

St Bernard's Catholic Primary School Berowra Heights

2009 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

St Bernard's Catholic School community is committed to quality teaching and learning, inspiring one another to grow in faith, hope, love, respect, justice and joy.

The School motto of 'Honesty' encourages all to celebrate our faith and give witness to the Gospel values within a caring and supportive community of parish, parents, staff and students.

Many successes were celebrated throughout 2009 demonstrating the quality of teaching and learning, the vibrant expression of the Catholic faith and the outstanding commitment of the parent community.

The impact of the building and renovations program provided several challenges, undertaken with an excited anticipation of the improved facilities we would have in 2010.

These successes and challenges, along with the direction identified for going forward in 2010, will be outlined in the body of the report below. Several representatives of the entire community have contributed to developing this report.

The Principal

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

We welcomed our new Principal in 2009 and enjoyed developing a strong partnership and working collaboratively together over the course of the year. We pride ourselves on being a welcoming community and we extended this to new community members.

The school received Federal Government grants enabling the refurbishment of the toilet block, two classrooms, a learning support room and the construction of a new library and administration building. This building project started in 2009 and will be completed early 2010.

In 2009 the P&F faced financial challenges due to the postponement of our biannual fete. However, a wonderful team of fundraisers ensured that a number of other events were initiated or continued to foster community spirit and enable some fundraising. At St Bernard's we are blessed with many families who are consistently giving up their time to assist with grounds maintenance, uniform shop, canteen, and classroom needs.

The P&F President

1.3 Message from the Student Body

As school captains we are able to report, on behalf of our peers, that we enjoyed many aspects of school life in 2009:

- the introduction of the School Rules
- leading the weekly assembly
- an awesome learning opportunity in Canberra
- the Gateway program
- the Year 6 Cluster Mass
- the Young Leaders Day
- Cassie Davis' visit
- fundraising for charities and our farewell.



From the seven years of primary school we will take many special memories of our friends and teachers. We will always remember St Bernard's as a place where we were given many opportunities to learn and have fun!

The Year 6 Captains 2009



2. School Profile

2.1 Introduction

St Bernard's Catholic School was established in 1971 in the beautiful bush setting of Berowra on the northern suburbs of Sydney. The children are drawn from the surrounding suburbs of Brooklyn, Cowan and Mooney Mooney. St Patrick's Catholic School at Asquith also sits within the Ku-ring-gai Chase Catholic Parish.

St Bernard's enjoys a reputation as a centre for excellence in teaching and learning which offers a balanced, holistic curriculum in a safe and caring environment.

2009 has seen the continuation of the School Strategic Plan introduced in 2007. Following the School Review, staff members and the leadership team developed a new Strategic Plan to take the school forward to the end of 2010.

The Annual Plan for 2009 identified the implementation of particular initiatives – ICLT, Science in Primary Schools and the review of the Pastoral Care Policy. Accordingly professional learning opportunities were aligned with these goals.

Federal Government grants to fund an extensive building program (PRIDE) saw the refurbishment of the students' toilet block and the existing library into a multidisciplinary learning space. The Commonwealth Government's Building the Education Revolution grant enabled work to be started on the transformation of the administration block into two Kindergarten classrooms and the building of a new library and administration block. This work is due to be completed by the end of March 2010.

2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2009:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
101	118	7	1	219

*Language background other than English

2.3 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Enrolment Policy](#)† which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

†Copies of this policy and other policies in this report may be obtained from the Catholic Schools Office website at: <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/about/index.html> or by contacting the Catholic Schools Office.

2.4 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report details the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

- have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications
- do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:



- to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
- as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

a	b	c	Total
16	0	0	16

Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school's profile page on the *My School* website.

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2009 was 96.2%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2007/8 to 2009 was 90.9%.

2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

2009 was a 'first' for several staff with the appointment of a new Principal and Religious Education Coordinator, along with two first year classroom teachers. A survey of these staff members and reflections gathered from their mentors and supervisors indicate a high level of satisfaction within their ministry at St Bernard's.

