



**Catholic Schools**  
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

# 2025

## ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



### St Joseph's Primary School

1 St Joseph's Drive, TAREE 2430

Principal: Brooke Stephens

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

## About this report

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St Joseph'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

During the last two years, the staff of St Joseph's Taree have focused on strengthening our Catholic identity and developing a strong culture of wellbeing that enables learning to flourish. Classroom refurbishments provided teachers with the opportunity to engage students in lessons through the use of visual charts that demonstrate teaching moments and collaboratively developed samples and exemplars of student work.

We were supported by the Catholic Diocese of Maitland Newcastle and other Catholic organisations to assist families and members of the community impacted by the floods. Throughout this challenging time, caring for our students, staff, families and community was our priority. We were incredibly grateful for the support we received.

Our new Vision and Mission became embedded into the day to day life of the school and wellbeing procedures became clear and functional in their application. Teachers developed their understanding of the content and requirements of new syllabus documents and programs in readiness for their implementation.

We commenced a Little Joey's program to support our transition to school program and look forward to building on this program in 2026.

### Parent Body Message

As a Year 4 parent, I feel there are many meaningful opportunities to be engaged in the life of the school. Communication is clear and consistent, especially through platforms like Compass and Seesaw, which keep me well informed about classroom activities, upcoming events, and important notices. These tools make it easy to stay connected with my child's learning and ensure that parents are aware of what is happening across the school community. I also appreciate the welcoming atmosphere the school creates for parents who wish to be involved. Whether it is spectating at sport or swimming events, or attending the Christmas concert, there is always a sense that families are encouraged to participate. Staff are friendly and inclusive, and they make parents feel valued as partners in their child's education. Being able to express any concerns or issues for my child strengthens the connection between home and school, as well as being able to share in the achievements and celebrations of students at the end of year awards. Overall, I feel that St Joseph's provides a warm, open environment where parents are both informed and genuinely welcomed to contribute to school life.

## **Student Body Message**

At our school, I feel really involved in my learning because the teachers make lessons fun and interesting when they can. We do lots of hands-on activities, work with partners, and ask heaps of questions, so learning never feels boring. I like that we get to share our ideas and have a say in what we do in class.

There are also lots of chances for students to be leaders. In Year 6, we have leadership teams, and every two weeks we meet in our working groups. We talk about ways to make our school even better, plan little projects, and help younger students. It makes me feel proud to know that students can make a difference.

All the students at St Joseph's help shape our school, too. We have had special workshops about bullying and kindness, where we learn how to include others, solve problems, and be good friends. These workshops helped us understand how to make our school a safe and happy place. We have the Rock and Water program that teaches you how to be a good friend, how to stand up for yourself or ignore people that may be annoying you.

We also get to represent our school in different sports. Wearing the school colours and playing against other schools is really exciting. It teaches us teamwork and gives us confidence. Overall, I feel like students are a big part of what makes St Joseph's great.

## School Features

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St Joseph's Primary Taree caters for Kindergarten to Grade 6 students and is currently two streams. We are in the parish of Our Lady of the Rosary Taree and are one of 5 feeder primary schools in the Manning Region to St Clare's Secondary College.

In January 1923, the Sisters of St Joseph's founded our school. Preparations were made under the direction of Father Coady for the arrival of the Sisters of St Joseph. A new convent and a brick primary school on Wynter Street had recently been completed ready for the Sisters to begin St Joseph's Primary School and a girls boarding school at the beginning of the school year. The boarding school continued until 1965.

Rosary High School was established on the parish site in 1926. When the high school relocated to Chatham in 1971, the pupils from 3rd to 6th classes at St Joseph's Primary School moved into the vacated secondary school building which had been built in 1962. In 1972, the original 1923 school was demolished and replaced with a modern infants school consisting of three double classrooms based on 'open plan' teaching. With the closure of St Joseph's Primary and Boys Boarding School at Cundletown in 1968, and St Joseph's Primary School, Krumbach in 1989, students travelled to St Joseph's, Taree.

St Joseph's Taree draws from its six parish centres and surrounding district. This includes Taree, Old Bar, Harrington, Lansdowne, Cundletown and Coolongolook. We also draw students from the Halliday's Point area, and Nabitac. Increasing enrolments and cramped conditions led to a new school being opened at St Joseph's Drive on May 25, 1998, the school's current site.

