



# St Leo's Catholic College Wahroonga

## 2008 Annual Report



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## 1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community



### 1.1 Message from the Principal

In 2008 St Leo's Catholic College continued to challenge its students, parents and staff to focus on excellence in all aspects of College life.

World Youth Day enabled our young people to have the opportunity to be immersed in their Catholic faith along with thousands of pilgrims from overseas and gave the opportunity also for them to commit themselves further to their faith as they move into adulthood.

Our commitment to fulfilling the goals of our Strategic Plan in each of the priority areas resulted in us moving closer towards to our vision of what the community wants to see in the young people who graduate from our College.

This was the sixth year of our Quality School Project and we can see our attainment of quality being achievable and attainable.

### 1.2 Message from the Parent Body

The year 2008 saw the Board continue to build upon the impetus and enthusiasm it had generated in 2007. There were numerous tasks undertaken by the Board during 2008 that assisted the College Leadership in achieving its quality teaching objectives.

Significant progress was made by the Board in contacting and welcoming new parents to the College community. The Board arranged hospitality for various College events throughout the year such as the Year 7 Parents Evening and College Open Day.

The Board revised its relevance within the College community by reviewing the Board Charter which records its governance role within the College community.

A new process to develop and implement each of the Board initiatives was also introduced. A project leader model was adopted which replaced the former sub-committee process. This enabled each Board project leader to call upon additional resources outside the Board membership. Many parents volunteered their time and expertise that no doubt aided in completing each project successfully.

The Board continued to assist in progressing research, identifying trends and formulation of policy in marketing/promotion, sustainability and parental involvement. These activities enabled the Board to seek wider community opinion and expertise in each of these areas.



The College undertook a number of improvements throughout the year to which the Board and parents gave wholehearted support. Notable items included the introduction of the SMS messaging system, the upgrading of the area outside the College Chapel, completion of shading in the main assembly area and commissioning of the water tanks.

A feature of the year's activities was to regularly inform and engage with the College community on Board activities. This was achieved by Board members attending many of the parent gatherings which occurred throughout the year and conducting an open Board meeting.

The consensus shared by the Board representatives and parents is that during 2008 the College had met performance measures to achieve its goals.

### 1.3 Message from the Student Body

The St Leo's community enjoyed another successful and productive year, as manifested in the Student Body's embracing and further development of the College's core values. Values – which are otherwise simply words until acted out - were enthusiastically seized upon and cultivated by students within and beyond the classroom.

Many successful fundraisers complemented the College's focus on faith, and non-monetary activities, in conjunction, helped spur and sustain a renewed focus on school spirit.

Beyond the academic realm of the classroom, the College upheld its annual participation in Caritas' *Project Compassion*, with greater focus this year. Turning to sport and culture, a colour house *Sporting Contest* was held during lunchtimes, stressing the importance of cooperation and teamwork. From this contest emerged winners and losers, but more so, students with new insight into the integral role a student plays within a College, and, indeed, wider society.

Students not only participated in an array of activities throughout the year, but were presented with an abundance of opportunities in leadership and supportive roles: Peer Support, SRC and student groups, with focus on the environment, justice, faith and culture which empowered students with patience, compassion and generosity. Students gave of themselves, and in doing so embraced and enjoyed the College's focus on faith, inevitably, contributing to a superb, harmonious year.





## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Introduction

St Leo's Catholic College is a coeducational Years 7 to 12 College situated on the North Shore of Sydney in the suburb of Wahroonga.

The College enjoys a fine reputation in the local community and is often commended on the friendliness and the cooperation of its student body. Students of the College are renowned for wearing the College uniform with pride.

The main feeder parishes are Asquith, Berowra, Normanhurst, Pymble, West Pymble, St Ives, Wahroonga, Waitara and Pennant Hills. While its main feeder Catholic primary schools are Our Lady of the Rosary, St Patrick's, St Bernard's, St Agatha's and Prouille, a considerable number of students come from the local Government schools at Normanhurst, Hornsby, Wahroonga and Waitara.

