



LOVE GOD - LOVE OTHERS

# 2019

## ANNUAL REPORT

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# INTRODUCTION

Northcross Christian School is a dynamic and vibrant, double streamed primary school. We are committed to delivering quality education within a caring, nurturing and supportive Christian environment. We partner with parents to train and equip students in their lifelong journey of learning. The school teaches a Christian world view and integrates biblical values and principles into the curriculum. We are a ministry of Ryde Baptist Church and a member of Christian Schools Australia. The school is registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

At Northcross we believe that a positive school experience in the early years of education lays the foundation for a child's learning. We recognise that each student learns differently. In response, we provide effective, interactive and varied learning experiences in every classroom.

The staff plan, teach and assess the mandatory outcomes in all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) including English, Mathematics, Human Society in Its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative Arts and Personal Development/Health & Physical Education.

The foundational teaching of Literacy and Numeracy skills in Kindergarten to Year Two provides a strong platform for students to build upon as they progress through the Primary Years.

In Years Three and Four the foundational skills of numeracy and literacy are consolidated so that the basic skills of reading, writing, spelling and Mathematics form a solid foundation for Years Five and Six. During these years students progress from concrete operational learning to a situation where they are encouraged to begin to engage in deep learning that involves abstract thoughts and concepts. The ability of teachers to differentiate for a wide range of learning styles and developmental stages at this level is important.

At Northcross, Years Five and Six form our Middle School. Middle School provides the students with a curriculum that prepares them for the transition to secondary school through developing each child's leadership skills and responsibility for learning. We focus on individual needs by engaging students through multiple intelligences and higher order thinking skills to foster exciting learning. Integrated in Middle School is a strong pastoral care program including peer support and community outreach. This ensures every student is personally cared for and supported through this transitional time of life.

We also have Learning Support programs offering enrichment, literacy and numeracy support and EALD. Extracurricular opportunities are provided in music, orchestra, band, choirs, dance, drama, numerous sporting events, environment club, camps, coding club, chess, debating and public speaking.



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

During 2019 Northcross Christian School continued to implement our Strategic Plan. (A copy can be found on our website) There are eight elements and these include; Excellence in Teaching & Learning, Pastoral Care & Spiritual Development, Curriculum & Co-Curricular, Quality Christian Staff, Church, School & Community Partnerships, Financial Stewardship, Facilities Planning: Size & Structure of School and Governance, Management & Administration.

The key initiatives were;

- Developing pedagogy by implementing effective learning theories that provide quality, holistic learning experiences
- Keeping abreast of current trends in education and reviewing their appropriateness
- Developing a whole school (K-6) assessment continuum
- Refining the implementation of Information & Learning Technologies (ILT) and consolidating individual learning tools and devices (ThinkPads, iPads)
- Continuing the development of Christian perspectives in the curriculum using 'Transformation by Design'
- Consolidating Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework and TAA requirements introduced by NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)
- Continuing and extending our 'Outreach & Mission' pursuits
- Continuing to mentor teachers
- Creating a succession plan for leadership positions
- Ensuring professional learning for the Executive
- Advertising and engaging a School Counsellor
- Creating a Financial Model and Fees Review Working Party
- Continuing the process of site master planning and preparation for a new Northcross building in conjunction with Architects
- Revising the 'dashboard' and simplifying reporting for Northcross Board
- Approving an updated Northcross Limited Constitution



# PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

The P&F (Parents and Friends of Northcross) is a committee made up of parents of existing Northcross students who represent and serve the Northcross Community. Our aim is to make a positive contribution to the school in various ways. Northcross Christian School embraces and promotes a philosophy where parents and school work in partnership together to nurture and equip all our students.

The P&F Executive currently consists of a President, two Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, Parent Representative to the School Board, the Canteen Convenor and a General Member. In addition, the P&F liaises with various sub-committees, such as the Hospitality Committee and Gardening Committee.

