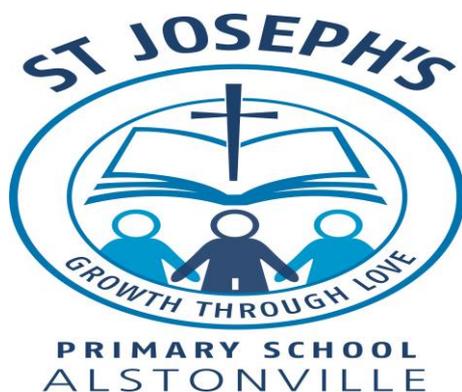


# Annual School Report

## 2021 School Year

St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville



11 Perry Street

Alstonville NSW 2477

Phone 02 6628 1009

[www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au](http://www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au)

## About this report

St Joseph's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Lismore 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 to the Parish School Community* for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The *Report* also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). This *Report* has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, yearbooks and other regular communications. The *Report* must be available on the school's website by 30 June 2022 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this *Report* may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this *Report* may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6628 1009 or by visiting the website at [www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au](http://www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au).



## 1.0 Messages

### 1.1 Principal's Message

The primary purpose of St Joseph's Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. St Joseph's Primary School offers students a quality Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

During 2021 with the continuing COVID-19 pandemic the school ensured they offered strong support to all our families as they managed the effects of restrictions. Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the students to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas although in a different form than normal. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school's mission was lived out daily in the life of the school and was greatly appreciated by our school community.

The students' achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2021. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards and in the school office. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that St Joseph's Primary School has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school's academic achievements. In 2021 the school:

- Continued our work with Lyn Sharratt around Clarity and improving writing outcomes for students. As a staff we created a data wall to track student growth over time and utilise whole school writing tasks to monitor student achievement.
- Began our work with Michael McDowell and the RENEW project, and we are working to reinvigorate our Religious Education Programs. This project began in Stage 3 and will filter down through the stages as we continue our work in this area.
- Participated in the Little Scribes Writing Festival. This was a week-long festival where students were able to interact with Authors and Illustrators from around Australia to improve their writing and illustrating skills. Staff also participated in this festival and were able to build capacity in the areas of writing and illustrating in order to take these skills back into the classroom setting.
- Commenced training a staff member for the Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) program. This allowed us to have a specialist EMU teacher in each stage across the school to support students in Mathematics not only as an Intervention, but also within the classroom setting.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school's cultural program and community involvement. In 2021 the school:

- Held Ten Ten music workshops and performances in our Hall as an essential component of our Faith Rally.
- Participated in the Clean Up Australia Day work in our community.
- Held our own ANZAC Day remembrance service at school.
- Invited Orange Sky to visit and talk to the students as part of our Winter Sleepover initiative.
- Held David Ogg Art Workshops for interested students, creating art works to display at school.
- Facilitated NAIDOC Week Celebrations for our school community.

Students performed well at various sporting events throughout the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights. In 2021:

- Students were successful at Polding level in Swimming and Cross Country.
- Despite interruptions with COVID-19, our school was able to safely and successfully hold all of our annual school sporting carnivals for Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics.



- Individual students were selected to represent our school, Zone and Diocese for Netball and Rugby Union.
- Senior students participated in a local mixed netball gala.
- Our students participated in a variety of new sports following successful grant applications with the Australian Sports Commission. This grant also allowed us to purchase new sporting equipment for the students to use at school.

There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Joseph's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

Therese Seymour  
Principal

## 1.2 A Parent Message

2021 was again a very different year for the Parish School Forum. We were still able to hold very modified Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day stalls by ordering in advance. Our annual Family Day was held as an end of year family afternoon on the school playground with Colour Run, BBQ and Liturgy. With only one face to face meeting we concentrated more on the behind the scenes help and support to parents of the school community. COVID-19 has taught us many things: how to be patient and yet move with changes quickly; simple care of each other; and celebrating special moments in different ways. I am sure these new ways of thinking will help us into the future. We look forward to a more hands on year for the Parish School Forum in 2022.

Liz Bugden  
Co-ordinator  
Parish School Forum

## 2.0 This Catholic School

### 2.1 The School Community

St Joseph's Primary School is located in Alstonville and is part of the Catholic Parish of Alstonville and Wardell Parish which serves the communities of Alstonville, Goonellabah, Alstonvale, Macleans Ridges, West Ballina, Uralba and Wardell, from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 102 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest Fr Max Gow is involved in the life of the school.