We honour our Josephite and parish history. In 2023, St Joseph's celebrated 100 years of being central to education in the Taree community. Throughout the year St Joseph's primary school came together to celebrate 100 years of education. In Term 4, our school community, both past and present, celebrated the 100 years spring fair, liturgy and blessing with Bishop Michael and the 100-year mass at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish. The celebrations were a wonderful recognition of the incredible contribution to the Catholic education in the Manning community.

In 2025, our Year 2 to Year 6 classrooms were refurbished to support the pedagogy used within classrooms, making learning visible, using the 'third teacher' to support and engage students. We commenced our Little Joey's transition to school program and developed a future concept for a St Nicholas Preschool. The new sound and speaker system across the school has improved our capacity to communicate with our students and staff for different purposes and to share moments of celebration with our families.

# 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
134	137	72	271

\* 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 89.32%. 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
90.70	88.20	92.91	86.81	88.79	91.01	86.80

## 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.

## 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	57
Number of full time teaching staff	15
Number of part time teaching staff	15
Number of non-teaching staff	27

### 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 Primary School in 2025:

Conditional Teachers	5
Provisional Teachers	0
Proficient Teachers	23

## 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 Joseph's Taree continued to strengthen its Catholic identity through daily practice, visible symbols, and active engagement with parish life. The school anchored its work in creating a new Vision and Mission statement with input from all stakeholders. We Learn. We Serve. We Are Faithful. Staff used this statement to guide priorities in learning, wellbeing, and community outreach.

The school gathered for prayer, seasonal liturgies, and whole school celebrations of key feast days. These included St Joseph and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and many other opportunities to come together. The school placed strong emphasis on forming students who understand prayer as part of daily life. Teachers supported this through simple prayer routines, quiet reflection, and age-appropriate scripture work.

Student formation days provided opportunities for students to grow in faith, leadership, and reflection. These days supported the Religious Education curriculum themes and helped students understand the values that shape Catholic life. Activities included guided prayer, small group discussion, and practical service experiences. Staff designed these days to support age appropriate reflection and to build students' confidence in expressing their faith.

Staff continued faith formation through professional learning, staff meetings, and diocesan programs. This strengthened confidence in teaching religion and supported understanding of the Catholic worldview.

The partnership with the Taree Parish remained strong. Father Kevin visited classrooms and celebrated Mass and liturgies with students in the church and on site. Deacon Vince was also

able to support Father Kevin in forming students and celebrating whole school liturgies. The school supported sacramental preparation and families joined parish celebrations connected to Confirmation, Reconciliation, and First Eucharist.

Religious Education remained central to classroom learning. Teachers followed the K-6 RE curriculum with clear learning goals, structured Scripture engagement, and purposeful dialogue. Students explored Catholic teaching through real school and community contexts. They learned about the life of Jesus and examined examples of Christian service. Teachers used the pedagogy of encounter to engage students.

The school promoted service as a Christian responsibility. Students supported Caritas, St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Mission, and local initiatives that responded to community need. These included food collections and targeted support for families facing hardship; especially for families affected by the flood. We were very grateful the Sisters of Charity provided financial support and donated many items for the families affected by the flood.

## 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.

During 2025, the focus of our professional learning was new Syllabus documents in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Creative Arts and Human Society and Its Environment. We continued our work in developing a culture of feedback using the Assessment Waterfall and embedding our positive behaviour for learning opportunities. Teachers were focused on providing descriptive feedback and supporting students to peer and self assess using the same approach to set clear learning goals.

Professional learning and collaborative team meetings provided teachers with the opportunity to analyse student achievement information and work samples and make decisions based on the impact of pedagogical approaches. Building the collective capacity of teachers through sharing the knowledge and skills of staff assisted in building our culture of learning. This work was extended through the development of a process for tracking student achievement that is consistent and easily accessible for staff.

The provision of support for our diverse student population and students with additional needs focused on intervention strategies that aligned with classroom pedagogies. Supporting the learning and wellbeing needs of students led to improved practices for the delivery of intervention and collection of evidence for reporting purposes. The work of our Learning Support team, Aboriginal Education team and English as an Additional Language or Dialect staff was important in the success of this approach.

