

2014 Annual School Report

St Brigid's Primary School, Raymond Terrace



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About the Annual School Report

St Brigid's Parish School is registered by the Board of Studies as a member of the Catholic system in the Dioceses of Maitland-Newcastle. The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2014 and gives information about 2014 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the [Schools Assistance Act, 2008](#).

The information in this Report is complemented by the school website where other school publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained from the school.

Messages from Key School Bodies

Principal

It is with pleasure I present the 2014 Annual Report for St Brigid's Parish School, Raymond Terrace. This report is an overview of the achievements and activities during the past year.

St Brigid's Parish School has a proud history of educational continuity and tradition, serving the community of Raymond Terrace and beyond since 1890. The school is housed on a site mixed with heritage listed and modern buildings. These buildings are surrounded by a garden setting.

St Brigid's Parish School is a Catholic co-educational Year K-6 systemic school in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Our Catholic identity is the foundation of all we aim to achieve. At St Brigid's we try to nurture every child towards achieving their full potential, recognising that education is a life-long process. This is spelt out in our Vision Statement.

During 2014 the culture of St Brigid's Parish School continued to evolve. The partnership between home and school was healthy and very visible. The attitude of students to 'do our best' was evident in all aspects of school life. These attitudes and desire to do well have contributed greatly to St Brigid's excellent reputation in the Port Stephens community.

Throughout 2014 St Brigid's Parish School has had close and frequent ties with the local parish. This relationship through liturgies and assemblies acknowledge this positive partnership.

The parent body, particularly the P&F Association, continued to support St Brigid's. Their support made educational projects a reality.

The staff of St Brigid's were again the driving force behind the excellence and improvements this year. Their passion and commitment to Catholic Education at St Brigid's is very noticeable and appreciated.

This document is a summary of a self-evaluation of St Brigid's for 2014.

Parent Body

2014 has been another very busy and very successful year, I don't know about you but it seems like only yesterday we were welcoming in new members and putting together a plan of attack.

I would like to thank you all for your efforts, I would like to thank the new faces that put their hand up to fill spots on the committee I hope you enjoyed it. I also thank the more experienced (didn't say old) hands for going around again. To me it is a great indicator of the healthy state of our P&F that we do have people willing to come back again and again and again and again.

As a group we have accomplished a lot and as result been able to support and make improvements to our wonderful school that will live on well beyond the final bell for the year. The fans in the hall which cost in excess of \$20000 and I have been told make a huge difference are a direct result of all your hard work and organisation and you all deserve a big round of applause.

Not that it is all about money, but to raise the amount that we have in a non-Spring Fair year is amazing. We have had many successes throughout the year:

- We had another successful disco and now have a good template in place to ensure the success of all future discos
- The Mother's day and Father's day stalls were a great success, thanks to Jane and company for everything there.

But I don't think anyone predicted how well the Grandparent's day and the Movie night would go. The Movie Night in particular was a huge undertaking and our major fundraiser for the year and an incredible success, so to Helen Page and all those involved a big congratulations on a job very well done.

While I'm thanking people, this will be my last year in the P&F as my youngest is off to High School. I would like to say thanks to you all for not just your hard work, but for the love you put into it and for the fun and relaxed way in which you have got things done.

You have made my job very easy, I just turn up and chair a meeting once a month (most months thanks Susan) and help out a bit. You guys are the driving force and should be very proud of yourselves for what you have done over the last few years.

A special thanks to Kristen, and Jo for her years as Treasurer, and thanks again to David and the Staff for being so easy to deal with.

I have met some great people, made some very good friends and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of St Brigid's P&F.

Brett Davison

Student Body

The school parliament consists of twelve (12) Year 6 children who have an individual focus around St Brigid's. The areas of focus are Technology, Environment, Sport, Health & Welfare, Fundraising & Entertainment, and Communication. The school parliament as well as other Year 6 students carried out various civic responsibilities such as conducting assemblies, attending official functions, and welcoming visitors.

The school parliament of St Brigid's supports the Principal and teachers, providing a link between the staff and students, and setting a good example.

Who We Are

History of the School

The first Catholic school was built in Raymond Terrace in 1850. In 1890 St Brigid's was then established and administered by the Singleton Sisters of Mercy. Since that time extensions to the building site took place in 1920 and then a major building development of five classrooms occurred in the 1950's.

During the 1990's the school was further developed and expanded due to the area demand for Catholic education. During 2010 the relocation of classes from the hall side to the church side was completed. The new hall was completed early 2011.

