

Annual Report 2020



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Chair's Report

NICHOLAS MOORE

Chair, National Catholic
Education Commission



As I reflect on all that has been achieved over the past year, I'm conscious of the unique and significant challenges faced by Catholic school communities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I commend the resourcefulness and agile response by our leaders and staff who worked above and beyond, alongside families, to ensure learning and teaching continued for students across Australia.

Crises like these certainly highlight the strengths of our systems and resources. They also show us where we can continue to improve and put in place measures to strengthen our response in the future.

2020 was a significant period of reflection and progress for the Commission with the development of our new strategic priorities for the next three year period (2021-2023).

These national priorities respond to the current and emerging needs of Catholic schools to:

- enliven faith formation and religious education
- support the continual improvement of educational outcomes for all students, and
- respond to the needs of all families through strong advocacy for recurrent and capital funding to ensure access to a Catholic education.

Critical work has already commenced on targeted activities to progress the successful delivery of these priority areas including developing a national picture of achievement and need supported by an evidence-based approach.

It's crucial that our schools identify and respond to increasing diversity including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the growing number of students with disability, responding to the impact of financial disadvantage, increasing access to early learning, and improving the transition from Year 12 to post-schooling.

Ongoing collaboration with state and territory commissions ensures the needs of Catholic schools are served in considerations of funding, legislation and policy.

A key role of the Commission is to advocate through effective liaison with the federal government and the introduction of a new Direct Measure of Income for school funding is an example of the importance of this work.

In October 2020, Catholic education marked 200 years of Catholic schooling in Australia with the establishment of the first 'official' Catholic school founded by Fr John Therry in October 1820 in Parramatta. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our bicentenary will be celebrated in the 2021 school year.

From the early days of teaching 31 students in that first school, Catholic education has grown to become the nation's largest provider of education outside government. We educate 777,000 students and employ over 100,000 staff across 1,755 schools.

It's truly a great achievement and we all owe a huge debt of gratitude to the families, religious and clergy, lay teachers, and governments in recent years for their support and determination to establish and sustain

“From the early days of teaching 31 students... Catholic education has grown to become the nation's largest provider of education outside government.”

a Catholic schooling sector in Australia. It's unrivalled anywhere in the world.

Looking ahead, the task of the Commission and all those involved in Catholic education is to ensure we continue to address new challenges and changing circumstances.

On behalf of the Commission, I am pleased to commend the 2020 Annual Report and look forward to the ongoing work and delivery of our strategic priorities in the future.



ED's Report

JACINTA COLLINS

Executive Director, National
Catholic Education Commission

Throughout our 200-year history, Catholic education has actively lived our mission to serve those most in need. This is particularly evident in the work of early religious orders and lay people who established schools under severe conditions with little funding or assistance.

While the Catholic schools sector has grown over two centuries and serves a more diverse cross-section of society, our commitment to the education and care of the most vulnerable is still paramount to our mission of Catholic education.

This commitment ensured we were well-prepared to respond to the challenges faced in 2020. Indeed, it was a year like no other with severe natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic creating a range of unprecedented impacts for our schools and systems.

It was a privilege to work with and witness the response of our leaders, staff, students, families and many others who dealt with this adversity and disruption with courage, creativity and compassion.

Collaboration was critical to ensure the needs of our school communities were met during these times of crisis. At the national level, the National Operations Standing Committee was established to address pandemic-related issues and respond with consistency wherever possible.

We also engaged in a number of committees and consultations, including participation on the federal government's

Education Sector Pandemic Preparedness Committee to ensure the Catholic sector was represented in government responses to the pandemic.

Locally, Catholic schools responded with a range of measures, including:

- changing learning and teaching programs and supporting families to accommodate home learning
- ensuring access to devices and the internet
- keeping schools open for children of essential workers and students who required onsite schooling
- responding to financial hardship and support for affected students
- the reorganisation of exams and assessments, particularly for Year 12 students
- providing ongoing pastoral care and support to students, staff and families and a whole host of other activities.

While 2020 posed many difficulties for our schools, it has also served to highlight the importance of community, connection and outreach.

A key national event held for Catholic educators was our first Virtual Symposium, held on World Teachers Day (30 October), which focused on school improvement and supporting disadvantaged students in a COVID world. This successful event was introduced to provide a professional engagement opportunity as our planned National Catholic Education Conference needed to be rescheduled due to pandemic restrictions.

“While 2020 posed many difficulties for our schools, it has also served to highlight the importance of community, connection and outreach.”

In 2020, we built the resourcing of the national office, particularly in the areas of policy and data analysis, to support the implementation of our strategic priorities as discerned by the Commission.

I take this opportunity to thank the Commission under the leadership of our Chair Nicholas Moore for setting a clear strategic focus for the future and for their continued support of our work.

I gratefully acknowledge the contribution of all those who represent Catholic education on national committees and working groups, and extend my sincere thanks to outgoing Deputy Director Peter Hamill and the team in the secretariat for their work during a challenging year.

We can look ahead with great optimism and determination, as we continue to respond to our mission of meeting the faith and educational needs of young people in the future.



St Joseph's College, Toowoomba
Diocese of Toowoomba

2020 YEAR IN BRIEF

January

- Many Catholic school communities across eastern parts of Australia were impacted by the 2019-2020 Bushfire crisis
- Catholic education welcomed the Australian Government's doubling of funding to support families affected by drought with \$8.2 million allocated to Catholic schools across QLD, NSW, VIC and SA

February

- Former Macquarie Bank CEO Nicholas Moore is appointed to chair the National Catholic Education Commission

March

- A new Direct Measure of Income to assess parents' capacity to contribute is legislated, to be fully introduced by 2022
- A number of state governments enacted a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In many jurisdictions parents were encouraged to keep children at home and in some states school holidays were brought forward.

- Catholic schools stayed open for students of essential workers and those who needed to attend school and offered fee relief for families facing financial hardship
- The Education Council confirmed 2020 NAPLAN exams would be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic

June

- Principal Br Nicholas Harsas (NSW) and former principal, now regional leader of Sisters of St Joseph, Sr Margaret Cleary (SA) were recognised in the Queen's Birthday honours list
- The National Catholic Education Commission provided a submission to the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training Inquiry – Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on home learning and teaching

August

- Victoria entered into Stage 4 lockdowns, with the majority of students returning to home-based learning

September

- Australian Catholic University chancellor, the late Hon John Fahey AC GCSG, was recognised for his contribution to Catholic education

October

- The National Catholic Education Commission met for their 250th meeting
- School students across Victoria returned to classrooms after two months of remote learning
- Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd was established under the leadership of chief executive officer Jim Miles and new chair Gerard Dalbosco
- Catholic education hosts its first Faith in the Future Virtual Symposium

November

- Senior students across Australia complete their final exams

COVID-19 Response

2020 was a challenging year for school communities throughout Australia due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of home learning on students, families and staff. The focus in the Catholic sector was to monitor and respond swiftly to the advice of federal, state and territory governments and health authorities.

