

# Annual School Report 2023 School Year

O'Connor Catholic College, Armidale



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Principal  
Phillip Gibney

## About this report

O'Connor Catholic College is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The report outlines to the school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Annual Improvement Plan.

The report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the CSO. This report, approved by the CSO, monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This report complements, and is supplementary to, school newsletters and other regular communications. It is available on both school and CSO websites by 30 June 2024 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums, including the School Advisory Council meetings and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6772 1666 or by visiting the school's [website](#).



## 1.0 Messages

### 1.1 Principal's Message

There were many people who assisted in the development of the College as a Catholic learning community. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the College staff for all their generous efforts. O'Connor Catholic College is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the College.

O'Connor Catholic College aims to develop, in all students, a passion for lifelong learning. We are deeply committed to assisting students to achieve their goals, within a structured and nurturing environment.

In line with this perspective, students are offered the opportunity to accelerate their learning journey through the study of HSC VET courses in Year 10 and Mathematics for those in Year 9 onwards.

Likewise, the building project continues to develop new facilities that offer students the best in twenty-first century learning spaces with the opening of the new Performing Arts Centre and Basketball Gym.

With a vision that is 'founded on faith and focussed on learning', the development of the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing of students can be attributed to the willingness of the staff to build strong positive relationships with students. The appointment of two Pedagogical Leaders in 2024 will focus on developing teacher expertise in the classroom to support and sustain this into the future.

Phillip Gibney  
Principal

### 1.2 A Parent Message

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the O'Connor Catholic College School Advisory Council (SAC) only held two meetings during 2023, with a decision made in conjunction with the Catholic Schools Office to hold over the AGM until the new Principal took office in early 2024.

Whilst only two meetings were held, the SAC was pleased to provide feedback, advice and suggestions in a variety of areas:

- The O'Connor Catholic College Annual Improvement Plan
- Communications with stakeholders
- School uniform
- Ongoing debriefing on progress with building works and infrastructure upgrades
- Retention and attrition statistics – numbers of students enrolling and transferring
- Updates on various staffing changes, refurbishment and repair projects

The remit of the SAC changed in 2023, with finance and budget removed from the responsibilities of the Council. Nonetheless, the business conducted by the SAC in the limited opportunities it had to meet, was wide-ranging and gratifying for members.

I look forward to reinvigorating the SAC in 2024 and continuing active support of the school in its future development.

Suzanne Crew  
Chair  
School Advisory Committee



## 2.0 This Catholic College

### 2.1 The College Community

O'Connor Catholic College is located in Armidale and is part of the Sts Mary and Joseph Cathedral Parish which serves the communities of Armidale, Guyra, Uralla and Walcha, from which the College families are drawn.

Last year the College celebrated 49 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest, Rev Father Roel J Llave, is involved in the life of the College.

### 2.2 Catholic Life and Religious Education

O'Connor Catholic College follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

#### The College Community

Fr Damien is the point of contact between the parish and the College. This has become more significant since the temporary closure of the cathedral in October 2023 and the relocation of parish weekend masses to the College Chapel (De La Salle Chapel).

#### Catholic Life and Religious Education

Staff began to transition across to a digital resource, Understanding Faith, which, whilst primarily targeting Stages 4 and 5 Religious Education, also supports Stage 6 Studies in Catholic Thought (SICT).

Religious Education in Years 7-10 is a compulsory subject for all students, irrespective of their faith backgrounds. Many RE teachers have also taught Stage 6 Studies of Religion or Studies in Catholic Thought, and they have been able to develop the junior curriculum with the intent of better preparing students for the senior courses.

In Stage 6, Studies in Catholic Thought has grown in popularity as a subject of choice for those students who are not seeking ATARs or who have a high VET workload which requires frequent absences from school. One and Two unit Studies of Religion continue to attract students wishing to attain an ATAR. However, fewer students are selecting the 1 unit course.

The prayer and liturgical life of the College continued to be a focal point for the community. A strong relationship with the Saints Mary and Joseph Cathedral Parish and the parish priests continues, driven in part by the shift of weekend masses to the De La Salle Chapel following the closure of the cathedral. Weekly masses were celebrated in De La Salle Chapel, and in a change to previous practices, junior and senior year groups celebrated masses together. At least once a term, the entire school community gathers to celebrate Mass.