Staff were surveyed several times throughout the year to inform critical reflection on the quality of the teaching and learning environment, including: Public Speaking initiative, structure of Release from Face to Face, and improving learning gains in Mathematics. The staff also expressed satisfaction with the programs taught by specialist staff for the study of Italian, PE, Music and Band.

All data gathered assisted the leadership team to make crucial decisions on how to move forward in 2010 and will guide the future Strategic Plan to be developed for 2011- 2014.

2.7 Student Attendance

YEAR	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	92
1	93
2	94
3	96
4	95
5	97
6	95

The average student attendance rate for the whole school for 2009 was 95%.



Management of non-attendance: In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the school's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.

The Catholic Schools Office monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system's School Review and Development processes.

2.8 Student Satisfaction

A highlight for students was the introduction of the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework which they indicated (via SRC) gave autonomy to the student body as they felt the guidelines for all students for fair and just treatment of self, others and the environment were more clearly identified. Students have responded positively to the introduction of the St Bernard's Award and take great pride in being nominated for the award.

Particular initiatives the students indicated they appreciated were: Cassie Davis' visit, greater opportunities to celebrate with St Patrick's students, the Gateway program, Chess Club, band, music, Italian and the ICLT enrichment group.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Bernard's was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1971 who were active in the school until 1985. The Mercy tradition of holistic education for life continues at St Bernard's through the demonstration of faith, hope, love and honesty in an unashamedly Catholic environment.

The *Catholic Life and Mission* goals drawn from the *Strategic Plan 2007-2010*, features of which were specifically attended to in the Annual Plan 2009, included regular and meaningful opportunities to: reflect upon and build Catholic character; participate in Ministry for Teachers 1 and 11; revise the Pastoral Care Policy resulting in the implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning framework; strengthen the links between parish and school through a more visible and vibrant role in weekend Masses; and, promote our responsibility as baptised Catholics to respond to God's call to spread His Word through our Vision of being a *welcoming community*.

Parents and students are constantly reminded of the Catholic identity and mission of the school and the expectation that they will assist in that mission, an indicator of progress in the Bishops' Pastoral Letter – "Catholic Schools At A Crossroads".

Further information on the history and heritage of our school can be found on the School's website at: www.sbbdbb.catholic.edu.au

3.2 Religious Life of the School

A strong emphasis is placed on the religious and liturgical life of the community:

- 22 children were confirmed, 34 made First Reconciliation and 34 received First Eucharist. These children were well supported through the Parish Sacramental Programme and the classroom teaching and learning opportunities of the diocesan modules
- participation in weekly parish Mass for all students
- Years 4-6 experience opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation twice annually
- weekly Staff Prayer
- the School Prayer and Song are prayed each week
- parent prayer is connected to the Liturgical Seasons of the Church
- celebrating the Sacraments, particularly when received for the first time, through the giving of a memento and acknowledgement at assembly
- prayer spaces are prominent in classrooms, offices and the foyer
- icons of St Bernard are displayed around the school

3.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and the Diocese

2009 saw the continued practice of participating in the weekend Parish Masses which involves families of each class attending together. Students and Class Parents took a more active role in assisting with the preparation for these Masses.

Families attended both the Anniversary of the Dedication of the St Bernard's Church and the outdoor Mass and movie event during September.

Parishioners joined the school for special celebrations of the Eucharist and shared morning tea immediately following these events (eg Opening School Year, Catholic Schools Week, Mother's Day, St Bernard's Feast Day, and Father's Day).



The Year 5 students from both schools combined for a Leadership Camp at Challenge Ranch in November with the Parish Priest presiding over evening Mass.

The Hey Dad camp was facilitated by both parents and parishioners and provided fathers with an opportunity to spend quality time reflecting with their children about the importance of family life in the Catholic context.

Two parents and a teacher participated in the Right of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process; these candidates were well supported by both the Parish and the School and their journey was shared with the community via newsletters, website updates.

Students participated in diocesan liturgies including Mission Mass and the Year 6 Cluster Mass.