St Joseph's Primary School is a parish school with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through activities such as:

- Our Parish-based Sacramental Program which continued to be a major focus in 2021 with our students participating in Baptism, First Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation. To support this we hosted a Sacramental Preparation Day here at school, utilising staff members in preparing students for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Continuing a focus on School Liturgies for a variety of celebrations including St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Beginning of the Year and Ash Wednesday, while we could not hold school Masses.
- Continuing our commitment to Christian Meditation daily with all students.
- Our social justice work, which continued through events like the Winter Sleepover, Christmas Hampers for St Vincent de Paul and Socktober.
- Celebrating an End of Year Family Liturgy to mark the achievements of our year.



- A weekly School Report which appears in the Parish Bulletin to keep the Parish community informed of school events.
- Supporting families through our Junior Joeys program, a transition to school initiative.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text "To Know, Worship & Love". Catholic life and culture permeate school life with two and a half hours of religious education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school's prayer life. The aims and direction of our parish school are guided by *The Mission of Jesus Christ Foundational Values Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore*. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate the essence of this statement into all aspects of school life. Religious Education is given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.

## 2.2 School Enrolment

St Joseph's Primary School caters for children from Years K to 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL 2021	TOTAL 2020
<b>Male</b>	15	18	10	16	15	9	16	99	101
<b>Female</b>	7	14	13	16	9	8	10	77	81
<b>Indigenous *</b>	2	1	3	0	0	1	0	7	6
<b>EALD *</b>	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	4	0

\* count included in first two rows

NB: EALD refers to students who have English as an Additional Language or Dialect.

## 2.3 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 monitor attendance each day as a part of their duty of care.

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, email to the school or a note in Compass, 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, families meet with the principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2021 is shown in the following table.

Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years

94.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	94.0%	95.0%	94.0%	94.6%
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## 2.4 Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

All teachers employed by the School are qualified to teach in NSW. Additionally, all teachers at this School who are responsible for delivering the curriculum are accredited with NESA. Effective from October 2007, the minimum qualification for a teacher in a systemic school in the Diocese of Lismore is a four year teaching degree. Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the *NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Diocese at these levels is as follows: Conditional 57 teacher(s); Provisional 44 teacher(s); Proficient 1486 teacher(s); Highly Accomplished 1 teacher(s); Lead 1 teacher(s). Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

At this school there are 17 teacher(s) accredited with NESA, 17 teacher(s) with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education, 1 Indigenous staff and 12 non-teaching staff.

## 2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance figure is 93.0%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

At the end of 2021 we had a long-standing staff member retire and one staff member resign.

## 2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school 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 school and the local community.

The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- During 2021 our Kick It program continued to make an impact in school. This program, run in vertical groups and led by Stage 3 students, is designed to build mutual respect and safety in our school community. The school continues to facilitate the Seasons for Growth program as well as Cool Kids to support our students.
- Our Student Wellbeing staff continues to ensure we meet the needs of our students and their families. This has been especially crucial during the Covid epidemic. The level of care we could offer has ensured our students and their families have managed all the difficulties of COVID-19 with healthy results.

## 2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures.

During 2021 we sought parent feedback on the structures we had in place to support our school families during Blended Learning.

We also introduced our new format for Learning Conversations where the student, a staff member and a parent meet to look at progress, areas for improvement and celebrations of success. At the conclusion of the Learning Conversations we sought parent feedback on the format used.

In addition, we utilise parent meetings to seek feedback from families around school policy, school initiatives and planning for future events.

### **3.0 Teaching and Learning**

#### **3.1 School Curriculum**

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

Our Learning Support programs support students with Tier Two and Tier Three interventions:

- EMU - Students from Stages One -Three participate in EMU. EMU is Extending Mathematical Understanding and focuses on four areas. Students who are deemed vulnerable in these four areas are invited to participate in this program.
- STAR - Stage One students participate in STAR four times per week. STAR is a reading program for younger readers and supports with decoding and comprehension skills and strategies ranging from PM benchmark levels five - eight.
- MULTILIT - Stage Two and Stage Three students participate in MutliLit four times per week. This is a reading/comprehension program that supports older readers in a small group setting.

Enrichment Programs are linked to our Wellbeing programs and support for students and families during this year has been vital. Regular check ins with families during extended periods of lockdown due to the pandemic were important as students and families were away from the school environment. We were unable to host some of our regular programs such as the Learning Assistance Program due to restrictions.

Our school was supported with Technology through our Innovative Technology staff. These staff provided support in creating Digital portfolios using the Google Suite and supported staff in creating a Digital Scope and Sequence from Early Stage One to Stage Three.

Literacy and Numeracy continues through our School Improvement Plan and each goal is related to continuing work in these areas. Our Literacy focus is our work with Lyn Sharratt around writing and our numeracy work is around our Mathematics Assessment Interview data and maintenance in these four priority areas.

