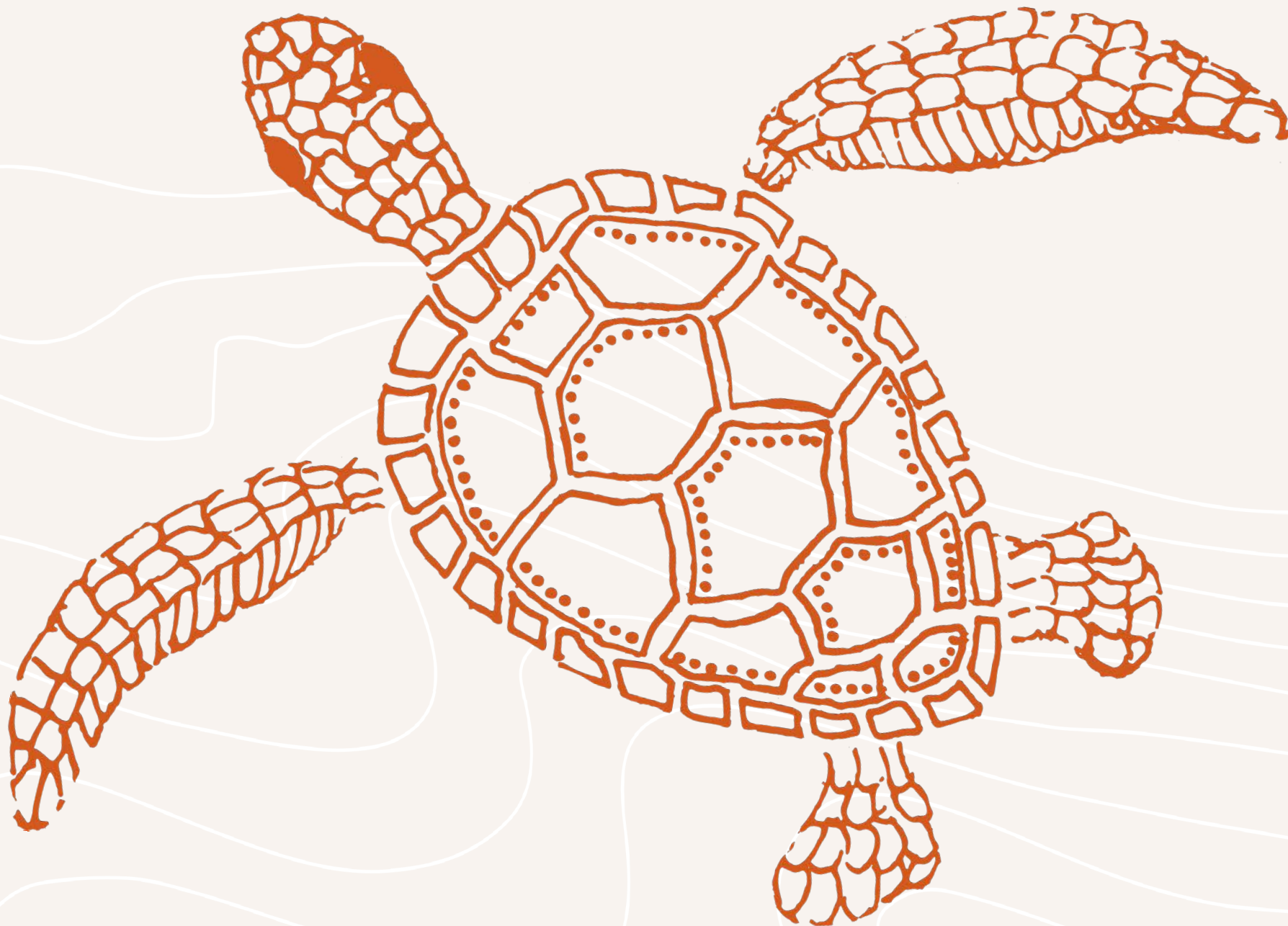




Annual Report 2025

GILIBAA





Contents

4 Context

- **Message from Les Holland**
Chairman, Board of Directors SPCEF Ltd
- **Message From Graeme Irwin**
Chief Executive Officer, SPCEF Ltd
- **Message From Martin Telfer**
Principal, St Philip's Christian College Port Stephens & Gilibaa
- **Message from Jonathan Lilley**
Director, Aboriginal Education
- **Contextual Information About The School & Characteristics Of The Student Body**