Staff attended the Diocesan Schools Staff Mass.

3.4 Catholic Worldview

All religious activity/experience is shaped to enhance the community's understanding and love of the faith.

The Eco-spiritual garden continued to be respected as a place of quiet prayer and reflection which children and parents accessed regularly.

Social justice activities were aligned to the mission of the Church. Specific examples from 2009 include: St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal, Mission Week activities, a homelessness initiative, and Christmas appeal.

The Cassie Davis concert prompted a gathering of the Year 6 students from St Bernard's, St Patrick's and the Berowra Christian School to hear about how Jesus' message can be embraced in the secular world. Strong bonds were formed during this event and regular contact maintained throughout the year.

The Religious Education modules have proven a successful vehicle for demonstrating our responsibility as baptised Catholics to extend hospitality to others. Year 3 undertook a unit of work focused on stewardship and responded by engaging in an outreach initiative to provide local people with food, personal hygiene products and warm clothing. The students baked and sold cakes and used the funds to purchase much-needed resources for homeless men. They contacted the St Vincent de Paul who visited the School assembly to talk about importance of everyone lending a helping hand.

Parent welcoming and inclusion rituals were again a high priority in 2009. The most notable were: Tea and Tissues, Kindergarten Playgroup, Walkabout and social activities.

The Annual Christmas Appeal again funded our support for the local community and the Candela community in Lima, Peru.

Christmas Hampers were made using non-perishable donations and distributed through St Vincent de Paul.

The PBL framework which is embedded across all KLAs has given all students a greater appreciation for, and understanding of, 'made in the image and likeness of God'. All students (and their parents and teachers) are treated with respect. The ideal, 'speak the way you would like to be spoken to, act in a manner you would like people to act towards you', is promoted and nurtured across the whole community.



3.5 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a policy on the [Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

All teachers at St Bernard's are accredited to teach Religious Education with three staff members undertaking the Certificate of RE (NSW). One teacher in late 2009, decided to depth her study by opting to enrol in a Master of Arts (Theological Studies) through BBI.

Another staff member is studying a Masters of Theological Arts through the University of Newcastle and will complete this degree mid-2010. Another staff member already has a Master of Arts in Theological Studies.

Two teachers attended Ministry for Teachers I, and one teacher attended Ministry for Teachers II.

All staff participated in guided meditation led capably by Catholic Schools Office personnel.

Three staff participated in the Meditation for New Teachers twilight sessions facilitated by Education Officers-Mission Services from the Catholic Schools Office.

An Education Officer-Mission Services led professional development in modules via staff meetings and individual sessions with teachers new to the diocese.



4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Student Discipline](#) Policies which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

At St Bernard's pastoral care policies and practices are aligned to living out the mission of the Church as witnessed through the diocesan Catholic Worldview Statement.

These policies and practices are best articulated through the impact of the implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework, the St Bernard's Award, integration of Religious Education modules and liaison with outside agencies. Through practices such as these the whole community has become more aware of the impact we can have on others in drawing them to Christ.

The success of the implementation of the PBL framework has resulted in students, teachers and parents been well versed and active in ways to display a greater respect for themselves, for others, and for the community. Several initiatives have been re-energised and/or introduced including the custom of well-supported Working Bees, a higher rate of attendance at weekend Masses, a deeper generosity towards fundraising for charitable causes, and a decline in the reported incidences of bullying or un-Christian like behaviour.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Class Parents played an integral role in catering to the pastoral needs of the community. They were active in their efforts to ensure practical support for families in times of need and crisis.

A number of families were referred to the School Counsellor for intensive support. Reasons ranged from the breakdown of the family unit, death of a relative, mental health issues through to serious anxiety issues.

The Parent Program 1-2-3 Magic was offered during early Term 2 and was attended by twelve parents. A report via a survey instrument indicated it had a positive impact within their families.

The Seasons for Growth program was facilitated during Term 4. Participants of this program were spread across two groups. Parent feedback indicated a deep appreciation for the opportunity these sessions gave their children.