### 2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2008:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
357	577	155	4	934

\*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.cso.brokenbay.catholic.edu.au/resources/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
73	2	1	76



## 2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2008 was 96.6%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2007 to 2008 was 87.7%.

## 2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers at the College have an opportunity to express their views on proposed policy directions or evaluating current procedures and policies at their faculty meetings, middle manager meetings and at staff meetings.

The views of our staff are valued and assist the leadership of the College in ensuring that the direction of the College does reflect the College Strategic Plan where all views of the community are represented.

The College evaluates aspects of College life on an annual basis with teacher feedback being a key aspect.

As well as Key Learning Areas (KLA) and Year Coordinator positions, staff have the opportunity to apply for a range of organisational positions that develop the rich co-curricular life of the College and it is pleasing to see so many young staff applying for and gaining these positions.

## 2.7 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Student attendance in 2008 was 94.8%.

St Leo's data on retention rates is of interest due to the fact that the College is in an area that includes at least six independent single sex schools as well as two selective high schools and five Department of Education comprehensive schools. This results in movement to and from our College on a regular basis in a variety of year groups.

In addition, parents who come from professional backgrounds move in and out of the area depending on their job requirements as the North Shore is seen as an attractive area of Sydney in which to live.

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2006, 81% completed Year 12 in 2008 at this College.

## 2.8 Student Satisfaction

Students have a strong voice in the life of the College through our extensive student leadership program that has been extended to leadership roles in Year 9 as well as in Year 11 and 12.

At the Student Representative Council meetings the views of the student body are heard and discussed by the students and a decision as to the direction that will be taken next is made.

At forums where we ask students to speak about the College, such as prospective parent evenings, parent evenings, and primary school visits, there is an overwhelming satisfaction expressed about all aspects of College life.

## 2.9 Student Destinations

Over one third of our Year 12 students apply for and gain places at one of the universities both in the Sydney metropolitan area and in Wollongong, Newcastle or Armidale. The courses that our students access cover the full range.

The remaining students either take up traineeships or TAFE courses or go to work where they often eventually pursue tertiary courses, even as mature age students.



### **3. Catholic Life and Mission**

#### **3.1 Catholic Heritage**

St Leo's Catholic College was founded by the Christian Brothers in 1955 to provide quality Catholic education for boys in the tradition of Edmund Rice. The foundation Principal was Brother Leo Crohan. The brothers remained until 1982 with a transfer to a lay Principal, Mr Alan Brady.

The College was transferred to the Trustees of the Archdiocese of Sydney in 1983 as well as becoming co-educational with girls entering Year 11. The College is now part of the Broken Bay Diocese.

The school aims to provide quality Catholic education.

#### **3.2 Religious Life of the School**

The school year began with our opening College Mass where we welcomed our Year 7 students, new students from other years and new members of staff. The College values of Justice, Integrity, Hope, Dignity and Respect are pronounced.

At each of our whole school masses we involve the students and staff to model what it means to belong to a Catholic community.

The auditorium of Hornsby RSL in recent years has proven to be an appropriate venue for one of our most significant liturgical events.

A myriad of opportunities to be fully involved in the liturgical life of the College is provided for students during the twice weekly masses that are held in our College chapel, to the whole year group, and whole College liturgies. The liturgical life of the College reflects the Liturgical Seasons of the Church as well as moving ANZAC and Remembrance Day liturgies.

St Leo's is fortunate to have a Religious Education Team, namely the College Chaplain, the Director of Mission and the Youth Minister who are actively involved in the liturgical life of the College as well as working closely with staff in providing opportunities for them to develop their faith through our Staff Retreat Program and assisting in the pastoral care of students as required.

On various feast days and significant days in the life of the school, the College community also comes together for the celebration of the Eucharist or a Liturgy of the Word.