A special taskforce, the National Operations Standing Committee (OSC), was established to respond to the pandemic, led by NCEC executive director Jacinta Collins and comprising all state and territory Catholic Education Commissions. The OSC met via video conference bi-weekly to work through issues that arose and responded consistently wherever possible, recognising the impacts of differing state and territory government decisions and advice.

Catholic education managed a range of issues impacting schools including ensuring access for students who required onsite schooling, remote learning, student, family and staff wellbeing, access to technology, financial hardship and school fee relief.

Jacinta also participated on the Education Sector Pandemic Preparedness Committee, established by the federal government, involving senior education officials from commonwealth and state departments. The committee advised Education Ministers through the Education Council.

By working with governments at every level, key concerns of school communities, such

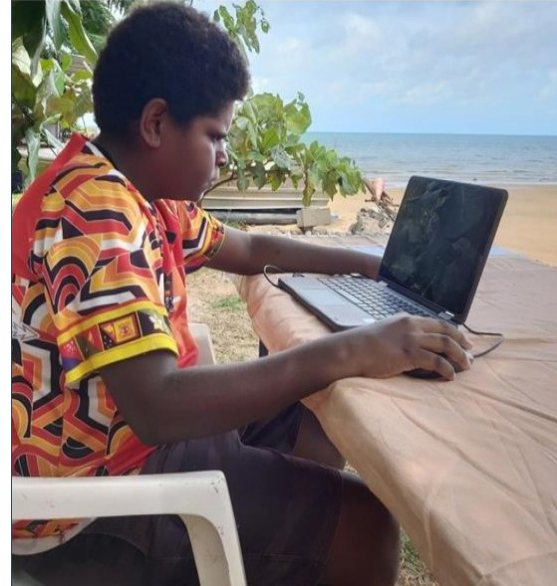
as the cancellation of 2020 NAPLAN and arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boarding students, were addressed.

Throughout 2020, Catholic schools implemented home learning for students for extended periods due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns. The greater Melbourne region was significantly impacted due to a second wave forcing their schools to return to remote learning.

Boarding schools and students living on state borders were also highly impacted, as were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and those students living in remote parts of Australia (see panel).

To meet these challenges, school communities needed to respond flexibly to their local contexts. In some cases this meant providing home access to the internet and loaning digital devices, partnering with local government schools to support boarding students in remote areas, and implementing a range of wellbeing and community building strategies.

The Catholic education sector also welcomed the federal government's early learning and care COVID-19 package, announced in April 2020, which brought relief to Catholic early childhood and care services across Australia. There are approximately 400 Catholic early childhood education and care services, serving over 15,000 children in Australia, with the majority of centres onsite with Catholic primary schools.



COVID-19 impact in remote Australia

In the Diocese of Cairns, all boys secondary school St Augustine's College offers a co-educational boarding facility for 170 students, and accommodates boarding students from neighbouring St Monica's Girls College.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions boarding schools closed and the college's staff worked to deliver learning and teaching to students living in some of the most remote parts of Australia.

The college's boarding students come from remote Australian towns and islands such as Groote Eyelandt, Gove, Arukun, Weipa, Torres Strait (Thursday Island, Prince of Wales Island and Darnley Island), Cooktown, as well as Papua New Guinea.

St Augustine's established common principles through their "Continuity of Learning Plan" for the college's 800 students, 130 teachers and staff, and parents that included common start times for logging into the college's learning platforms, daily prayer and the students were required to wear their school sports uniform during the day.

St Augustine's principal Matthew Brennan said underpinning the plan was the wellbeing of all students. He said teachers and boarding staff were in contact with students regularly to support their learning, answer questions and to check on their wellbeing.

"We've had a major paradigm shift and student wellbeing is a critical factor during this time," he said. "Teachers observed the need to keep expectations simple and explicit, and focus on quality rather than quantity in relation to learning tasks," Matthew said.

Above: St Augustine's College, Cairns boarding student Cyril Ghee learning from his home on Darnley Island.



Teachers from St Paul's Primary, Coburg, connecting with their students while they were learning from home.



100,000+

staff were teaching and working
in Catholic schools in 2020



Sacred Heart College Champagnat Campus
Archdiocese of South Australia

Education Policy & Advocacy

A key focus for Education Policy in 2020 was the response to the impact of natural disasters (bushfires and floods) and COVID-19 on schools and communities. Catholic Education's first priority has been to ensure the safety of our students, families and communities. Catholic schools have always supported families and communities in distress and has welcomed relief packages and additional funding provided by the federal government to support our communities.

SUBMISSIONS

In 2020, NCEC in its role as the representative body for National Catholic Education, made several submissions and contributed to reviews initiated by government and parliamentary committees. NCEC submissions were informed by advice and contributions from state and territory commissions:

- [NCEC Consultation Regarding Legislative Reforms on Religious Freedom - Comments on the Second Exposure Drafts](#) (February 2020)
- [NCEC Submission on Education of Students in Remote Communities and the Role of Culture, Family, Community and Country in Delivering Better Outcomes](#) (March 2020)

- [NCEC Submission on Australian Education Amendment \(Direct Measure of Income\) Bill 2020](#) (March 2020)
- [NCEC Letter to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training Inquiry – Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on home learning and teaching](#) (June 2020)
- [NCEC Submission on the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education](#) (August 2020)
- [NCEC Submission on Indigenous Cultural Competency in the Australian Teaching Workforce](#) (October 2020)
- NCEC submission on the Review of Regional Schooling Resource Standard Loadings (November 2020)
- [NCEC 2020-2021 Pre-Budget Submission](#)

Network groups

NCEC created four new and two re-established network groups in 2020. The network meetings allow commissions to provide input and high-level advice to NCEC on national education issues and offer members opportunities to network, discuss and share ideas and collaborate. Due to pandemic restrictions, face-to-face workshops were not held in 2020, and all

meetings were held virtually. The network groups comprise of Learning and Teaching Directors Group, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network Group, Students with Disability Network Group, Early Childhood Education Network Group, Student Wellbeing Network Group and Vocational Education and Training Network Group.

Equity

In Catholic Education, we strive to reduce the impact of disadvantage in our schools through developing key targets and focusing on our most disadvantaged cohorts and students in need including Aboriginal students, students from low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds, rural and remote students, and students with disability.

To assist with monitoring our vulnerable cohorts, the NCEC data team has developed several dashboards which track the proportion of Aboriginal students, students with disability according to level of adjustment provided and the proportion of regional and remote students across Catholic jurisdictions and Dioceses.

The Student with Disability Loading Review Reference Group was established this year



St Joseph's Primary, West Tamworth
Diocese of Armidale

to act upon the recommendations of the National Schools Resourcing Board (NSRB) review into the loadings for students with disability. NCEC has two representatives on the consultative body which is charged with reviewing the loadings for the three funded levels of adjustment and developing an evidence base to inform a refined costing model for students with disability loading. The final report and recommended changes are expected to come into effect in 2023.

