

Assyrian Schools Limited
Campus of
**SAINT HURMIZD ASSYRIAN
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



Annual School Report 2015

MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

Message from the Board of Directors of the Assyrian Schools

The Assyrian Schools Limited Board comprises of the Chairman and Director of Assyrian Schools, His Eminence Archbishop Mar Meelis Zaia, AM, and a body of directors including parents, professionals and educationalists from the local community. The Assyrian Schools Board is the designated governing body that oversees the operations of the St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School located at the site of the St. Hurmizd Cathedral, Greenfield Park; the Saint Narsai Assyrian Christian College, Edensor Park; St. Hurmizd Early Learning Centre, Greenfield Park and Grace Early Learning Centre, Bossley Park.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School operates under the auspices of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. The school was founded in 2002 to cater for the educational needs of the local Parks' communities within Fairfield City. In 2015, the school catered for the educational needs of 632 students.

The School shares its location with the St. Hurmizd Cathedral at Greenfield Park, NSW, and is named after the seventh century Christian saint, *Rabban Hurmizd*. St. Hurmizd is revered as one of the major saints of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. His feast day is celebrated on the 1st of September as set in the Church's liturgical calendar.

Assyrian Schools Board

Message from the Principal

The publication of the Annual School Report is a New South Wales, *Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES)* requirement for non-government schools.

The Report is a school's profile for public disclosure and includes information and data about the school's mission statement, policies and procedures, student achievements and performances in National tests, staffing and students, the curriculum, financial summary, goals and aspiration for the future.

St Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School is located in Sydney's Metro South-West at Greenfield Park. The school has grown from 86 enrolments from its foundation year in 2002 to 632 students in 2015. It is a K – 6 Co-educational Christian-based independent school in the tradition of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East.

The school draws its students from areas of low socio-economic status of Fairfield City NSW, and caters for the learning needs and cultural diversity of these local communities by providing a progressive, BOSTES-endorsed curriculum, based on high educational standards incorporating Australian values and attitudes.

From 2012 -2013 the school participated in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership (NP). Under this Federal Government Partnership, the school was granted \$560, 000 per annum to:

- ▶ transform the way that schooling takes place in participating schools and to address the complex and interconnected challenges facing students in disadvantaged communities
- ▶ improve the educational outcomes of students, including literacy and numeracy outcomes, in targeted schools as well as to improve students' transition rates to further education and employment.

In 2014, under new Federal Government funding directions, the four-year National Partnership was abandoned and funding redirected under a new formula for Non-Government Schools.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School continues to work with its collaborative strategic plan which was developed to encompass the NP with all stakeholders after a comprehensive situation analysis of the School. Priority areas and targets were developed and strategies were planned and implemented to achieve them

The priorities areas identified in line with the partnership reforms were:

- Literacy and Numeracy
- Teacher Quality
- Leadership and Management
- Parental Engagement

In 2015 and through the AIS, St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School became eligible for the School Leading Learning (SLL) project for the period 2016-2017.

“Schools Leading Learning addresses the links between quality teaching and quality learning as described in both the Australian Government’s *Students First* reform agenda (2013) and the NSW Government’s *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* (March 2013). The project supports school leaders to:

- drive quality teaching and learning in their school
- conduct self-assessments of school performance to inform improvement planning
- identify and design teacher professional development aligned to priorities determined during whole school improvement planning processes
- facilitate and review in-school professional learning opportunities, including teachers learning from each other. “ ***AIS SLL School Information***

The School continues its focus on these priorities to achieve desired outcomes as per our strategic plan.

Mr. Sargis Makko (Principal)

Message from our Student Leaders

At St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School (SHAPS), the Student Representative Council (SRC) of 2015 was comprised of:

2 School Captains

- Eshtaarr Youkhana
- Daniel Menashi,

2 Vice Captains

- Anita Daniel
- Anthony Albazi,

6 SRC Members

- Benjamin Awraham
- Angelina Daniel
- Isabella Baba
- Marvin Gewargis
- Rebecca Lee
- Symona Gabriel, representing each of the grades.