Similar to previous years, 2019 was an active year with many parents involved in the following activities:

- Hosting and preparing gift packs for the Tea and Tissues morning tea for kindy's first day
- Catering and hosting the Open Day and Kindergarten Orientation morning teas.
- Encouraging parents to volunteer as Class Parent Representatives at TIPS night
- Explaining PAL hours to new Kindergarten parents at TIPS night
- Providing support to teachers by assisting with reading groups, art classes, canteen, uniform shop, student banking, library, excursions and sports marshals.
- Serving as Class Parent Representatives and the primary contact points between the class teacher and class parents.
- Holding prayer meetings to pray for students, staff, parents and School Board.
- Holding P&F meetings each term with guests including Pastor Brendan (Senior Pastor Ryde Baptist Church), Phillip Pogson (Chair of Northcross Board) and school staff.
- Fundraising through outside school promotions e.g. The Athletes Foot, Entertainment Books.
- A major fundraising involving a Chocolate Drive
- The effective running of the School Canteen
- Representing the parent community at monthly Northcross Board meetings through the positions of P&F President and Parent Rep to the Board.

In addition to the above, the School operates a Parent Activity Levy (PAL) system. Parents are asked to volunteer their time to be involved in many and varied activities within the School (including assistance in classroom reading, art classes and canteen duties). The P&F administers the rostering of parents to some of these duties. Through the volunteering of time, parents are exempt from paying a levy that is charged in addition to normal school fees.

In 2019, the P&F raised a total of \$22,907.62 through various fundraising activities and canteen.

During 2019, the P&F supported Northcross school financially with the following donations/gifts:

Description	Amount
P&F Donation – school	\$20,000
P&F Donation - musical	\$5,500
Hospitality	\$134
Farewell gifts - teachers and outgoing pnf members	\$170
Year 6 Bibles	\$1,166



The parent community at Northcross are a vital part of the school. We are thankful to God for the hard work, support and generosity of the parent body over the last year which has been a blessing to the whole school.

On behalf of all parents, the P&F Executive would like to thank the School Board for their continued dedication, the wonderful staff of Northcross and Ryde Baptist Church for the ongoing ministry of the school.

We look forward to everyone's continued service at Northcross in years to come.

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Student Leadership Team includes School Captains, Vice Captains and House Leaders. Students are elected by their peers and staff.

In 2019 Student Leaders responsibilities included:

- Running and participating in school events such as Dedication Service, Thanksgiving Evening, School Tours, Teacher & Parent Information Nights, Northcross Limited AGM and our weekly Assemblies
- House Leaders lead House Meetings and help lead the Swimming, Cross Country and Athletic Carnivals
- Organising sports equipment to be used at student breaks and Thursday sport
- Representing the school at various events including the Ryde Council Anzac Day Ceremony and Annual State Parliamentary Visit
- Organised 'Arkoun Days' to raise funds for the three villages we support in Cambodia through Baptist World Aid Australia

In addition, the Student Leadership Team attended the National Young Leaders Day and took part in a mentoring program as part of their learning and development.





## NAPLAN TESTING

### 2017

#### Year 3

In 2017 in Literacy, 92% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 57% in the State.

In Numeracy, 92% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 43% in the State.

#### Year 5

In 2017 in Literacy, 76% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

In Numeracy, 73% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

### 2018

#### Year 3

In 2018 in Literacy, 88% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 53% in the State.

In Numeracy, 86% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 45% in the State.

#### Year 5

In 2018 in Literacy, 67% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

In Numeracy, 84% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

### 2019

#### Year 3

In 2019 in Literacy, 88% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 51% in the State.

In Numeracy, 77% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 39% in the State.

#### Year 5

In 2019 in Literacy, 77% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

In Numeracy, 85% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 30% in the State.

## TEACHING STAFF AT THE SCHOOL

Northcross employs teaching staff who are committed Christians and accept the school's Statement of Faith. All staff teach from a Christian world view across the curriculum.

In 2019, the school employed 46 staff members with 29 teaching staff, full-time and part time. The school retained 97.67% of the full-time and part-time teaching and administration staff from the previous school year.

Each of the teaching staff at Northcross have teacher qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia, as well as formal teacher education qualifications. There are no teachers employed lacking formal teacher qualifications (category ii and iii). The school aims to provide staff and students with support through teacher aides and support staff. Small group, one on one or in class support is offered to students who require additional, specialised instruction in EAL, Literacy and Numeracy as well as students with Additional Needs. An Enrichment program extends students who excel in various KLAs.

Staff were provided with frequent opportunities to improve teaching practice through professional development throughout 2019. As a whole school, the teaching staff were developed in the



following areas – First Aid, Science and Technology (Digital Technologies), PDPHE and reporting re-design. Furthermore, briefings to upskill and update staff on policy changes were undertaken in the following areas: child protection, teacher accreditation, excursions, attendance and other compliance matters.