The foundation stones of the first Catholic school are preserved in a wall in the current school library.

Location/Drawing Area

St Brigid's is a co-educational K-6 Systemic Primary School in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. We service the community of Raymond Terrace and Port Stephens. The school is housed in a garden setting with many open playgrounds. The buildings are a mixture of heritage listed and modern designs.

Characteristics of the Student Body

The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

LBOTE*	SWD*	Indigenous
37	43	25

*Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE); Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Religious Dimension and Culture of School Life

Catholic Identity

St Brigid's School was founded by the Sisters of Mercy. Their faithful commitment to Catholic Education in Raymond Terrace and its surrounds has provided us with the rich heritage of which we are very proud. Even though the demographic of the school population has changed much over the years, grandchildren and great grandchildren of our pioneering families are attending St Brigid's today. The stained glass window from the former convent chapel has pride of place in the new school hall. This year we are celebrating the 165th anniversary of the school opening. We will be holding various events to highlight this occasion.

The School as part of Parish and Diocesan Life

St Brigid's has continued to have a rich liturgical life. The school year began with our opening school liturgy. New students, parliamentarians, staff and parents were welcomed and blessed for the journey throughout the year. Our school theme for 2015 is *Remember My Love*. This theme was chosen to incorporate our school's 165th anniversary as well as the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli.

At our whole school liturgies we involve the students, parents, parishioners and staff to share what it means to belong to a Catholic community.

On various feasts and significant days in the life of the school, the community comes together to celebrate. Teachers work together with the Religious Education Coordinator to plan liturgies that occur regularly throughout the term. In 2014 the school celebrated often as a faith community, and these celebrations included the Opening School Liturgy, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Harmony Day, Holy Week, Easter, St Mary MacKillop, Catholic Schools Week, Mission Week, the Gifting Mass, Year 6 Farewell, and the Closing School Liturgy. Our ANZAC Day liturgy has particular meaning as parents at our school are involved in active military service overseas.

Representatives from Year 6 attended the Diocesan Mission Mass and Catholic Schools Week Mass. Students in Year 4 to 6 attended Friday morning Mass with the parish on a regular basis.

One way to achieve our goal of strengthening school, parish and community links with parents is through the promotion and encouragement of greater participation at school liturgical celebrations.

Parents were encouraged to join their children for class Masses and the Liturgy of the Word throughout the year.

During 2015 St Brigid's School continued to strengthen our links with the St Brigid's Parish by being involved in weekend liturgies. Each grade help coordinate a Sunday liturgy. These liturgies allow for families from the school to celebrate with the wider parish community.

Prayer features strongly in the daily life of St Brigid's. Each day we gather as a whole school to pray our school's morning and afternoon prayers. Class prayer is creative and features formal, informal and meditative prayer experiences. In 2014 the Family Prayer Kits were introduced. Each week a student has the opportunity to take home the prayer kit. It contains suggestions for family prayer and action.

Each class has produced a class prayer cloth; this provides a special focus for class prayer and school liturgical celebrations. Staff gathers each Friday morning for shared prayer, which is a highlight of the week and an opportunity to listen and share.

Teaching of Religion

Religion is taught daily through a wide variety of strategies such as dance, drama, research group work (incorporating information technology), art and music. Teaching and learning in Religious Education at our school follows the Diocesan Guidelines. The teaching programs are based on the Diocesan Units of Work. Consistent with other subjects within the curriculum, the program is outcomes-based and seeks to ensure a breadth and depth of content from Kindergarten to Year 6. The Stage Three students began working with the trial units.

The Year 5 students were involved in a leadership day. This day involved the training for the Mighty Mate Program.

Retreats and Faith Development Programs

During 2014 the staff attended a spirituality day which was initiated by the CSO Religious Education Team. The weekly staff prayer reflection held each Friday morning, allowed for group prayer and discussion.

Values and initiatives to promote respect and responsibility

Raising the awareness of the needs of others is an important aspect of our response to the Gospel. Social justice perspectives are developed through:

- Project Compassion
- St Vincent de Paul Gifting Mass
- St Vincent de Paul Competition
- International Children's Day Concert/Mission Day
- Participation in 'You Can Do It' Program
- Mighty Mates Programme
- Catholic Mission Partners

The 'Seasons for Growth' program was once again conducted successfully by a team of staff members. The aim of this program is to give children a chance to understand their grief, which might be a result of the loss of a family member through death, divorce, or separation.

