St Columba's Catholic College, Springwood
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Introduction

About the Annual School Report

St Columba's Catholic College is registered by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority, NESA, as a member of the Catholic system of schools in the Diocese of Parramatta.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider school community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2017 and gives information about the 2018 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act, 2008 and the Education Amendment Act 2004.

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.
Key Messages

Principal

I am proud to present to you the 2017 Annual School Report for St Columba's Catholic College. At St Columba’s Catholic College we strive for the full human development of our students, grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ. We work with our young people so that they may take a hopeful, critical and constructive role in the service of Jesus within our society. We seek to form young people in our Catholic faith and tradition. This transmission is our core purpose, so that together we will act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Parent

Parent communication with teachers was promoted and encouraged through use of the student diary, the Skoolbag app, the electronic noticeboard, the college newsletter, our student run Facebook page, parent teacher interviews and information evenings. Parents were always invited to contribute towards building our community through their interaction with the college staff, particularly in regards to our son’s or daughter’s learning.

Student

The students feel very proud to attend such a caring and focused learning community as St Columba’s Catholic College.

In 2017 we were given many opportunities to participate in the academic, cultural and sporting life of the college. The students were represented formally by a Student Leadership Team that met weekly and tabled the issues raised by the student body. The Student Leadership Team organised and chaired college assemblies and other significant events. These members were actively involved in the liturgical life of the college. The leaders worked with students to promote pride in the liturgical life of the college, and all sporting and cultural events. Our leaders helped all students to develop their leadership skills by actively involving them in fundraising, charitable works and social justice initiatives. Many of our students engaged in peer tutoring and mentoring programs where they assisted one another with their learning.

The students at St Columba’s Catholic College believe they are integral to the ongoing growth of our wonderful college community.
Who we are

History of the school

St Columba's Catholic College was originally built as a seminary for candidates to the priesthood in 1908. In 1979 the college was re-established as a Years 7 to 10 Catholic school by the Diocese of Parramatta. It was restructured as a Year 7 to 12 school in 1993. The design and architecture of our magnificent buildings reminds us daily of our links to the past but with the new design of our modern facilities, the staff and students are reminded of our expectations that they each contribute as leaders in our contemporary society.

Location/drawing area

St Columba's Catholic College is a co-educational Catholic high school set in the beautiful Blue Mountains and surrounded by a national park. The college serves the parishes of: St Finbar’s, Glenbrook; St Thomas Aquinas, Springwood; Our Lady of the Nativity, Lawson; Our Lady of the Way, Emu Plains; St Nicholas of Myra, Penrith; Mary MacKillop, Upper Blue Mountains; and Sacred Heart, Blackheath. There are over 1000 students enrolled at St Columba's Catholic College with 39 homeroom classes from Years 7 to 12.
## Workforce Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers who hold teaching qualification from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers who have a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or within AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher qualifications</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers accredited to teach Religious Education</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers currently undertaking accreditation to teach Religious Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of non-teaching staff (includes teachers' aides)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of teachers who are indigenous</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average teacher attendance for 2017</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 2017 teaching staff who were retained from 2016</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Catholic Identity and Religious Education

Prayer, Liturgical Life and Faith Experiences

St Columba's Catholic College has a rich tradition of prayer and liturgy. In 2017, we continued to promote System Strategic Direction 1: Formation: that was to strengthen Catholic identity, with a specific formation goal of enabling students to learn more about the Sunday gospel and relate this to everyday living. Homeroom classes prayed daily, as did the staff at its various meetings. Each midday the Angelus was led over the public address system. Each class in Years 7 to 10 had the opportunity to attend morning mass at St Thomas Aquinas Parish Church several times a year. Student attendance at retreat days was compulsory:

- Years 7 to 10 (one day per Year group) reflected on the themes particular to Year level
- Year 11 students assisted as leaders on junior school (Years 7, 8 and 9) retreat days.
- Year 11 retreat (one day) focused on being agents of social justice.
- Year 12 retreat (three days) enabled students to discern ways in which they could respond to God's action in their lives.