Prayer features strongly in the daily life of the College, initiated by staff and students at the commencement of College Assemblies, a focus within Tutor periods and at the beginning of lessons.

Community issues are shared with the College community at year assemblies and whole College assemblies with active Ministries sharing their involvement in various undertakings such as the Liturgical Life of the College, the Environment of the College, Culture and Sporting Life as well as addressing the Social Justice issues of St Vincent de Paul, through Night Patrol, Project Compassion and Christmas hampers for those in need.

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

As St Leo's College has nine feeder parishes we are often challenged as to how to become more involved in these parishes especially in light of physical distance and the fact that the College has more students from some parishes than others.

However, students from the College are involved with Our Lady of the Rosary, Waitara, due to its physical proximity by assisting with their sporting events and debating; and with St Patrick's, Asquith in a Gifted Program. In addition, the students from Our Lady of the Rosary use our bottom oval at lunch times as they are short of space. We are keen to support any parish events that require the use of our ovals.



Each of the parish priests and assistant parish priests is always welcome at our College liturgical events and participates when they are available.

### **3.4 Catholic Worldview**

As a Catholic school, St Leo's College sees quality education as an expression of the Catholic Worldview which is a little like examining everything we do through 'Catholic-tinted glasses'.

We therefore seek to offer opportunities to apply that worldview to all aspects of school life, both inside and outside the school. It is for this reason that each policy that is developed, each project that we consider, every aspect of student management, has a reference point which is our Catholic Worldview.

We continued to integrate our values into College life by ensuring all our policies articulated one or more of our values as well as focusing on one of our values at any major liturgical event.

In 2008 our teaching staff participated in a two day staff retreat where they examined their own spirituality by participating in workshops, prayer and the Eucharist.

In addition, Years 11 and 12 students attended one and a half day retreats where they examined their own spiritual journey and participated in the Eucharist.

Every College Assembly, Year meeting and Staff Development Day begins with a prayer or reflection led by staff or students.

### **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.



## 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

Our Pastoral Care Policy encompasses the areas of teaching and learning; Catholic faith; school organisation and culture and community, all underpinned by our values of Justice, Integrity, Hope, Dignity and Respect, and surrounded by our School Vision and Mission, the Catholic Worldview and the Diocesan Vision and Mission.

The National Safe Schools Framework was implemented in 2006. We are confident that we are a safe school according to Federal Government requirements.

The College has again delivered programs to students to support studying in a safe environment. For example, anti-bullying plays and workshops; Raising Responsibility Program; 'Safe Driving' educational forums and Choice Theory/Reality Therapy lessons to promote self-discipline and self-evaluation.

Annually, our staff undergo a refresher course in Child Protection as well as focussing on aspects of the OH & S Policy.

### 4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Our College Pastoral support network consists of the Director of Pastoral Care, Year Coordinators, a Youth Minister and full-time Counsellor, Director of Middle School and Director of Senior School. This team works closely with teachers, students and their families. Members of the team are trained in Choice Theory and Reality Therapy and bring a variety of expertise to assist families in our combined work with the young people in our College.

Parent evenings are held to assist parents in dealing with teenage issues, for example, understanding the psychology of their teenager, safe partying, safe driving, understanding alcohol and drugs in the life of teenagers, cyber bullying, and the potential impact of the internet on family life. At these evenings and depending on the nature of the issue, families are put in touch with outside agencies to work with them and the school in supporting their children as they overcome difficulties.

Our Youth Minister works with small groups of students who are overcoming grief or who need strategies to overcome their anger so they can gain confidence at school.

Our Director of Pastoral Care has undertaken advanced professional development in Choice Theory/Reality Therapy. Opportunities for parents to learn peaceful parenting techniques are provided by the College as well as opportunities for parents to learn more about Choice Theory and Raising Responsibility.

Our Careers Advisor also assists students in finding an appropriate vocation and arranges work experience on a one-off or regular basis for students at risk. Many of our students have taken part in TAFE courses that prepare them for part-time or full-time work.