Policies

Enrolment Policy

St Brigid's Parish School follows the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office *Enrolment Policy 2013*. This Enrolment Policy has been devised in order to accommodate the needs of families seeking a Catholic education. It aims to set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices and assist the system of Catholic schools to provide schooling, where possible, for all Catholic children who seek enrolment, cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources and to encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Copies of the Policy are available from the school, or from the Catholic Schools Office website. Parents concerned about school fees should ensure they make contact with the school. Diocesan provisions (including standard discounts for those with a Health Card) exist to help in this area, and the Principal can also exercise discretion where genuine need exists.

Student Welfare

Our approach at St Brigid's is basically to be proactive rather than reactive. We base our policies and procedures around Restorative Justice which focuses on 'Rights, Rules, Responsibilities and Routines'. The children in each grade develop their own rules and responsibilities from these. As well, we have the 'You Can Do It' programme with the key concepts of confidence, communication, getting along, and persistence reinforced. We also have various awards, reward days and stickers to help motivate the children each day. The underlying concept to all these programmes is building resilience in the child.

With approximately 10% defence families at St Brigid's, the Defence Force Transition Assistance programme has continued which allows the smooth transition of Defence Force families into the school and community life.

Discipline

During 2014 the 'Warning Slip' programme was continued and revised. This programme directly impacts on negative behaviour. Fundamentally, it is to track the behaviour of children both frequency and specific area of concern. If a child receives 2/3 warning slips, parents are contacted, then if a child receives 5 warning slips, they are placed on a Level 2 contract which monitors the child over one week. We also have a Level 3 contract for more serious incidences.

At St Brigid's we hope the discipline fostered at this school is an extension of what is expected at home, and we encourage our parents to support it. Parents are welcome to view our discipline policies in the school library and obtain copies from the administration office.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers. St Brigid's Parish School *Anti-Bullying Policy* is reviewed regularly and is available on the school website.

Complaints and Grievances

St Brigid's has an open and transparent policy relating to complaints or grievances. Many of the concerns of parents are dealt with at class teacher level.

More serious concerns are dealt with by the Assistance Principal or Principal. The Principal in conjunction with the Child Protection Unit at the Catholic Schools Office deals with those issues that come under the jurisdiction of the Child Protection Legislation. Parents are welcome to view our Complaints and Grievances policy in the school library and obtain copies from the Administration office.

Student Achievements

Academic Achievements

During 2014 St Brigid's continued participation in the 'State Action Plan Literacy and Numeracy' program. This program enabled St Brigid's to have a greater focus on the intervention support with Literacy and Numeracy. This focus has been Years K-6.

The NAPLAN testing has given St Brigid's a clear indication of the students' strengths and weaknesses. Results are studied by staff and modifications are made in the daily teaching of students.

The Learning Support Teachers, and the Teaching and Learning Team support staff to assist all children to reach their academic potential.

St Brigid's also actively encourage students' participation in educational competitions such as the University of NSW and Newcastle Permanent competitions. Many students were awarded certificates to acknowledge their achievements.

The school debating team were Regional Debating winners and runners up in the Maitland-Newcastle Debating Competition.

School Academic Priorities

Priority	Steps taken to achieve the priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set explicit goals to address areas of weaknesses identified by NAPLAN data and other measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Match student achievement to aspects of the literacy and numeracy continuum.Review current practices in literacy and numeracy and restructure using Tiering 1, 2, 3 formula.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implementation of intervention strategies in the early years and at key transition periods for underachieving students and students at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review current assessment schedule and provide a clear timeline and expectations for testingEstablish 11 week cycle of monitoring students at risk.Use of tracking proforma.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide ongoing professional learning to develop a Balance Literacy Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use of literacy continuum for planning and assessing.PD of staff in Modelling to students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review school timetables, routines and procedures to minimise disruptions to teaching/learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Audit current practices and make necessary adjustments to place increased importance on Literacy and Numeracy competence.