In addition to formal masses, the College celebrates a wide range of liturgies, including NAIDOC Week, Founders Day and Anzac Day. Daily prayer in Pastoral and Academic Care remains a reverent and appreciative way to start all school days. Community service opportunities, such as Assistant Catechists in the State Primary Schools, were well-supported by the Year 10 cohort, whilst Year 11 students were able to become involved in the school faith community through the Lasallian Youth Leader program.

The College commitment to Caritas and Catholic Missions saw awareness raised regarding the Catholic teachings on social justice and of the work of these Catholic charities. Charitable donations were made by the community to these organisations with money raised at events including the Paupers Banquet as well as the Vinnies Winter Appeal sleepout and Christmas appeal.

A retreat program was maintained for all students and staff throughout the year. Years 7-10 were given opportunities to participate in day-long retreats, whilst Year 11 engaged in a leadership retreat at Coffs Harbour, preparing them for life as school leaders. In addition to these retreats, staff



participated in a whole-day retreat at St Albert's College as well as twilight sessions with the Diocesan Retreat team and the annual Lenten Program.

## 2.3 College Enrolment

O'Connor Catholic College caters for students from Years 7 to 12. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

|               | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 | Year 12 | TOTAL 2023 | TOTAL 2022 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|------------|------------|
| <b>Male</b>   | 46     | 45     | 40     | 42      | 37      | 23      | 233        | 248        |
| <b>Female</b> | 49     | 50     | 42     | 45      | 46      | 28      | 260        | 259        |
| <b>Totals</b> | 95     | 95     | 82     | 87      | 83      | 51      | 493        | 507        |

## 2.4 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor attendance each day. The class roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each week by the Principal or their delegate. The school uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by staff. Parents are requested to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence by means such as a written note, telephone call, SMS message or email to the school, preferably on the first day of absence and certainly within seven days. The Principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations, the Principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases, students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the College during 2023 is shown in the following table.

|   | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 | Year 12 | All Years |
|---|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| <b>Average Student Attendance Rates</b> | 88.0%  | 87.0%  | 84.0%  | 84.0%   | 85.0%   | 86.0%   | 85.7%     |

### Managing Student non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The College, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, College staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

College staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance.



- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/\_carer involvement.
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed, the Principal and the System Performance Leader will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.

## 2.5 Staff Profile and Teacher Standards

| Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile |  | Number of Teachers |
|--|--|--------------------|
| 1.                                     | Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level. | 6                  |
| 2.                                     | Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Proficient level.                 | 45                 |
| 3.                                     | Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Highly Accomplished level.        | 0                  |
| 4.                                     | Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Lead level.                       | 0                  |
| 5.                                     | Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.              | 22                 |
| 6.                                     | Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the College.                 | 5                  |
| 7.                                     | Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the College.                        | 26                 |

## 2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The college ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the college and the local community. The college models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- The values of respect and responsibility lie at the heart of Catholic schools, and underpin all policies and procedures. Students, teachers and parents are regularly reminded of the school's commitment to these and other school values by newsletter items, assembly messages and by the nature of interpersonal relationships.
- Students and staff contribute generously to social justice appeals, including St Vincent de Paul and Caritas. Principal awards were presented at fortnightly whole school assemblies, while



outstanding citizenship was recognised at the Annual Presentation Assembly with awards from the Lions Club and the local Member of Parliament.

- Pastoral Academic Care continues to be a priority. Every student is known and staff work with them individually to enhance their well-being and learning. The language of Living Well, Learning Well is embedded into all aspects of school dialogue. Learning conversations are focused on moving forward, language is one of restorative justice and providing opportunities to demonstrate positive interactions. All members of the school community are learners who will flourish when they feel connected, valued and safe in the school.
- Restorative Justice Practices continue to be reviewed, ensuring that teachers and Leaders of Learning are working together and alongside students to identify unproductive behaviours and to create strategies to replace them in both the classroom and the playground.

## 2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the College used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the College from parents, students and teachers.