Along with two Sports Captains for each of our four Houses

- **Babel House**
 - Daniel Kakoz
 - Marie Toma
- **Nimrud House**
 - Marina Shamon
 - Abael Joseph
- **Tigris House**
 - Angela Benyamin
 - Ninep Khaey
- **Eden House**
 - Mary Oraha
 - Jason Mirza

The SHAPS SRC is responsible for a number of operational tasks that help run our school smoothly while making sure students are represented at every level during their time at school.

As well as representing the student body at various levels, the SRC are also tasked with roles and responsibilities that include running daily morning assemblies, organising and hosting formal school assemblies, working with the Christian Studies Department in organising and hosting liturgies, Feast days celebrations and commemorations, assisting in the organisation and running of important days like: ANZAC Day, Assyrian Martyrs Day, Remembrance Day, Harmony Day, Assyrian New Year Celebrations, St. Hurmizd Day and much more. The SRC are also actively involved in fund raising activities like, Jeans for Genes, Red Nose Day, Jump Rope for Heart, Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, Project Compassion for overseas children, and Christmas Hampers for the needy and so on.

*Eshtaarr Youkhana & Daniel Menashi,
School Captains 2015*

Message from our Parents' Representatives

The Parents and Friends Association of St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School is comprised of a dedicated group of parents that represent the interests of the entire parent body belonging to the SHAPS School community. The P&F Association comprises of: a President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fund Raising Office, PR Officer and Sub Committee Members.

It is important to note that the P&F plays an integral part in our school in providing a formal structure and support network for parents to participate and make meaningful contribution to the decision-making process for the benefit of our children.

The P&F also helps parents engage with the school and with the learning of their children. It does this by helping parents realise that they are partners with the teachers and the principal in the education of their children and consequently parents share the responsibility of educating their children with the teaching staff. Parents and families are the first teachers of their children and have the right and the responsibility to be engaged with their children's education. Research shows that children do better at school when parents continue to be involved throughout their children's years at school. While other groups may be active within the life of the school, we feel that the P&F Association makes a most valuable contribution in representing the interests of the whole parent body and their children.

Over the years, the P&F, through their fund raising efforts have managed to contribute generously to the improvement of our school, some of the projects that the P&F have contributed to include; an electronic sign for the school, new soft floor playground for the infants, new expansive shade sails for the playground and various other projects.

SHAPS P&F Association

The School

School Profile

Our Vision

Lighting the way - Preserving Our Faith, Culture and Heritage

Our school is dedicated to educational excellence, encouraging students to reach their potential in a nurturing environment to become productive citizens, reflecting the faith of the Assyrian Church of the East, Assyrian language and Culture.

Our Mission:

Centre of Excellence

- *To provide a continuum of education founded on a rich tradition of faith, family and community values.*
- *To strive for academic excellence embedded in a Christian faith-filled environment.*

Curriculum

- *To offer a broad and diverse curriculum endorsed by the NSW Board of Studies, based on progressive technology-enriched educational programs incorporating productive and coordinated planning.*
- *To continuously evaluate the quality of our courses to ensure their excellence is maintained, and enables holistic student development in spiritual, intellectual, physical and social aspects of being, reflecting the diverse needs of a life-long learning process.*
- *To provide a complete academic program in an environment that integrates learning, cultural heritage and religious instruction, Gospel values, and spiritual formation into all aspects of a comprehensive and challenging curriculum and the practice of faith lived out in the daily experience of our dedicated staff and students.*

Characteristics of the student body

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School had 632 students enrolled in 2015. There are approximately equal numbers of boys and girls enrolled at the school. The school draws its students from the local communities of Fairfield City which is situated in Sydney's South West - an area associated with a low Socio-Economic status. The majority of students are of an Assyrian heritage and so English is not their main language at home so contributing to the high ESL factor of the school. The school also accommodates for a number of students that experience learning difficulties and are regarded as Special Needs. The school runs an Intensive Language Course of 12 months for New Arrival refugee students originating from countries of the Middle East.