In order to meet the specific professional development needs, staff attended the following:

Curriculum/Learning	Wellbeing/Learning Support	Operational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven Steps to Writing Success workshops</li> <li>• Music teaching</li> <li>• Teaching digital technologies</li> <li>• Sounds-Write</li> <li>• Assessment in PDHPE</li> <li>• Talk For Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCCD support and moderation sessions</li> <li>• Strategies and support for students with ASD</li> <li>• Learning Support Conferences</li> <li>• Cool Kids Anxiety Program</li> <li>• SPELD Vocabulary training</li> <li>• Live Life Well Events</li> <li>• CRU Teachers' Day</li> <li>• Behaviour management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian Schools Australia Policy Forum</li> <li>• Legal Matters in Schools Conference</li> <li>• Reportable Conduct Training</li> <li>• Future Schools Summit</li> <li>• Business Managers and PA Conferences</li> <li>• Enrolling and Supporting Students with Diverse Needs Forum</li> </ul>

## STUDENT POPULATION OF THE SCHOOL

The total student population of the school in 2019 was 355, with 174 girls and 181 boys in Kindergarten to Year 6. These numbers allow for any students moving in or out of the school throughout the year. The students are predominantly from the Ryde area and represent a mix of diverse cultural backgrounds. The students are encouraged to value the differences from within the community and to work harmoniously as a community.

The average student attendance was 95.6% school days, with absences largely being accounted for by approved leave or student illness.

Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance
Kindergarten	95.4%	Year 3	95.6%	Year 5	96.0%
Year 1	95.2%	Year 4	95.9%	Year 6	96.0%
Year 2	95.7%				



# SCHOOL POLICIES

## ***Enrolment Policy for Northcross Christian School***

### **Rationale**

The enrolment policy we adopt to assist our determination of families who become part of our school community, reflects our attitude toward the role of Christian Schooling generally, as well as the type of educational community we wish to develop for our students. To maintain our strong Christian ethos, it is vital that we at all times ensure that those coming into our school are fully supportive of, if not actively pursuing the same attitudes, values and relationship with our Lord and God. As a school we believe that our primary ministry is towards those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord in their lives, and are active members of their respective congregations. We also believe that where space permits there is a role for our school to encourage parents who are yet to make that commitment to Christ. These families must understand and be able to sign the conditions of enrolment before enrolment can proceed.

### **Aims:**

- To provide an efficient process of enrolment that satisfies the needs of both families and the school.
- The School Board has ultimate authority for the enrolments of students at Northcross, and has delegated to the Principal the authority to enrol students in accordance with the school's enrolment policy.

### **Implementation:**

- Each family will be considered on an individual basis, with the Principal and in some cases the School Board, carefully assessing whether enrolment of a child in the school is in the best interests of the child, his/her family and the school as a whole.
- To be enrolled in Kindergarten, students must turn 5 on or before April 30 of the year in which they start school to be accepted for enrolment. Exceptions to this age limit will be determined at the discretion of the Principal.

### **Class Size Limitations**

The maximum number of students entered into each K-6 class will not generally exceed 26. However special consideration will be given where siblings are seeking a place and the rest of their family has been catered for, or again where the Principal feels it is appropriate to offer a position.

### **Gender Policy**

It is the school's aim to have broadly equal numbers of boys and girls in each year level. The school's enrolment policy does not discriminate between males and females.

### **Role of the School Board in Enrolment of Students**

The School Board is responsible for setting the enrolment policy and is the final avenue of appeal in matters relating to it.

### ***Summary of Safe and Supportive Environment Policies***

Our school has a number of policies in place to ensure student welfare and a supportive environment for the children. Our desire is to make the school a safe, caring and nurturing place to be. These policies include Workplace Health and Safety and First Aid, Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting





Policies, Supervision, Evacuation and Lockdown Policies. These policies and procedures are routinely updated in line with legal and regulatory changes. These can be accessed from the Office.

Northcross provides a Chaplaincy program with the funding it receives as part of the National Schools Chaplaincy Program. The Chaplain is available to cater for the pastoral needs of the school community.

