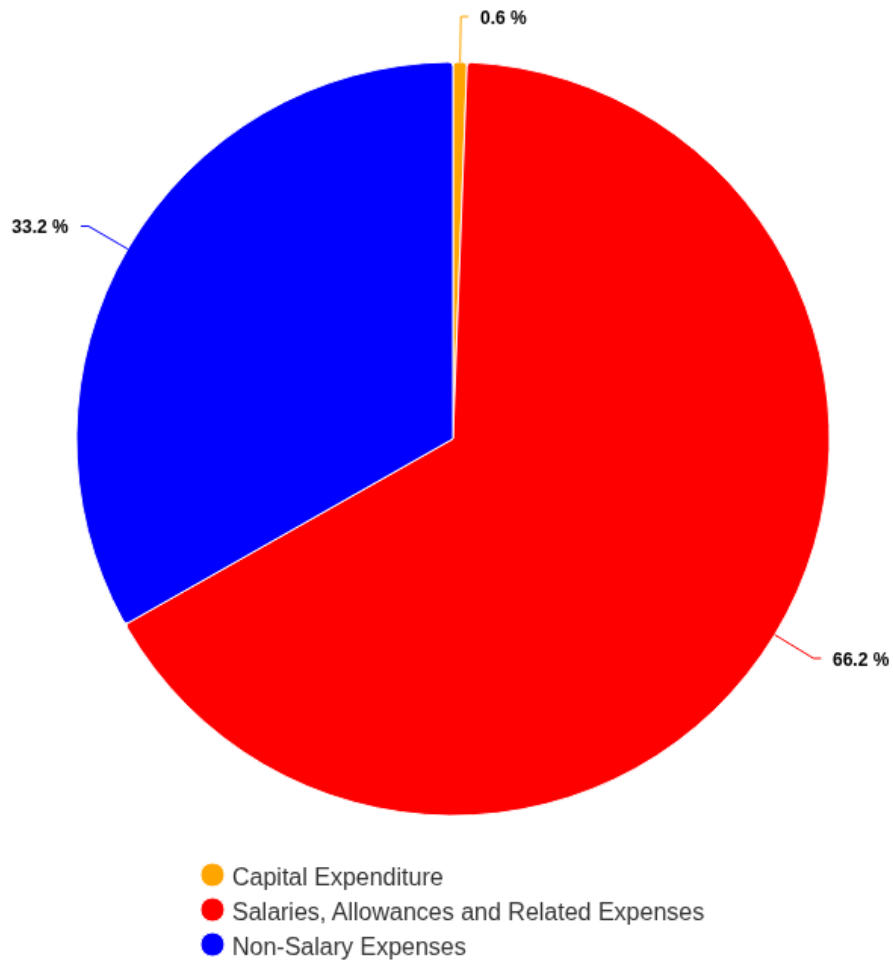
Financial Statement

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