There is open and clear communication with parents in our community so that we can work together for the benefit of our young people.

In 2008 the College took steps to embed our College values into our teaching and learning as well as being a focus in our tutor lessons. Tutor lessons focusing on goal setting, evaluation of academic performance, academic resilience, study skills and note-taking continued in 2008.



Our teaching staff continued to apply Choice Theory in the classroom as well as become more familiar with restitution in dealing with issues in and out of the classroom.

In addition, as part of our Middle schooling philosophy which focuses on the importance of students being connected to their school, Year 7 had their own base classroom in 2008 as well as all Year 7 having focused lessons on Choice Theory.

Pastoral care is now seen at our College as involving faith, teaching and learning, policies and procedures and community in a broad approach that encompasses all walks of College life.

We adopted online booking by parents for their interviews on parent/teacher nights as well as parents collecting their child's report on the parent/teacher night so that more parents could take advantage of spending time with their child's teacher.

#### 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.





## 5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

### 5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

St Leo's College offers a broad range of subject choices for students.

As St Leo's is a Catholic College, students must study Religious Education from Years 7 to 12. In Stages 4 and 5 students study the Broken Bay Diocese Religious Education Program while in Stage 6 they can choose between the Broken Bay Diocese program or the Board of Studies Syllabus courses.

The Stage 4 curriculum choice consists of the mandatory courses across the eight Key Learning Areas with students choosing between German, Italian and French in Languages.

The Stage 5 curriculum consists of the mandatory courses as well as two elective subjects from within the TAS, Creative Arts, Languages and HSIE Key Learning Areas (KLAs).

In Stage 6, students are able to construct their HSC programs around Religion and English by selecting from approximately thirty subjects across each of the Key Learning Areas, including Vocational Education and Training courses that can be studied either at school or TAFE. Students are also able to put together a selection of subjects that enable them to complete a traineeship as part of their HSC.

In Stage 5 and 6 St Leo's also offers the Life Skills range of subjects for applicable students.

The staff at St Leo's have adopted the Quality Teaching Framework which gives a clear, succinct and easily adopted approach to achieving quality teaching and learning. When quality teaching enables students to achieve outcomes in their learning it is given the title in this document of 'productive pedagogy'. Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching so when students achieve outcomes that are successful then the teaching has been successful.

The staff at St Leo's differentiate the curriculum for the students who are at each end of the learning spectrum, so those students who are gifted or who have learning disabilities are able to be catered for in the mainstream classroom.

We have continued to work in this manner in 2008 with further development and refinement taking place in our teaching, learning and assessment program so that our students experience the full range of intellectual challenge.

Our focus in 2008 has been again on evaluating our assessment tasks to ensure that they not only follow our quality teaching philosophy but also are clear and explicit for our students and are focussed on the outcomes that have been taught in the unit of work. This is ongoing work that is essential for quality learning.

We also continued to embrace the Board of Studies endorsement that within a unit of work there needs to be ongoing assessment for learning so that the teacher knows how far the learning has progressed and whether the students are ready to be successful in the assessment of learning approach.

To assist in planning, students and the families of St Leo's received an Assessment Handbook for Years 7 - 12 which clearly set out when tasks were due, what type of task it was and the outcomes that were being assessed. In addition, the break-up of marks for the semester reports was clearly defined.

Reporting to parents is based on the A-E reporting as required by the Federal Government.

Another significant initiative in 2008 was the introduction of the Understanding by Design process for program development. This process supports the quality teaching philosophy by focusing on the teaching and learning strategies within the teaching program.



