



PO Box 277 Merrylands NSW 2160 Australia

**Phone:** 9632 8759

**Fax:** 9681 5643

<http://www.cerdon.nsw.edu.au/>

## What we believe

The following extract from our Vision Statement provides a summary of our beliefs:

Cerdon College is a Catholic secondary school for girls, established by and educating in the traditions of the Marist Sisters. Our school celebrates the uniqueness of each person and is committed to providing each student with a learning environment which is comprehensive and challenging.

We are a multicultural school which seeks to live out the values of Christ in a caring and supportive environment.

## About the Annual School Report

Cerdon College is registered by the Board of Studies (New South Wales) as a member of the Catholic system of schools in the Diocese of Parramatta. The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider school community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2005 and gives information about 2006 priorities.

This report is a legislative requirement under the [Education Amendment \(Non-Government Schools Registration\) Act 2004](#).

The information in this report is complemented by other school publications such as the annual school magazine, school prospectus and newsletters which may be obtained from the College. Further information is available on the College website.

## Who we are

### History of school

Cerdon College was established in 1960. It was founded by the Marist Sisters and named after the little village in France where the Marist Sisters began.

### Location / drawing area

The school is located in Merrylands and draws on students from Catholic feeder schools and parishes in Merrylands, Granville, East Granville, Guildford, Greystanes and Smithfield. Additional places are offered to Catholic students from surrounding parishes.

### Student population

In August 2005, there were 1037 students enrolled at Cerdon College. There were 39 home room classes from Years 7 to 12.



### **Enrolment policy**

Cerdon College follows the Parramatta Diocesan document *Enrolment Procedures in Parramatta Catholic Systemic Schools, January 2002*. This document states that when demand exceeds number of places available, priority for enrolment will be given to first, 'children of Catholic families who live within the geographic boundaries of the parish (or parishes) for which the school was established, on which the school depends OR live outside the parish geographic boundaries but regularly attend such a parish'.

This document can be obtained from the school office or is available on our web site or the [Catholic Education Office web site](#).

### **Retention rates**

In 2003, Year 10 comprised of 183 students. Of the 2005 Year 12 enrolment of 163 students, 155 students have been at the school from Year 10.

## **School Review and Development**

### **System Strategic Goal 1 – To strengthen the Catholic identity of our schools**

Strategic Direction 1.1 *Promote life-giving relationships among schools, parishes and the diocese*

Strategic Direction 1.2 *Develop a visionary direction for the evangelising mission of our schools within the local Church*

Strategic Direction 1.3 *Implement renewed strategies for the spiritual formation of all members of our school communities*

Strategic Direction 1.4 *Implement strategies to better integrate faith and life in the community, culture and curriculum of our schools*

### **System Strategic Goal 2 – To improve the learning outcomes of our students**

Strategic Direction 2.1 *Implement evidence based practices as the basis for ongoing educational improvement*

Strategic Direction 2.2 *Provide professional learning that improves teacher skills and knowledge in pedagogy, curriculum and content*

Strategic Direction 2.3 *Establish resources and service models so that schools can more effectively and efficiently implement their mission*

Strategic Direction 2.4 *Implement new approaches to the role and work of the teacher in the context of the contemporary educational environment*



### **Annual school priorities 2005**

During 2005 the school undertook a revision of the school Vision Statement and developed a Mission Statement for the College titled *Marist education: inspire to great heights*. (SD 1.2)

The school community of staff, students and parents were involved in a process of setting the Strategic Plan for 2006-08. The identified focus areas are:

- The spiritual dimension of our school (SD 1.1)
- The pastoral life of our school (SD 1.1)
- Teaching and learning- a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum (SD 2.3)
- Leadership and growth (SD 1.1)
- The organisational life of our school (SD 1.1)
- The provision, maintenance and management of ICT systems in the school (SD 2.3)

The *Values Across the Curriculum 2004* initiative which identified the set of values pertinent for each Year level has been mapped for every subject at each Year level (SD 2.3)

We have continued to improve the environment, facilities and aesthetic appeal of the school. The major building program to provide purpose built Music and Hospitality blocks, upgrade Science laboratories and replace six demountables with permanent general learning classrooms is due for completion in June 2006 (SD 2.3).