### ***Management of Non-attendance***

Northcross is committed to ensuring every child has the opportunity to learn. In partnership with our parent community, it is our expectation that students attend school and participate in learning and activities that support their growth and development.

The following procedures are used to manage student non-attendance:

- Attendance is taken at the commencement of every day;
- Parents must notify the school if their child is going to be absent from school, email or the School App on the morning of the absence with an explanation;
- Unexplained absences are followed up via SMS by the school on the day of absence;
- Parents may be called to meet with the Principal to discuss ongoing concerns as a result of habitual student absences.
- Certificates of Exemption Leave and Attendance/Enrolment are granted by the Principal when the applicant has clearly demonstrated that the exemption is in the student's best interests and when, where appropriate, other alternatives have been explored.

### ***Summary of Anti-Bullying Policy***

One of the most prominent characteristics of a Christian School must be its commitment to maintaining a safe and inclusive context for all students. All members of the school community are entitled to feel and to be safe while in the school or participating in any school related events.

Harassment, victimisation and bullying are unacceptable behaviours at Northcross. Any student experiencing harassment, victimisation or bullying can expect to be treated seriously when reporting an incident. Any student found responsible for repeated or intentional acts of harassment, victimisation or bullying will be disciplined according to the Northcross Discipline and Pastoral Care Policy, as deemed appropriate by the Principal or their delegate.

### ***Summary of Discipline and Pastoral Care Policy***

At Northcross, we believe that children thrive on encouragement and praise. The teachers endeavour to provide an environment which recognises and values the positive efforts and attitudes of the children. A number of methods are used to reinforce the positive attitude of the children in the school including verbal words of encouragement, achievement certificates, house points and sharing of excellent work samples with other students.

Where there are situations which need correction and intervention, the classroom teacher will follow the school's procedure to maintain the correct behaviour and positive attitudes.

Communication between the teaching staff and the parents about the child's behaviour, attitude and work ethic ensures that the child is surrounded with consistent values and standards both in the home and at school.

Northcross Christian School prohibits corporal punishment as a means of disciplining a student. Northcross Christian School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.



### **Summary of Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy**

From time to time a parent may have concerns over their child's relationship with another student or teacher, as well as concerns in relation to other aspects of their child's education. Should a parent wish to address this we would want them to follow the appropriate grievance process. In general terms, this procedure means that initial contact is with the teacher involved, and if required, then to the relevant Executive Staff Member, Deputy Principal or Principal and ultimately the School Board.

***There were changes to the Attendance Policy to include the use of SMS messaging.***  
***There were no changes to Anti-Bullying, Discipline and Pastoral Care and Complaints Policies since the previous report.***  
***The Enrolment and Management of Non-Attendance policies were reviewed during the year and updated accordingly.***  
***All the above policies are available on the school website.***

## **SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS**

During 2020 the key priorities include;

- Ensuring a smooth transition to the new Interim Principal
- Supporting and mentoring teachers and other Executive members especially the new Learning Support Coordinator
- Continuing the professional learning for the Interim Principal and Executive
- Continuing to work with the K-2 teachers to revise assessments across all KLAS
- Reviewing Middle School Report Descriptors
- Reviewing Middle School Assessment Records
- Keeping abreast of current trends in Learning Support education and reviewing their appropriateness
- Continuing professional learning and understanding of NCCD
- Facilitating Learning Support team to mentor staff in teaching students who are identified as 'gifted' and/or needing further in class extension (specifically '2e' students)
- Continuing to develop the Wellbeing Team so that it effectively and efficiently supports students, teachers and parents
- Implementing strategies to help teachers maintain their wellbeing and work/life balance
- Continuing the development of Christian perspectives in the curriculum using 'Transformation by Design'
- Leading Parent and Teacher information sessions on MiniLit and MultiLit
- Considering the succession plan and strategy for P&F President and Parent Representative to Board
- Ensuring financial management processes are in place to brief the Interim Principal and maintain strong financial oversight
- Optimising space requirements on campus and creating flexible learning spaces piloting design as we plan our next building stage
- Continuing the process of site master planning and preparation for a new Northcross building in conjunction with Architects
  - Finalising the needs analysis for Northcross Christian School
  - Finalising a master building plan for the campus
  - Developing a cost schedule to undertake these items



- Continuing to implement the transition to digital management of forms and records
- Continuing developing partnerships to assist with Community Outreach initiatives

## PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

At all times Northcross Christian School aims to promote respect and dignity amongst all members of the school community. Through daily devotions and interactions our students are reminded of their individuality and uniqueness and are encouraged to demonstrate an attitude of understanding and respect to each person – child, teacher and adult – demonstrating acceptance and tolerance of those who are different to themselves.