## 5.2 Student Achievement

2008 was the first year of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). As a result of this new initiative, several points should be noted:

- A national minimum standard replaces the national benchmark of previous years.
- It is not possible in 2008 to provide comparisons with previous years' data.
- Students who were exempted from a test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.
- In the 2008 cohort, there were 160 students in Year 7 and 167 students in Year 9.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables where band distributions and percentages of students achieving the national minimum standard are outlined separately for Year 7 and Year 9. In Year 7, the highest band that a student can achieve is Band 9. In Year 9, the highest band that a student can achieve is Band 10.

### Year 7 band distributions and % of students at or above national minimum:

		Band 4 (-) %	Band 5 %	Band 6 %	Band 7 %	Band 8 %	Band 9 (+) %	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	School	1.0	6.0	21.0	35.0	25.0	12.0	99.0
	National	4.6	14.1	27.5	27.9	16.9	7.7	94.2
<b>Writing</b>	School	3.0	5.0	38.0	29.0	19.0	7.0	97.0
	National	6.9	13.8	26.4	26.8	16.0	8.8	91.8
<b>Spelling</b>	School	3.0	5.0	18.0	36.0	30.0	9.0	97.0
	National	6.4	12.0	24.5	29.2	18.7	8.0	92.4
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	School	5.0	9.0	20.0	32.0	27.0	8.0	95.0
	National	7.2	15.4	27.5	26.3	15.5	7.0	91.6
<b>Numeracy</b>	School	1.0	7.0	21.0	28.0	27.0	17.0	99.0
	National	3.4	14.6	25.8	26.0	17.2	11.7	95.4

It is pleasing to note that in all test areas the percentage of students achieving at or above the national minimum significantly exceeds the national figures. It is very pleasing to note that in all test areas the numbers of students in the lower bands are significantly lower than the national figures. This indicates that the current approach to intervention and in-class support for students at risk is working effectively.

### Year 9 band distributions and % of students at or above national minimum:

		Band 5 (-) %	Band 6 %	Band 7 %	Band 8 %	Band 9 %	Band 10 %	% at or above national minimum
<b>Reading</b>	School	3.0	10.0	27.0	32.0	21.0	7.0	97.0
	National	5.9	17.6	29.2	26.2	14.4	5.5	92.9
<b>Writing</b>	School	8.0	19.0	16.0	35.0	15.0	8.0	92.0
	National	11.6	18.5	26.1	21.9	12.8	8.0	87.2
<b>Spelling</b>	School	7.0	10.0	28.0	27.0	22.0	6.0	93.0
	National	9.1	15.3	26.2	27.0	15.6	5.7	89.7
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	School	7.0	10.0	33.0	26.0	17.0	7.0	93.0
	National	8.9	19.5	28.5	24.4	12.7	4.8	89.9
<b>Numeracy</b>	School	4.0	10.0	26.0	36.0	15.0	10.0	96.0
	National	5.2	18.0	28.2	25.3	14.4	7.6	93.6



As is the case with Year 7 the percentage of students achieving at or above the national minimum is higher than the national percentage in every area. It is very pleasing to note that in all test areas, the percentage of students in the lower bands is significantly lower than the national figures. This indicates that the current approach to intervention and in-class support for students at risk is working effectively. These figures indicate that support for students at risk is enabling them to develop the necessary skills in literacy and numeracy. In 2009 a whole school literacy focus will be introduced in Years 7 to 10 to further enhance the curriculum outcomes with a view to improving student achievement at all levels.

### School Certificate

It is pleasing to note that in all School Certificate tests the College cohort achieved means higher than the State.

Students at St Leo's Catholic College sat for English Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Australian History and Australian Geography in the School Certificate external tests, and CST10.

It was observed that 49 students (approximately 35.5% of the 139 students) gained 81 performances at the highest state benchmark across the six School Certificate tests.