### **Projected school priorities 2006**

#### **School priorities linked to System Strategic Goal 1:**

The school community of staff, students and parents will continue to be involved in the further development of the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan for 2006-08. The identified focus areas include:

- The spiritual dimension of the school (SD 1.1)
- The pastoral life of the school (SD 1.1)
- Leadership and growth (SD 1.1)
- The *Values Across the Curriculum 2004* initiative which identified the set of values pertinent for each year level has been mapped for every subject (SD 2.3).

A projected school priority for 2006 is to promote the nature and strengths of Cerdon College within the wider community (SD 1.1)



### **School priorities linked to System Strategic Goal 2:**

The school community of staff, students and parents will continue to be involved in the further development of the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan for 2006-08. The identified focus areas include:

- Teaching and learning - a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum (SD 2.3)
- The organisational life of our school (SD 1.1)
- The provision, maintenance and management of ICT systems in the school (SD 2.3)
- Improvement of the environment, facilities and aesthetic appeal of the school. The major building program to provide purpose built Music and Hospitality blocks, upgrade Science laboratories and replace six demountables with permanent general learning classrooms is due for completion in June 2006 (SD 2.3).
- To build on 2005 HSC success and continue to improve the educational outcomes within the classroom (SD 2.1).

## **Catholic Identity**

### **Prayer / liturgical life**

The school has a rich prayer and liturgical life with full school Masses celebrated three times a year, and supplemented by liturgies throughout the year, as well as prayers and ceremonies held in class and assemblies. Ceremonies commemorate liturgical and other events such as Lent and Easter, Christmas, Pentecost, the Assumption, Anzac Day, and Remembrance Day. The school has a strong Marian focus in its prayer life culminating in its Chavoin Day celebrations.

### **Social justice**

A strong sense of social justice is evident in the school and strongly expressed as part of its philosophy. Support of charities is a feature of school life, particularly Marist charities which are the focus of Chavoin Day. Social justice is a strong element of the Religious Education program, with students in Year 10 and 11 undertaking a week of community action in each year, and support of organisations such as the St Vincent de Paul through its Christmas drive and the Vinnies van.

### **School / home / parish partnerships**

Cerdon College seeks to actively involve the wider school community. Parish priests from our feeder parishes are welcomed to the school and invited to concelebrate the school Masses. A feature of the Religious Education program has been the parish days. The parish priest of St Margaret Mary's offers reconciliation to students on a regular basis. The school has a youth minister based at Our Lady Queen of Peace Greystanes who works with the students.



### **Parent involvement**

Parents are kept well informed of school life through the fortnightly school newsletter and many other publications sent to homes. Parents receive invitations to the many school events, and attend parent Information Nights and Parent/Teacher Meetings. The Parents and Friends' Association is a strong group within the school. Parents always play a part in developing important school documents.

### **Faith experiences**

These are linked to the prayer and liturgical life of the school. All Years undertake reflection days or retreats. Year 11 students undertake small group (about 10 students) reflection days with a Marist sister. Prayer is an element of all school events, and an optional prayer service is held every Wednesday in the school chapel. Staff also undertake small group reflection days, Liveable Spirit, which focus on the Marist charism. Major events in the Church calendar are celebrated through prayer and liturgy.

## **Religious Education**

### **Religious Education program**

The school follows the *Sharing Our Story* program of the Parramatta Diocese and completes all units of work outlined in it. The Religious Education program is the core of the school's curriculum. Students in Years 11 and 12 have the option of studying *Catholic Religious Studies* or the Board of Studies *Studies of Religion* course. Results in the *Studies of Religion* course have been very strong in recent years.

Religious Education is not confined to Religious Education classes. Homeroom classes lead the school in prayer on assembly. Values education is an integral feature of programs in all Key Learning Areas.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### **Teacher standards**

In 2005, the school had 78 teaching staff and 20 non-teaching staff. All teaching staff at the school have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution. Teachers are currently enrolled in the following post graduate courses: Graduate Certificate of Religious Education, Masters of Educational Leadership.