NCEC continues to support the exciting work being undertaken in Catholic School Authorities in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The NCEC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Network has explored topics such as developing student centred personalised learning plans, embedding cross-curriculum priorities in learning areas, developing a culturally competent teaching workforce and closing the gap strategies. Meeting Closing the Gap targets and developing cultural competence in school staff will be a major focus in 2021.

Advocacy continues in promoting a just funding outcome for students with disability for funding to cover all costs associated with the education of students with disability. The total number of students across all Catholic Schools with disability is 148,388 an increase of 8 per cent from 2019. The larger Catholic jurisdictions NSW, VIC and QLD have a majority share of these students. Students with Disability funding delivered to Catholic schools in 2020 was approximately

\$940 million, up 19.5 % from 2019. NCEC provided input into the parliamentary inquiry on the education of students in remote communities and the role of culture, family and community in delivering better outcomes.

Catholic Education has a long history of serving remote communities, with approximately four per cent of Catholic schools located in remote and very remote locations educating 9,400 students. Many of these students are from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. Catholic education is committed to improving outcomes for students in remote areas, with a continued focus on improving literacy and numeracy.

The presence of the Catholic boarding schools throughout Australia is essential to preserving diversity and choice for families. NCEC has advocated for capital and recurrent funding to support boarding facilities in remote locations. Costs in our systemic boarding schools for our students include not only "in class costs" and other incidentals such as school equipment and excursions but also the cost of accommodation and 24-hour supervision.

NAPLAN

Education ministers made the decision to cancel NAPLAN in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision was taken to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education. In 2020, NCEC

worked with state and territory commissions to respond to the 2020 Independent Report of NAPLAN commissioned by Ministers in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and the ACT. NCEC participated in a range of stakeholder meetings with ACARA on potential refinements to NAPLAN. The key changes focused on reviewing the model of assessing writing (including conducting a 2021 student pilot of the revised writing assessment task), changes to timing (year levels and time of year), and whether any additional domains of learning should be included in the national census-based standardised assessment program. Any changes to NAPLAN need to be aligned with the transition to NAPLAN Online in 2022.

Australian Education Act

Working closely with state and territory Catholic commissions, the NCEC advocated successfully for legislation to amend the Australian Education Act. The amendments, in force from 27 March 2020, ensure that school funding is better aligned to need and better able to support choice and affordability for all Australian families.

The amendments include a fairer and more accurate measure of parents' capacity to contribute to the costs of non-government schooling based on the median income of parents and carers at a school. The Direct Measure of Income, which will be fully introduced by 2022, replaces a flawed assessment of capacity to contribute calculated on the socio-economic status

(SES) scores of areas where students live. The development of an income-based measure followed from the National School Resourcing Board's 2018 review of SES score methodology and its recommendations to the Australian Government and involved multi-agency collaboration to ensure that public funding flows to schools that need it most.

The 2020 amendments better support Catholic schools offering low fee schooling across Australia and will assist Catholic education to provide accessible schooling options to all families who desire them.

Copyright

In August 2020, the Catholic education sector supported the Federal Government's decision to reform Australia's copyright laws to ensure teachers and parents are not involved in copyright infringement when students are learning from home.

The government recognised the need to urgently update the Copyright Act to ensure that teachers, parents and students did not inadvertently breach copyright laws simply by shifting lessons to the online environment.

There were a number of proposed changes including:

- Ensuring that educational exceptions apply to all forms of learning, enabling teachers to use copyright materials in lessons, irrespective of whether the teacher and students are in a classroom, learning at home via Zoom, or accessing lessons on-demand
- Fixing an existing problem where schools may lose the benefit of copyright exceptions if parents and guardians assist children with their home learning

RESEARCH

COVID-19 Research

NCEC engaged the National Centre for Pastoral Research to undertake an 18-month research project investigating innovative approaches to online teaching and learning by Catholic education during COVID-19. To build on the positive lessons learned, the study describes the changing teaching and learning landscape in Catholic education as a result of COVID-19, with a particular focus on Catholic Identity, and seeks to determine which strategies were most effective to improve learning and

wellbeing outcomes for students. The project will outline ways that Catholic education can improve our transition to remote learning for individual students and apply lessons from best practice examples to the new landscape. Case studies will be developed illustrating innovation and best practice within Catholic education.

Early Childhood

In October, NCEC conducted a survey of all Catholic childcare services to gain a better understanding of the national landscape for early childhood education and care services operating within Dioceses. These included services operated by the Diocese and Catholic agencies that manage services for a Diocese, excluding out of school hour care services.

The survey collected information on type of childcare services, service usage, fees, perceived benefits and challenges in offering the service, vulnerable children and children with additional needs and the early childcare workforce. The data collected will be used for future policy planning to ensure that young Catholic children and their families receive high-quality early childhood services and support.



Faith Formation & RE

One of the key pieces of work undertaken by the Standing Committee for Faith Formation and Religious Education in 2020 was the finalisation of the report by Australian Catholic University (ACU) into the alignment and effectiveness of the Framework for Formation for Mission in Australian Catholic schools.

The report was completed in early November and affirmed the definition of faith formation within the paper against contemporary research and literature as well as ecclesial wisdom and understandings. The research highlighted that formation for mission is not an independent experience outside of an understanding, experience and witness to mission.

The findings reflected positive perceptions of formation experiences, and called Catholic school communities to further explore connections to community, including parish connections. The report also challenged learning communities to consider how to acknowledge and share this understanding of faith formation and embed the principles to which the Catholic community is called. This critical piece of research will be instrumental in further engaging Catholic school communities in the formation of staff.

In 2020, the Committee worked on the first draft of a discussion paper on student formation, which is expected to be published in 2021.

A significant focus of this project in 2020 was listening to the voices of children and young people in Catholic education across Australia, who reflected on, and discussed, their own relationship with God and perspectives on the faith formation of, and for, their peers.

There was a considerable focus on consolidation and improvement of the NCEC's online resource, *Together at One Altar*, which continues to host high user engagement. Across the site, teacher resources and links have been updated.

The challenges of COVID-19 throughout the year slowed progress on the production of professional learning videos unpacking the Religious Education framing paper and further extension to the Scripture website. As such, these areas are forming the focus of work early in 2021.

In July 2020, the Pontifical Council for promoting the New Evangelisation released the new Directory for Catechesis. This document has been some time coming and summary papers were presented to the Committee at their final meeting of 2020.

The directory engages in the challenges of evangelisation in a world that is quite different to that of the last iteration published in 1998 and has been a considered part of all elements of the ongoing workplan of the Committee.