### Parent Satisfaction

The Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Armidale contracted 'Survey My School' to conduct surveys of parents, students, and staff in all schools within the diocese. Below are some results of the staff survey for O'Connor Catholic College. In summary the satisfaction was scored as follows: Strongly disagree=0, Disagree=1, Agree=2, Strongly Agree=3 For all statements students rated the level of satisfaction for (Top is most satisfied to bottom)

|   |
|---|
| Catholic religious identity is a high priority in the school  |
| There is a strong partnership between the parish and this school  |
| This school is well maintained e.g. clean, buildings painted  |
| I am happy with this school's facilities  |
| I am happy with my child's access to technology in the school   |
| I can make contact with my child's teachers or other staff easily   |
| Staff, students and parents are actively involved in the religious life of the school                         |
| The school communicates clearly that it has high expectations for student attendance, engagement and outcomes |
| The school is a safe place for my child   |
| The use of technology (iPads, computers) enhances my child's learning   |
| This school celebrates student achievements   |
| Communication between the home and school is effective  |
| I would recommend this school to others   |
| Overall, I am satisfied with the education our child/ren receive at this school                               |

### Student Satisfaction



The Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Armidale contracted 'Survey My School' to conduct surveys of parents, students, and staff in all schools within the diocese. Below are some results of the staff survey for O'Connor Catholic College. In summary the satisfaction was scored as follows: Strongly disagree=0, Disagree=1, Agree=2, Strongly Agree=3 For all statements students rated the level of satisfaction for (Top is most satisfied to bottom)

|   |
|---|
| I regularly use technology at my school                       |
| I am encouraged to care for others                            |
| I feel safe at school   |
| My school encourages me to be a good community member         |
| My teachers care about me                                     |
| I feel accepted by others at my school                        |
| I like being at this school                                   |
| I receive feedback from my teachers to improve my learning    |
| I would recommend this school to others                       |
| My school gives me opportunities to do interesting activities |
| My teachers tell us what we are learning and why              |
| This school celebrates student achievements                   |
|   |

### Staff Satisfaction

The Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Armidale contracted 'Survey My School' to conduct surveys of parents, students, and staff in all schools within the diocese. Below are some results of the staff survey for O'Connor Catholic College. In summary the satisfaction was scored as follows: Strongly disagree=0, Disagree=1, Agree=2, Strongly Agree=3 For all statements students rated the level of satisfaction for (Top is most satisfied to bottom):

|  |
|--|
| I participate in professional learning conversations   |
| Catholic religious identity is a high priority in this school  |
| I have opportunities to enhance my students' learning through the use of technology                    |
| The school celebrates student achievements   |
| I am provided with opportunities to improve my teaching practice                                       |
| I get a lot of satisfaction from working in this school  |
| I have the resources I need to do my job   |
| I would recommend this school to others  |
| School leaders at this school know me as a person and support my wellbeing                             |
| There is a strong partnership between the parish and this school                                       |
| Access to professional learning opportunities helps me perform my role well                            |
| Care Catholic Principles and Values are explicitly taught in this school                               |
| My school encourages a climate conducive to staff professional learning and improvement in practice    |
| There are clear expectations concerning the use of effective teaching strategies throughout the school |





### **3.0 Teaching and Learning**

#### **3.1 College Curriculum**

The College provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority syllabuses for Secondary Education as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW). In addition, the College implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

##### **Year 7**

Religion, English, Mathematics, Science, HSIE (History and Geography), PDHPE, Music, Visual Arts, TAS (rotations of Coding, Electronics, Food Technology, Agriculture Technology), German.

##### **Year 8**

Religion, English, Mathematics, Science, HSIE (History and Geography), PDHPE, French, Music, Visual Arts, TAS (rotations of Robotics, Wood Technology, Textiles, Food Technology, Engineering), France.

##### **Year 9**

Religion, English, Mathematics, Science, HSIE (History and Geography), PDHPE, Electives: Design and Technology, Visual Arts, PASS, Drama, Music, Commerce, iSTEM, Food Technology, Agriculture

##### **Year 10**

Religion, English, Mathematics, Science, HSIE (History and Geography), PDHPE, Electives: Design and Technology, Food Technology, Agriculture, French, Child Studies, Music, iSTEM, PASS, Textiles, Visual Arts

##### **Year 11**

English Advanced, English Standard, English Studies, English Extension 1, Mathematics Advanced, Mathematics Standard, Mathematics Extension 1, Visual Arts, Biology, Physics, Construction (VET), Business Services (VET), PDHPE, Hospitality (VET), Primary Industries (VET), Textiles, Engineering, Business Studies, Chemistry, Ancient History, Design and Technology, Legal Studies, Community and Family Studies, Agriculture, Studies of Religion 1 unit, Studies of Religion 2 unit, Studies in Catholic Thought (1 unit), Music, Sport Lifestyle and Recreation (SLR)