Several families temporarily, but intensely, felt the effects of the global recession and were supported financially by a reduction in school fees and meals were provided by the P&F.

Financial support was extended to a number of grandparents who have graciously accepted the responsibility of educating their grandchildren in a Catholic environment.

The P&F chose to support local families in need through the Christmas appeal and funds were distributed to six needy families. The remaining money was donated to a charity in Lima, Peru with which the school has a particular affiliation.

4.4 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a [Complaints Handling Policy](#) which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.



4.5 Occupational Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for OHS and complies with the Australian Standard for OHS Management Systems. The OHSMS adopted by the Catholic Schools Office for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a 'safe and supportive' environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant Catholic Schools Office personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with OHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual OHS Plan. External OHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

Early in 2009 staff undertook to re-commit themselves to the 'Beliefs about Teaching and Learning'. These beliefs are explicitly articulated through the Integrated Units of Learning which are an integral and highly valued component of the overall quality teaching and learning structure K-6.

In response to the needs identified in Years 3 and 4, a Stage 2 initiative was implemented to support students challenged in numeracy and literacy. An extra day, split over two mornings per week, was funded for a teacher to work intensively to plan with the Stage 2 teachers. Differentiated tasks, to motivate and challenge underachieving students whilst providing a positive and engaging environment, were developed. Data gathered in November 2009, using both formal and informal assessment tools, showed a significant growth in the learning gains of these students. The data identified particular areas of need which will continue to direct the planning and programming for these students in 2010.

The Clinical Assessment for Numeracy tool was identified as extremely valuable for identifying at risk students across K-4. A structure was developed to ensure those students were further assessed and their needs addressed through teaching programs. Support for accurate and refined analysis of this tool was identified as a major focus for professional learning in 2010.

The Gateway initiative supported Year 6 students whose particular talents in Mathematics and Visual Arts deemed them worthy of participating in a forum to engage in learning activities and discussions with their peers. The value of this initiative was such that it will continue into 2010 and be broadened to include students across Stage 3.

A review of the role of external facilitators for speech (elocution), piano and guitar revealed that these programs were highly valued within the community. However, a survey of parents and teachers indicated concern at the substantial amount of time spent during class time on these programs. After consultation across the community, these opportunities were moved to before and after school timeslots.

A school wide review of the initiative known as Talk Time was undertaken in Term 3 resulting in overall support for the initiative but with some modifications. The initiative was commended on the skills and confidence of students in relation to public speaking. The modifications involved adapting the program from weekly to fortnightly and developing set criteria of the skills to be taught in each grade K-6.

An ICLT enrichment group was targeted for students who demonstrated a particular talent in working with IT. These students showcased their learning in an open afternoon in Term 4.

The transition to Kindergarten program (Kindergarten Playgroup) is a joint venture between the Kindergarten teacher, Learning Support team, Principal and parent representatives. The program is facilitated over six weeks and the benefits of this program are outstanding with much positive community support for the venture.

5.2 Student Achievement

2009 was the second year of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy. Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3** students in Band 1 are working below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are working at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are working above the national minimum standard.



- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are working below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are working at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are working above the national minimum standard.
- In the 2009 cohort, there were 42 students in Year 3 and 27 students in Year 5.
- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the National Minimum Standard in that test area.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are outlined separately for Year 3 and Year 5. In Year 3, the highest band that a student can achieve is Band 6. In Year 5, the highest band that a student can achieve is Band 8.