Faith in the future VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM

Inaugural Virtual Symposium

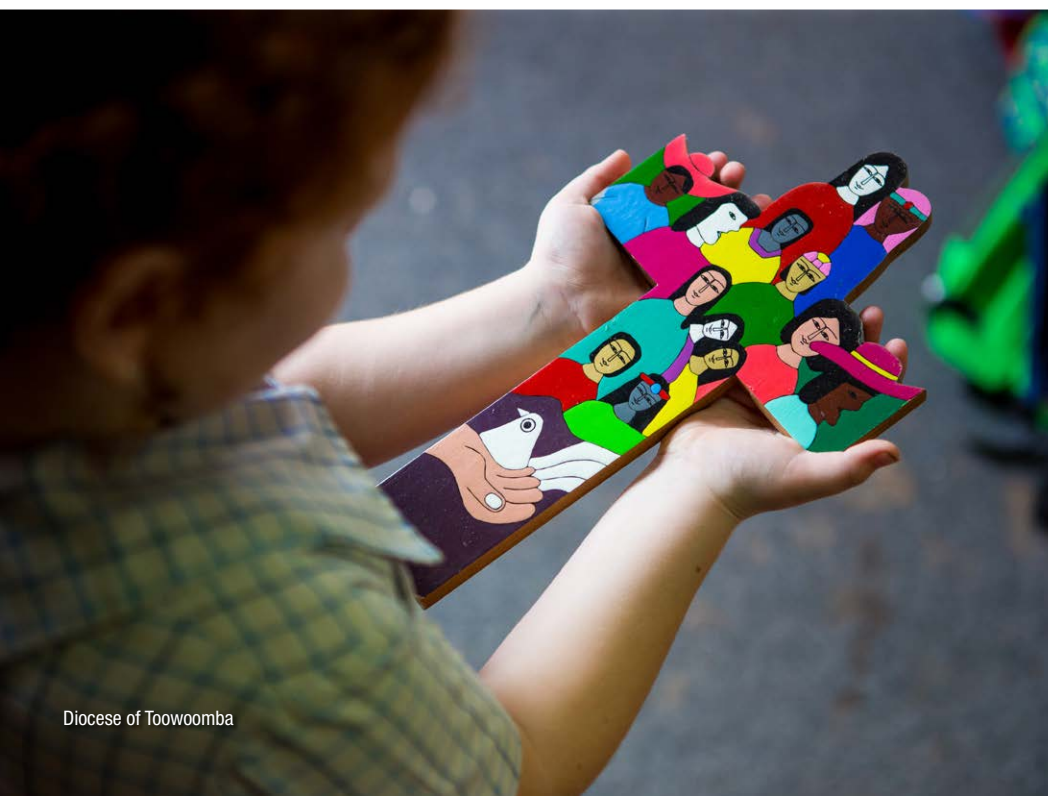
On World Teachers Day 30 October 2020, the National Catholic Education Commission hosted its first Virtual Symposium on school improvement and supporting disadvantaged students in a COVID world.

Around 1,000 educators across Australia joined the symposium, with participants from New Zealand, Ireland, Pakistan, Hong Kong and the United States, among other countries. Keynote addresses were delivered by associate professor of Leadership and Educational Change at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Dr Carol Campbell on school improvement and Scottish philosopher, professor John Haldane, on the challenges and opportunities for Catholic education.

The symposium included a panel discussion, moderated by Australian broadcaster Geraldine Doogue AO, on school improvement, student wellbeing, faith formation and parent engagement, with panellists Glenn Fahey from the Centre for Independent Studies, Carmel Nash OAM from Catholic School Parents Australia, and school leaders from urban and remote schools in Australia.

Then Federal Minister for Education Dan Tehan and the Shadow Minister for Education and Shadow Minister for Women Tanya Plibersek provided addresses and took part in the Bicentennial Games - quiz-style segment on the history of Catholic education in Australia, hosted by national director Marist Schools Australia, Dr Frank Malloy.

The symposium was organised in response to the postponement of Catholic Education's quadrennial conference as a result of the pandemic. It was due to be held in Melbourne in September 2020, and has been rescheduled to 4-7 September 2022.



Stakeholder Engagement

School Policy Group

The School Policy Group (SPG) is an advisory group to the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee, which advises the Education Council, comprising Education Ministers from across Australia. SPG comprises representatives from federal, state and territory Departments of Education, the NCEC and the independent schools sector.

Executive director Jacinta Collins, her 2020 proxy Queensland Catholic Education Commission executive director Dr Lee-Anne Perry AM, and then deputy director Peter Hamill were the Catholic sector's participants on the SPG.

During 2020, there were four meetings and several out of session processes focused on a number of national policy initiatives:

- Learning Progressions and Online Formative Assessment
- Initial education of teachers
- National Evidence Institute
- Teacher accreditation systems
- Review of Senior Secondary Pathways
- Review of the Disability Standards for Education
- Implementation of the Unique Student Identifier
- Review of the Australian Curriculum

SPG also received regular updates during 2020 from the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority and the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership on projects such as NAPLAN Online and the National Teacher Workforce project.

Directors Forum

The Catholic Education Diocesan Directors Forum was held in October 2020. The participants are the diocesan directors of

Catholic education from all dioceses, the chairs of the Catholic Principals Associations, and the deputy chair of Catholic School Parents Australia. The forum affords NCEC the opportunity to facilitate updates on educational policy issues at the national level and for participants to collaborate and share experiences that impact key issues.

The event commenced with the Rural Regional and Remote Directors Forum held on the same day and attended by Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education Andrew Gee MP.

The online forum commenced with Shadow Minister for Education and Training, Tanya Plibersek MP who delivered a passionate speech thanking school communities for their considerable efforts during remote learning. She acknowledged the agility needed by teachers, students and parents to continue learning and teaching through the lockdown period, and for schools to consider what was learned from the experience.

Executive director Jacinta Collins shared an update with a specific focus on the recently developed NCEC Strategic Priorities 2021-2023. The agenda covered continual improvement of educational outcomes with a focus on NAPLAN Numeracy, the challenges of facing a shortage in the teacher workforce and COVID-19 learnings.

Then Minister for Education and Training, Dan Tehan MP delivered a motivating address on empowering attendees to maintain engagement with their local Member of Parliament to ensure they understand the importance of how funding impacts Catholic schooling in Australia. He stressed the importance of relentlessly focusing on literacy and numeracy outcomes to address the foundational learning for all students.



250th NCEC Meeting

On 15 October, the National Catholic Education Commission met for their 250th meeting. The first meeting of the Commission was held nearly five decades ago on 25 June, 1974.

At the first meeting, then Bishop now Archbishop Francis Carroll, outlined the role of the commission, stressing it was “not to control state, regional and local educational works, but to offer them service, coordination and leadership”, and that work embraced both Catholic schools and other forms of religious education.

Executive director Jacinta Collins said it's “the perennial challenge of balancing national coordination with local subsidiarity that is still top of mind when the commission meets to consider its work today”.

At the first meeting of the commission in 1974 early childhood education was also flagged as one of the key areas of focus, which is still high on the agenda for the Commission today.

The commissioners also welcomed then Federal Minister for Education Dan Tehan who joined the meeting virtually for a discussion.

Below: The 250th meeting of the National Catholic Education Commission was a 'hybrid' in-person and online meeting due to travel restrictions.





Highlights

South Australia school visits

Just prior to the pandemic in February, Jacinta visited St Joseph's School, Peterborough and St Joseph's School, Gladstone in regional South Australia.

