

# 2025

## ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



### St Columban's Primary School

Church Street, MAYFIELD 2304

Principal: Ms Penny Banister

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

## About this report

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St Columban's Primary School (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

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### Principal's Message

I am pleased to present the Annual School Report for St Columban's Catholic Primary School. Guided by our mission, "Inspiring all to reach their full potential, within a diverse community, through the richness and Truth of Christ's message," this report celebrates our achievements and outlines our priorities for continued improvement.

St Columban's is a welcoming, nurturing community where each child's individuality is valued and respected. Our strong reputation within the local community is built on our commitment to pastoral care, student wellbeing, social justice, and a shared pursuit of excellence in all areas of school life.

Our staff remain strongly focused on building a culture of learning, supported through our continued involvement in the Diocesan Leading Learning Collaborative. This initiative has strengthened a shared language of learning and increased the capacity of both students and teachers, resulting in more purposeful and effective teaching and learning practices.

We continue to promote inclusivity by building positive, respectful relationships with our Parish and parent community. We are proud of the strong sense of belonging that defines St Columban's and work intentionally to nurture each student's gifts and talents, empowering them to grow as confident global citizens who live and share their faith.

### Parent Body Message

As another school year comes to an end, I reflect on the achievements, growth and positive changes our school has experienced in 2025. The permanent appointment of our executive staff has allowed Mrs. Banister and Mrs. Neilson to firmly establish themselves as the heart of our school. Their leadership continues to drive meaningful improvement, with a strong focus on communication and community engagement through initiatives such as the FACE meetings and regular newsletters. With ongoing support and involvement from parents and friends, I strongly believe St Columban's will continue to be a school of choice in our area.

This year I attended my first school swimming carnival and was struck by the students' enthusiastic participation and strong sense of sportsmanship. The encouragement and cheering for classmates, regardless of race results, perfectly reflected the wonderful school spirit we share.

Our cultural diversity remains one of St Columbans' greatest strengths, with over 32 nationalities represented. This inclusive environment helps our children develop understanding and appreciation of the wider world.

Beyond academic and sporting achievements, we should also celebrate everyday successes, staff supporting learning and faith development, and students showing kindness and respect toward one another.

Visible improvements such as new fencing, garden maintenance and footpaths show pride in our school, as does the introduction of the new girls' summer uniform. These changes highlight the positive impact of collaboration between parents and staff.

### **Student Body Message**

#### **Prayer Pillar Report**

The Prayer Pillar supported school liturgies throughout the year, with students actively contributing to celebrations such as Easter, Mothers' and Fathers' Day, and St Columban's Day. Under Ms Di Santo's guidance, students developed confidence, responsibility and a deeper understanding of prayer and liturgy.

#### **Study Pillar Report**

The Study Pillar fostered leadership, collaboration and a sense of belonging. Students supported peers and staff, shared ideas to improve school life, and built strong relationships, making it a rewarding and enriching experience.

#### **Community Pillar Report**

Community Pillar members served the school through practical leadership, including managing sports equipment and assisting with carnivals. Students developed teamwork, responsibility and a strong sense of contribution to the school community.

#### **Service Pillar Report**

The Service Pillar supported those in need through fundraising and school initiatives such as Mini Vinnies and Pyjama Day. These experiences encouraged compassion, generosity and living out faith through service.

## School Features

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St Columban's is a K–6 Catholic primary school serving families from Mayfield and surrounding suburbs, including Mayfield East and West, Carrington, Hamilton North, Islington, Maryville, Sandgate, Tighes Hill and Warabrook. Established in 1917 by the Dominican Sisters, the school has a long and respected presence within the local community.

Our school motto, Truth, drawn from the Latin Veritas, reflects the Dominican tradition and underpins all aspects of school life. Students are encouraged to be true to themselves, to others and to God, and to develop a lifelong commitment to seeking truth. We maintain strong connections with other Dominican schools, including Corpus Christi Waratah, St Dominic's Centre Mayfield and San Clemente High School Mayfield. Our close partnership with San Clemente High School, located on the adjacent site, supports a smooth and confident transition for students moving into secondary education.

St Columban's offers a comprehensive transition program for students entering Kindergarten, including classroom visits and a buddy program to support our youngest learners. During the first term of school, Kindergarten students participate in the Successful Foundations program, which uses play-based learning to ensure a positive and supportive transition into formal schooling.