In our daily discussions and interaction, staff reaffirm the Values for Australian Schools from a biblical perspective. At Assemblies the values were also reinforced in the context of a whole school approach. The Peer Support Program is an opportunity for student leaders to promote a unified approach to promoting respect and responsibility from all members of the school community. Our aim is to raise future generations that will make valuable contributions to the society in which they work and live. In addition, we have implemented a 'growth mindset' approach in order to equip students when confronted with challenging situations in order to help them in their journey of life-long learning.



## SUMMARY OF PARENT, TEACHER & STUDENT SATISFACTION

A percentage of the parent community, staff and students were surveyed to determine the general satisfaction of the wider school community.

### **Parents:**

The majority of parents surveyed indicated that they are pleased that their child attends Northcross. They see the school encouraging a sense of community where parents have the opportunity to participate in school activities. They see Northcross as a positive and nurturing environment where children are encouraged to try their best and work with others. They highly value that the curriculum being taught is through a Christian world view. They feel the school provides a sound educational foundation for their children. They are thankful for the many opportunities students have to participate in school activities including sport, music, dance, choir, public speaking and the school musical.

They appreciate the highly competent staff who are devoted to the development and well-being of the whole child. They see the teaching staff as providing challenging and stimulating lessons. They value the way in which students are encouraged to care for one another. They believe that the school makes good use of very limited space and facilities however these areas still continue to be an issue. Parents have expressed their desire to see a greater multi-cultural mix.

### **Staff:**

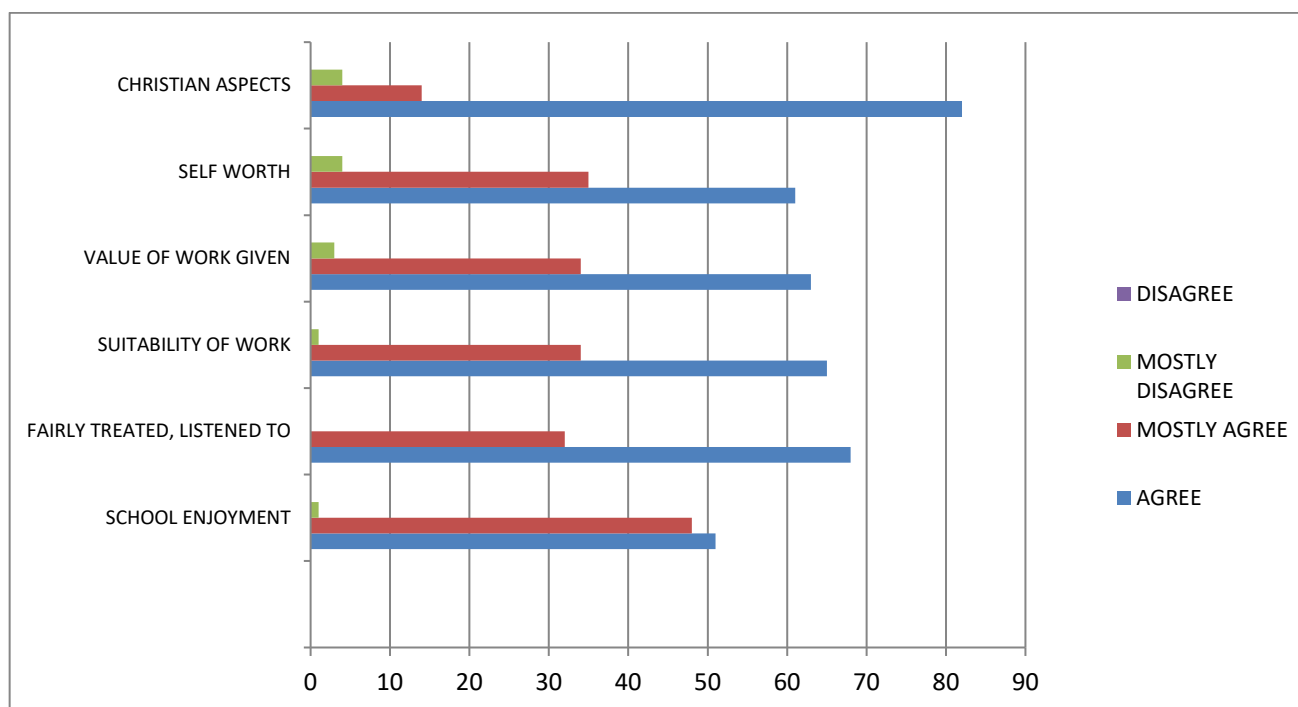
Staff described the school as a living Christ-centred community and are thankful to be part of a dedicated team. They appreciate the positive culture amongst staff, including general staff and the strong focus on the genuine Christian support that is given within staff relationships. They enjoy working alongside supportive and caring people who are committed to the whole child's well-being. They believe they are able to give their students a solid faith and educational foundation that will equip them for life. They would like to see the issues of limited facilities on the current site addressed. They would like to see additional support especially during busy times like report writing.