In Religious Education, 23 teachers are accredited to teach the Religious Education curriculum and 4 teachers are conditionally accredited.



### **Professional learning**

In 2005, teachers undertook courses in a wide range of areas to support the school's religious dimension, pastoral care and educational focus. The whole staff furthered their professional learning through 3 staff development days and staff meetings which focussed on enhancing classroom learning and programming to meet new syllabi in all Key Learning Areas.

### **English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA)**

Student results in the 2005 ELLA showed that there were many questions where the students achieved 10 or more percent points higher than the state average, particularly in the writing and language components of the test. There was only one question in which the students performed below the state average and this was related to "explaining: recognising the meaning of a word."

Data from the 2005 ELLA identified students who did not meet the national reading (19 students) and writing (1 student) benchmarks. Eight of this total number of students had already been categorised as "funded special education" students and 4 others had been identified by both their primary school and Cerdon College as experiencing difficulties in either language or reading.

Our Year 8 students also sat the retest for ELLA in 2005, and the growth in development of their literacy skills was above the average state growth for not only all students in the state but also for all girls in the state (the average State growth was 1.8, while the Cerdon College growth rate was 2.48). Of the 167 students who resat the test, 146 achieved a growth in their overall literacy progress since 2004. The average growth in writing skills was particularly outstanding when compared to the average growth in writing for other students in the State (State 1.72, Cerdon College 3.28). The average growth in reading was a little below the state average growth for reading. The school summary showed that there were many questions where the students achieved 10 or more percent points higher than the state average, particularly in the writing and language components of the test.

As is the case each year, the ELLA test data was analysed closely by the assistant principal (curriculum) and the learning support staff at the school. The results are then presented to all members of staff with particular focus on growth, strengths and weaknesses and the development of strategies to address areas of weakness. The slower growth of reading skills in Year 8 prompted a number of initiatives including:

- Professional development in the area of reading using strategies which actively engage students in learning.
- Literacy inservice for studies coordinators.
- Professional development (using the "train-the trainer" model) facilitated by learning support staff in the areas of 'Communication Disorders' and 'Making Better Readers'. Both these areas are also the learning support projects for the Parramatta Diocesan Focus on Learning project grants.



- Students who scored 'low' in the reading component of the test as well as students identified as needing literacy support by their primary schools were also invited to participate in a tutorial program in 2005 titled "Reading for meaning."
- The data was also analysed in the context of the main feeder primary schools and distributed to these schools with offers of follow-up time with our school.

## Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP)

As a cohort, the school performed slightly above the state average in overall numeracy skills. They were above the state average in the number, data and numeracy problem solving strands of the test but slightly below average in the measurement and space strands. Cerdon College has a high Non English Speaking Background (NESB) population, with 107 out of 172 students identifying themselves as NESB. These NESB students achieved below the state average in all strands except data.

The school results SNAP showed that there were areas of strength in some questions in some strands of the test where the school's percent correct was 10 or higher than the state percent correct. The data strand was notable among these. There were also examples of questions, particularly in the space and measurement strands where the school's percent correct was 10 or more lower than the state percent correct, or in which a particular wrong answer was chosen significantly more in the school than the State.

There were larger numbers of students in SNAP who did not meet the national numeracy benchmark compared to those who did not make the National literacy benchmarks in ELLA.

As is the case each year, the SNAP test data was analysed by the assistant principal (curriculum), learning support staff, and a representative of the Mathematics department at the school. Analysis and follow-up was limited to the Mathematics department. The 2006 SNAP test will be held in the same week as ELLA and therefore we expect the results to appear at a more convenient time to allow closer analysis and follow up.

