



# Annual Report







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# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay respects to the Ngandowal and Minyungbal people of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional owners of the land upon which we live and learn within the caldera of Wollumbin. The Small School seeks to support the Uluru Statement from the heart, especially the Makarrata Commission, to assist in a fair and truthful relationship building process with our First Nation community.

*Artwork created by students at The Small School*

At The Small School we acknowledge the traditional



respects to their Elders, past, present and future.

Connection to land, water, ways, sky and their culture. We pay our

Owners, the Bundjalung people, of this land. We acknowledge their



# Theme 1

## Context

### Message from the Chairperson, School Board

Looking back 2024 has truly felt like the year we have hit our stride, with the completion of our registration for Kindy through to Year 10. This means students can now remain at TSS for the majority of their compulsory schooling if they so choose, offering stability and smooth transitions through mixed-age classes. The emotional and social support we have offered since the beginning, alongside rich classroom learning, has continued to deepen.

Wellbeing remains central to our school philosophy. A core principle for our educators is to nurture children's wellbeing and outlook, while equipping them with the tools they need to navigate an increasingly complex world. This has been formalised into a specialised Wellbeing team, with a Coordinator and several Mentors, each focusing on distinct areas of connection such as gardening, nature excursions and animal welfare.

Our Mentors work closely with students in these areas of connection, supporting their social and emotional wellbeing and observing patterns of behaviour. They share insights with teaching staff to help build a fuller picture of each student. This work reflects our commitment to making wellbeing a central part of the school's priorities and resourcing. We are also grateful to have received support through the National Student Wellbeing Program, funded by the NSW Government, which has helped us to strengthen this work.



Some moments from 2024 that I would like to share include our successful applications for grants to support solar power and accessibility upgrades through the Building Grant Authority. Sustainability is a core tenet of TSS, and being able to reduce our reliance on grid electricity by generating our own is both encouraging and affirming. The installation of battery storage means we are also increasing our resilience in the face of more extreme weather events in the Northern Rivers.

We welcomed two new Senior School teachers in 2024, whose experience and areas of expertise are helping to shape the next phase of our high school development for Years 11 and 12. This work involves significant changes to subject offerings, class structures and timetabling, and takes a great deal of time and careful planning. There will be more to share on this in 2025!

It is with great fondness that I wish Marie Menzies and Imogen Edeson success as they leave the board to focus on their full-time careers. Their contributions to the board have been stimulating, compassionate and thorough.

Yet again I look back over the year and see so many incremental changes that have been driven by our board, our Principal, our teaching and support staff, and our parents. These are then finessed by the students themselves through the Student Council. A heartfelt thanks to every single one of you. I hope that you, like me, are so proud of this space we have cultivated for our children.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Amie'.

**Amie Green** | Chairperson



# A message from key school bodies (continued)

## Message from the Principal

At this stage of the school's development, having completed our sixth year of operation, it is fascinating to see how culture and tradition are beginning to form and how they are giving shape and rhythm to each school year.

We now have activities and events that have continued successfully for a number of years and are taking on the meaning and significance of school traditions. These early traditions, shaped in the foundational years of the school, will in turn shape both the school itself and the students who pass through it in the future. This highlights the importance of laying these foundations with care, through trial and error, by listening to student voices, and by reflecting the unique character of our school community.



Some events and activities have now become annual traditions including the student-run Mini Fete in Term 2 and the Whole School Performance in Term 3. Traditions have also formed around our school camps which have become meaningful rites of passage for our students. We have much loved and highly anticipated camps at Spring Gully in the Scenic Rim for the Kookaburra class (Years 5 to 6) and the 'big house' camp at Hosanna (Years 2 to 4) for the Starlings class.

We have continued to run our hallmark programs, including Sustaining The Small School, Electives, and Personal Interest Projects (PIPs). One of the STSS projects

this year saw students create a battery recycling station. Electives offered throughout the year included woodworking, sewing, tie dye, drawing, Garage Band, archery, and of course Dungeons and Dragons, our signature elective now in its sixth year.



Our democratic decision-making model for students also evolved this year. Our long-running whole school meeting, Nesting Ground, shifted to a class representative model, which has been named Student Council and is held once a fortnight. This change has opened up new ways for students to raise issues and shape school life.