### **Students:**

AREAS	AGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	MOSTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE
SCHOOL ENJOYMENT	51	48	1	0
FAIRLY TREATED, LISTENED TO	68	32	0	0
SUITABILITY OF WORK	65	34	1	0
VALUE OF WORK GIVEN	63	34	3	0
SELF WORTH	61	35	4	0
CHRISTIAN ASPECTS	82	14	4	0

*STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS [Given in percentages]*





The Table above summarises the responses of our student leaders in a range of areas related to their experiences at Northcross Christian School. Responses indicate that 100% of them either agreed or mostly agreed that they were fairly treated and listened to. 99% agreed or mostly agreed that the work was suitable with 97% agreeing or mostly agreeing with the value of work given. Within the category of School Enjoyment 99% of the student leaders either agreed or mostly agreed to statement such as; ‘My school is a place I like to be’, ‘I enjoy what I do in class’, to ‘The other students are very friendly’.

The teaching they receive and preparation for the future continue to be high on our students’ list of priorities. It is encouraging that they see themselves as successful learners. In the category of Self Worth with questions such as; ‘I learn to get along with other people’, ‘I feel proud to be a student’, ‘People trust me’ and ‘People can depend on me’, 96% either agreed or mostly agreed with these with these statements. In relation to Christian Aspects 96% of student leaders agree or mostly agree to statements such as; ‘Teachers act out the Christian values they are teaching us’ and ‘Students act out the Christian values we are learning’.

Participation levels in Assemblies and Devotions indicate the high value placed on the Christian input students receive at Northcross and it has been a delight to see our students willingly lead worship at School events.

Anecdotal comments indicated that students value their ‘Buddies’ and enjoy opportunities where they can work and socialise together in co-curricular programs such as Peer Support and Community Outreach. Students have appreciated the opportunities to lead Assemblies, represent the School at official functions and conduct School Tours.

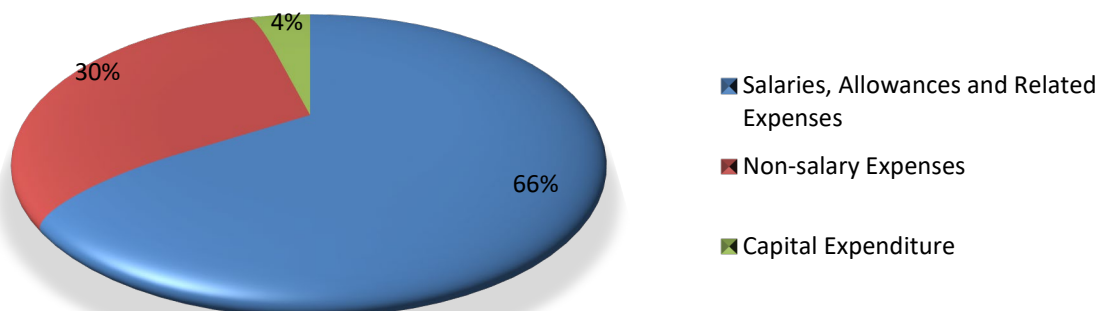




## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A summary of the sources of the School's income and expenditure for 2019 is shown below.

### Northcross Expenditure 2019



### Northcross Income 2019