The visits provided an opportunity to meet with principals and staff to learn about their work and understand the needs of regional, rural and remote students, with nearly 40 per cent of Catholic schools located outside major metropolitan areas of Australia.

The backgrounds and needs of regional, rural and remote students are vastly different to their peers in the cities.

"Our role at the national level is to advocate for the needs of all students, and to do that it's important for us to speak to students and staff in these communities, and see, first-hand, how we can best support them in responding to these needs," Jacinta said.

Jacinta also visited the Nazareth Catholic Community in Adelaide touring both campuses in Findon (R-6 & Early Childhood Centre) and Flinders Park (7-12). During the visit Jacinta spoke with staff and students at the Early Childhood Centre, and engaged with secondary students from Design and Technology and Food Technology subjects.



Top: Jacinta with students from St Joseph's Primary, Gladstone and above at Nazareth Catholic College Early Childhood Centre.



Jacinta also spoke to around 50 Catholic school leaders in Catholic Education South Australia, which was an opportunity to reflect on the role of women in Catholic education and the Church, particularly in relation to their contribution to leadership and decision-making.

Above: Catholic Education South Australia director Dr Neil McGoran, St Joseph's Peterborough principal Rebecca Fahey, Jacinta Collins and Port Pirie director Nichii Mardon.



Left: Catherine McAuley Westmead (NSW) and right St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Sunshine North (Vic) were highlighted by ACARA for NAPLAN progress.

Papal honors

Pope Francis appointed former National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) chief executive officer Dr Bill Griffiths and former NCEC chair Greg Crafter AO as Knights of the Order of St Gregory the Great, which was announced by the Archbishop of Adelaide Patrick O'Regan on 19 October.

Archbishop Patrick said the Order of St Gregory the Great was one of the highest awards for lay people, bestowed on Catholic men and women deemed to have made a significant contribution to the Church. He said Bill and Greg were "worthy recipients of this high honour with their outstanding service to the community over many years".

Dr Bill Griffiths, a secondary school teacher by profession, held previous positions in Adelaide Catholic Education Office, the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools and was the Director of Catholic Education

in Darwin Diocese from 1993 until 2007. He served from 2008 - 2013 as CEO of the NCEC in Canberra.

Greg Crafter was a lawyer before entering state parliament, where he served as the Member for Norwood for 14 years, including seven years as Education Minister. Greg served as chair of the NCEC for seven years.

ACARA profiles high NAPLAN performers

Nine Catholic schools across New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia were recognised for consistently delivering high progress in NAPLAN and were profiled by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

There were only 24 schools across all sectors profiled including nine for numeracy, eight for reading, and seven for writing.

ACARA chief executive officer David de Carvalho said explicit teaching, collaborating on the analysis of formative assessment data, and focused professional learning were among the practices prevalent in schools who delivered high progress in NAPLAN.

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Sunshine North in west Melbourne, was one of the schools profiled for achieving consistently high progress in writing.

St Bernadette's principal Joanne Webster said 87 per cent of the students come from a language background other than English, and the school has driven improvement by adopting pedagogical practices, informed by evidence, at both whole of school and classroom levels.

"At a school level, we utilise and analyse both big and small data, including NAPLAN results, to inform our strategic direction," she said.

"This provides us with the ability to identify gaps in learning as well as implement targeted professional learning for teachers to build their pedagogical knowledge and practice to meet student needs.

"We have also implemented a 'leader/co-teacher' model where leaders work with teachers, enabling shared responsibility for the students' progress," she said.

Catherine McAuley Westmead was another school profiled by ACARA and principal Mary Refalo said the development of students' skills in writing at Catherine McAuley is a responsibility taken by all teachers.

"Teachers know that good writing comes from high expectations about the quality and length of the written text set early in Year 7, as well as the co-dependency between good writing on regular reading," she said. "We are proud of the expertise of the teachers in developing students' writing, and of the achievements of the students themselves."



Chair of the Bishops Commission for Catholic Education Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP with Greg and Rae Crafter at Greg's farewell as chair of the National Catholic Education Commission and inset Bill Griffiths.



Nearly 40% of Australia's

1,755

Catholic schools are in rural,
regional and remote areas

Schools Profile 2020

Summary statistics data for 2020 and 2019 financial data are from the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment's Annual School Census and Financial Questionnaire. Historical trend data is from the NCEC Australian Catholic Education Statistics database.

Statistics relate to all canonically recognised Catholic schools, including schools in Catholic systems and Catholic independent schools. Combined schools have students enrolled at both primary and secondary year levels.

Unless otherwise stated, all figures reported in this section refer to full-time equivalent students and staff. Full-time equivalent numbers account for both full-time hours and part-time hours of participation in education (students) and employment (staff).

Note: Totals may vary to the sum of the parts due to rounding.

STUDENT ENROLMENTS

A total of 777,054 students attended Australian Catholic schools in 2020. Taking part-time participation in education into account, Catholic schools educated 776,852 full-time equivalent students, an annual increase of 8,785 students. Over 35 years, enrolments have increased steadily, up by 35% since 1985.

STUDENT ENROLMENT GROWTH

Since 1985, 65% of the total growth in Catholic school enrolments is at secondary level, an increase of 131,070 students compared to a primary increase of 70,777. In 2020 the increase in secondary enrolments was higher (up by 8,458 students) than primary enrolments which increased by 327 students compared to 2019.

STATISTICAL SNAPSHOT

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA 2020

School Type	Number	% of schools 2020	Change from 2019
Primary schools	1,245	71%	-4
Secondary schools	342	19%	0
Combined primary/secondary	156	9%	8
Special	12	1%	0
All schools	1,755	100%	4

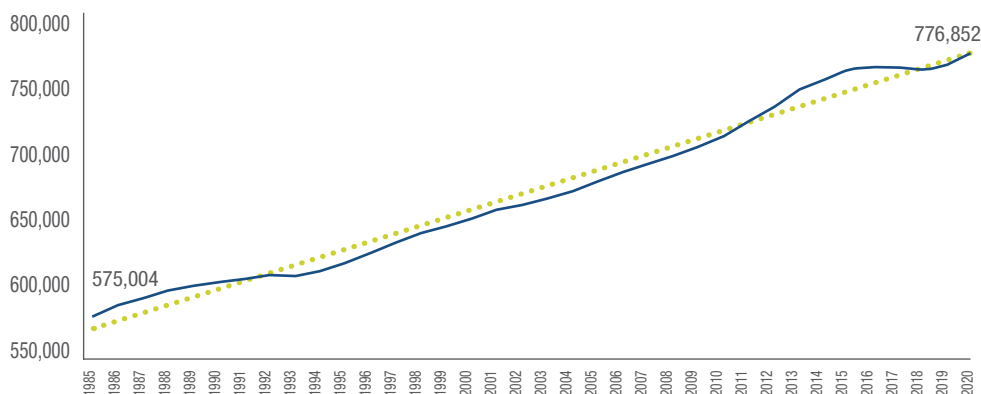
STUDENTS IN AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 2020 (FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT - FTE)