We were proud to support the indigenous education organisation Children's Ground through their Wear It Yellow Day fundraising initiative. It gave us a meaningful and visible way to take part in National Reconciliation Week this year and connect with an inspiring First Nations-led organisation doing important work.

We were also successful in our Year 9 registration this year, and we are now officially a Kindy to Year 9 school, with 62 students enrolled. We welcomed two new high school teachers and continued to develop and deepen our approach to secondary learning.

Thank you to our whole school community, students, families and staff, for your energy, trust and creativity. It's been a big year, and we're proud of what we're building together.

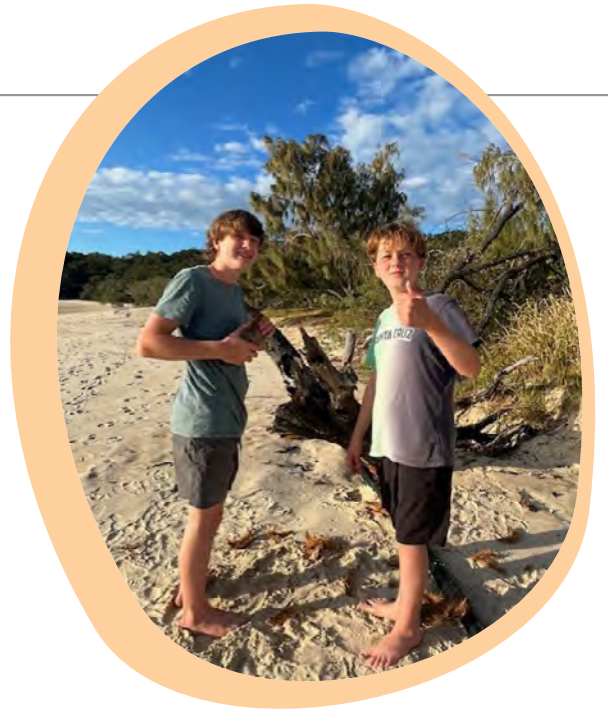


**Carla Wilson**  
Principal

## Theme 2

# Outcome and Results

NAPLAN information for The Small School can be viewed at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)





# Theme 3

# Staffing



## Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	Number of teachers
Conditional	N/A
Provisional	N/A
Proficient	7
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	N/A
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	N/A

Workforce Composition 2024	
Teaching staff	7
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	5.4
Non-teaching staff	11
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	6.1



# Theme 4

## Attendance

### Management of Non-Attendance

Early intervention is the most effective way to resolve irregular attendance.

Early intervention strategies are informal and carried out by the classroom teacher with parents. Early intervention strategies include checking for and responding to the following possibilities:

- Checking for any peer or classroom related issues or transport barriers
- Checking for learning difficulties and investigating teaching approaches
- Offering for the child to be supported by the Student Wellbeing Worker
- Developing a transition plan which includes parents being able to stay with their child at school for a period of time.

Teachers report any early intervention approaches to the Principal who will follow up with the family if these approaches are not successful and attendance does not improve. These strategies will be captured in a student's Individual Support Plan. More formal approaches to non-attendance include providing parents with an attendance report with a written request for attendance improvement. This can be followed by a face-to-face meeting with parents and Principal in an Attendance Improvement Meeting. The attendance improvement requirements will be recorded in the Individual Support Plan. Adherence to an Individual Support Plan can be a condition of enrolment.



Grade	Whole year attendance rates for 2024 by year level
Kindergarten	74.37%
Year 1	86.94%
Year 2	85.64%
Year 3	83.39%
Year 4	85.15%
Year 5	80.32%
Year 6	76.26%
Year 7	82.27%
Year 8	84.85%
Year 9	81.64%
Whole year attendance rate for the whole school (K-9)	82.08%