At the end of 2005, the school received funding from Parramatta Catholic Education Office's Focus on Learning grants for a project titled *Girls Attitudes and Engagement with Mathematics*. The idea for the project derived from the 2003 study *Program for International Student Assessment into Mathematical Literacy* for 15 year olds titled "Facing the Future". The school project aims to collect data using some of the survey tools used in the study to inform teachers' understanding of student perceptions of Mathematics and Mathematics learning. The data will then be used to review and develop teaching programs which will respond more closely to the needs of girls in Mathematics

## School Certificate

Cerdon College's pattern of solid School Certificate results continued in 2005. In the School Certificate examinations, the students achieved above the State average in bands 6 and 5 in the Literacy, Australian History and Geography examinations and well below state average in the lower bands. The achievements of the students in the Australian History examination were particularly commendable, showing further improvement, on what were already strong results, from 2004. The students achieved slightly fewer bands 6 and 5 than the State average in Science and Mathematics but, as was the case in the other examinable courses, they were also below the State average in the lower bands.



The school continues to work on its 2005 goal to address negative attitudes by our students towards Mathematics, through the "Girls Attitudes and Engagement with Mathematics" Focus on Learning project.

## **Higher School Certificate**

Cerdon College had an outstanding Higher School Certificate year in 2005, building on consistently strong results from previous years. The school ranked 78th on the Best 200 Schools List for 2005, and 1st as a Catholic systemic school. One hundred and sixty students presented for the HSC, with 131 electing a University Admission Index (UAI) pathway. Forty six percent of all students who applied for a UAI achieved a UAI rank of above 80. Ninety nine students received offers for places in university courses.

Five students were placed on the NSW Premier's List of outstanding all rounders who scored 90 or above in ten or more units. One student achieved first place in the state in Geography while another achieved third place in the state in Italian Extension.

In almost all of the 33 subjects offered at the school, students achieved results which were above the state mean. The students achieved 131 band 6 (including 11 extension Band 4), and 290 band 5 (including 15 extension band 3). They were well below the state representation in the lower bands. Some outstanding achievements included: no students in Visual Arts achieved below a band 5; no students in Physics or Geography achieved below a band 4; 85.7% of Advanced English students achieved either a band 5 or 6; and 75% of Studies of Religion 1 Unit students achieved either a Band 5 or 6.

2005 saw the first cohort Year 11 accelerated 2 Unit Mathematics students at Cerdon College to complete their HSC one year early. Eight of these students achieved band 5 or 6.

## **Additional teaching and learning programs**

Many programs are offered to assist students to achieve their full potential. The learning support team offers assistance with reading, works with students with identified disabilities both within the classroom and beyond, organises transition programs from school to work such as Fast track. The ESL department, like the learning support team, offer individual, small group and class support to students with needs in the English language. They offer academic and pastoral support to "new arrivals" and refugees as they move from the Intensive Language Centre to mainstream school. A Special Needs Committee, drawn from a wide range of staff, works with students on a one on one basis with a range of needs. Gifted and talented students are also catered for through enrichment programs in Mathematics and Science, various competitions and activities such the Tournament of Minds, and more recently acceleration programs in Mathematics.



### **Transition programs**

Year 6 students who enter the school take part in an Orientation Day late in the previous year. They attend school one day before the rest of the school in their first year, where they are thoroughly immersed in the school organisation and culture. Year 10 students undertake a program called *Clueless* which prepares them for the demands of senior school. All Year 10 and senior students work with the careers teacher and their guidance coordinator to prepare them for work or further study.

All students 'at risk' undertake transition meetings with the learning support teachers, school counsellor, careers teacher, guidance coordinator and parents to help best determine their future.

### **Co-curricular activities**

The school is involved in many co-curricular activities. These include St Vincent de Paul Society, Lions Youth of the Year, Quota, Rotary programs, Catholic Schools' Debating, Catholic Schools' Oratory, Sydney Morning Herald Plain English Speaking, Mock Trial, J.A. Thompson History debating, cabaret/ dance/drama evenings, music recitals, vocal group, aerobics, athletics, aquathlon, basketball, cross country, netball, soccer, softball, swimming, touch football, table tennis, tennis, triathlon, and volleyball.