### School Certificate means, 2004-08:

		English Literacy	Maths	Science	Civics, Citizenship & Australian History	Civics, Citizenship & Australian Geography	CST
<b>2008</b>	School	78.62	72.81	77.09	73.08	76.91	84.11
	State	76.63	70.67	73.61	70.58	73.52	80.71
<b>2007</b>	School	78.37	72.19	78.67	75.20	77.87	81.78
	State	74.76	69.38	73.48	72.14	74.60	80.28
<b>2006</b>	School	77.47	69.53	75.44	70.60	77.31	82.04
	State	74.10	67.87	72.85	71.00	74.37	80.55
<b>2005</b>	School	75.73	71.52	76.55	73.63	74.14	NA
	State	73.14	71.01	74.57	73.59	72.76	NA
<b>2004</b>	School	77.09	74.15	78.74	72.68	75.23	NA
	State	73.95	71.09	74.10	70.78	72.65	NA

This compares favourably to the 2007 College cohort results where 45 students (28% of 160 students) gained 90 performances at the highest benchmark across the five School Certificate subjects.

The College will continue to challenge its students to improve the results.

### Higher School Certificate

The 2008 Higher School Certificate results were significantly higher than those of 2007.

There were 50 entries in the Distinguished Achiever's list and more than 30 students achieved a UAI of 80 or more with the highest UAI being 95.2.

Distinguished Achiever's List:

2002	49
2003	53
2004	43
2005	49
2006	72
2007	28
2008	50



The College cohort's mean was higher than the State mean in the following subjects:

Biology; Community & Family Studies; Construction Examination; Design & Technology;  
Earth & Environmental Science; Economics; English (Standard); English (Extension 1);  
English Extension 2; Hospitality Examination; IT Examination; General Mathematics; Physics;  
Senior Science; Studies of Religion (2 Unit); Society & Culture; Visual Arts.

In terms of the 2008 College cohort 28 students (19% of the 148 candidates) accumulated a total of 50 performances at the highest state benchmark across 15 courses:

Biology; Community & Family Studies; Design & Technology; Earth & Environmental Science;  
Economics; English (Advanced); English (Extension 1); English (Extension 2); General Mathematics;  
Mathematics (Extension 1); Personal Development, Health & PE; Society & Culture;  
Studies of Religion I; Studies of Religion II; Visual Arts.

### 5.3 Extracurricular Activities

Throughout the year, musical soirees and ensemble evenings were held enabling students to perform for parents and friends. The symphonic, stage and concert bands performed at music festivals and at College and community events.

Our Debating and Public Speaking teams had a very rewarding and successful year with our senior teams going through to the elimination rounds and the Year 11 team runners up in the Sydney Metropolitan area. Teams were entered in Hornsby Council's Great Debate and the Macquarie University Schools' competitions.

Students in Years 7 to 10 participated in a developmental Outdoor Education Program which helps them increase their outdoor skills. Year 7 went to Myuna Bay with the theme of the camp 'Getting to Know You'. Year 8 ventured to the Outdoor Learning Centre at Colo River where they camped out for three nights. Year 9 explored Positive Relationships during their camp at Meroo Christian Life Centre, Kurrajong and Year 10 combined outdoor activities with a Leadership Program at the Elanora Heights Centre.

### 5.4 Professional Learning

In 2008 teachers accessed the range of professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Schools Office of Broken Bay as well as being involved in activities provided by professional associations and international speakers.

This complemented the full range of opportunities provided by St Leo's College:

- Choice Theory/Reality Therapy/Lead Management basic week and more advanced courses for interested staff
- Four day conference on Understanding By Design by two leaders who then proceeded to share this knowledge with KLA Coordinators
- Professional learning teams that met when students left early once a fortnight. The topics were: Self-Directed Learning; Brain-Based Learning; Quality Teaching Framework; Project for Enhancing Effective Learning (PEEL) and Gender Education
- IT Workshops: various software understanding; My Classes; Web 2 Technology
- Staff meetings were seen as opportunities for professional learning and thus involved 'show and tell' from the professional learning teams; snippets to assist in the understanding of Choice Theory/Reality Therapy and literacy hints



- Faculty Workshops and meetings
- Assessment Evaluation and Planning Workshops.