16 Outcomes & Results

- **Student Outcomes In Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing**
- **Results of HSC**

17 Staffing

- **Accreditation Status Workforce Composition**

18 Attendance Student Profile

- **Student attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school**
- **How The School Manages Non-Attendance**

19 School Policies

- **Policies**

20 Stakeholder Satisfaction

- **Parent, Student And Teacher Satisfaction**

21 Financial Information

- **Income 2025**
- **Expenses 2025**

1. Context

Message from Les Holland

CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPCEF LTD

Greetings,

It is with pleasure that I present my report for the year ended December 2025.

Faithfulness – an apt theme for the year. Luke 16:10 “If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones...” This theme was exceptionally displayed in tangible ways throughout the St Philip’s group during 2025.

2025 – a year of significance and challenges that presented opportunities and achievements that portrayed the strength and character of this organisation.

During the year, our collective teams invested significant energy, diligence, perseverance and high-level dedication which resulted in achieving remarkable results in all aspects, especially in financial outcomes. God’s faithfulness was undeniably present in all situations.

St Philip’s strategic mission is to deliver **“Whole of Life Education”** throughout our network of schools and early learning centres. Our key strategic goals include delivering high-quality, Christian-based education, fostering innovative learning environments, nurturing individual student gifts and ensuring the holistic development (academic, social, physical spiritual) of all students.



Thank you to our CEO, Mr Graeme Irwin AM, who continues to guide this organisation with clear, forward-thinking vision and strategic leadership. Also, to the CFO, Mr. Jacques Cronje and the finance team, not forgetting all personnel in the Central Office who contribute to the effectiveness of this outstanding organisation known as St Philip’s. To SPCE staff in all schools and centres, thank you for your expertise and continued commitment to delivering high-quality education in a caring, “Christian Framework.”

My gratitude to the Board of Directors (welcome to two new directors this year) for your diligence, time, expertise and oversight of the St Philip’s group.

The theme for 2026 – “Providence” – God’s divine guidance! **“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.”** Romans 8:28 NIV.

Grace and Peace,

Leslie J Holland

Chairman, Board of Directors SPCEF Ltd
AGM 28th May 2026

**“If you are faithful
in little things,
you will be *faithful*
in large ones...”**

LUKE 16:10

DIRECTORS

Leslie Holland
Chairman

Graeme Irwin AM
CEO

Stephen Clarke
Director

Ksenia East
Director

Robert Fogg
Director

Jenny Hoffman
Director

Benjamin Picton
Director

COMPANY SECRETARY
Garry Paget

Held the role of secretary
during the year

Message from Graeme Irwin

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ST PHILIP'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

Well here we are at the end of another remarkable year, and what a year it has been, there are so many moments to celebrate and be thankful for in 2025.

Our theme for 2025 has been Faithfulness, and this is my prayer for all of our SPCC students, across every entity and every location. That they would not be known simply for what they achieve, but for who they are – for their faithfulness. That they would be steadfast rather than flashy. Quietly committed. Doing the little things well. Serving with their whole heart. Persevering through challenges. And trusting that God's goodness will always lead them into His greater purpose.

This year has been another season of growth and blessing for the St Philip's group of schools. One of the most exciting milestones has been the acquisition of a new **Outdoor Education and Retreat Centre** at the western end of Port Stephens. Through the extraordinary generosity of a local benefactor, this long-held vision has become a reality at minimal cost to SPCE. This site will be a purpose-built space for student retreats, outdoor learning, staff training, and spiritual formation – a centre that will strengthen our mission of transforming lives through Christ-centred education.



We also celebrated a very special milestone this year: **25 years of the Young Parents College.**

What began in 2000 as a bold idea in Waratah – a school for young mothers – has now grown into a transformative force that has touched hundreds of families. Over the years, the program has expanded to include fathers, added a campus on the Central Coast, and now looks toward further growth in the Hunter Valley and Lower Central Coast. At its heart, however, the vision remains unchanged: that every young parent deserves a future filled with hope, purpose, and the unshakable truth that they are loved by God.