Parent partnership is a valued strength of our community. Parents actively support fundraising and community-building initiatives and are invited to participate in regular Family And Community Engagement (FACE) meetings. Students are offered a wide range of co-curricular opportunities, including Mini Vinnies, debating, public speaking, ICAS competitions, tournament of the minds and representative sport. Through the Sporting Schools program and government grants, students access a variety of sporting experiences such as touch football, soccer, athletics, gymnastics, basketball, netball and cricket. Our Art Exhibition provided students with opportunities to present their learning in Creative Arts using many forms.

## Student Profile

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### 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 |
|-------|------|--------|----------------|
| 77    | 85   | 71     | 162            |

\* 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 89.86%. 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 |
| 89.89                          | 92.02  | 90.10  | 89.49  | 88.44  | 89.05  | 90.03  |

### 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

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### 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              | 29 |
| Number of full time teaching staff | 6  |
| Number of part time teaching staff | 12 |
| Number of non-teaching staff       | 11 |

### 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 Columban's Primary School in 2025:

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Conditional Teachers | 2  |
| Provisional Teachers | 1  |
| Proficient Teachers  | 15 |

## 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 Columban's Primary School has a proud Dominican heritage spanning more than 100 years. Students demonstrate a clear understanding of the Dominican charism of engaging the head, heart and hands to reflect the love of God in their lives. The four pillars of the Dominican tradition—prayer, study, community and service—are central to our identity and are embedded in all aspects of school life.

Prayer is an integral part of our Catholic identity. The school community gathers in prayer each morning, and classes regularly participate in parish Mass. Liturgies are celebrated throughout the year to mark significant seasons and occasions, including feast days, Reconciliation Week, Harmony Day, and Mothers' and Fathers' Day. On 21 March, the school celebrates cultural diversity, promoting inclusion and respect as families share their heritage through music, dance, art and food, affirming that all are created in the image of God.

A strong commitment to study is evident in the school's focus on excellence in learning. Religious Education is a daily component of the curriculum, with students deepening their understanding of the life of Jesus, the teachings and traditions of the Church, and the principles of social justice. Through this learning, students are encouraged to become reflective, lifelong learners in the spirit of St Dominic.

Service to others is an essential expression of faith at St Columban's. Students participate in social justice initiatives that foster responsibility and compassion, including involvement in Mini Vinnies and whole-school spirituality days further strengthen this focus, with recent

initiatives including outreach projects such as preparing care packs for the Mission to Seafarers and Christmas gifts for St Vincent De Paul.

Community is celebrated and strengthened through shared experiences and traditions. Each year, St Columban's joins with local Dominican schools to mark St Dominic's Day, reinforcing connections and a shared commitment to living out the Dominican pillars of faith, learning and service.

## Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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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.

Throughout the year, ongoing evaluation and refinement of practice ensured that the curriculum and School Improvement Plan remained central and deeply embedded within the school's learning culture. Teachers consistently supported students to set meaningful learning goals while also engaging in reflective practice and professional goal-setting to strengthen their own teaching expertise. This shared focus fostered a strong culture of continuous improvement and collective responsibility for student learning.

Collaborative professional learning was a key focus, with staff participating in three Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings per term. These sessions centred on embedding explicit vocabulary instruction across all Key Learning Areas (KLAs), supporting consistency in teaching practice and enhancing student access to curriculum language demands. This collaborative approach strengthened instructional practice and promoted shared professional accountability.

Staff also engaged in three Staff Development Days designed to build inclusive practices and improve student access to learning. Professional learning focused on responding effectively to student needs and ensuring that teaching approaches were inclusive, targeted, and aligned with whole-school priorities.

Cultural competence and understanding were strengthened through participation in Crossing Cultures: Hidden Histories at Murrook Cultural Centre. This experience deepened staff understanding of Aboriginal cultures, histories, and perspectives, while also raising awareness of the historical and contemporary challenges faced by Aboriginal communities and the impact of these experiences on education. As a result, staff were better equipped to implement culturally responsive practices across the curriculum.

In addition, staff participated in further Staff Development Days that enhanced professional capacity and collective responsibility. Faith formation through Pilgrims of Hope provided

opportunities for spiritual renewal and encouraged staff to journey together in hope, strengthening their shared sense of mission as Catholic educators. Staff also completed Advanced Office of Safeguarding training, reinforcing a strong and unwavering commitment to child safety, wellbeing, and ethical practice.