##### **Year 12**

English Advanced, English Standard, English Studies, English Extension 1, English Extension 2, Mathematics Advanced, Mathematics Standard, Mathematics Extension 1, Mathematics Extension 2, Visual Arts, Biology, Physics, Construction (VET), Business Services (VET), PDHPE, Hospitality (VET), Primary Industries (VET), Textiles, Engineering, Business Studies, Chemistry, Ancient History, Design and Technology, Legal Studies, Community and Family Studies, Agriculture, Studies of Religion 1 unit, Studies of Religion 2 unit, Studies in Catholic Thought (1 unit), Studies in Catholic Thought (2 unit) Music, Sport Lifestyle and Recreation (SLR).

If a student in Stage 5 or 6 has a strong desire to study a course that is not running at the College, the course may be undertaken by Distance and Online Education. Extra costs are often involved in this avenue of study. Many students undertake eVET and SBAT opportunities and are supported in these endeavours by the College and local community.

Extra Curricular Activities include sport gala days such as futsal, cricket, basketball, rugby league and swimming as well as participating in the Armidale, Walcha and Guyra shows.



## 3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

### 3.2.1 NAPLAN

The College participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 7 and 9 tested. In Year 7, 93 students presented for the tests while in Year 9 there were 92 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

Commencing in 2023, NAPLAN test results are reported using proficiency levels.

Students' results show how they performed in each of the NAPLAN assessment areas against 4 proficiency levels:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

At O'Connor Catholic College, college and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and college achievement. College staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of O'Connor Catholic College students in the top two levels compared to the State percentage.

#### Year 7 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding

| Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar and Punctuation | Numeracy |
|---------|---------|----------|-------------------------|----------|
| 56.0    | 48.0    | 61.0     | 50.0                    | 50.0     |

#### Year 9 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding

| Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar and Punctuation | Numeracy |
|---------|---------|----------|-------------------------|----------|
| 62.0    | 51.0    | 66.0     | 42.0                    | 56.0     |

### 3.2.2 Higher School Certificate

The results of the College's Higher School Certificate candidature are reported below. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top three bands and shows a comparison with results from previous years.



|                               | Higher School Certificate: Percentage of students in bands 4, 5, 6 |       |        |       |        |       |
|-------------------------------|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
|                               | 2021   |       | 2022   |       | 2023   |       |
|                               | School   | State | School | State | School | State |
| <b>Studies of Religion 1</b>  | 71%  | 69%   | 67%    | 80%   | 83%    | 84%   |
| <b>English Standard</b>       | 59%  | 58%   | 36%    | 56%   | 28%    | 60%   |
| <b>English Advanced</b>       | 75%  | 93%   | 80%    | 93%   | 79%    | 95%   |
| <b>Mathematics Standard 2</b> | 41%  | 79%   | 60%    | 54%   | 12%    | 58%   |
| <b>Mathematics</b>            | 83%  | 51%   | 33%    | 76%   | 13%    | 75%   |

The results of the College's Higher School Certificate candidature are reported above. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top three bands and shows a comparison with results from previous years.

In these subjects, students' averages were above state averages:

Ancient History

English Extension 1

English Extension 2

English Studies

Hospitality (VET)

Music Extension

Music 1

Music 2

Visual Arts

The Top Achievers list shows the top performing HSC students in a course. This is the first time since 2008 (Michael Kelly, Construction) we have had a student named on this list. Jasmine Hockey is on the Top Achievers list.

The eight highest marks (top bands) were (in no particular order):

- Jasmine Hockey. 96 in Hospitality. Band 6. One of the top results in the state.
- Maxwell Buckland. 50/50 in Music Extension (100%). Band E4.
- Maxwell Buckland. 96 in Music 2. Band 6.
- Samuel Russell. 46/50 in Music Extension. Band E4.
- Roie Wood. 91 in Visual Arts. Band 6.
- Roie Wood. 46/50 in English Ext 2. Band E4.
- Roie Wood. 93 in Ancient History. Band 6.
- Caleb Dubois-Bender. 93 in Hospitality. Band 6.

Each teacher completes a detailed course report using RAP and DeCourcy data. They look for areas to improve, working together with other teachers. Students are counselled on the most appropriate course for them with the numbers in future years increasing in subjects like Mathematics Standard 1, English Studies and Studies in Catholic Thought.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| In 2023 the number of students issued with a RoSA | 29 |
|---|----|



### 3.2.3 Senior Secondary College Outcomes

The table below sets out the percentage of students undertaking vocational education training in their senior years as well as those attaining the award of Higher School Certificate (or equivalent vocational education and training qualification).