Each member of St Leo's, including Teachers Aides, are involved in a number of professional learning sessions during the course of the year.

The average expenditure on professional learning, per teacher, in 2008 was \$1,417.





## 6. Strategic Initiatives

### 6.1 2008 Priorities and Achievements

Our Strategic Plan was developed in 2006 and had its first year of implementation in 2007. Our Plan has three Priority Areas with Priority Area 2 being the lynchpin for the other two areas. Under each of the major areas we have a number of major projects which are ongoing each year and may have an additional focus from the year before. These are contained in the Annual Management Plan.

#### ***Priority Area 1: Implementing Quality Learning Platforms***

We embarked on our one-to-one laptop trial for one of our Year 7 classes as outlined in the 2007 Annual School Report. This trial resulted in increased learning outcomes and motivation for this class above what was common for the other classes in Year 7. We continued inservicing our new staff in Choice Theory/Reality Therapy as well as demonstrating how they could integrate these approaches into their classroom teaching; and moved further towards improving on College spirit by acknowledging our high achievers in all areas in a variety of ways.

The major projects for 2008 were:

- again, a focus on learning by providing a range of professional learning opportunities for our staff to assist them in trying different strategies to enable our students to achieve at the highest academic level (professional learning teams, Understanding by Design approach, coding of assessment tasks using the Quality Teaching Coding)
- demonstrating to staff how they could develop positive relationships in their classrooms by utilising internal psychology strategies
- the introduction of a Student Recognition System that acknowledged excellent performance on assessment tasks and students who performed their work with diligence resulting in increased level of achievement
- our Literacy Project that provided for support of those students who were below the national benchmarks in their levels of literacy as well as equipping our teachers to address areas of literacy with which students struggle
- our Academic Mentoring program to support our Year 12 students.

#### ***Priority Area 2: Authentic Catholic Faith***

We fulfilled our goals of ensuring our young people are strong in their Catholic faith, participating in Social Justice activities and parish activities through developing our Senior Retreat programs in response to the faith needs of our seniors as well as ensuring that our Reflection Days address the themes of discipleship, prayer and liturgy. Our young people were fully involved in World Youth Day activities and also in the Broken Bay Youth Lighthouse Festival. World Youth Day activities resulted in many St Leo's students being involved in both parish events and the wider events offered for both local and overseas pilgrims.

Our College Ministries were developed as a result of aligning all our activities into the four councils that were renamed 'Ministries'. Our College Leaders took leadership of each of these Ministries. Our Staff Spirituality program focussed on the theme of pilgrimage which was interwoven in all aspects of College life.

We did further integrate the work of these ministries into the House System and involved the Student Representative Council in promoting these activities as well as supporting our pilgrims and those who were involved in World Youth Day to become more involved in their local parishes. In addition, we continued to strive to ensure that our Senior Retreats and our Reflection Days are relevant to both the faith journey of our young people and to their interest levels.



### **Priority Area 3: A Responsive and Dynamic Resourced Environment**

In 2008 we introduced the concept of a Middle and Senior School without, however, any structural changes; that divide students. The integration of more IT into our classrooms has resulted in increased motivation for boys. We focused on completing the refurbishment of the area outside the Chapel as well as the Art Rooms and completing a deck outside the IT Centre. Additional data projectors were installed in classrooms and we continued to upgrade our IT infrastructure as well as ensuring additional access to IT for teachers.

We continued to offer professional development opportunities, not only on the use of IT software, but also how to integrate IT into our teaching and assessment. This professional development complemented our professional learning teams as well as our subject specific and whole school platform professional learning.

## **6.2 2009 Priorities and Challenges**

We will continue to utilise data to inform our teaching and learning for each year group that sits for external tests. In addition, we will introduce a formal section in our Tutor program for each year group to evaluate their learning goals, set new learning goals, and evaluate our yearly exams. This will enable students to use results to better understand their learning.