Student outcomes in standardised National Literacy & Numeracy testing

NAPLAN 2015

In 2015, cohorts of students from St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School in years 3 (73) and 5 (79) participated in standardized National Literacy and Numeracy Testing (NAPLAN).

Performances in NAPLAN 2015 are reported on the My School website. Please visit:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

Professional Learning and Teaching Standards

Professional Learning

At St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School we are committed to providing an education that fully develops the talents and capacities of all students. Professional development is valued and recognised as a major contributing factor for improving the learning outcomes for students. Teachers at St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School have the responsibility to undertake ongoing professional development that develops skills, knowledge and understanding in support of this goal.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School identifies Professional Development as training and development opportunities, whether: formal or informal, individual or shared, that provides opportunities for professional discourse, interaction, practice, reflection and analysis. Professional development can occur face-to-face, online or through other modes of delivery. In 2015 the majority of the teaching staff attended, on average, 2 days of off-campus PD events as well as participating in school-organised professional development (8 days in 2015).

New Scheme Teachers

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School is committed to ongoing professional learning of staff. We recognise the significance of particular periods in the professional life of an individual, these include at the outset of employment as a beginning teacher and on return to the profession following periods of extended leave of absence. We aim to provide specific support and opportunities for professional development at these transition points to assist in the teacher's accreditation process according to the BOSTES guidelines.

Teaching Standards and Qualifications

CATEGORY	Number of Teachers
Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) Guidelines	36
Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR Guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	Nil

Workforce Composition

<u>Position</u>	<u>Number</u>
Principal	1.0
Deputy Principal	1.0
Primary Coordinators	2.0
Full time equivalent classroom teaching positions	30.0
Pastoral Care and Religious Education Coordinator	1.0
Learning Support Teacher and Coordinator	1.0
EAL/D Teacher(s)	2.0
Teacher Librarian	1.0
Counsellor	1.0
Non-Teaching Support Staff (SLSO) (Full time equivalent)	4.5
Non-Teaching Support Staff, Administrative and Clerical	3.0

Student Attendance Rates

2015 Student Attendance Rates as a percentage

GRADE LEVEL	ATTENDANCE RATE (%)
K	93.9
1	94.7
2	93.2
3	94.0
4	95.4
5	92.3
6	93.4
School Average	93.8

Managing student non-attendance

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School implements appropriate policies and procedures for the management of student non-attendance.

The Principal, Stage Coordinator or Classroom Teacher will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences. In the first instance, parents are notified by SMS on the first day of their child's absence with a reminder to provide written evidence explaining the absence.

Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. The Principal may report unresolved attendance issues to the Assyrian Schools Board.

Student non-attendance is reported on student's half year and end of year academic reports.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School Enrolment policy

PREAMBLE

Consistent with its Mission Statement, Assyrian Schools Limited (ASL) attempts to provide the best possible education and has as its focus, the Assyrian Church of the East ethos. It is vital that Assyrian Christian beliefs and ethics are integrated into the whole life of the school. In this regard, Assyrian Schools are committed to educating its students in an environment that strives to be faithful to the Church of the East, its traditions and teachings.

It is the aim of our schools to provide the choice of schooling to all those seeking an education in an environment formed by the teachings and traditions of the Church of the East. Notwithstanding this, enrolment of a student into an Assyrian Schools Limited school cannot be guaranteed.

[1.0] Principles

1.1 Assyrian Schools Limited schools (ASL schools) are open to all parents and students who are prepared to support the philosophy, values and objectives of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East.

1.2 ASL schools will endeavour to be inclusive of all students, consistent with the belief that all are equal before God.