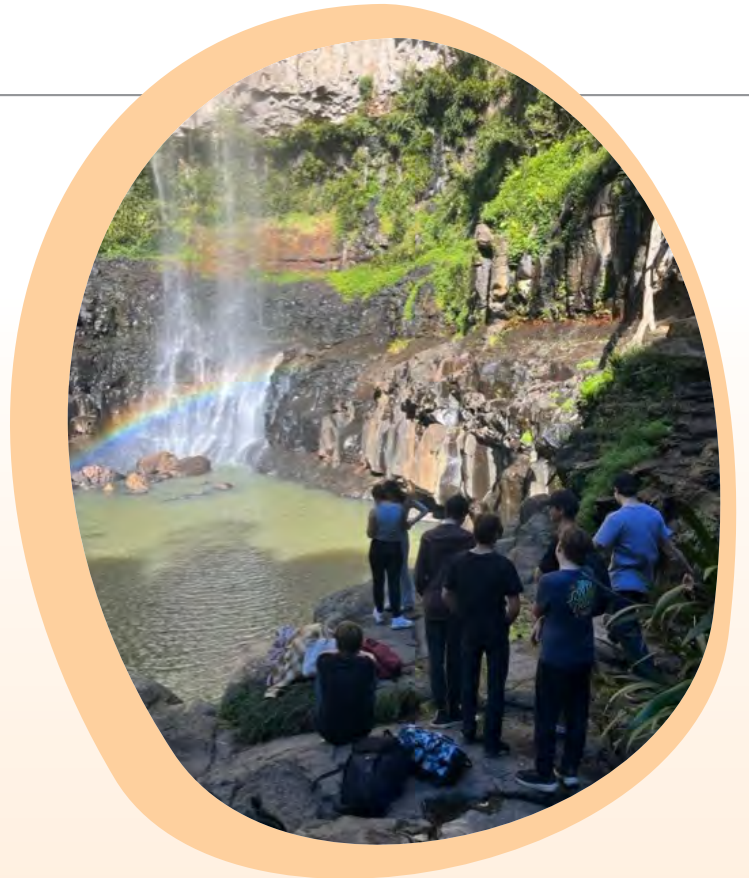


# Theme 5

## School Policies

The Small School's policies can be found via the following links:

- Enrolment Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy



# Theme 6

## Stakeholder Satisfaction

Transparent processes, inclusive of stakeholder feedback strongly influence much of the way we do things at TSS. Teachers will actively seek to include parents' feedback, particularly as it relates to the needs of their child. Explicit feedback is sought from students by the teachers in an age-appropriate way across the school in multiple forums. This is done through discussions in classrooms and through a fortnightly whole school meeting. Students are actively supported and encouraged to articulate their ideas and concerns in these participatory processes.

Parent feedback is sought explicitly twice per year in the Parent Information Sessions. These are face to face sessions held in Terms 1 and 3.

Hopes and Concerns meetings for new students provide an early opportunity for parent and student feedback. This is continued in the twice-yearly three-way conferences (parent-teacher-student interviews).

Staff at TSS operate in a collaborative, professional environment with many decisions being made together in staff and planning meetings. A culture of openness and mutual respect is very important at TSS. Teachers are seen as expert professionals who carry out a complex, vital and demanding job. The respect and autonomy afforded to teachers contributes greatly to their satisfaction and consequently the satisfaction of the children in their care.

Specifically, feedback from staff is sought by the Principal in annual staff reviews.

TSS has very low staff turnover and although staff often experience high levels of stress in their roles as a consequence of the nature and demands of working in schools, this is predominantly mediated by our supportive, collaborative and respectful working environment.