Together, these professional learning experiences ensured that staff were well prepared to create learning environments that are inclusive, culturally respectful, faith-filled, and safe, supporting the holistic development and wellbeing of all students.

## 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 Columban's Primary School 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 | 37%                                                       | 54%       |
|                     | Reading                 | 70%                                                       | 66%       |
|                     | Writing                 | 70%                                                       | 76%       |
|                     | Spelling                | 52%                                                       | 62%       |
|                     | Numeracy                | 63%                                                       | 64%       |
| NAPLAN RESULTS 2025 |                         | Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards |           |
|                     |                         | School                                                    | Australia |
| Year 5              | Grammar and Punctuation | 56%                                                       | 63%       |
|                     | Reading                 | 74%                                                       | 73%       |
|                     | Writing                 | 67%                                                       | 65%       |
|                     | Spelling                | 81%                                                       | 69%       |
|                     | Numeracy                | 63%                                                       | 69%       |

## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### 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

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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 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

Staff have actively drawn on parent feedback to inform learning programs and strengthen family involvement within the school. Feedback was gathered through the Family and Community Engagement Group (FACE) and the 2024 Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey.

Results from the survey show that most parents feel welcomed and valued as partners in their child's education. Parents also reported confidence in the school's high expectations for learning and behaviour, and indicated that concerns are addressed in a timely and equitable manner. Overall, survey responses reflect strong confidence in the school's leadership, a well-embedded Catholic culture, and a positive standing within the local community.

Parent comments included:

"I do love the close community feel and the strong friendships my child has developed";

"When I ask to meet my child's teacher or asked for feedback they have been more than happy to respond and meet.";

"The school is thriving with enthusiasm and more opportunities for the students and community to come together"; and

"I like the inclusivity and encouragement from teachers to work at your best level".

### Student satisfaction

Students at St Columban's are supported and encouraged to engage fully in the faith, learning and cultural activities of the school. Findings from the 2024 Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey show that students feel they are given opportunities to build strong, positive relationships with both peers and staff. They describe their learning environments as engaging and supportive, where they feel appropriately challenged while also receiving the help they need.

Student feedback from the survey included:

"The things that I really like about this school is that the teachers take care of all of the students fairly and students pay attention in class and which makes this school even better"

"I really like that I have a lot of friends that I can trust and that all the teachers are really caring and helpful with everything and that it's a safe place to learn in and everyone is really kind and caring".

"It tells us about Jesus and that we should follow in his steps and help other people"

### **Teacher satisfaction**

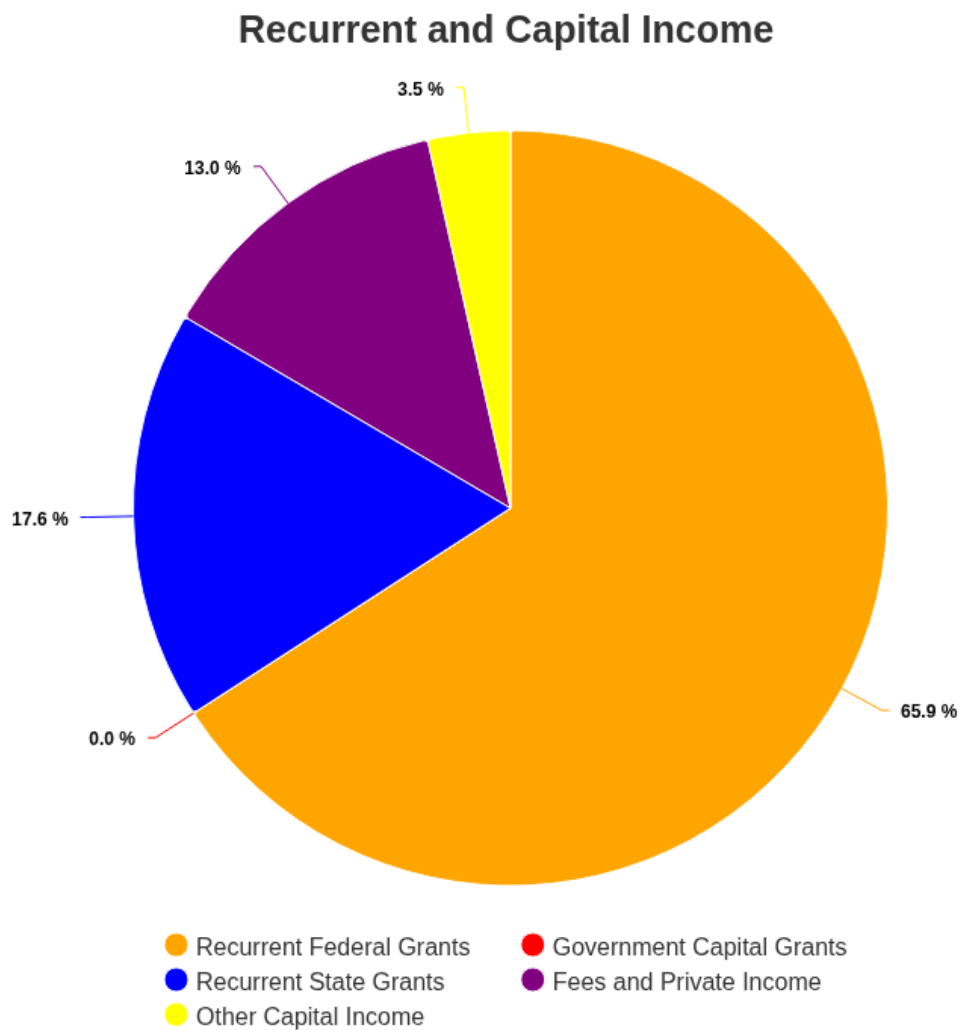
Staff at St Columban's continued to build their professional learning community through active participation in Professional Learning Teams. Teachers meet in Stage groups every three weeks to collaborate on strategies and strengthen their practice in order to enhance student learning outcomes. A strong culture of collaboration, shared learning and constructive feedback is clearly evident. Staff are supported and encouraged to engage in ongoing professional development and to share new ideas and initiatives with colleagues. All staff demonstrate a deep commitment to the personal, spiritual and academic development of students, showing genuine care for the wellbeing of students and their families.