1.3 ASL schools recognise that every student has a right to a complete education and in this regard shall offer students a curriculum that is not restrictive in scope and which is in line with New South Wales Board of Studies guidelines and syllabuses.

1.4 Parents who choose an Assyrian Schools Limited school for their children undertake to support the religious principles, traditions and practices of the school and the parish/s they serve. This includes but is not limited to full participation of their children in Assyrian Schools Limited religious education programs.

1.5 Enrolment of students at an Assyrian Schools Limited school obligates parents/guardians to accept and meet the school's fees and levies unless another agreement is reached with the Principal. Parents/guardians of those students who are marginalised and in most need shall not be refused enrolment merely because of an inability as opposed to unwillingness on their part to meet ASL schools financial requirements.

1.6 Enrolment applications will be determined by an Enrolments Committee which will consist of a Priest of the local parish (or his representative), and a representative of the School Board. The Enrolment Committee will meet from time to time and shall be chaired by the Principal.

1.7 The Enrolment Committee shall review all enrolments from time to time, but no less frequently than once per term. Continuing enrolment shall be conditional on students meeting ASL schools requirements.

[2.0] Enrolment Policies

2.1 General Enrolments

2.1 All parents seeking to enroll their children in an ASL schools must complete the application for enrolment form and return it to the relevant school office by 31 May in the year prior to enrolment. However, this does not guarantee enrolment of their child in the school.

2.2 Application for enrolment forms will be available at ASL schools offices.

2.3 Completed application forms should be returned to the relevant school office together with copies of the following documents:

- (a) Birth Certificate;
- (b) Baptismal Certificate; and
- (c) Immunisation Record

2.4 The completed Parish reference which forms part of the application for enrolment will be returned to the relevant school office by the Parish Priest.

2.5 The Principal will arrange for an interview with the parents/guardians and the prospective students.

2.6 Parents will then be notified in writing of the results of their application by June 30 in the year prior to enrolment.

2.7 Where the number of enrolments in any given year exceeds the number of places available, the priority for acceptance shall be as follows:

- (a) Siblings of students presently enrolled in an ASL school whose parents/guardians have shown a commitment to meet their financial responsibilities to the school.
- (b) Children from the St. Hurmizd Early Learning Centre and Grace Child Care.
- (c) Children from families affiliated with the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East.
- (d) Children from families affiliated with other Assyrian Churches.
- (e) Children from Christian families.
- (f) Children from non-Christian families.

2.8 Enrolment application received after the cut-off enrolment date, will be considered by the Enrolment Committee only if vacancies exist, regardless of where the application might be placed in the hierarchy of priority described in clause 2.7 above.

2.9 Parents must be prepared to meet the financial requirements for the ongoing enrolment of the child.

2.10 Parents acknowledge that acceptance of their children at the pre-school level does not confer an automatic entitlement to enrolment at the Primary School. Enrolment at St Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School is a new process that requires students to complete and submit a separate school enrolment application form.

2.11 Parents acknowledge that acceptance of their children at the primary school level does not confer an automatic entitlement to enrolment at the secondary level. Enrolment at Saint Narsai College is a new process which requires students to complete and submit a separate school enrolment application form.

[3.0] Students with Disabilities

3.1 The Enrolment Committee shall follow the enrolment procedure detailed above when processing enrolment applications from parents/guardians of students with disabilities, within the context of Part 2, Division 2, Section 22 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, who seek to be enrolled into regular classes at St Hurmizd.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's annual review cycle.

School Policies

Policies and Procedures

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School has a comprehensive range of written Policies and Procedures to ensure that students are given the best possible education and that all activities comply with the NSW Board of Studies requirements.

Policies and Procedures include Child Protection, Student Welfare, Anti-Bullying, WH&S, Medication, Enrolment, Grievance, Critical Incident and Evacuation.