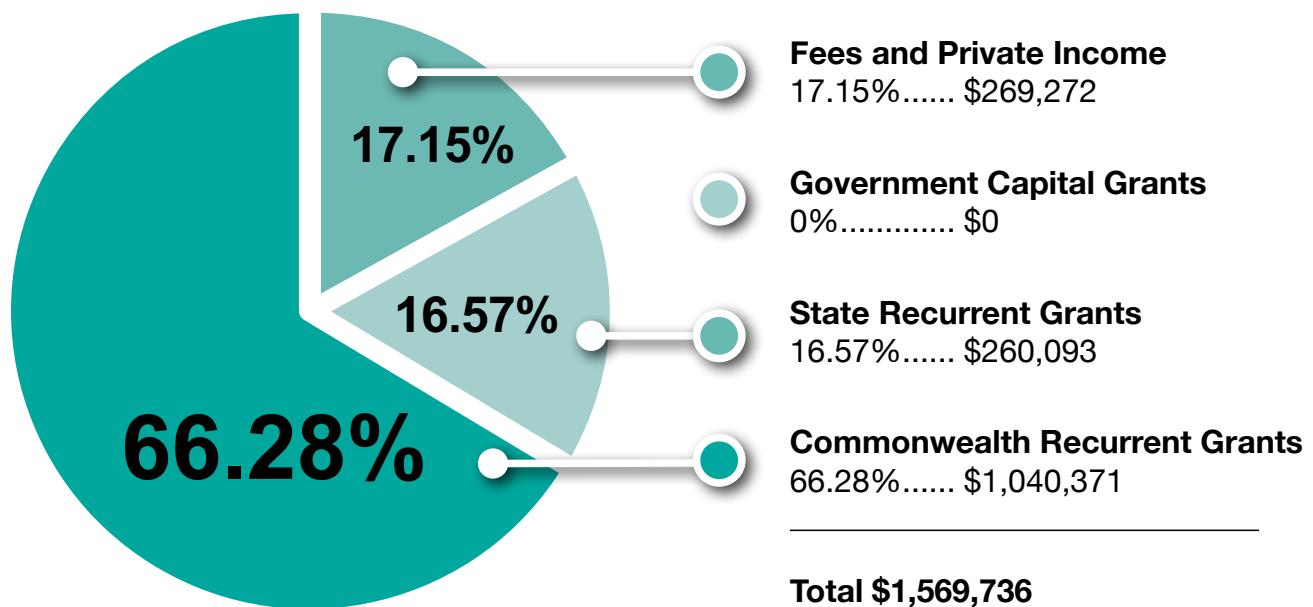




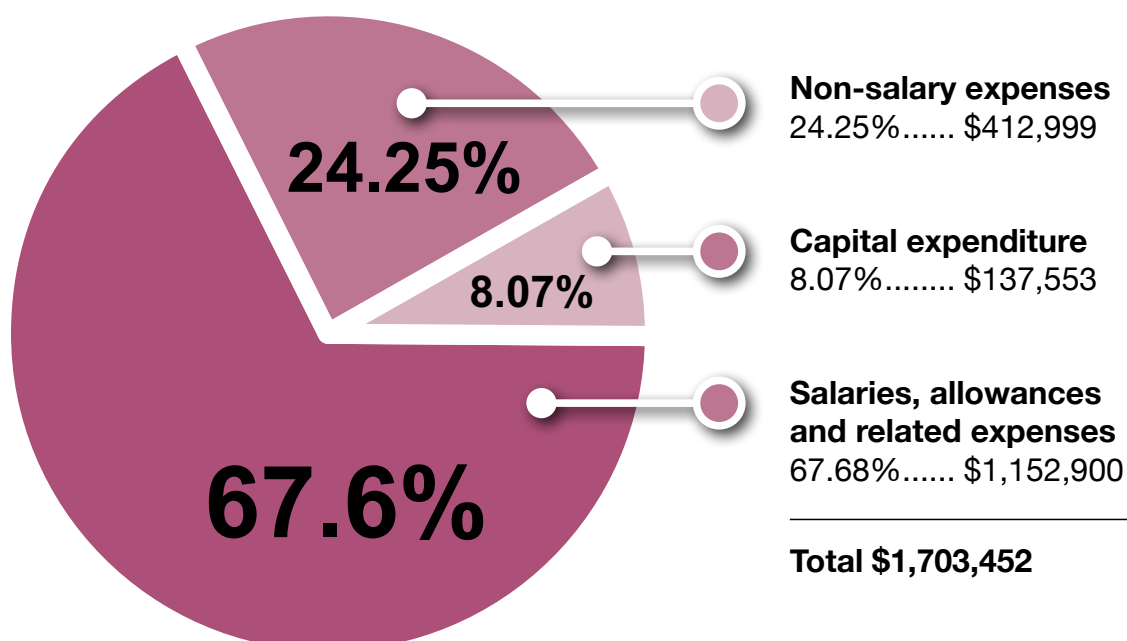
## Theme 7

# Summary Financial Information

### Recurrent / Capital Income



### Recurrent / Capital Expenditure





**The Small School** | 8 King Street, Murwillumbah, NSW, 2484

**P** (02) 6672 1018 | **E** [admin@thesmallschool.org.au](mailto:admin@thesmallschool.org.au)

[www.thesmallschool.org.au](http://www.thesmallschool.org.au) | ACN: 621 765 820