Social Justice

St Columba's Catholic College's Mission Statement challenged all to respond to Jesus' call to act out of justice, love and the humble service of God, recognising that awareness precedes action. Whole-school examples of promotion were:

- Project Compassion (Caritas Australia)
- St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal and Christmas hampers
- Ignite Food Bank (Jesuit Social Services)
- Catholic Mission

Student group examples were:

- Young Christian Students (YCS)
- Social Justice Committee
- 'Vinnies Van' team (staff and students)
- St Vincent de Paul
- Duke of Edinburgh Scheme - community service component
- Year 12 students electing to train as junior leaders and then attending Nano Nagle Centre camps

School home and parish partnerships

Our local parish clergy were involved in school life again in 2017. Partly for geographic reasons, contact has mainly been with Springwood, Lawson and Glenbrook parishes. Staff and students gave witness and service in their own parishes. 'Working in partnership' was at the basis of all parent initiatives at St Columba's Catholic College. Parents were welcomed at liturgies or school events.

Religious Education

In Years 7 to 12, students undertook all of the core units in the Parramatta Diocesan Sharing Our Story curriculum for Stages 4, 5 and 6. Stage 6 students had the option of undertaking Studies of Religion 1 or 2 (Board developed), or Catholic Studies (Board endorsed Sharing Our Story syllabus).

Religious Education (RE) lessons began with prayer. Class study followed by written reflection on the Sunday gospel was a successful initiative for Years 7 to 10 in 2017. Classes visited the school's...
Iona Chapel regularly for reflection and prayer on the themes of their *Sharing Our Story* units. Preparation for aspects of Year group and whole-school liturgies occurred in Religious Education classes: e.g., prayers of the assembly, offertory elements, and artworks. Year level retreats flowed from Stage specific *Sharing Our Story* focuses. Our eight-hour Introduction to Catholic Tradition program, undertaken by students in Years 7 to 10 new to Catholic education, used the *Understanding Faith* computer program as its basic resource. This course was run once per semester. A Sacramental program was conducted in partnership with parishes for students wishing to prepare for, and receive, the Sacraments of Initiation and Reconciliation for the first time.

**Professional Learning of staff in Religious Education**

Studies of Religion teachers attended the Studies of Religion curriculum day organised by Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia (ISRA) in Sydney.

RE teachers were supported in their Scripture exposition with students through the gospel commentaries provided by RE team leaders; through the weekly staff memo; and through the commentaries accessed via *Liturgy Help* on the Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP), Oscar website.
National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

Students in Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9 across Australia participated in National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in May 2017. The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. The test provides a measure of the student’s performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching and learning with a view to improving student performance.

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum acceptable standards for literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling at particular ages. These are referred to as national minimum standards. Student performance in NAPLAN in our school is compared to these standards. The percentages of students achieving at or above these national minimum standards, and the percentages of students in the top three bands are reported in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>NAPLAN RESULTS 2017</th>
<th>% of students at or above national minimum standard</th>
<th>% of students in top three bands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>NAPLAN RESULTS 2017</th>
<th>% of students at or above national minimum standard</th>
<th>% of students in top three bands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our Year 7 NAPLAN results demonstrate that we have a significantly higher number of students achieving in the top band for reading when compared to the state. Our Numeracy results show that we have a high number of students achieving in the top 3 bands when compared nationally. Compared to previous Year 7 Numeracy results, there are significantly more students achieving in
Compared to previous Year 7 Numeracy results, there are significantly more students achieving in the highest band this year.

Results for our Year 9 students in reading continued to show that we have more students achieving in the top bands when compared nationally. The growth of our Year 9 students in reading and Numeracy skills is significantly higher than the national average. This outstanding average gain was acknowledged by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and resulted in the college being identified as a high-gain school for 2017.

Our college is committed to analysing and using NAPLAN data to inform teaching and to gain a better understanding about the strengths and needs of our students. Current NAPLAN data suggests that writing continues to be an area that challenges some of our students and is an area where we need to increase student abilities. Our college Action Plan – Literacy is focused on improving student skills in the areas of planning (building structure and ideas), paragraphs (building elaboration and cohesion), and vocabulary (building clarity and sophistication).

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

From 2013, eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC) will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

The RoSA records a student’s completed Stage 5 and Preliminary Stage 6 courses and grades, and participation in any uncompleted Preliminary Stage 6 courses. It is of specific use to students leaving school prior to the HSC.

In 2017 there was one Year 10 student and five Year 11 students who requested a RoSA.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Percentage of students in performance bands 4, 5 and 6 compared to the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher School Certificate</th>
<th>Percentage of students in top 3 bands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies of Religion I</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Standard</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Advanced</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Studies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers in our college engaged in professional learning opportunities where the HSC data was analysed. This involved the writing of HSC Results Analysis Faculty Reports where teachers analysed their class and subject results within their faculties.