Performance in National Testing

National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 2014

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs. The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The school results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN Program 2014 - Year 3 Percentage in Skill Band						
		Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Writing	Numeracy
Band 6 and Above	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	24.2%	13.1%	39.3%	8.2%	11.5%
	<i>National Performance</i>	24.5%	21.1%	27.4%	11.4%	14.6%
Band 5	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	22.6%	31.1%	24.6%	39.3%	37.7%
	<i>National Performance</i>	21.7%	22.6%	22.5%	27.7%	21.6%
Band 4	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	17.7%	29.5%	13.1%	14.8%	14.8%
	<i>National Performance</i>	22.5%	23.2%	21.6%	29.8%	27.2%
Band 3	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	17.7%	14.8%	8.2%	23.0%	24.6%
	<i>National Performance</i>	16.2%	16.2%	14.6%	17.9%	21.2%
Band 2	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	16.1%	8.2%	11.5%	9.8%	9.8%
	<i>National Performance</i>	8.6%	9.5%	7.5%	7.0%	10.0%
Band 1	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	1.6%	3.3%	3.3%	4.9%	1.6%
	<i>National Performance</i>	4.5%	5.3%	4.4%	4.2%	3.4%

NAPLAN Program 2014 - Year 5 Percentage in Skill Band						
		Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Writing	Numeracy
Band 8 and Above	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	9.6%	5.7%	9.4%	1.9%	3.8%
	<i>National Performance</i>	14.6%	12.0%	16.4%	3.6%	8.8%
Band 7	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	15.4%	18.9%	18.9%	11.3%	3.8%
	<i>National Performance</i>	19.9%	21.6%	20.2%	11.9%	17.1%
Band 6	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	23.1%	24.5%	17.0%	18.9%	25.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	26.0%	27.2%	25.1%	30.0%	27.7%
Band 5	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	17.3%	41.5%	22.6%	37.7%	36.5%
	<i>National Performance</i>	21.3%	20.8%	20.1%	31.1%	26.4%
Band 4	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	23.1%	5.7%	24.5%	18.9%	25.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	11.2%	11.1%	10.9%	13.7%	13.5%
Band 3	St Brigid's Primary School Raymond Terrace	11.5%	3.8%	7.5%	11.3%	5.8%
	<i>National Performance</i>	5.1%	5.3%	5.2%	7.7%	4.6%

Cultural Achievements

During 2014 the children participated in a variety of excursions and incursions. These had a direct link to the learning outcomes being taught in the classrooms.

The school choir performed at special occasions around the Raymond Terrace community.

Sporting Achievements

During 2014 St Brigid's participated in various sport competitions and knockouts. St Brigid's is proud of the varied opportunities it can provide the children. Our aim is to allow maximum participation and combine this with good nutrition as a way of life.

The 'Before School' morning sport programme continued and was extended from traditional summer/winter sports to other movement disciplines.

The school had student representation at Regional, Diocesan and Polding levels in many sports.

Other Highlights for 2014

St Brigid's continued to expand its banks of class computers. The purchase of 30 tablets and 40 iPad increased greatly the classroom computer banks. The purchase of 2 sets of classroom furniture freshened the appearance of Grade 6.

Staff

Staff Qualifications

Qualifications and Experience	Number of Staff	
I. Teachers with teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).	28	
II. Teachers with qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by NOOSR but lacking formal teaching qualifications		
III. (a) Teachers not having qualifications as described in I or II above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context	(a)	(b)
III. (b) Of these which are New Scheme Teachers.		

Workforce composition

Number of Staff	
Total teaching staff	28
Total non-teaching staff	14
Grand total	42

Percentage of teachers who are Indigenous	0
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Professional Learning Undertaken

During 2014 the staff of St Brigid's were involved individually, and whole school professional development. These included:

- School Review Document
- National Curriculum – English K-10
- Spirituality retreat
- ICT training
- Child Protection
- CPR/Emergency Care
- State Attack Plan inservice
- Count Me In Too
- Focus on Reading
- MiniLit
- National Curriculum – Maths K-6
- Literacy/Numeracy Continuum
- Balanced Literacy Block

Teacher Attendance

The average teacher attendance rate for this schools is 93%.

Teacher Retention

The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 100%.

Enrolments

Actual Enrolments 2014

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
Kindergarten	61
Year 1	81
Year 2	48
Year 3	62
Year 4	46
Year 5	55
Year 6	57
TOTAL	410

Student Attendance

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2014:

Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	School Average
95	94	95	95	94	94	94	94

Managing non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents and guardians, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The compulsory schooling age is 6 to 17. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act (1990) the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation. The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including student and parent interviews, reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program, development of a school-based attendance improvement plan, referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies and support from school - based personnel. If a range of school - based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Catholic Schools Office.