Policies and Procedures are made available to parents through the Parent Handbook and during information/parent teacher meetings held throughout the year or simply the stake holders may contact the school's office for a copy of the desired policy.

All policies and Procedures have been sent to the NSW Board of Studies as part of the registration and accreditation process.

All staff has been supplied with a Staff Handbook which incorporates the School's Policies and Procedures. All staff receives regular training in these procedures and they are regularly reviewed to ensure currency and best practice. Electronic copies of all updated policies and procedures are accessible to all staff via the school's network.

Grievance Procedure

There will be times in any organisation where clients are not completely satisfied with products and services on offer. Within our school, we have procedures in place where parents can contact their child's teacher and make an appointment to discuss their concerns. If parents are still not satisfied with the answer, parents may take their concern to the Principal. If however, a grievance cannot be resolved with the Principal they can write to the Board to resolve the issue.

Student Welfare & Pastoral Care

The School's Welfare and Pastoral Care policy is based on positive reinforcement. Students are rewarded with merit awards for their academic efforts as well as for demonstrating positive behaviours and attitudes towards others and showing respect for their physical environment.

Students receive awards according to the following process, culminating with the School Medallion:

Students who earn 5 Merit Awards will receive 1 Assembly Award

Students who earn 5 Assembly Awards will receive 1 Gold Award

Students who earn 5 Gold Awards will receive 1 Principal's Award

Students who earn 5 Principal's Award will receive the School Medallion

Records of awards are kept throughout their time at school so while everyone is able earn a School Medallion it is not expected that all will.

For students who find it difficult to follow the school rules, there are a number of disciplinary measures that are used to address minor and major misdemeanors.

For serious or repeated incidents, students are given time out or detention during lunchtime. These students are also referred to the School Counselor to assist them with their behaviour. Parents' of students, who are placed on time out on more than three occasions, are notified by letter that their child will serve an in-school suspension in the first instance.

If their behaviour does not improve, the student's enrolment may be cancelled. While we hope we never have to cancel any student's enrolment, there may be a time when this is necessary for the sake of other students in the school.

St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School does not condone or allow the use of any form of corporal punishment. This includes corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at school.

School-determined improvement targets

Achievement of priorities in 2015

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Numeracy	Priority exists in lifting the School's numeracy results across all grades as NAPLAN data shows that student performance can be significantly improved in relation to state and sector means for both the Year 3 and Year 5 cohorts.	In 2015 the school had continued to refine pedagogical aspects of numeracy across all grades through professional development delivered by consultants from the Association of Independent Schools and other professional bodies. NAPLAN analysis continues to prove to be a powerful diagnostic measure in assisting the school in identifying areas of concern. NAPLAN data from 2012 – 2015 indicates that achievement levels in both cohorts of Yrs3 &5 have stabilised. Further work is needed in 2016 to explore ways of improving these levels.
Technology Assisted Learning	Appointment of ICT coordinator to assist and further develop this important area of student learning. Every student in stages 2 and 3 is now equipped with a portable device to assist in their learning.	Students of grades 4, 5, and 6 readily engage with handheld devices that have become a valuable tool in the classroom as well as at home. The students continue to gain confidence in the application of these devices to both their classroom learning and also at home with interactive programs prescribed by the school.
Student Welfare	Priority is set to develop and implement programs that will enhance student welfare and pastoral care.	In 2015 the school continued to work with the "You Can Do It Program" from 2014. This has been a successfully run program and works well with other programs that we have introduced at the school, like the PBS program (Positive Behaviour Strategies).