The two main sources for our analysis into the HSC data were the DeCourcy Analysis package and the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Results Analysis Package. Through a more holistic analysis of the data, an overall upward trend has continued to be observed when looking at overall school performance.

Some results that were outstanding: where the school mean was significantly higher than that of the state mean, were English Standard, Senior Science, Visual Arts and Legal Studies.

The English Key Learning Area (KLA) results reflected the forward movement of a whole cohort. Students in English Standard performed above the state average in all components of the HSC Examination. Teachers used previous data to inform practice, collaborating effectively and implementing new initiatives.

The Visual Arts HSC results have continued to be strong and reflect excellent teaching practice with all students achieving in the top three bands. The results of Legal Studies reflected teaching
practice which was evaluative, and constantly in search of how to bridge gaps in student learning for further improvement. The significantly improved results of Senior Science reflected ongoing focused feedback to students to improve their skill development, and targeted approaches for students who were under performing.

School curriculum

We have a strong academic focus which is reflected in external results achieved in both NAPLAN and HSC Examinations, and in engaging teaching and learning programs.

In 2017, students were offered a co-curricular program which included: sports, cultural pursuits, debating, public speaking, 'Write a Book in a Day', social justice activities, author visits, Duke Of Edinburgh program, the University/Schools Steer Competition, drama and musical performances, Scripture lessons delivered in local government schools, and involvement in Captivate initiatives. These activities provided great opportunities to extend students’ learning and experiences outside the classroom.

Outstanding student performance was recognised at regional, state and national levels, including winning state competitions in sport, and students being nominated and selected for HSC ArtExpress. We enjoyed our 'sister school' relationship with Hokusetsu Sanda Senior High through a visit and through our Japanese exchange program.

We made amendments to curriculum to meet student needs. Learning tools, such as laptop computers, iPads and a range of educational web tools helped engage students in the learning process. Flipped learning was used as a strategy to improve student engagement and deepen understanding of the learning. Flexibility in classroom design, student furniture and seating formations in our teaching and learning spaces maximised both collaborative and personalised learning.

‘Café Columba’ opened as part of Hospitality Studies further opportunity for ‘real life’ skill development.

Senior students were involved in study skills sessions to improve their skills in studying. Continual development of ‘Study Notes’ for each subject, individual student learning planning, tracking, study planning, and a focused Study Hall program supported this.

Initiatives to promote respect and responsibility

These included:
- College Retreat program for all students
- anti-bullying campaign conducted in assemblies and through involvement in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence
- students being given the opportunity to submit responses to the annual bullying survey with information provided in this survey followed up by leaders of mission and head of mission with both the victim and perpetrator(s) of the bullying
- behaviour surveys conducted each semester, to obtain feedback from students and teachers, with students identified in the behaviour survey being counselled, and parents being included in meetings to identify unwanted behaviours and formulate strategies to improve classroom behaviour, followed by ongoing monitoring by Leaders of Learning (LOLs) and Leaders of Mission (LOMs).
- Wall of Hands in support of National Aboriginal Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week initiatives
- Sorry Day assembly presentation to raise awareness of indigenous issues
- student involvement in a wide range of community events including Anzac Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, Remembrance Day and Foundation Day marches in Springwood
- students participating in the Safer Australian Roads and Highways (SARAH) road safety campaign
students participating in White Ribbon Day activities
the College Student Leadership award system, requiring students to perform internal and external community service as part of the qualification process
students conducting Scripture lessons in local primary schools
students performing for local nursing home residents
Social Justice program for each Year group
Peer Mentoring program: National Rugby League (NRL) Schools to Work program
fundraising for community and global concerns
opportunities to participate in values symposiums and conferences
Merit Award program
Duke of Edinburgh program
Year group and whole-school assemblies
sister school relationship with Hokusetsu Sanda Senior High School, Japan

Professional Learning
Professional learning undertaken in 2017 included:
- staff religious formation - understanding of the gospel
- program evaluation days
- protective practices training
- child protection training
- DeCourcy HSC Analysis tool
- emergency care and anaphylaxis training
- Stage 6: new school-based assessment
- English Mathematics Stage 4 (EM4)
- numeracy action research
- Stage 6: implementing adjustments to assessment
- learning support: new approaches to personalised planning and collaborative planning
- Vinnies Van volunteer training
- New Scheme Teachers' training
- assessment for learning
- curriculum compliance audit training
- data as diagnostic tool training
- student welfare - drug and alcohol awareness training
- technology in education: Clickview
- Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) survey analysis
- individual teacher identified professional learning
## School Improvement