#### Senior Secondary Outcomes

|  |   |     |
|--|---|-----|
| <b>Senior Secondary Outcomes Year 12, 2023</b> | % of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling.                    | 45% |
|  | % of students attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification. | 98% |

### 3.2.4 Post College Destinations

Destination data is required to be collected by all schools for students beyond the compulsory years of schooling. This table is an easy way to represent the figures ensuring school and system compliance with this Federal requirement.

Each year the College collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort. The table below sets out the percentage of students for the various categories shown.

| <b>Destination Data Year 12, 2023 Graduating Class</b> | <b>University</b> | <b>TAFE / Other institutions</b> | <b>Workforce entry</b> | <b>Destination not reported</b> |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
|  | 29%               | 2%                               | 43%                    | 26%                             |

### 3.2.5 Retention of Students from Year 10 to Year 12

The percentage of students who completed year 10 at O'Connor Catholic College and progressed to year 12 for 2023 was 64%.

## 4.0 College Policies

### 4.1 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Students from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This College does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the College's [website](#) and the Armidale Catholic Schools Office [website](#).



## 4.2 Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale

Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale are policies and procedures justifying a model of student support that considers learning, wellbeing, school connection, behaviour, family-school partnerships and similar domains as inseparable and interrelated elements in the lives of children and young people and in the complex community that is the contemporary school.

The development goal of Living Well, Learning Well, and related policies was, and is, to ensure contemporary research and findings in fields of pedagogy, inclusion, behaviour support, pastoral care, bullying prevention and intervention, student voice, participation and connection to school, child and adolescent psychology, student wellbeing and staff collective efficacy are reflected in all language, policy, practice and protocols of the system and schools. It supports a whole-system ecological approach to understanding and acting on the complexity of factors that interact to shape and form the lives of children and young people.

At the heart of Living Well, Learning Well is a universal and unconditional positive regard for children and young people and a high regard for the collective capacity of a school staff team to increase learning, wellbeing and life-opportunity outcomes for children and young people. The full text of the College's Living Well, Learning Well procedures may be accessed on the College [website](#).

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this College. The College does not sanction the administration of corporal punishment by college staff or non-college persons, including parents, to enforce appropriate behaviour in the College.

## 4.3 Student Protection Policies and Procedures

The role of the Catholic school in child protection is to protect children and young people and to promote and safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. This responsibility is shared with the whole community. Every school within the Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO) system of schools works within a statutory framework of cooperation with government authorities and other relevant agencies and with families in the care and protection of children and young people.

Schools have a key role to play in today's society by assisting students and families with child protection. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of students is given the highest priority in every preventative and protective action taken.

In caring for children and young people, we must act in their best interest and take all reasonable steps to ensure their protection. This involves sincere commitment to upholding children's rights to safety and their wellbeing, and taking comprehensive steps to create a child safe school organisation and culture, with shared responsibility requiring all Armidale CSO personnel to work together within a comprehensive framework to ensure action and accountability for child safety.

O'Connor Catholic College is committed to fulfilling its obligations and seeks to develop best practice to identify and address risk and harm, and to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people in Armidale CSO schools. The dignity of the human person is a central truth of the Gospel message of Jesus. In respecting the dignity of all human persons, Catholic school communities are called to ensure the welfare and safety of all of their members.

The protection of the students entrusted to our care is a very serious responsibility. In taking up this responsibility along with parents, who are recognised as the primary educators and carers of their children, Catholic school communities are committed to ensuring Catholic schools have at their centre the total care of the whole student.

O'Connor Catholic College follows the guideline, policies and procedures as determined by Armidale Catholic Schools Office who provides policy, procedures, forms and links to other resources relating to child protection. These resources have been developed to guide and assist staff and to inform



Catholic school communities. Further details can be accessed from the College's [website](#) which includes a further [guide for parents](#).

#### **4.4 Complaints Handling Policy and Guide**

The Diocese of Armidale has established a 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' which is implemented by the College. The rationale for this policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of the contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policies.