2016 Priority areas for improvement

Area	Priorities
Literacy and Numeracy	The school will continue to prioritise the attainment of set targets as set out in the 2016 School's Improvement Plan in Literacy and Numeracy.
Implementation of the AIS's Schools Leading Learning (SLL) project within the Schools Professional Learning Community (PLC) framework.	To continue working within the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Framework implemented in 2014 and incorporating in 2016 the School Learning Leading (SLL) project initiated by the NSW Association of Independent Schools.
Student Welfare and Pastoral Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Support the appointment of a new Welfare Coordinator for Stage 3 to address the emotional, mental and physical challenges of pre-teens before transitioning to high school. ▶ Further promote and evaluate the already established programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behaviour Strategies (PBS), • Seasons for Growth, • Restorative Justice program
Cultural and social challenges for New Arrival students.	Develop a program to assist the assimilation of new arrival children from war-torn countries into the school community. This would be achieved via gradual integration with a focus on social and cultural adjustments, trauma counselling, confidence building and skills in overcoming language and cultural barriers.

Respect and Responsibility

Valued education permeates all aspects of school life at St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School and respect and responsibility are important aspects of valued education.

As part of the NSW Government's action plan for values, respect and behaviour in schools, a number of school education initiatives were announced to promote the key community values of respect and responsibility.

Respect is having regard for yourself and others, lawful and just authority and diversity within Australian society and accepting the right of others to hold different or opposing views. Responsibility is being accountable for your individual and community's actions towards yourself, others and the environment.

At St. Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School Gospel values lie at the very heart of our pastoral care and welfare policy. Both staff and students demonstrate respect and responsibility through role modelling in the every-day life of the school.

Formal Religious Education

The study of Religious Education is a compulsory subject at St Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School. A team of Religion teachers form a committee whose role is to design and implement the Religious Education program at the school.

The content of the Religious Education program is based on the teachings of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. Prayer is a fundamental part of the program.

All units of study within the Religious Education program aim to develop each student's knowledge and understanding of their faith including, beliefs, history, traditions and practices. The Christian values and commitment instilled in the students encourage them to demonstrate tolerance and treat all members of the community with dignity and respect.

Parent, student & teacher satisfaction

The evaluation and development of Assyrian schools is an ongoing process. Through our regular communication and contact with parents we hear positive and constructive comments regarding our Schools. Modes of communication/contact include:

Newsletter every fortnight, hard and soft copies through website updates and school App.

Parent information Nights

Students' Academic reports

Parent/teacher interviews

Parent survey

P&F fliers to parents

Local Parish announcements

Community radio announcements

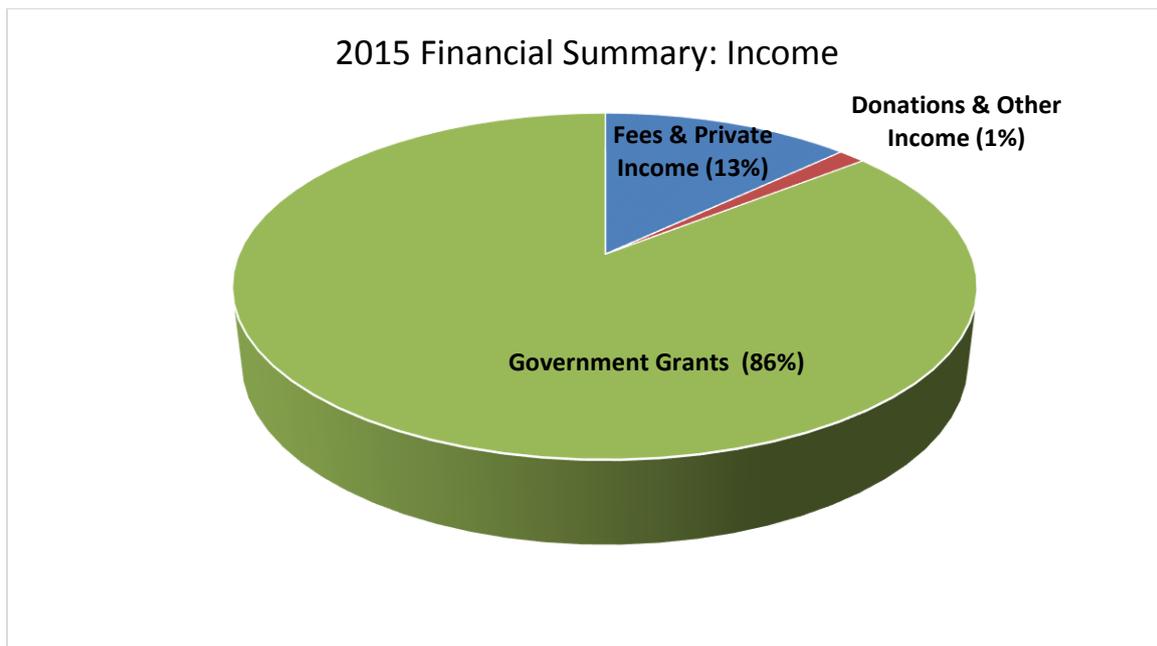
The school has an open door policy with parent involvement welcomed and encouraged. The Parents and Friends Association meets on a monthly basis and provides one of a number of avenues for parents to express their level of satisfaction. Throughout 2015 the level of participation in the P & F was high and parent feedback indicates a pleasing level of satisfaction with the school.