### Annual school priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 1</th>
<th>For each student in Stage 4 and Year 9 to increase their writing skills in connecting ideas and text cohesion through planning and vocabulary use by one cluster, according to our school writing continuum by the end of 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for priority 1</td>
<td>NAPLAN literacy results in 2016 indicated that writing remained an area where our Stage 4 students needed to develop, particularly those higher level writing skills. Continuing from the strategies and goal of 2016, we extended the targeted writing skills to include connecting ideas (building on from developing ideas) and text cohesion (combining structure with more crafted vocabulary use).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Steps taken to achieve priority 1 | These included:  
- developing expertise in understanding and applying the writing continuum that could be used to build writing skills  
- reviewing writing tasks to develop ones that focused on and strengthened student writing skills  
- developing scaffolds for organising and planning ideas into text structures  
- monitoring and tracking of development of writing skills, keeping in mind the HSC minimum requirements  
- using mentor texts to model the link between selection of ideas and text construction |
| Status of priority 1 | Ongoing |
| Priority 2 | For Stage 4 students, to improve their mathematical understanding of number, in particular fractions, decimals, place value and percentages (FDP), through applying effective mental computation and problem solving strategies, by a minimum of one stage as assessed by the school progress screener |
| Reason for priority 2 | Analysis of 2016 NAPLAN results revealed that Year 7 students need to improve on their ability to work effectively with non-calculator questions particularly in fractions, decimals, place value and percentages. In addition, item analysis over time showed the number of students correctly answering fraction, decimal and percentage questions fell below that of the state, especially in non-calculator questions. |
| Steps taken to achieve priority 2 | These included:  
- involvement in the EM4 project  
- teachers beginning lessons with mental arithmetic starter questions or similar activities  
- developing and using open ended and challenging tasks (EM4 strategy) at least once per cycle  
- including enabling and extending prompts to cater for the diverse learning needs of students  
- using the screener for measuring the progress of students in their ability to problem solve, according to learning Stages in the Mathematics syllabus |
<p>| Status of priority 2 | Ongoing |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 3</th>
<th>All students in Stage 4 and 5 to demonstrate a greater understanding and knowledge of Jesus through reflecting on the Sunday gospels for Year A of the liturgical cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for priority 3</td>
<td>There was a high proportion of students who did not know the stories of Jesus, so we aimed to strengthen their understanding of the gospel stories and how the stories connected to students' everyday lives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Steps taken to achieve priority 3 | These included:  
- students continuing with their journal in Religious Education (RE) classes to reflect on the gospel and how it linked with their everyday lives  
- RE teachers reading the Sunday gospel with students and asking questions which students could answer in their journal  
- RE teachers guiding students in making links with the Scripture passage, Jesus, their lives and the Christian life experience through discussion, reflective writing in their journals and focus questions in RE lessons |
| Status of priority 3 | Ongoing |
### Projected school priorities

**Priority 1**

For 110 (57%) or more students in Year 8 2017 to have reached a NAPLAN band 8 writing skill level by the end of Year 9 term 1 and for 107 (69%) or more students in Year 8 2018 to have reached a NAPLAN band 8 writing skill level by the end of term 1 2019: focusing on developing skills in building structure and ideas, elaboration and cohesion, and clarity and sophistication.

**Reason for Priority 1**

NAPLAN literacy results in 2017 indicated that writing remains an area in which our students need to develop, particularly higher-level writing skills. Building on the strategies already being implemented, we are extending the targeted writing skills to include building planning skills, structural cohesion and vocabulary use. This is to ensure students are moving towards and reaching the minimum literacy skills in writing that they need to demonstrate to be awarded the HSC.

**Steps to be taken to achieve Priority 1**

These will include:
- teachers developing expertise in understanding the skill progressions associated with writing in their Key Learning Areas (KLAs)
- using *Reading to Learn* and NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) *Learning through Reading and Writing* strategies to link reading and writing skills
- students improving their skills in ideas for writing through planning strategies (such as graphic organisers)
- students using particular strategies across all of their subjects to improve their writing
### Priority 2
For 135 (72%) or more students in Year 8 2017 to have reached a NAPLAN band 8 Numeracy skill level by the end of Year 9 term 1 and for 129 (83%) or more students in Year 8 2018 to have reached a NAPLAN band 8 Numeracy skill level by the end of term 1 2019, focusing on mathematical problem solving by explicitly teaching skills and strategies through: subject specific terminology, deconstructing the problem into mathematical equations, and using estimation skills.