The school works in flexible stage groupings. This allows staff working in these stages the opportunity to group students where support is required or where individualised teaching is necessary. This change in pedagogy has resulted in better support and a greater opportunity for targeted teaching. The same pedagogical approach is utilised with students in Wellbeing.

The school stage groups meet regularly in professional learning teams and in case management meetings to ensure we own all the faces on our data. The focus on all students being known is also supported by our Kick It groups, Better Buddy training and the use of student voice in all areas of the school.

The parish primary school offers a strong co-curricular program including student participation in:



- Sports events locally to build their skills in both the sport and in social settings.
- Storytelling which allowed them to bring God's word to life using the art of narration and imagination.
- The heavy focus on digital technologies and the tools to support learning.
- Mindfulness and spirituality being taught through art and God's word.
- Diocesan Retreat Days such as Exuro, Incitare and Accendere.
- ANZAC Day and Remembrance day Liturgies
- Clean Up Australia Day when our school took part in a town clean up organised by Rotary International.
- Lunchtime activities such as Bingo, Choir, Drama, Art, Maker Space and Garden Club.
- Writing, illustrating and animating a published book supported by local authors and illustrators.

## **3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs**

### **3.2.1 NAPLAN**

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 31 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 20 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.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

At St Joseph's Primary School, school and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Joseph's Primary School students in each band compared to the State percentage. Please note that due to the possible rounding up or down of numbers or students who achieved results outside of these bands the total percentage figure may not be 100%.

**Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy  
Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6**

BAND	6		5		4		3		2		1	
	State	School										
<b>Reading</b>	22.0	22.6	22.0	19.4	19.0	19.4	13.0	16.1	8.0	6.5	3.0	0.0
<b>Writing</b>	20.0	9.7	37.0	29.0	23.0	25.8	9.0	22.6	4.0	6.5	2.0	0.0
<b>Spelling</b>	23.0	12.9	23.0	22.6	20.0	29.0	13.0	12.9	7.0	12.9	5.0	3.2
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	22.0	19.4	24.0	35.5	19.0	25.8	10.0	9.7	6.0	0.0	4.0	3.2
<b>Numeracy</b>	14.0	22.6	22.0	25.8	27.0	32.3	19.0	12.9	10.0	0.0	3.0	0.0

**Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy  
Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8**

BAND	8		7		6		5		4		3	
	State	School										
<b>Reading</b>	16.0	25.0	25.0	6.3	27.0	25.0	18.0	43.8	8.0	0.0	3.0	0.0
<b>Writing</b>	8.0	0.0	17.0	12.5	33.0	25.0	27.0	31.3	10.0	25.0	3.0	6.3
<b>Spelling</b>	15.0	6.3	28.0	18.8	24.0	25.0	17.0	25.0	8.0	25.0	4.0	0.0
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	13.0	0.0	21.0	6.3	27.0	31.3	20.0	25.0	9.0	25.0	5.0	12.5
<b>Numeracy</b>	10.0	6.3	21.0	18.8	29.0	37.5	24.0	25.0	10.0	6.3	3.0	0.0

As can be seen from the table of percentage, the number of students in Year Five in the top three bands in Numeracy has increased from the previous years. The bulk of Year Five students are currently in Bands five and six for Numeracy. A number of initiatives have contributed to these results including the implementation of a range of strategies to improve student engagement and understanding in Mathematics.

In Year Three there are several students in the bottom two bands for Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation. Further analysis is required to gain insight into future directions for the improvement in Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation.

### 3.3 Teacher Professional Learning

All teachers have been involved in professional learning activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the professional skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2021 were:

Staff Professional Learning Activity	Date	Presenter
RENEW	26/11/2021	Staff from S3 at school
Staff Spirituality Day	12/07/2021	Staff from school
Clarity, Learning Collaborative	26/11/2021	Clarity Team at school
Disruptability Conference	18/11/2021	Online, Amanda Page-McDonald, Julia Boyle
Compass Training	05/10/2021	Greg Dwyer
Seven Steps for Writing	19/04/2021	Seven Steps Company presenter

Additionally, staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

Activity	Staff numbers	Presenter
Teacher Learning Network Courses	9	Various
Digital Technology	11	Phil Crosby
Read & Write Help	9	Julia Boyle
NESA Online PD	12	Various
Learning & Teaching Domain Statements	20	Kasey Miles

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at \$4741 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by the CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

## 4.0 School Policies

### 4.1 Enrolment Policy

Parish schools were established as places of educational excellence and places that transmit the faith, in the mission entrusted to the Church by our Lord Jesus Christ. They form part of a tradition of Catholic education provided by religious and lay teachers in the Diocese of Lismore for over 150 years. They also fulfil parents' rights to choose the schooling for their children which reflects their own faith, values, beliefs and hopes. Catholic schools have a particular responsibility to provide a Catholic religious education to children baptised in the Catholic faith and to support parents in honouring the commitments that they made on behalf of their children at baptism. The Catholic school is also "open to all who want to share its educational and faith goals inspired by Christian principles" (Congregatio de Institutione Catholica 2009). Most importantly, there is a special place in parish schools for those with the greatest need, especially in areas of lesser educational options or lower socio economic circumstances, and efforts should be made to encourage such enrolments, within the vision of the Bishop of Lismore for the poor.