Areas of concern were mostly related to student WH&S issues on the school playground during the children's play time. Vigilant Teacher supervision is expected from all staff in line with their Duty of Care obligation at all times but especial during play time and during movement to and from class. Parents, students and school staff are constantly reminded of best practice to minimize hazards on the school site.

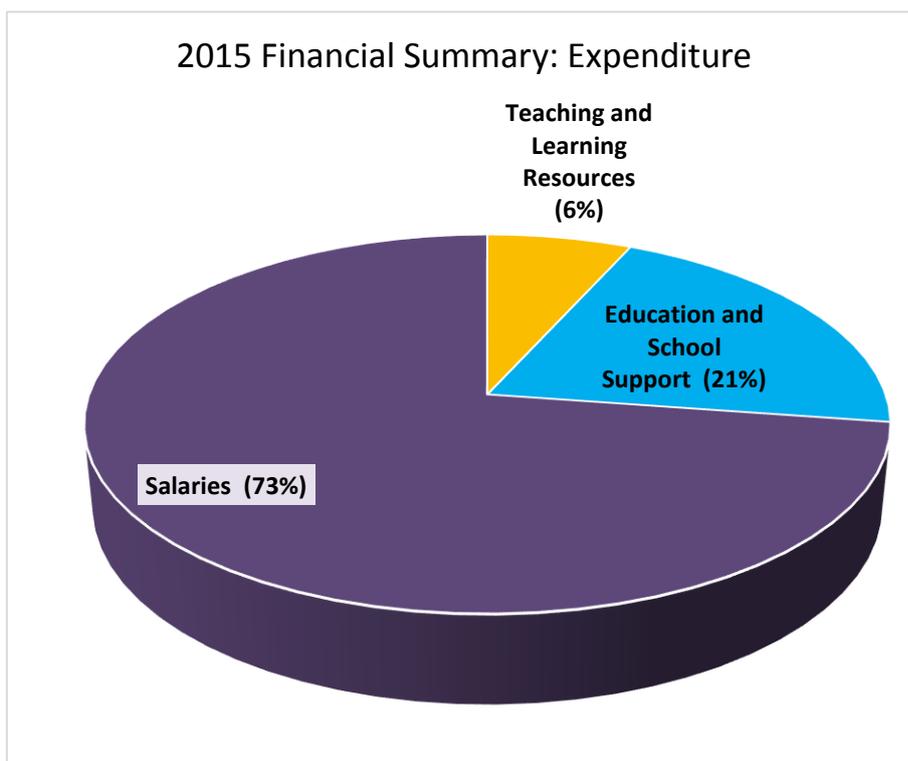
All staff members are formally interviewed by the principal as part of an annual self-review to insure workplace efficiency and satisfaction are addressed.

Financial Summary

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



End of Report