## **Pastoral Care of Students**

### **Programs and activities related to pastoral care**

All teachers have a responsibility for the pastoral care of students through their care of them in the class room and the provision of quality learning. The homeroom system means that certain teachers undertake a special program of care of students. Each day begins with prayers in homeroom. Guidance coordinators meet with individual classes once a cycle and have a program of pastoral care with them. One of the assistant principals has a specialised role of pastoral care. The quality of relationships developed by this structure is a feature of the school and commented on by students in surveys about the school.

As a special care of Year 7 students, a Peer Support program operates with Year 10 students working with a small number of Year 7 students on a weekly basis. The focus of pastoral care in 2005 was values education.



### **Student management / welfare / discipline policies**

The school's *Student Welfare Policy* and *Student Welfare: Consequences Statement* is published in the student handbook issued to every student and therefore available to all parents. It contains a list of rights and responsibilities for students, staff and parents. The four major student responsibilities are:

- To treat others justly and to value them as individuals
- To contribute to a safe and secure school that is free from discrimination and intimidation
- To have a positive and responsible attitude towards learning and to respect the rights of all students to learn
- To promote and enhance a positive image of the school by observing all school rules.

The school also takes a very strong stance on anti-bullying, and records show a minimal amount of bullying in the school. All allegations of bullying are thoroughly investigated and responded to.

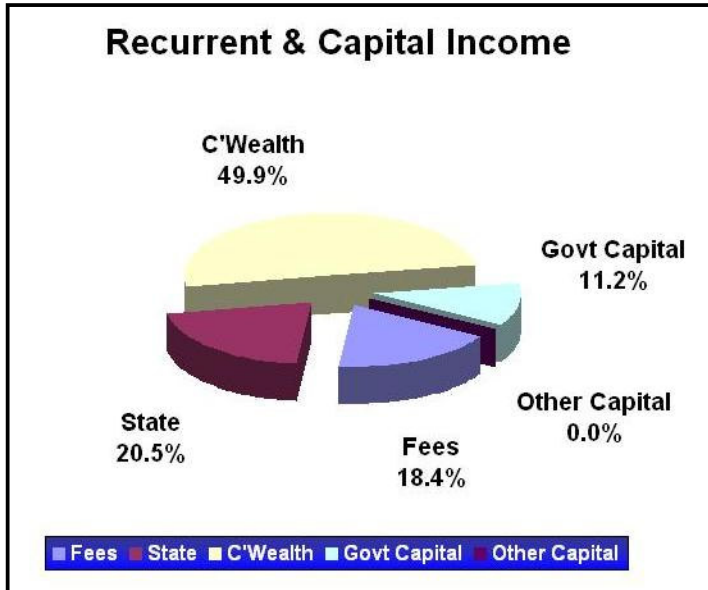
### **Complaints and grievances policies**

The school has formal written protocols in draft form in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Catholic Education Office *Complaint Handling Policy*. Parents are advised in written form at the beginning of each year in a letter posted home about whom they should contact if they have a concern or a complaint. In line with CEO protocols, a complaints register is maintained at the school by the principal.



## Financial Statement

This information is in accordance with the school annual return to CEO for preparation of the Financial Questionnaire.



The system pie chart includes the government per capita recurrent grants received by the system.

### School Recurrent & Capital Income

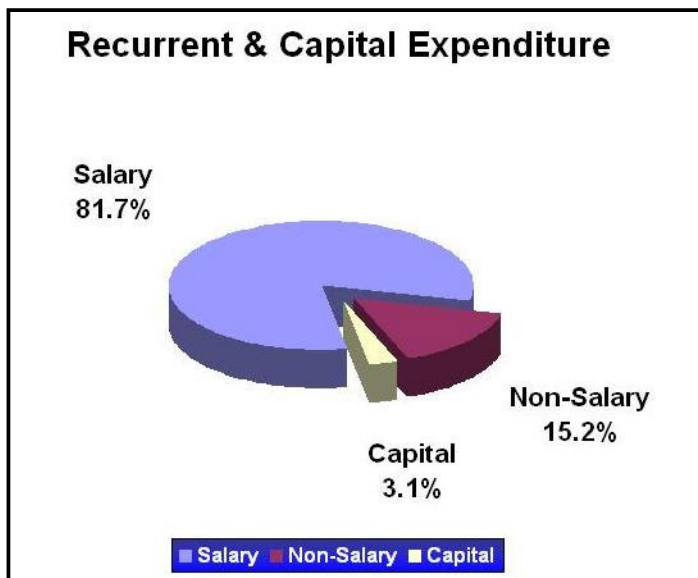
**Fees** relate to school based fees.