### Reason for Priority 2
Current assessments of mathematical learning and skills, such as NAPLAN and the new online Numeracy Test, consist of problem solving questions where students need to use their numerical understanding (being numerate) to solve context based questions. Focusing on providing students with numerous opportunities across topics and content areas to practise solving these types questions, as well as challenging open-ended rich tasks, will increase their numeracy skills.

### Steps to be taken to achieve Priority 2
These will include:
- working mathematically when solving selected problems – including NAPLAN questions, open-ended tasks, and problem-based tasks
- students using strategies to assist when they become stuck on a problem (before going to the teacher) eg Four Before Me (4B4 me) - using the four strategies of buddy, brain, tool box and books before asking the teacher for help
- continued focus on productive struggle in learning Mathematics and associated problem solving strategies

### Priority 3
Students will demonstrate a greater understanding of the connection between their own lives, the person and mission of Jesus, and our call as Christians to bring justice to those in our society who are marginalised.

### Reason for Priority 3
There is a high proportion of students who come to the college with limited knowledge of the stories of Jesus, so we aim to strengthen their understanding of the gospel stories and the connection of these stories to students' everyday lives.

### Steps to be taken to achieve Priority 3
Year 7 RE teachers will revise teaching/learning strategies for the literary forms in the Bible, to ensure students have a stronger understanding of the place of the gospels within the Bible structurally, culturally and historically.

Students will:
- apply the gospel message in their relationships with staff and each other
- be given the opportunity to lead and read the gospel
- continue to develop a written journal in RE classes to reflect on the gospel and its links with their lives and actions
Community Satisfaction

Parent satisfaction
During 2017, the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta engaged insight SRC to conduct the Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) survey to provide feedback from parents, students and staff about our school. This survey is conducted annually.

The QCS data collected and reported to our parents, students and staff, showed that our parents believed we had a strong focus on learning and were very supportive of our Behaviour and Safe and Supportive policies at the college. They had a very strong belief that their child was safe and supported. They believed, however, that some of the teachers needed to provide lessons with greater enthusiasm and focus on the individual needs of the students.

Student satisfaction
The QCS data collected and reported to our parents, students and staff, showed that the students felt very safe at the college and believed that their gifts were developed at the college with learning opportunities that met their learning needs. They would, however, have liked their teacher to understand more about what they found motivating and interesting.

Teacher satisfaction
The QCS data collected and reported to our parents, students and staff, showed that the teachers believed that the college was very focused on the learning, and that areas of curriculum work were a great strength that they were proud of. Although the teachers worked successfully in teams to provide great curriculum opportunities, they did not feel empowered about their role in decisions at the school. Teachers believed that they were safe and student behaviour was excellent. They were confident in understanding what their roles were and what was expected of them. Whilst teachers acknowledged being given feedback from their colleagues and leaders, many did not connect this to professional learning.
Student Profile

Enrolment Policy
St Columba's Catholic College follows the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP)  
Enrolment Policy and Procedures. This document can be obtained from the school office or can be  
accessed on the CEDP website http://www.parra.catholic.edu.au/policy-central

Current and previous years' student enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>1014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contributing factors to our drop in numbers include our Year 7 enrolment intake was lower than  
in previous years, more students from Year 10, 2016, left to attend the Trade Training Centre,  
Technical and Further Education (TAFE), or employment. Our intake into the senior years was  
also lower than in previous years.

Student attendance rates
The table below shows the percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School average</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language background other than English (LBOTE)</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disablities (SWD)</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Managing Student 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 6-17. Parents and guardians are legally responsible for  
the regular attendance of their children, explaining the absences of their children in writing  
within several days to the school, and taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving  
their children. School staff as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.
They maintain accurate records of students' attendance, follow up unexplained absences through written and verbal communication, implement programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise, and provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance. The principal or their delegate, may grant permission for late arrival or early departure from school, leave or exemption from attendance only in individual cases, on written request from parents and guardians.

The principal/delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly if an unexplained absence occurs. If truancy is suspected, the principal will contact the parents/guardians to ascertain the reason for the absence. If a satisfactory response is not received, the matter will be referred to the relevant staff at the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta who will follow up unexplained absences as per legislative requirements.

**Student retention rates**

The retention rate of students for Year 10 to Year 12 was 71%.

This particular cohort of students was interested in pursuing vocational education and training, with students leaving St Columba’s Catholic College to attend McCarthy Catholic College Trade Training Centre, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or gaining employment as an apprentice.