Another project we are excited about is our new **College at Maitland.** After years of prayer and planning, the dream of a St Philip's presence in this community is moving forward. Beginning as a K-4 Junior School in 2028, it will grow into a full K-12 College, with a Narnia Early Learning Centre, a Dynamic Learning College, and a Saints Academy. We look forward to sharing more as this project continues to take shape.

Alongside these major initiatives, 2025 has also been a year of **cross-campus connection.** From ministry camp, worship nights, and the Year 12 study camp, to our student leadership symposium, these events have helped our students build friendships and learn from the many gifted staff across our community.

This year also saw the continued success of our Golf Classic, now in its third year. This event not only builds relationships with our partners but also fuels projects that make a profound impact. A shining example is the extraordinary \$1.5 million donation we received for the Young Parents program at Wyong. This gift will enable the creation of a dedicated Young Parents College and Narnia Early Learning Centre on site – a dual-generational initiative that will bless both parents and their children for years to come.

And of course, we want to say a heartfelt **congratulations** to the graduating class of 2025. Over three hundred strong, this Year 12 cohort has left a legacy of both academic and personal achievement. As you step into the next chapter of your lives, I hope that all you have gained here at St Philip's equips you to contribute positively to the world and to live out faithfulness in every sphere of life.

Finally, I want to thank you – our community of parents, staff, and students – for all that you contribute to making St Philip's such a rich, supportive, and life-giving place. Education here is a partnership, and we are deeply grateful for the way you walk with us in shaping young people for the future.

Thank you, and God bless.

Graeme Irwin AM
Chief Executive Officer
June 2025

"Our theme for 2025 has been Faithfulness, and this is my prayer for all of our SPCC students, across every entity and every location. That they would not be known simply for what they achieve, *but for who they are – for their faithfulness.*"

Message from Jacques Cronje

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER
ST PHILIP'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
FOUNDATION



SPCEF successfully navigated the 2025 financial challenges with the unwavering support of our families and college community who are invested in affordable Independent Christian Education.

Our financial results for the year are pleasing considering the extensive impact the new MEA agreements had on our staffing costs. Employee costs went up by 9.3% Year on Year (YoY) and our total cost base increased by 11.4% from 2024, whilst our recurrent revenue only increased by 7.3% YoY. It is important for us that our college communities understand the cost pressures we face and that we endeavour to steward our resources in the best possible way.

Our overall margin was significantly supported by additional benevolent giving from our community partners who are standing in the gap of inflationary pressures and reduced government funding (in real terms) to support our operations and future growth initiatives.

The new financial year has been met with successive interest rate increases and we will do our upmost to weather all economic eventualities. Our aim is to not have to pass on all of our financial performance challenges onto Tuition Fees, but find innovative ways to create lasting sustainability as much as we can.

During 2024 we entered into a partnership with **Edstart** who are now our Accounts Receivable agents for most of our registered schools. We

have received excellent feedback from our college community about their flexible and service-oriented business model, simplifying the payment of tuition fees. Our auditors made special mention of our debtors' position during the latest audit, and we are grateful to our college community for being quick adopters.

We engaged in many transformation projects during 2025. One of these was implementing a **Centralised Finance team** to further support the organisation with specialised financial management expertise to provide quality shared services across the group at a lower unit cost.

During 2025, SPCEF was awarded with the **CMA governance** accreditation by the CMA Standards Council. The accreditation demonstrates that the organisation has been carefully assessed against the Nine Principles of Ministry Accountability, and has scored a 100% passing grade. The CMA Standards Council does not attempt to rank or score an organisation. An organisation either meets the standards completely, and is thus accredited, or

it falls short. When our community and donors see the CMA Standards Council 'Accreditation' Seal, they can give confidently and generously, knowing that the organisation takes governance, accountability and stewardship seriously.

As in last year's CFO report, we will again provide a quick synopsis of how government funding influences our organisation's financial position. It is important for our community to understand the downward pressures on our government funding that in return puts pressure on tuition fees.