Annual School Priorities

Priority	Steps taken to achieve the priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none">State Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All children K-6 Tiered 1, 2, 3Tracking using Literacy and Numeracy ContinuumReview K-6 Assessment ScheduleDevelop balanced Literacy Programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Purchase 40 iPad for Kinder and Year 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Playground Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Upgrade drainage on infants playground
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hall improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Installation of ceiling fans in school hall

Community Satisfaction

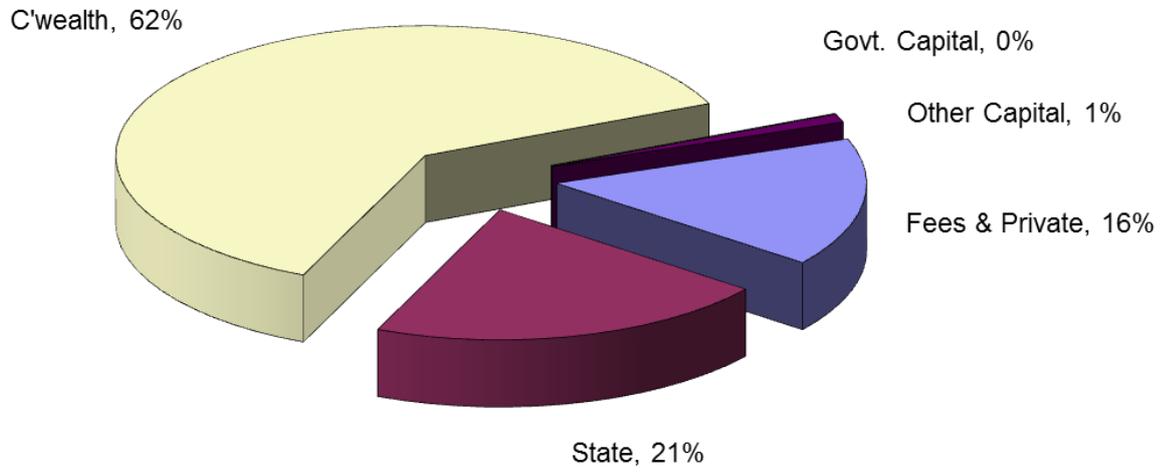
St Brigid's School had another productive year. The community perception is very affirming with enrolments strong. St Brigid's is a highly regarded school in the Raymond Terrace area. Specific areas highlighted:

- The clear Catholic identity
- Consistent and well managed pastoral care procedure
- Friendly, safe school
- Caring environment
- High expectations with teaching and learning
- Beautiful, well equipped school

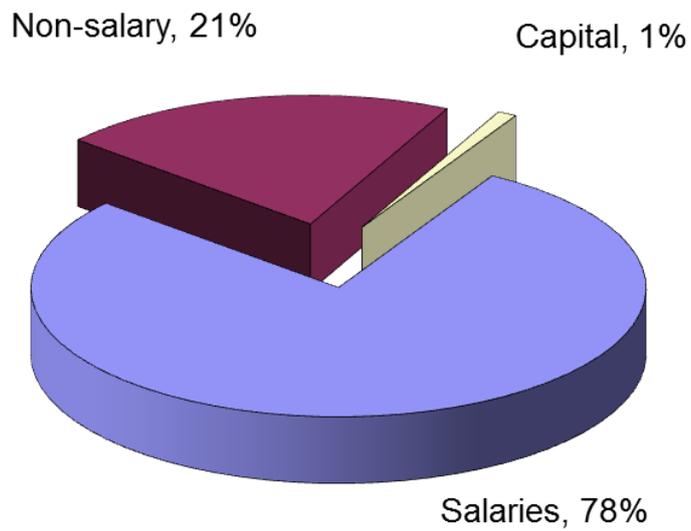
Financial Information

The following graphs represent the income and expenditure for St Brigid's Primary School, Raymond Terrace for the school year ending 31 January 2015 as aggregated from the annual returns to the Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training.

Recurrent & Capital Income



Recurrent & Capital Expenditure



Concluding Statement

St Brigid's has had another great year, probably highlighted by the very affirming report given from the 3 day whole school review. St Brigid's School plant is in great shape, the public perception is excellent and the quality work delivered by staff is best practice.

I would like to thank Father Kevin and Father Phillip for their continued support of St Brigid's, the children and parent body for their contribution this year.

Report Access and Publication

This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, The Board of Studies, The Parents and Friends Association, the Parish Priest and to all parents.

Copies of this school's Annual School Report are available to the general public. Persons wishing to access a copy of the report should contact:

David Palmer

Principal

St Brigid's Parish School

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For further information relating to the Diocesan Policy please refer to: <http://mn.catholic.edu.au>