Band Distributions (%) – Year 3

			Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	2009	School	5	10	12	5	29	40	95
		State	3	9	17	22	21	26	96
		National	4	11	18	23	20	22	94
	2008	School	0	10	14	17	28	31	100
		State	4	10	17	24	23	21	95
		National	6	12	18	23	22	18	93
Writing	2009	School	0	0	12	21	33	33	100
		State	2	5	13	29	32	19	97
		National	3	6	15	30	29	16	96
	2008	School	0	0	3	34	34	28	100
		State	2	5	13	28	31	22	98
		National	3	6	16	29	27	17	95
Spelling	2009	School	0	5	12	21	38	24	100
		State	4	7	16	24	23	25	95
		National	6	9	19	25	20	19	92
	2008	School	0	10	10	21	41	17	100
		State	3	7	16	26	25	22	96
		National	6	10	19	26	22	16	93
Grammar & Punctuation	2009	School	7	0	12	17	31	33	93
		State	4	8	13	21	24	30	95
		National	6	9	14	21	23	26	93
	2008	School	0	3	28	7	21	41	100
		State	4	9	16	24	24	23	95
		National	7	11	17	23	21	19	91
Numeracy	2009	School	7	14	12	26	17	24	93
		State	3	10	20	27	22	16	96
		National	4	12	23	27	20	12	94
	2008	School	0	7	10	28	28	28	100
		State	2	9	20	28	23	17	97
		National	3	11	23	28	21	12	95

St Bernard's Year 3 achieved solid results in both writing and spelling, with 100% of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard. This achievement is aligned in part to the intensive focus (2007-2008) on increasing learning gains in spelling and writing. Teachers' professional development focused on developing a well-structured literacy block with a specific focus on strategies associated directly with students becoming more competent spellers and writers.

In response to areas where the performance could be stronger, there has been a focus on the implementation of specific strategies to assist growth. These strategies included a review of and modifications to early intervention, diagnostic testing K-6 and intensive differentiation strategies for



some students. Staff will engage in professional learning in numeracy in 2010 to provide appropriate learning experiences that best target the needs of students to ensure growth for all individuals.

Worthy of note is that in all areas other than numeracy, more than 60% of the students performed in the top two bands.

Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

			Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	2009	School	0	4	15	15	54	12	100
		State	5	12	19	25	22	15	94
		National	7	13	21	25	21	13	92
	2008	School	3	10	17	21	14	34	97
		State	6	12	23	26	20	12	94
		National	8	14	24	26	18	9	91
Writing	2009	School	0	4	15	54	15	12	100
		State	4	10	26	33	19	8	95
		National	6	12	27	31	17	7	93
	2008	School	0	10	14	34	28	14	100
		State	4	10	24	31	20	9	95
		National	6	12	25	29	18	8	92
Spelling	2009	School	0	4	8	50	31	8	100
		State	4	10	22	26	21	15	95
		National	6	13	26	26	18	10	92
	2008	School	3	17	31	24	21	3	97
		State	5	10	22	29	22	12	95
		National	7	13	25	28	18	8	92
Grammar & Punctuation	2009	School	4	0	0	31	42	23	96
		State	5	10	18	25	22	19	94
		National	6	11	20	26	21	15	92
	2008	School	3	7	21	34	21	14	97
		State	5	10	20	26	21	16	94
		National	7	11	21	26	20	13	91
Numeracy	2009	School	0	4	27	15	27	27	100
		State	3	11	24	28	19	14	96
		National	4	14	27	28	17	8	94
	2008	School	3	17	14	28	31	7	97
		State	5	15	26	26	17	10	94
		National	6	17	29	26	14	7	93

St Bernard's Year 5 cohort achieved above the state mean in each test area.

This year 100% of students achieved at or above the national minimum standard in all areas except grammar and punctuation. The percentage of students in Bands 7 and 8 is higher than the state in each test area, demonstrating a particular strength in reading.

We look forward to this trend continuing in 2010 as we maintain our comprehensive literacy and numeracy experiences.

5.3 Extracurricular Activities

A diverse extracurricular program continued in 2009. Offerings included the Premier's Reading Challenge, Come on Kids online, Gateway initiative, choir, band, musical instrument classes, debating, and chess.

The Chess Club was again a particularly successful initiative coordinated through the time and energy of a small group of parents. The twelve students involved in the program enjoyed



commendable successes throughout the year, making it through several different levels of each of the competitions they entered.

5.4 Professional Learning

The professional learning opportunities for 2009 were captured through staff development days, participation in conferences and one day programs, staff meetings and structured conversations during some Release from Face to Face. Some of these are outlined below.