Developing a Response Continuum that reflected the Positive Behaviour for Learning matrix and framework strengthened our approach to the management of student behaviour.

Increasing access to technology for staff and students continues to be a focus, as does the professional learning for teachers to improve the digital capability of 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 Joseph'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	36%	54%
	Reading	58%	66%
	Writing	74%	76%
	Spelling	55%	62%
	Numeracy	44%	64%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	36%	63%
	Reading	57%	73%
	Writing	60%	65%
	Spelling	62%	69%
	Numeracy	45%	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

The Tell Them From Me Survey shows that parents believe that support of learning is strong from a home and school perspective. This is indicative of the work the school does within learning support, English as an Additional Language or Dialect teaching, classroom pedagogical approaches, Cultural, creative and sporting programs.

Parents feel welcome and that the school promotes inclusive education. This result is reflective of the friendly and caring nature of the staff and students, the opportunities to build Cultural awareness and share experiences among our diverse student population that allow us to build perspectives across the community.

Although parents feel that safety at school could be improved, they also strongly believe that the school supports positive behaviour. The focus on aligning our Positive Behaviour for Learning Matrix and Response Continuum with our School Vision and Mission now underpins our approach to support students to learn the skills they need to develop positive relationships with peers and functional behaviours for learning.

### Student satisfaction

The Tell Them From Me Survey shows that students experience positive relationships with peers but there is a need to improve their sense of belonging at the school. Sport is a driver for students, especially for our boys. Although students value school outcomes, homework is not a priority and their interest and motivation of some students to learn needs strengthening. There has been an improvement in positive behaviour at school with the majority of students are trying hard to succeed. Students recognise the effort of staff to listen, encourage and act upon their concerns, and that the school is focused on building a positive learning climate.

There is a need to build the basic skills of students and to differentiate tasks for our high achieving students. Learning time is viewed as effective although students would like to increase the relevance of the learning to their everyday lives. The students would like to see staff raise the expectations for them in learning.

## Teacher satisfaction

The Tell Them From Me Survey reveals there is work to be done across the eight drivers of student learning from a staff perspective. Parent involvement and inclusivity are viewed as strengths, while leadership, technology and collaboration are the greatest areas for improvement.

Feedback and supporting staff to improve their practice is viewed as important, as well as creating the culture of feedback in classrooms. Creating learning tasks that are relevant to students was also noted by staff. The staff identified that creating a culture of feedback in classrooms with challenging and visible learning goals is an area for improvement.

Technology is the greatest area of need in the school, viewed as important for building the digital capability of students but also in the provision of effective learning pedagogies.

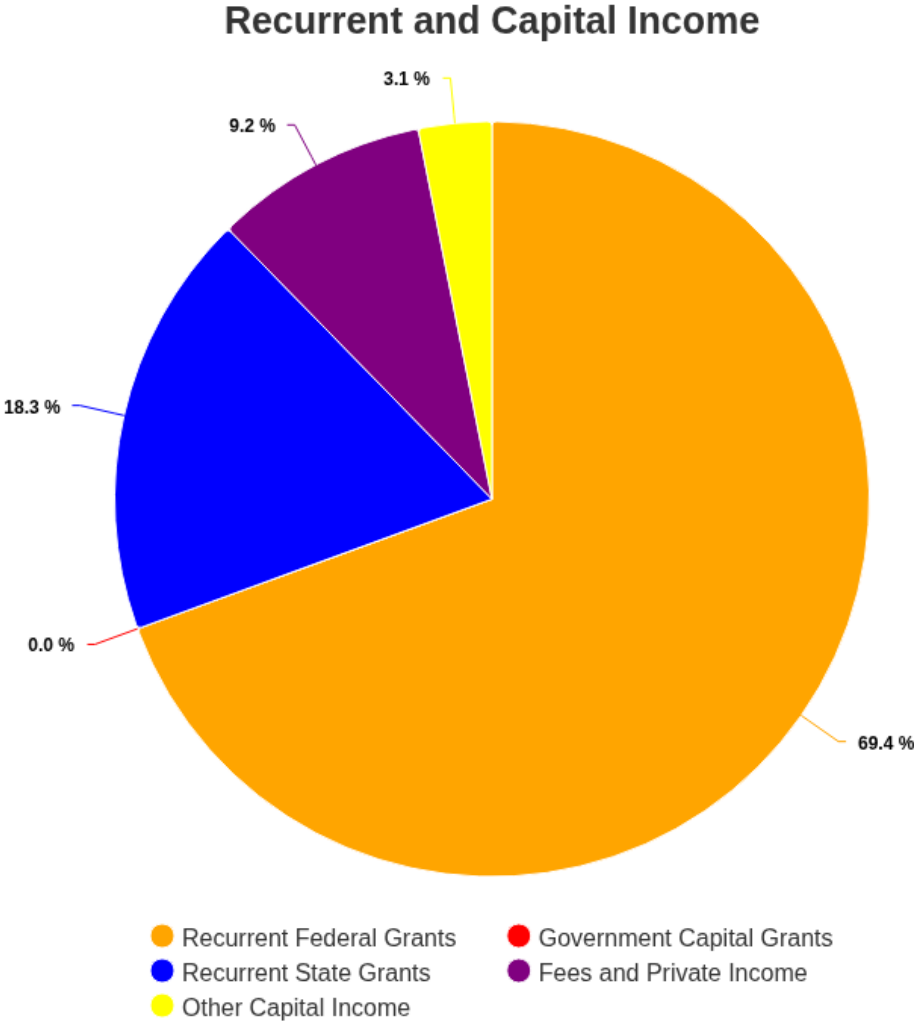
Surprisingly, teachers do not view the support strategies for students as effective. The staff are focused on the wellbeing of students and have mixed feelings about the faith and life of the school in regard to our Catholic Culture. The staff observe room for improvement in the school facilities and do not see the school as having a positive reputation in the community.