## Financial Statement

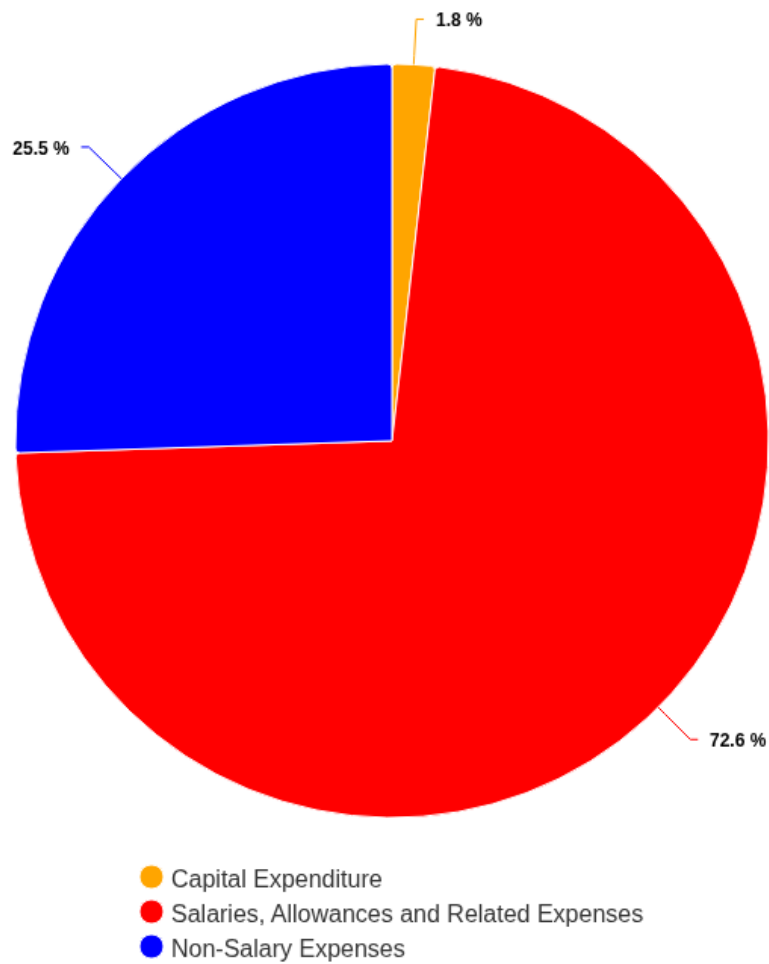
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This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2025 year is detailed below:



## Recurrent and Capital Expenditure



END OF 2025 REPORT