Every new enrolment at St Joseph's Primary School requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines. A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school's website [School Enrolment Policy](#). There have been no changes to this policy this year.

#### **4.2 Pastoral Care Policy**

The school's Pastoral Care Policy is based on the principles of restorative justice and procedural fairness. The policy reflects the vision and mission of the Catholic Church and is characterised by safety, trust and mutual respect. To live out this policy the school has adopted various programs aimed at helping students value themselves and experience wellbeing. These include programs focussing on self-esteem, social relationships, moral development, vocational awareness, sexuality, anti-bullying, drug awareness, health and personal safety. The school's pastoral care program has been developed in consultation with staff, parents and students and is available on the school's website. This policy was reviewed by both staff and our parent body in 2021.

#### **4.3 Discipline Policy**

The school does not sanction corporal punishment or allow parents to administer corporal punishment in the school.

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and ensures that school practices respect the dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms of individual students. Students are required to abide by the school rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with delegated authority. Where disciplinary action is required any penalty imposed will vary according to the nature of the breach and/or the student's prior behaviour. The policy is discussed with students, staff and parents on a regular basis. Reminders about the policy are regularly included in school newsletters. It is available on the school's website. There have been no changes to this policy this year.

#### **4.4 Anti-Bullying Policy**

The school's Anti Bullying Policy fosters a cohesive approach to the issue of bullying and includes specific initiatives that are designed to promote pastoral care, wellbeing and safe school communities. This policy covers the bullying of students with disabilities. Disabled children and young people need to know they have the right to be safe from bullying, what bullying is, how to keep safe and what to do if adults do not do enough to stop the bullying. The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and intrinsic to our education ministry. There have been no changes to this policy this year and it is available on the school website.

#### **4.5 Complaints and Grievance Policy**

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly, and confidentiality is always maintained. There have been no changes to this policy this year and it is available on the school website.

## 5.0 School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school implements the School Improvement Plan. 2021 was a very rewarding year.

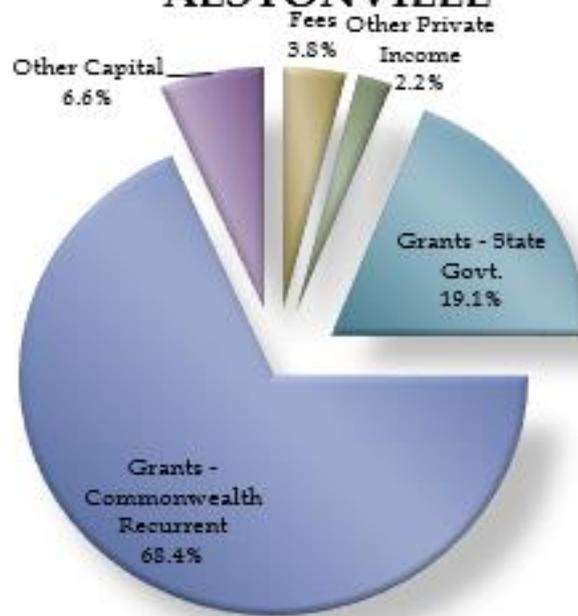
Key improvements achieved this year	Key Improvements for 2022
<b>Mission of Jesus Christ</b> The mission of Jesus sits at the heart of all our learning. In 2021 we worked to develop a renewed approach to the teaching of Religious Education and the faith formation of our community by our engagement in the RENEW project. This involved training all our staff in this approach and supporting them to embed this within their teaching.	<b>Mission of Jesus Christ</b> In 2022 we will continue to RENEW our approach to teaching Religious Education with increased knowledge for staff to support this. As we have now moved to all stages teaching with this approach we will continue to support this new learning.
<b>Learning and Teaching</b> In 2021 we continued to build collective understanding of the Learning Collaborative work with Lyn Sharratt. We supported staff new to this collaborative and built understanding of areas such as case management meetings and learning walks and talks.	<b>Learning and Teaching</b> In 2022 we will continue to build collective understanding about the best practices for Writing and Spelling in our school through further research, enquiry and professional reading.

## 6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary 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 2021 is presented below:

## 2021 INCOME - St Joseph's Primary School ALSTONVILLE



## 2021 EXPENSE - St Joseph's Primary School ALSTONVILLE