Families might be familiar with the CTC or DMI score funding arrangement the government put in place in 2020. Below is a brief background to further explain the significant impact of government funding on independent schools, whilst appreciating that government funding equates to approximately 51% of our total revenue.

There have been many independent school funding models in Australia with the Gonski report very influential in 2014. In 2020, the government introduced the Capacity to Contribute (CTC) model relating to the capacity of a school community to contribute to the cost of education. This means that the government looks directly at each individual school's parent community's socio-economic ability to

contribute to education costs of that specific school. The Direct Measure of Income (DMI) score provides indexation against the national benchmark and where a school community seems more likely to contribute, the less recurrent government funding is made available for that school.

This unfortunately puts indefinite upward pressure on a school's tuition strategy in order to compensate for the reduced government funding.

We share this information with our community, to enable transparent communication in building community trust and for our partners to understand the pressures of a school's operating landscape, whilst wanting to reassure our community that we are committed to responsible stewardship of our resources.

May God's *love and peace* guide and sustain you as you journey with St Philip's.

Jacques Cronje
Chief Finance Officer

Message from Martin Telfer

PRINCIPAL
SPCC PORT STEPHENS & GILIBAA

At St Philip's Christian College Gilibaa, our theme for 2025 was 'Faithfulness', which was most appropriate considering God's generosity towards our school as it entered the second year of operation. Faithfulness, also, is what enables our Gilibaa community to function properly. **Every day, we depend on the faithfulness of others just as others depend on our faithfulness. It is what binds all of our relationships together.** Faithfulness accurately describes the character of God, and He has designed the world in such a way where our community life together requires faithfulness and interdependence. We need each other to be reliable. This year at SPCC Gilibaa, we have continued to build upon our relationships with each other, marked by dependability and trust. We are also aware that our success as a young school relies upon our partnerships with the wider SPCC community and local Aboriginal communities.

The increased growth of our school this year led to the employment of more staff. We are grateful to God in providing for us faithful men and women who contributed greatly to building our educational excellence at Gilibaa. We were able to recruit experienced Aboriginal teachers and aides, who were strong in their love of Jesus and their culture. We were also joined by non-Aboriginal teachers from within SPCC who were called by the vision of Gilibaa, as the place of light. They were faithful in engaging with culture and learning Gathang language, indeed, our students proved to be our new language



experts. We were also very pleased to appoint our first Gilibaa Chaplain, Uncle Jim, an Elder who teaches our students Christian Studies, prays with families and who is well respected in the local Aboriginal communities.

It has been wonderful to witness the growth in our students spiritually, culturally and academically. Their development in Gathang language has been beyond what we expected. Alongside this, the elements of the school day which they engage with and enjoy the most, continue to be circle time each morning, and learning On Country in the afternoons. Each student works alongside their teachers and families to create an individual cultural plan which focuses their attention throughout the year.

Our staff and students were very pleased to receive our first unique Gilibaa uniform piece, a polo shirt displaying a Worimi design, reflecting our school name. Our students wear this with pride on sports day each week. Our Stage 2 students were also very excited to join with Stage 2 SPCC Junior School on their overnight camp to Lake Macquarie. This was such a

success that we intend to continue this in 2026 as well as begin our own Gilibaa camp. During NAIDOC week, our students took centre stage at our special assembly and also shared their culture with Port Stephens students through different learning activities.

Our school was delighted to be invited to the Waratah Project, and Independent Schools program designed to support the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across NSW. **This year we focused on creating safe cultural spaces for all of our students across the campus,** as well as developing our staff in Worimi culture by attending the Connect to Country course run by the local Murrook Cultural Centre.

As our school matures, we realised the needs our students have, beyond their learning in the classroom. We have been overwhelmed by the support of local external health services who generously provide support for our families in a variety of ways. We also started our own bus service to Tanilba Bay and surrounding areas. Many of our families come from this area and the bus service at the beginning and end of each day is of great assistance to families and ensures high attendance.

"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful."

HEBREWS 10:23

We are thankful for God's faithfulness expressed through the ongoing commitment of our local Elders and families. Their engagement each week in the education of our students continues to have a great impact on our community. A number of Elders joined the Gilibaa executive for a day of strategy, where we prayed, shared and discussed our plans and hopes for the future of Gilibaa, as it continues to grow. We were so pleased to receive NESAC approval to begin a Stage 3 Gilibaa class in 2026. We always remain optimistic about our future, for as it is written in Hebrews 10:23, "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful."