Type	Students	% of students 2020	Change from 2019
Primary	402,800	52%	327
Secondary	374,053	48%	8,458
All students	776,852	100%	8,785
All students (head count)	777,054	100%	8,759

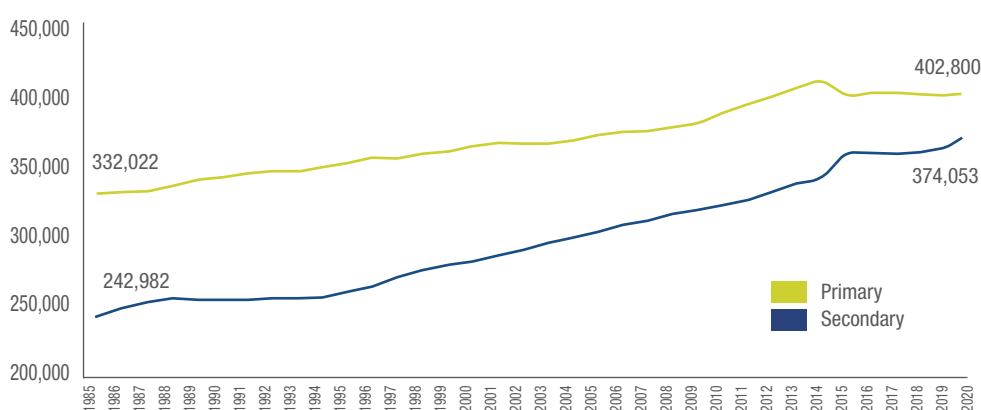
SPECIFIC STUDENT GROUPS IN AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 2020 (FTE)

Type	Students	% of students 2020	Change from 2019
Students with disability (NCCD adjustments)	148,388	19.1%	11,118
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	25,328	3.3%	1,226
Full-fee-paying overseas students	1,349	0.2%	-146
Boarding students (52 boarding schools)	5,160	0.7%	-279

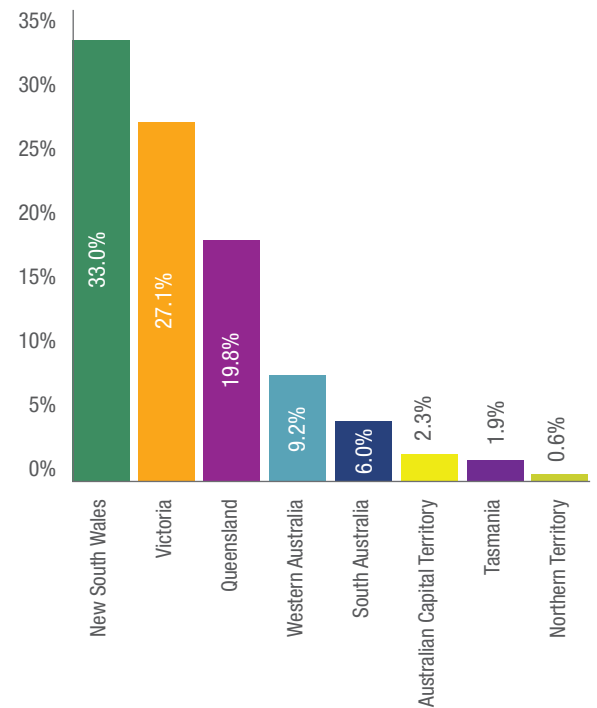
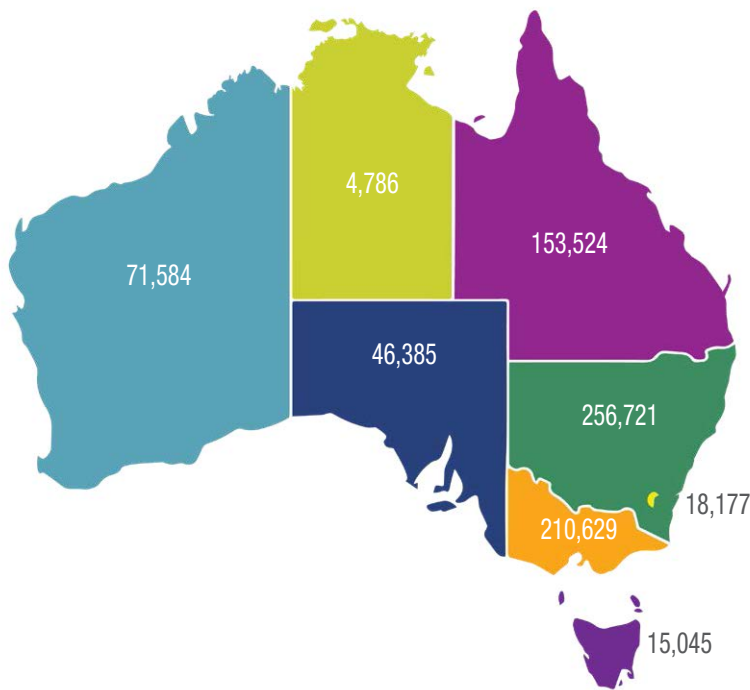
STUDENTS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 1985 TO 2020 (FTE)



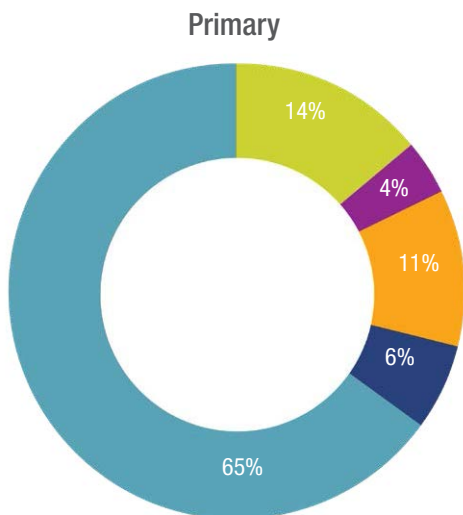
CHANGE IN STUDENT ENROLMENTS 1985 TO 2020 (FTE)



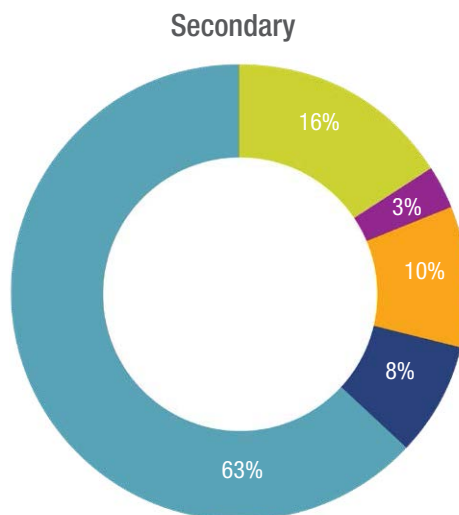
STUDENT ENROLMENT BY STATE & TERRITORY (FTE)