*No changes were made to the 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' this year.*

*The full text of the College's 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' may be accessed on the College's [website](#) or the administration office.*

#### **5.0 College Review and Improvement**

Each year, the College develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the College's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic Schools Office Annual Improvement Plan. The College engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the System Performance Leader.



| Key Goals Achieved and Implemented in 2023   | Key Goals for 2024  |
|--|---|
| <p>Each year, the College develops an Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan for each year is developed from the previous plans, the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) Strategic Improvement Plan and the CSO's list of non-negotiables. The College engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness in line with the AIP, in collaboration with key CSO staff, particularly the School Performance Leader. The development of the AIP is done with two things in mind: staff are aware of the WHY behind the goals and staff are involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Key goals achieved and implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided authentic faith formation opportunities for the community</li> <li>• Four staff members completed 4-day Cornerstones Religious Education training,</li> <li>• Faith formation professional learning completed by all staff</li> <li>• Developed strong teams that embedded literacy through targeted action research cycles</li> <li>• Wrote and refined the role descriptions of all positions.</li> <li>• Embedded Living Well, Learning Well into the Wellbeing Framework</li> <li>• Became consistent with the language of Living Well, Learning Well</li> <li>• Treated all students as OUR students and developed consistency across our classes.</li> </ul> | <p>Each year, the College develops an Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan for each year is developed from the previous plans, the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) Strategic Improvement Plan and the CSO's list of non-negotiables. The College engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness in line with the AIP, in collaboration with key CSO staff, particularly the School Performance Leader. The development of the AIP is done with two things in mind: staff are aware of the WHY behind the goals and staff are involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Key Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong Teams, Working Together</li> <li>• Foster and nurture an authentic Catholic community of care</li> <li>• Great Teaching and Learning - All students are actively engaged in their learning: 5 GREAT lessons a day</li> <li>• New syllabuses: Engage, Enact and Embed</li> <li>• Unconditional Positive Regard for all</li> <li>• Wellbeing - LWLW is at the centre of all that we do</li> <li>• Morning triage attended by all leaders, who then visit PAC classes</li> <li>• Vertical PAC implemented in Houses</li> <li>• House culture grows</li> </ul> |

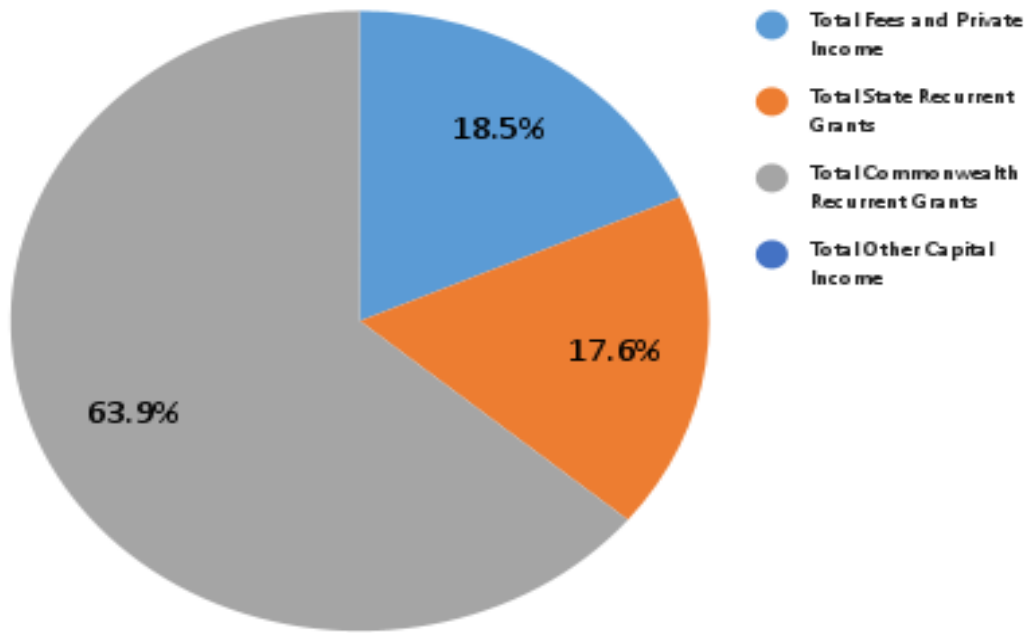
## 6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools, K-10 schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2023 is presented below:



### 2023 Income - O'Connor Catholic College, Armidale



### 2023 Expenditure - O'Connor Catholic College, Armidale