**System Contribution** relates to additional support over and above school based fees for general operations, maintenance and special needs of the school. It includes GST refunds.

**Govt Capital** refers to grants for specific purposes. Diocesan school building levy is shown in the system pie charts.

**Other Capital** refers to donations for capital and insurance claims.

In 2005 Cerdon College received \$ 71,594.07 as interest subsidy. Our school community is appreciative of the support it received from the NSW State government under the Interest Subsidy Scheme. The NSW Interest Subsidy Scheme, which began in 1965, is of vital importance to this school



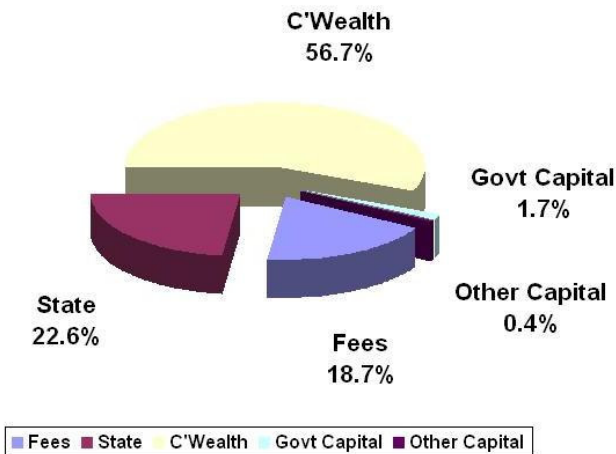
### School Recurrent & Capital Expenditure

This expenditure relates to payments made at the school. The system pie chart includes the salaries, insurance, levies, authority charges and other system and school costs paid on behalf of schools.



The Catholic Education Office as a registration system authority receives income and pays salaries on behalf of schools. A summary of financial information is shown below

**Recurrent & Capital Income**



**System Recurrent & Capital Income**

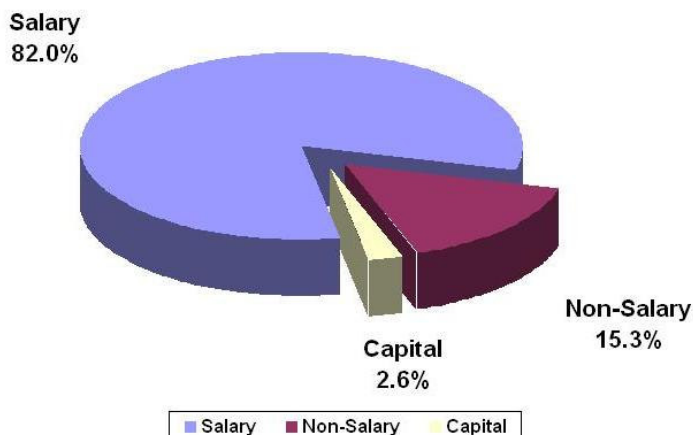
**Fees** refers to diocesan school fees

**State & Commonwealth** refer to the per capita recurrent grants received by the system.

**Govt Capital** refers to grants for specific purposes

**Other capital** includes diocesan school building levy.

**Recurrent & Capital Expenditure**



**System Recurrent & Capital Expenditure**

**Salary** refers to the total of all salaries paid by the system.

**Non Salary** includes system contribution to schools for general operations, insurance, levies, authority charges and other system and school costs paid on behalf of schools.

**Capital** refers to payments from the diocesan school building levy for capital works.



## **Website links**

Much school information to supplement this report can be found on our school website  
[www.cerdon.nsw.edu.au](http://www.cerdon.nsw.edu.au)