The North Shore Professional Learning Day provided teachers with many options for areas of development. Aligned to our School Annual Plan, most staff attended workshops on ICLT, Gifted and Talented, Spelling and Numeracy. Evaluations from this day indicated that teachers valued the opportunity to work with their colleagues on self-selected areas for development and growth. Staff members presented a snapshot of their learning from the day either at a staff meeting or a journal reflection.

The implementation of the Science in the Primary Years program was supported through a series of staff meetings and a staff development day, facilitated by an Education Officer-Educational Services from the Catholic Schools Office. As a result of this intensive professional learning, staff indicated a higher degree of satisfaction and confidence in the teaching of this KLA. Reflection on programming and student work samples was conducted during Term 4. This initiative was well supported financially to ensure teachers access to resources.

The PBL Team was structured relatively informally in 2009 in preparation for a full implementation of the framework in 2010. A team of six (including a parent representative) attended the two day professional learning course at the Catholic Schools Office. This opportunity, along with the foundations laid by the team, saw a very successful introduction of the School Rules and identified the need for further review of the Pastoral Care Policy which will be undertaken during 2010.

The ICLT team, in collaboration with an Education Officer-Educational Services from the Catholic Schools Office, led several professional learning opportunities, including ICLT breakfast meetings, surveys supported by individual and small group sessions to meet staff needs, and training in specific applications.

One staff member attended the Certificate of Primary Mathematics Course; five staff members have now completed this course. This professional learning experience will prove valuable for the numeracy team as they lead a major focus into 2010.

Observing best practice in other schools for New Scheme Teachers was a focus in 2009. The Kindergarten and Years 1 and 2 teachers observed more experienced and highly regarded staff from across the diocese in their classroom setting.



6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2009 Priorities and Achievements

Two significant areas identified and actioned in the 2009 Annual Plan included:

To develop an understanding of a shared pedagogical approach to the nature of the learner and the learning process.

Several strategies to achieve this goal included:

- the development of a Scope and Sequence for ICLT; needs based staff training in ICLT; purchase of one (making a total of three), and training in use of, interactive whiteboards; engaging in professional dialogue to review Integrated Units of Learning particularly with a view to maximising use of IT throughout
- the implementation of the Science in Primary Schools program which was well supported by professional learning and resources
- the development of IPs (individual programs) for each student with special needs in collaboration with a team of experienced personnel and the parents of each child. In addition, Student Review meetings were held twice each term to monitor, celebrate successes and adjust the program of each student.

Support parents as partners in the learning agenda.

Several strategies to achieve this goal included:

Meetings were held to inform and discuss reporting procedures, purpose and results of NAPLAN, orientation to kindergarten, Athletics and matters pertaining to ICLT. In addition parents were active at: weekly assemblies, Catholic Schools Week celebrations, Walkabout, Music in the Hall, Dance under the Amphitheatre and liturgies. Regular communication about school events and learning initiatives was conducted through the fortnightly newsletter.

6.2 2010 Priorities and Challenges

Priorities and anticipated challenges for 2010 include:

- The completion of the Building Project and the subsequent move into the new administration block and library. This move presents the community with opportunities for further engagement and will require generosity of time and effort across all groups within the community.
- Leading the development of the review and professional learning in Numeracy
- Continuing to foster and grow staff knowledge and skills in IT and ICLT
- The more formal implementation of the PBL framework
- The induction of several new members of the Leadership team
- The induction of several new members of the P&F Executive Team
- Immersion and consultation on the Draft Australian Curriculum involving all staff and the appropriate dissemination of this information to the parent community
- Responding to the My School website, including information based on NAPLAN data, to ensure an informed parent community.



7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

The parent community is highly valued at St Bernard's and the list below provides just a snapshot of the numerous ways in which parents are involved.