We will continue to take forward our two College platforms of Intellectual Quality and Quality Relationships. They will be used as a measure for any new initiatives as well as developing whole College approaches to all aspects of teaching and learning.

Our one-to-one laptop initiative will be expanded to the entire Year 7 cohort and perhaps into Year 8 with the appropriate support for teachers and the protocols in place that worked so well for the trial in 2008.

We will continue to align our Ministries with student leadership and provide opportunities for our young people to be more fully involved with their local parish and in the wider local area.

Our focus will turn to developing a feeling of Belonging for our Middle School students with the possibility of expanding the Year 8 House System into a whole College House System and linking it to our College ministries.

This development of College spirit has been an area we have been with for a number of years.





## 7. Parent Participation

### 7.1 Introduction

The College has moved into a new era with regard to parent participation and has moved away from the traditional model with parent participation being gauged by the number of parents who are involved in fund-raising activities of the school. Our view of parent participation is that parents participate in the life of the College when they are taking an interest in the academic and co-curricular involvement of their child in College life, when they come to parenting evenings, when they come to activities that involve their children (e.g. PAWS evenings, assemblies, special masses, drama nights) and when they contact the College for more information on the progress of their child.

Our College Board involves a small number of parents who are actively involved in ensuring that the Strategic Plan of the College is driving the annual goals in the area of community life and it is their hospitality that is a sign of the welcoming atmosphere that predominates.

### 7.2 Parent Satisfaction

In addition to the Curriculum evenings held at the College there are many other opportunities for parents to be involved in College life above and beyond the support they give to their child in aiming to achieve his/her academic personal best.

Parenting evenings that focussed on teenage issues, safe partying, safe driving, technology, alcohol and drugs drew large numbers of parents. Special masses for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Catholic Schools Week, College Masses, and the Opening College Mass also drew large numbers of parents from all year groups.

Other evenings such as the soirees, PAWS evenings, drama evenings and Year 12 Major Works evenings also drew large numbers of parents. At many of these events there was a welcome cup of tea/coffee and slices hosted by the parents of the Board and an additional opportunity was created for interaction between parents.

In addition, the SMS system that communicates to parents regarding events of which they need to be reminded assists in the communication process, as does the use of emails which all complement the traditional Parent Newsletter.

Parents do feel informed of College events, do feel welcomed to the College and do feel that they will be directed to the appropriate person who will respond to them at their earliest possible time.





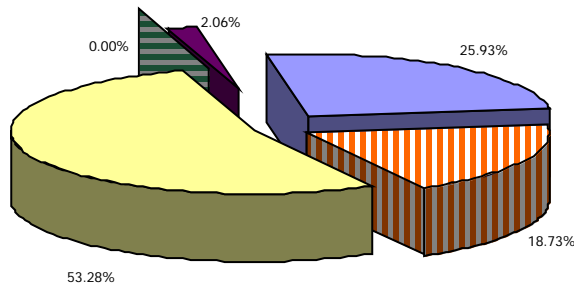
## 8. Financial Report

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.

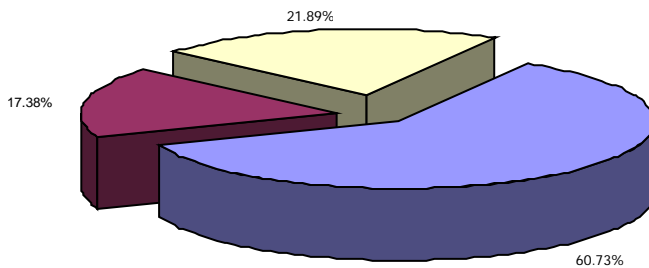
### Income

- Fees and Other Private Income
- State Government Funds
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants
- Government Capital Grants
- Other Capital Income



### Expenditure

- Salaries, Allowances and Related Costs
- Non salary Expenses
- Capital Expenditure



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School's consultant, Michael Slattery.