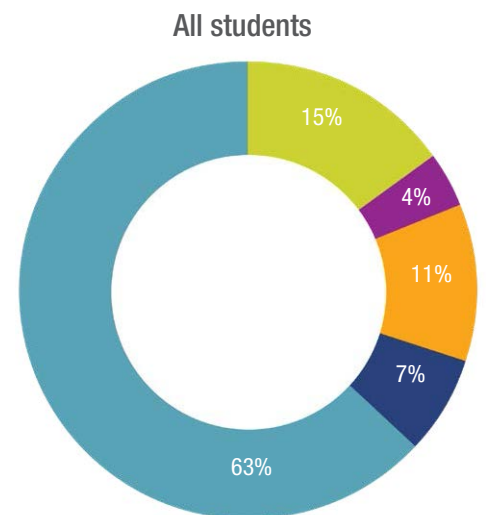
STUDENT RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION



■ Catholic
■ No religion
■ Other faith
■ Other Christian
■ Not recorded



■ Catholic
■ No religion
■ Other faith
■ Other Christian
■ Not recorded



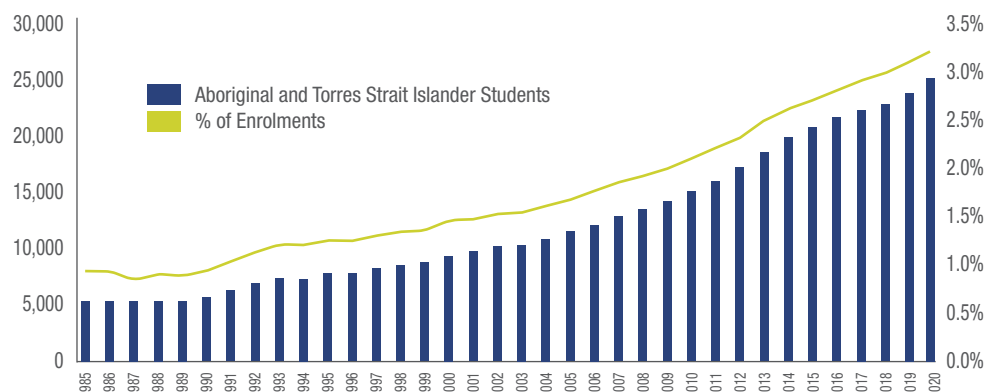
■ Catholic
■ No religion
■ Other faith
■ Other Christian
■ Not recorded

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (full-time equivalent)

There were 25,328 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic schools in 2020 representing 3.3% of all students. This was an increase of 1,226 students from the previous year.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS 1985 TO 2020 (FTE)



STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Students with disability (NCCD FTE)

In 2018, the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) was used for the first time to assess the number of students with disability and the level of educational adjustment they received.

Overall, there were 148,388 students with disabilities in Catholic schools in 2020. Of these students 40,693 (or 27%) benefited from quality differentiated teaching practice (QDTP), 77,038 (or 52%) received supplementary adjustments, 26,083 (or 18%) required substantial adjustments and 4,574 (or 3%) needed extensive adjustments. So, while students with disability benefiting from QDTP declined slightly, more students required substantial and extensive adjustments compared to 2019.

Staff Profile 2020

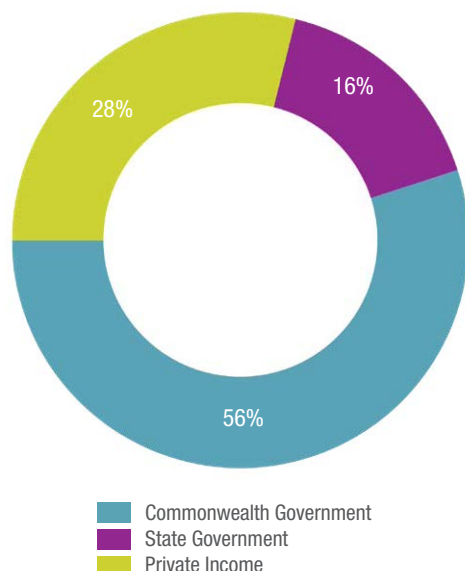
In 2020 Catholic schools employed a total of 100,076 staff. Counting both full-time hours and part-time hours, Catholic schools employed 81,069 full-time equivalent staff.

Income and Expenditure

SOURCES OF FUNDING 2019 CALENDAR YEAR

Proportions of total funding received from government and private sources are an average for all 1,751 canonically recognised Catholic schools, including 61 schools counted as "independent" in the source data (ACARA MySchool 2019 Financial Data, as on August 2020).

Sources of funding 2019 calendar year



STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (NCCD FTE)

NCCD Adjustment Level	Students with disability 2020	% of all students with disability 2020	Change from 2019
QDTP	40,693	27%	-27
Supplementary	77,038	52%	6,309
Substantial	26,083	18%	4,166
Extensive	4,574	3%	670
All students with disability	148,388	100%	11,117

STAFF IN AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 2020 (FTE)

	Staff 2020	% of staff 2020	Change from 2019
Teachers (including Principals)	56,453	70%	1,263
Non-teaching staff	24,616	30%	756
All staff	81,069	100%	2,019
All staff (head count)	100,076	100%	1,674

TEACHERS INCLUDING PRINCIPALS 2019 (FTE)

	Teaching staff 2020	% of teachers 2020	Change from 2019
Primary teachers	25,885	45.9%	579
Secondary teachers	30,378	53.8%	671
Special teachers	190	0.3%	13
All teachers	56,453	100%	1,263
Female	40,494	72%	1,066
Male	15,957	28%	196

STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS 2020 (FTE)

	Primary	Secondary	Total
Students per teacher	15.6	12.3	13.8

INCOME, CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BY TYPE (\$ PER STUDENT) 2019 CALENDAR YEAR

	Primary	Secondary	Combined	All schools
Fees and charges	2,060	5,623	8,145	4,417
Other private income	452	597	1,068	614
Total private income	2,512	6,220	9,213	5,031
State government grants	2,660	3,200	2,998	2,913
Commonwealth government grants	9,545	10,688	9,507	9,946
Total government income	12,205	13,888	12,505	12,859
Total income	14,717	20,108	21,718	17,890

Source: Department of Education (internal 2020 Financial Questionnaire datasets, unpublished) as on 26 March 2021 – average for all Catholic schools including "independent" Catholic schools. Total income represents gross income i.e. income before deductions.

EXPENDITURE, CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BY TYPE (\$ PER STUDENT) 2019 CALENDAR YEAR

	Primary	Secondary	Combined	All schools
Recurrent expenditure	12,985	17,487	18,417	15,561
Capital expenditure	1,778	2,804	3,144	2,388
Total expenditure	14,763	20,291	21,561	17,949
Loans at start of year	2,482	4,838	6,722	4,079
Loans at end of year	2,922	5,218	7,411	4,542
Annual movement in borrowing	440	380	690	463

Source: Department of Education (internal 2020 Financial Questionnaire datasets, unpublished) as on 26 March 2021 – average for all Catholic schools including "independent" Catholic schools.