**Senior secondary outcomes**

The following table shows the percentage of Year 12 students who undertook vocational training or training in a trade while at school, and the percentage that attained a Year 12 certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification.

| Percentage of Year 12 students who undertook vocational training while at school | 28 |
| Percentage of Year 12 students who undertook training in a trade while at school | 0 |
| Percentage of Year 12 students who attained a Year 12 (HSC) or equivalent vocational education and training qualification | 100 |

**Post school destinations**

Each year St Columba's Catholic College collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort. The table below sets out the percentages of students for the various categories.

| Destination of students leaving Year 12 | % |
| University                          | 31 |
| Technical, and Further Education (TAFE) | 10 |
| Workforce                          | 7 |
| Other/Unknown                      | 52 |
Student wellbeing

Student welfare, discipline and anti-bullying policies and pastoral care

The college motto, *Act Justly*, provided the ethos for the *Student Management* policy.

Staff, students and parents were challenged to build and maintain relationships that emanated from a shared understanding of this motto. ‘We believe in a loving God, present among us, whose son Jesus offers blessings to us as individuals and as a community when we do two things: love God and love each other as we love ourselves.’ (*Student Management* policy)

Initiatives to promote respect and responsibility included:

- fortnightly formal assemblies, which celebrated student achievement and provided guidance for students’ social and emotional development
- college student leadership ministries: Social Justice; Communications; Community and Service; Culture and Events; Sport and Recreation; and Liturgy
- opportunities to discuss current issues
- students in Years 7 to 10 attending performances from visiting drama companies, focusing on issues including bullying, cyber bullying and relationships
- workshops for all students in Years 7 to 10 and Year 11 and 12 retreat programs on what it means to be a Catholic in today’s world
- Anti-bullying program conducted through the college curriculum
- involvement in the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence
- student anti-bullying survey
- involvement in the Safer Australian Roads and Highways (SARAH) road safety campaign
- College Student Leadership and Award program
- participation in student leadership training camp
- college Student Leadership Team
- student involvement in St Vincent de Paul Vinnies Van program
- staff/student classroom behaviour surveys
- participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award program
- Caritas Project Compassion
- student Social Justice Committee
- student involvement in local community events including ANZAC Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, Springwood Foundation Day

Pastoral care was provided through a combination of homeroom teachers, Leaders of Mission (LOMs) for each year group, the head of mission and the college student counsellor. Regular Year assemblies were held to enable the celebration of student achievement and the provision of guidance on a wide variety of topics pertinent to each Year group’s social and emotional development. The college student counsellor monitored student attendance, and supported the LOMs in implementing initiatives to improve this individually for students.

The full text of student management/welfare and discipline policies as well as the college *Antibullying* policy can be obtained through the college website:

http://www.stcolumbasspringwood.catholic.edu.au

At a school level, there was change made to our College *Student Management Policy* in 2017. The changes were made to align to behavioural categories in a new software application, Compass, (a system for recording student management being piloted in some CEDP schools), making more explicit the connection between actions/consequences to student behaviours identified in the policy.
**Complaints and grievances policy**

The college has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These are in line with the Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) *Complaint Handling* policy.

A copy of the policy is available from the college office or is available on the CEDP website http://www.parra.catholic.edu.au under the menu item 'You Choose'/Policy Central.

There were no changes to this policy during 2017.
Section Eleven: Financial Statement

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Recurrent Grants</td>
<td>$8,833,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Capital Grants</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Recurrent Grants</td>
<td>$2,636,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees and Private Income</td>
<td>$3,595,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Capital Income</td>
<td>$14,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,079,788</strong></td>
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</table>

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditure</td>
<td>$160,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and Related Expenses</td>
<td>$10,522,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Salary Expenses</td>
<td>$3,864,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,547,788</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Commonwealth** relates to Commonwealth Recurrent Grants including per capita funding and special purpose grants.
2. **Capital** relates to Government Capital Grants.
3. **State** relates to State Recurrent Grants including per capita funding, interest subsidy and special purpose grants.
4. **Fees** relates to diocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income from parents.
5. **Other** refers to Other Capital Income including drawdowns from the Diocesan School Building Fund to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. **Capital** refers to Capital Expenditure including School Buildings, Furniture and Equipment.
7. **Salaries** refers to the total of all Salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation, workers compensation and leave.
8. **Non-Salary** refers to all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenses.