

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



Shaping lives that change the world



NORTHCROSS
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

Northcross Christian School (Northcross) is a dynamic and vibrant primary school which is committed to delivering quality education within a caring, nurturing and Christian environment. As a ministry of Ryde Baptist Church, Northcross has a ministry base among families in the Ryde area and well beyond. Northcross is a growing school community, with a student population of 333 children in 13 classes K-6 in 2016. The school is registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NES) which was previously known as BOSTES.

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.

Northcross provides a supportive environment where families and school partner together to train and equip students for their future learning and life. The school teaches a Christian world view and integrates biblical values and principles into the curriculum. In addition to this, all students participate in the school's Christian Studies program, with regular devotion times and Bible teaching. The Christian staff develop relationships that encourage the individual and nurture the whole child.

The school is committed to providing an excellent academic program which provides the students with skills, knowledge and understanding. There is a strong emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy throughout the school. The Spalding Method is used to teach the students the foundations of English through precise instruction in letter sound relationships, word dictation, sentence construction and reading and writing. Each Kinder – Year Four full time teacher is trained in this method at an intensive course before commencing employment at the school.

Mathematics is taught through a hands-on approach and a variety of learning styles. The students are taught the foundations of Mathematics through lessons that provide them with strategies and an understanding of number as well as opportunities to work mathematically through problem solving activities.

Northcross appreciates that students require different approaches to learning throughout the primary years. The teaching that is offered to students in Kindergarten to Year Two focuses on developing strong and sound foundational skills that are a vital key to the student's academic, social and emotional growth. The teachers aim to do their best to develop each of these skills in a secure, nurturing and loving environment.

In Years Three and Four the 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 are in the process of changing from concrete methods of learning to a greater focus on abstract thought. The ability of teachers to cater for a wide range of learning styles and developmental stages is important at this level.

In 2016 the Middle School Program continued for students in Years Five and Six of Primary School. Middle School provides the students with a curriculum and program that prepares them for the transition to secondary school through developing each child's leadership skills and responsibility for learning within a caring supportive environment. We focus on individual needs by engaging students through multiple intelligences and higher order thinking skills to foster exciting learning.



In providing opportunities for the whole child to be educated, Northcross provides a number of extracurricular activities in which students participate. These activities include:

Dynamic Performing Arts Department: with opportunities in Dance groups as well as Junior and Senior Choir; Interschool Debating Competitions and community Public Speaking Competitions;

- Sporting Competitions and Carnivals;
- A team of students represented the school and the Heart Foundation in the Jump Rope for Heart Demonstration Skipping Team;
- Students in Years 3-6 attended overnight camps at Lake Macquarie and Galston Crusader Camps;
- The Veggie Gardener's Club for students in Years 3 & 4 tend the school Veggie patch and learn about sustainability
- Coding Club
- Middle School students attended a 2 day trip to Bathurst as a means of consolidating their units of work in HSIE;
- Private tuition in Music which includes a Contemporary Worship Band and Orchestra,
- Private tuition in Mandarin, Tennis and Chess.
- CRU – Crusaders Christian Group

In 2016 the school participated in the following programs:

- Accelerated Reader Program
- Premier's Reading Challenge
- Tournament of Minds
- Lego League Junior Expo

In 2016, our students once again performed well at various inter-school carnivals and gala days, including netball, soccer, basketball and OzTag.

- The boys' cricket team performed brilliantly, winning the CSSA Super 8s Tournament after finishing runners up the previous year. Two soccer teams competed in the CSSA Inter Schools Gala Day, with the senior team progressing through to the Metro Cup competition.
- Two netball teams participated in an inter school gala day and gained selection to compete in the Metro Cup, achieving their best ever finish.
- Four teams competed in the CSSA Basketball Gala Day, performing strongly.
- Northcross also sent a team of students to the CSSA Biathlon, entering 3 students in the individual races and 7 teams into the teams' event. Students performed strongly, achieving 2 top ten placings in the individual events and 2 top twenty placings in the teams' event.
- Students were involved in inter school sports friendlies with another local school throughout Term 2, enjoying games in T-Ball and Soccer. Students were also involved in Gymnastics lessons in Term 1 and in the AusKick AFL Clinic in Term 3.
- A large team was sent to the Zone Swimming Carnival, where two students were named runner up Age Champions. A team of 4 individual swimmers and 2 relay teams qualified for the CSSA State Swimming Carnival. All swimmers then qualified for the CIS Carnival, with two individual swimmers and one relay team making the finals.
- The CSSA State Cross Country was a successful day, with three students recording top 20 placings.
- A large team was sent to the Zone Athletics Carnival. One student won the 11 Boys' Shot Put event, setting a new Zone record in the process. Four students qualified for the CSSA State Athletics Carnival, with one student going on to gain selection to the CIS Carnival. He performed very well at CIS, finishing in the medals. This meant selection to the CIS team to compete at the NSW PSSA Carnival, where he placed 6th in the final.
- Four students competed at the Hyundai Bennelong Cup Table Tennis Competition, progressing through the round robin stage and performing strongly.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

During 2016 Northcross Christian School continued to implement our Strategic Educational Thinking (SET) plan. These elements include; Excellence in Teaching & Learning, Pastoral Care & Spiritual Development, Curriculum & Co-Curricular, Quality Christian Staff and School & Community Partnerships.

The key initiatives were;

- Refined the implementation of Information and Learning Technologies (ILT)
- Developed a five-year financial plan including underlying budget principles
- Developed a master plan for the site
- Created flexible learning spaces
- Continued to articulate our core values to our community through visual prompts of graphic representation around the school
- Facilitated opportunities for teachers to lead staff meetings in their areas of interest and expertise including debriefing staff as a result of external professional learning
- Consolidated Australia Teacher performance and Development Framework and TAA requirements introduced by NESA
- Developed the newly acquired site at 5 Myra Avenue
- Completed our Strategic Plan
- Continued the expansion of PCSchools (School Administration System)
- Implemented the Administration restructure



PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

Northcross Christian School embraces and promotes a philosophy where parents and school work in partnership together to nurture and equip all our students. Northcross encourages and enjoys active parent participation in the school community which is primarily conducted through the Parents and Friends Association (the "P&F"). The P&F meets each school term to discuss matters relating to the life of the School and to organise future fundraising and School community events. The P&F Executive consists of President, two Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, Parent Representative to the School Board, the Canteen Convenor and a General Member (formerly the Parent Representative to the NSW Parents Council). In addition, the P&F liaises with two sub-committees, being a Hospitality Committee and Gardening Committee.

2016 was an active year with many parents involved in:

- Hosting and preparing gift packs for the Tea and Tissues morning tea for kindy's first day
- Catering and hosting the Information Evening, Open Day and two Kindergarten Orientation morning teas.
- the Northcross Food Fair, a community event involving multicultural food stalls and an evening movie on the school grounds, raising almost \$7,000 for the school.
- Providing support to teachers by assisting with reading groups, art classes, canteen, uniform shop, student banking, library, excursions and sports marshals.
- Holding a weekly prayer meeting to pray for students, staff, parents and School Board.
- the Annual Chocolate Fundraising drive.
- Fundraising through outside school promotions e.g. The Athletes Foot, Entertainment Books. These programs offer cash back/donation.

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 total \$31,762 was raised in 2016.

During 2016 the P&F were delighted to have been able to support the school financially with the following donations/gifts:

Description	Amount
Information Learning Technology (ILT) Phase Two – Stage 2 & 3	\$26,500
Year 6 Bibles	\$972
Teacher Farewell Gifts & Flowers	\$430
Environment Club/Gardening	\$258
Contribution to Year 6 Farewell (Cake)	\$264

We are thankful to God for the hard work, support and generosity of the parent body over the last year. On behalf of all parents, the P&F Executive would like to thank the School Board for their continued dedication, and Ryde Baptist Church for the ongoing ministry of the school.

We look forward to everyone's continued service at Northcross this year.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

In 2016 Student Leaders responsibilities included:

- Running and participating in school events such as Dedication Evening, Open Day, Teacher & Parent Information Nights and our weekly Assemblies
- House Captains leading House Meetings and assisting in organising Swimming, Cross Country, Athletic Carnivals.
- Organising sports equipment to be borrowed at Primary lunch times
- Representing the school at various events including the Ryde RSL Anzac Day Ceremony and Annual State Parliamentary Visit.
- Corresponding with the school's sponsor child in the Philippines
- Helped run the out of uniform days

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

2014

Year 3

In 2014 in Literacy, 92% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 51% in the State.

In Numeracy, 85% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 42% in the State.

Year 5

In 2014 in Literacy, 55% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 35% in the State.

In Numeracy, 64% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 29% in the State.

2015

Year 3

In 2015 in Literacy, 89% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 51% in the State.

In Numeracy, 67% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 37% in the State.

Year 5

In 2015 in Literacy, 70% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 35% in the State.

In Numeracy, 69% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 31% in the State.

2016

Year 3

In 2016 in Literacy, 86% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 53% in the State.

In Numeracy, 75% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 38% in the State.

Year 5

In 2016 in Literacy, 70% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

In Numeracy, 79% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 32% 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 2016, the school employed 38 staff members with 24 teaching staff, full-time and part time. The school retained 91.67% 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 teachers' 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.

Many opportunities were given to staff in 2016 to develop professionally. As a whole school the teaching staff were developed in – CPR, ILT planning, Live Life Well, Investigating learning space design, Share Point update, My Ed training, Transformation by Design workshops, PDHPE, WHS Online training, Spalding Update, Office 365 training.

Various staff attended the following courses or conferences– Spalding training, Future Schools, Edutech, First Aid, Improving the Outcomes of Hearing Impaired Students, Middle Leaders Program, Making Multimodal and Digital Texts for iPads, Tournament of Minds Workshop, Library Conference, ICT as a General Capability in Geography, Geography Inquiry, Boosting Creative Thinking Across the Curriculum with Music and Sound, Learning Difference Conference, Art in the Primary Classroom, Tactics of Effective Numeracy Instruction, MINILIT training, MULTILIT Reading Tutor training, Becoming accredited at Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher, Supervising Teachers Progressing to Proficient Teacher, Teaching Strategies and Behaviour Support for students with ASD by Sue Larkey, Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder – Dr Toni Attwood, Understanding Learning Difficulties – SPELD, Teaching Boys in the 21st Century, Working Scientifically and Working Technologically Unpacked, Objectives C, D & E: How do they look in the K-6 classroom, Teaching and Motivating Students with Particular Needs, The AIS Heads of Sport Conference - Taking It To The Next Level, Familiarisation: NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum K-6 History, Geography, Mathematics and English.

The Principal attended Future Schools Conference, CSA National Policy Forum and the CSA National Leadership Retreat. The Finance & Administration Manager attended the CSA Bursars Conference and the PC Schools Conference.



STUDENT POPULATION OF THE SCHOOL

The total student population of the school in 2016 was 333, with 154 girls and 179 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 95.77% school days, with absences largely being accounted for by approved leave or student illness.

Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance
Kindergarten	95.02%	Year 3	96.47%	Year 5	96.10%
Year 1	95.86%	Year 4	96.29%	Year 6	94.80%
Year 2	95.96%				

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 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;
- A note of explanation is to be given to the school upon return from the absence;
- Unexplained absences are followed up by the school;
- 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 no changes to the 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 2016 the Strategic Educational Thinking (SET) plan was extended to embrace other elements such as Marketing & Financial Stewardship, Facilities Master Plan, Size & Structure of School and Governance, Management & Administration. Agreed improvement targets include;

- Developing pedagogy by implementing effective learning theories that provide quality, wholistic learning experiences
- Continuing the development of Christian perspectives in the curriculum using 'Transformation by Design'
- Providing professional development opportunities and mentoring teachers
- Consolidating Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework and TAA requirements
- Introduce double streaming of Year Five and Year Six in 2017
- Continuing to building resilient children
- Continuing service activities such as 'Community Outreach'
- Reviewing Awards, Merits and other points systems operating in the school
- Consolidating the instrumental music program with the contemporary band and orchestra
- School & Community Partnerships - continuing to formalise Agreements of Cooperation providing continuity of Christian Schooling options for parents of Secondary students.
- Continuing to implement the Library Review recommendations
- Optimising space requirements on campus and creating flexible learning spaces piloting design as we plan our next building stage
- Investigating the merits of making a Block Grant Authority (BGA) application
- Developing a risk management and compliance reporting framework
- Focusing on Administration ILT including the introduction of the Northcross Christian School App
- Launching a new updated Northcross website
- Continuing to implement the transition to digital management of forms and records
- Continuing to realign Management & Operation of the School policies in line with NESA registration requirements

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 school 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 parents surveyed see the sense of community within the school as integral and important part of Northcross. 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 and public speaking.

They appreciate the highly competent staff who are devoted to the development and well-being of the whole child. 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. Parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities offered which are more technology related.

Staff:

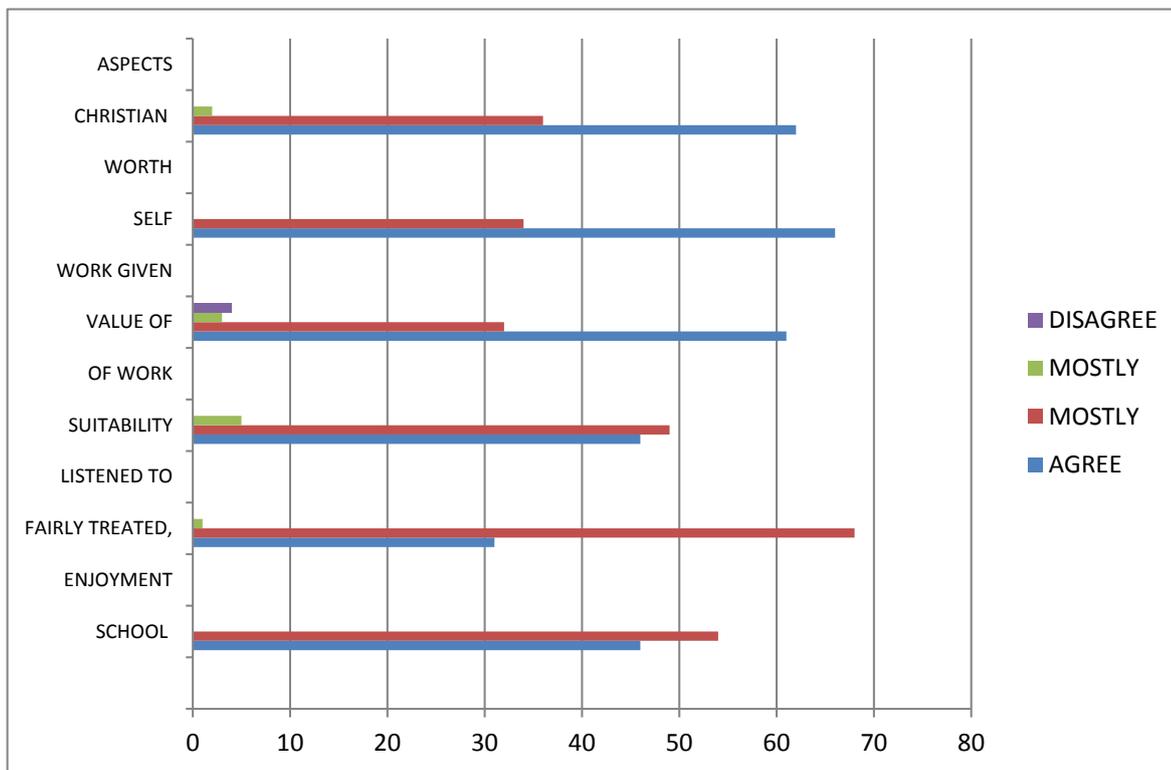
Staff described the school as a living Christ-centred community and are thankful to be part of a dedicated team. They find that Northcross fosters a culture of inclusion that is authentic. They state that it is a joy to work alongside such genuine, supportive and caring people who are committed to the 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 also want to continue to grow into better educators and provide challenging learning environments.

Students:

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS [Given in percentages]

AREAS	AGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	MOSTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE
SCHOOL ENJOYMENT	46	54	0	0
FAIRLY TREATED, LISTENED TO	31	68	1	0
SUITABILITY OF WORK	46	49	5	0
VALUE OF WORK GIVEN	61	32	3	4
SELF WORTH	66	34	0	0
CHRISTIAN ASPECTS	62	36	2	0





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 99% of them either agreed or mostly agreed that they were fairly treated and listened to. 95% agreed or mostly agreed that the work was suitable with 93% agreeing or mostly agreeing with the value of work given. Within the category of School Enjoyment 100% 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', 100% either agreed or mostly agreed with these with these statements. In relation to Christian Aspects 98% 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.

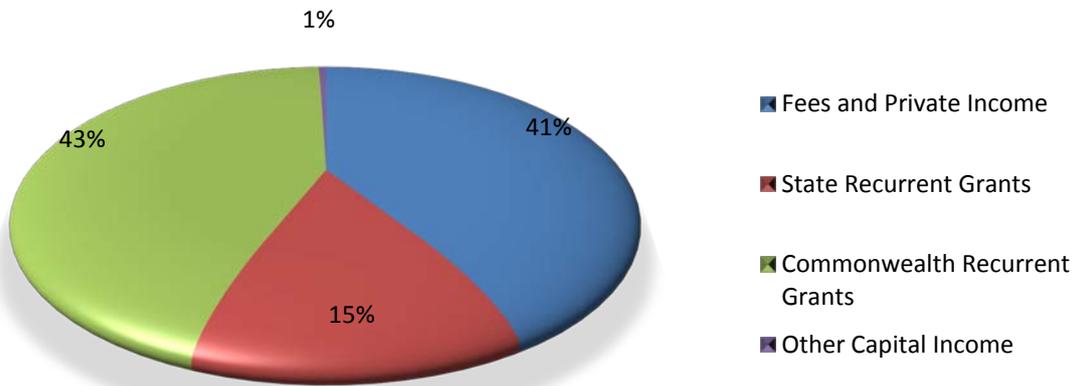
Anecdotal comments indicated that students value their 'Buddies' and enjoy opportunities where they can work and socialise together in co-curricular programs such as Peer Support and Community Outreach. Students have appreciated the opportunities to lead Assemblies, represent the School at official functions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



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A summary of the sources of the School's income and expenditure for 2016 is shown below.

Northcross Income 2016



Northcross Expenditure 2016