GOVERNANCE

2020 NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSIONERS



Nicholas Moore
Chair



Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP
Archbishop of Sydney
Chair, Bishops Commission
for Education



Dr Lee-Anne Perry AM
Executive Director, Queensland
Catholic Education Commission
Deputy Chair



Prof Greg Craven AO GCSG
Vice Chancellor
Australian Catholic University



Sr Elizabeth Dodds RSC
Australian Catholic Bishops
Conference Nominee



Most Rev Mark Edwards OMI
Bishop of Wagga Wagga



Ross Fox
Director, Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn



Gerard Gaskin
Executive Director, Catholic
Education Tasmania



Dr Neil McGoran
Director, Catholic Education
South Australia



Dallas McInerney
Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Schools NSW



Jim Miles
Executive Director, Catholic
Education Commission Victoria



Carmel Nash OAM
Executive Director, Catholic School
Parents Queensland



Greg O'Mullane
Director, Catholic Education
Northern Territory



Dr Debra Sayce
Executive Director, Catholic
Education Western Australia



Sr Catherine Slattery SGS
Good Samaritan Education
Catholic Religious Australia



Jacinta Collins
Executive Director, National
Catholic Education Commission

WORKING PARTIES AND COMMITTEES

Resource Strategy Standing Committee

- Dallas McInerney - Chair
- Jacinta Collins
- Ross Fox
- Dr Neil McGoran
- Jim Miles
- Dr Lee-Anne Perry AM
- Dr Debra Sayce

Operations Standing Committee

- Jacinta Collins - Chair
- Ross Fox
- Dr Neil McGoran
- Dallas McInerney
- Jim Miles
- Greg O'Mullane
- Dr Lee-Anne Perry AM
- Dr Debra Sayce

Standing Committee for Faith Formation and Religious Education

- Sr Elizabeth Dodds rsc - Chair
- Siobhan Allen
- John Clarke (Qld)
- Dr Christopher Cotter (WA)
- Dr Anthony Cleary (NSW)
- Dr Monica Dutton
- Professor Br David Hall FMS
- Sr Geraldine Larkins RSJ (Vic)
- Patrick McGrath (ACT)
- Sr Catherine Mead rsj (NT)
- Dr Caroline Thompson
- Martin Tobin (Tas)
- Michael Vial (SA)
- Peter Hamill (NCEC) – Executive Officer

Finance, Audit and Risk Standing Committee

- Dr Lee-Anne Perry AM - Chair
- Jacinta Collins
- Carmel Nash
- Jim Miles
- Peter Hamill (NCEC) – Executive Officer

Funding Analysis Expert Group

- Nicola Taylor (NCEC) – Chair
- Cyrus Li (QLD)
- Malcolm McDougall (QLD)
- Bruce Phillips (VIC)
- Geoff Miller (NSW)
- Mark Duchesne (WA)

Data Strategy Working Group

- Danielle Cronin (CSNSW) - Chair
- Nicola Taylor (NCEC)
- Kwami Wetsi (CSNSW)
- Mal McDougal (QCEC)
- Nigel McPhee (CESA)
- Anna Rados (CECV)
- Mareez Fernando (ACT)
- Edward Simons (CEWA)
- Damien Brotherton (NT)

The NCEC gratefully acknowledges the contribution of all those who represented Catholic education on national committees and working parties. We also remember our colleague John Clarke who passed away in November 2020. He made an outstanding contribution to the work of the NCEC and Catholic education in Queensland.

About the NCEC

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC or the Commission) is the official body charged by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference with developing, advising, enunciating and acting upon policy at the national level for the Church's work in education. The NCEC is directly responsible to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Education.

The NCEC is the focal point for ongoing discussions and negotiations with the Australian Government and other national bodies involved in education. The Commission is also a national forum for discussions and debate on significant matters of interest and concern to Catholic education in Australia.

Responsibilities include:

- Contributing to the national education policy debate
- Liaison with the Australian Government and other key national educational bodies
- Monitoring trends in educational theory and practice in Australia and overseas
- Consulting, complementing and working with Catholic education in each state and territory
- Identifying and disseminating data relevant to Catholic education
- Monitoring developments in faith formation and religious education
- Monitoring research in Catholic education.

Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue	3,383,189	3,122,601
Employee expenses	(1,848,097)	(1,752,209)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	(189,235)	(205,322)
Finance Costs	(36,647)	(43,659)
Rent expense	-	-
NCEC meetings and conferences expenses	(142,191)	(468,034)
Outsourcing expenses	(67,050)	(74,956)
Office and other expenses	(203,735)	(183,467)
Project expenses	(298,707)	(281,594)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	597,527	113,360
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	597,527	113,360

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	845,045	1,263,689
Trade and other receivables	84,971	69,559
Other financial assets	2,718,851	1,882,316
Other current assets	236,527	142,026
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	3,885,394	3,357,591
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	78,004	19,646
Right-of-use assets	560,072	691,230
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	638,076	710,876
TOTAL ASSETS	4,523,470	4,068,467
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	326,346	361,514
Provisions	205,816	218,546
Lease Liabilities	174,820	148,308
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	706,982	728,368
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	73,956	55,621
Lease Liabilities	436,118	575,591
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,217,056	1,359,580
NET ASSETS	3,306,414	2,708,887
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	1,945,723	1,348,196
Reserves	1,360,691	1,360,691
TOTAL EQUITY	3,306,414	2,708,887

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Retained Earnings \$	Reserves \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 January 2019	1,234,836	1,360,691	2,595,527
Comprehensive loss for the period	113,360	-	113,360
Balance at 31 December 2019	<u>1,348,196</u>	<u>1,360,691</u>	<u>2,708,887</u>
Comprehensive profit for the period	<u>597,527</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>597,527</u>
Balance at 31 December 2020	<u><u>1,945,723</u></u>	<u><u>1,360,691</u></u>	<u><u>3,306,414</u></u>

STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts from levies and other income	3,246,341	3,071,075
Receipt of government grants	100,000	-
Interest received	43,131	53,761
GST received (remitted) to the ATO	74,896	130,661
Interest paid on leases	(36,647)	(43,659)
Payments to employees and suppliers	<u>(2,718,538)</u>	<u>(2,757,044)</u>
Cash provided by operating activities	<u>709,183</u>	<u>457,794</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	<u>(78,280)</u>	<u>(15,134)</u>
Cash used in Investing Activities	<u>(78,280)</u>	<u>(15,134)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from related party	3,226,947	2,937,554
Repayment to related party	(3,288,844)	(2,925,989)
Payment of lease liabilities	<u>(151,115)</u>	<u>(131,136)</u>
Net cash (outflow) inflow from financing activities	<u>(213,012)</u>	<u>(119,571)</u>
Net cash from investing and financing activities	<u>(291,292)</u>	<u>(134,705)</u>
Net increase in cash held	<u><u>417,891</u></u>	<u><u>323,087</u></u>
Cash at beginning of the financial year	<u>3,146,005</u>	<u>2,822,918</u>
CASH AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	<u><u>3,563,896</u></u>	<u><u>3,146,005</u></u>



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