- Parents work as partners in classroom support during Literacy and Numeracy Blocks and for special educational celebration days (e.g. Asian Day, Convict Day)
- Class Parents actively inform the community about upcoming events (eg Family Portrait day, Car Boot Sale, St Vincent de Paul appeals, and special morning teas)
- The Fundraising Committee takes responsibility for organising Mother's and Father's Day Stalls
- Social events are coordinated by volunteers (e.g. Crazy Whist Night, Chefs Night, Trivia Night)
- The Canteen, Uniform Shop and Kindergarten Playgroup are staffed by parent volunteers
- All families contribute their time and energy to one Working Bee annually. These are capably organised by the parent Maintenance team
- Many parents attend the weekly assembly.

Further information about parent involvement, along with the Minutes of P&F Meetings, is posted on the website.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

The St Bernard's P&F aims to strengthen partnerships between family, school, parish and the wider community. The P&F Executive prides itself on providing appropriate opportunities to engage all members of school in the academic, sporting, pastoral and social life of the community.

Parents have indicated particular support for meetings that inform about NAPLAN and other educational initiatives; extracurricular initiatives; Parent Sharing Interviews; promotion of the use of IT as a vehicle for communication of notes and information, and social initiatives.

The staff look forward to further strengthening the parent and school partnership in 2010.

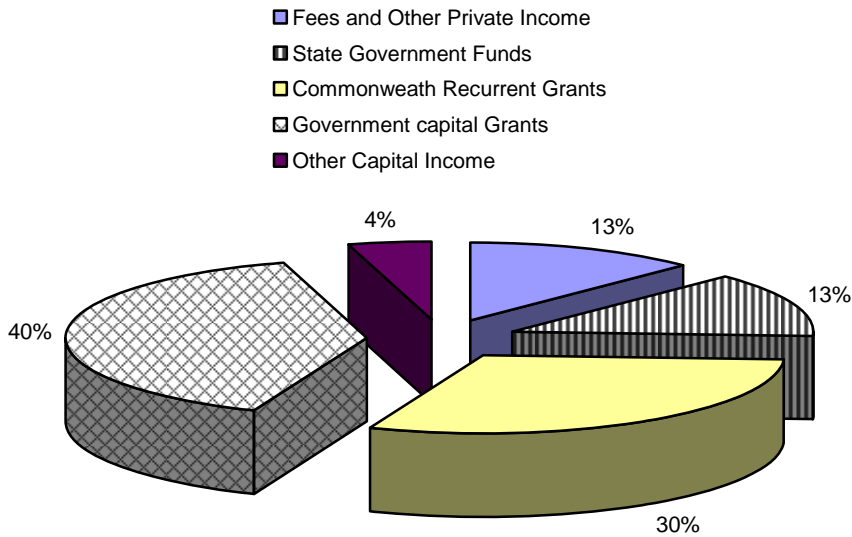


8. Financial Report

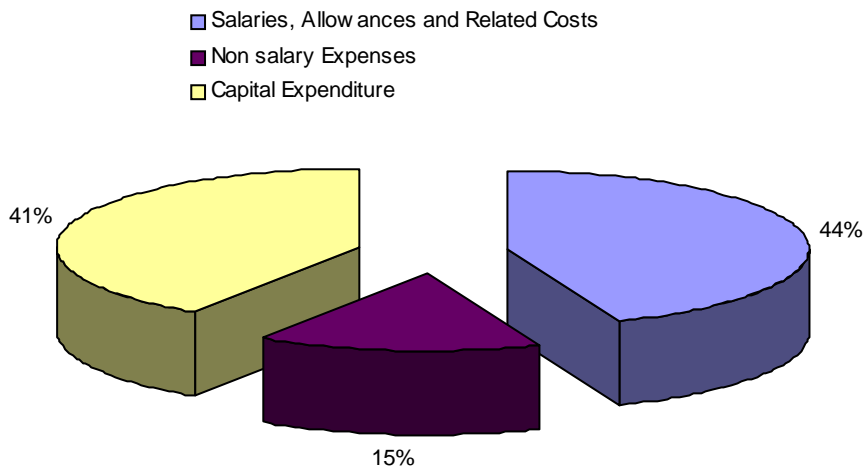
Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report at <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/resources/annrep.html>

Income



Expenditure



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the Schools Consultant, Diann Hynes.