# Financial Statement

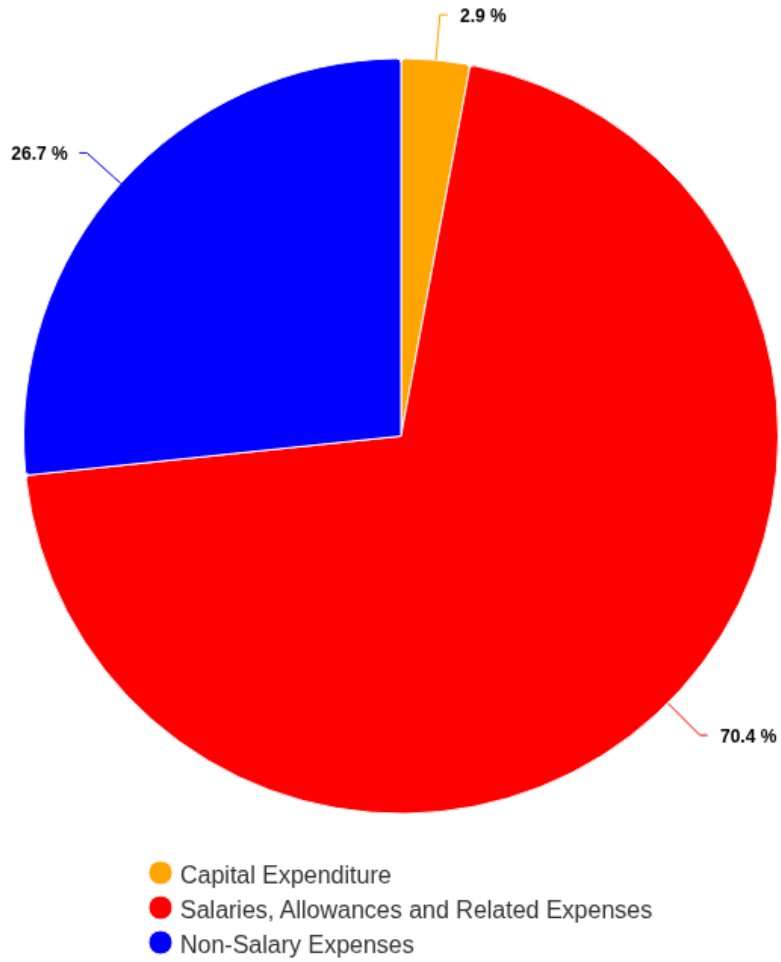
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This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2025 year is detailed below:



## Recurrent and Capital Expenditure



END OF 2025 REPORT