Martin Telfer
Principal



Message from Jonathan Lilly

DIRECTOR
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

Wiyabu,

What a great second year of Gilibaa and seeing the students growing stronger in culture and education each day. This year has seen the introduction of Stage 2, with Years 3 and 4 joining our school. The joy of seeing Grade 4 and the younger years sitting together has been remarkable for both students and staff. We look forward to Gilibaa continuing to grow with the addition of more students and grades with stage 3 joining us in 2026 with enrolments looking strong.

This year we welcomed new staff, a teacher for Stage 2, Ms Sarah Naden. Sarah brings with her a wealth of experience working in both remote community and city schools. Sarah's understanding of First Australian pedagogy is exceptional which will be shown and shared with students and staff alike.

Next year, we will expand in Learning Support with a dedicated staff member with strengths both in Education and Speech Pathology. Our students will benefit from one-on-ones and group support. Truly our school is tailoring education to each of our students as our staff expertise and support grows.

Gilibaa has three areas of focus, firstly that we are a faith-based Christian school, secondly that we are a school striving for excellent academics, and thirdly we have a depth of Worimi culture represented in the 4 pillars of culture being; Land, Language, Story & People, truly making us an aspirational, bicultural school.



Among the students there are more than 20 language groups represented, as far North as the Torres Strait Islands, as far South as Sydney, and out West to Wilcannia. This brings a wealth of cultural learning from the students, their families and the communities represented.

We are deeply grateful to Worimi community Elders that both are employed at our school and visit during our gatherings; their guidance and support is invaluable as we grow and listen to their wisdom. Our gratitude also goes to SPCC for partnering with the Worimi community to create this partnership and everything that is coming in the future.

As we look ahead, with foundations of belonging and relationship, our vision remains clear. We will continue to work towards an inclusive school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, tailoring a holistic education to meet their needs.

Gapu,

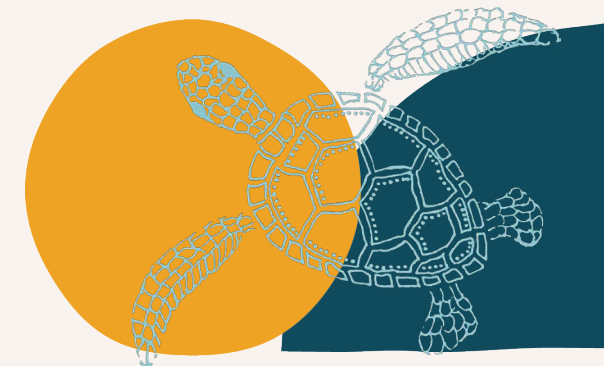
Jonathan Lilley

Director of Aboriginal Education



As we look ahead, with foundations of belonging and relationship, our vision remains clear. *We will continue to work towards an inclusive school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students,* tailoring a holistic education to meet their needs.

JONATHAN LILLEY - DIRECTOR OF ABORIGINAL EDUCATION



Contextual Information About The School & Characteristics Of The Student Body

OUR HISTORY

St Philip's Christian Education Foundation was first approached in 2019 by the Yatha Muru Foundation, led by prominent Aboriginal community leader, Sean Gordon and UNSW's Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous, Prof Leanne Holt to propose the idea of the establishment of an Aboriginal school-within-a-school as part of the St Philip's Christian Education group. It quickly became evident that due to the multi-school nature of the St Philip's group of schools, the structures in place would provide a foundation conducive to success in this venture.

St Philip's developed an Aboriginal Education Team who worked alongside the Worimi Community to begin a journey toward the establishment of an Aboriginal school which would address both the academic and cultural need for our Aboriginal students.

In partnership with the Worimi community and its organisations, St Philip's Christian College Gilibaa was launched at SPCC Port Stephens in January of 2024.

Gilibaa means 'The Place of Light' and the desire of the community at St Philip's is that the school will be a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will have the opportunity to develop not just in education but also in their understanding of local Aboriginal culture. Students will learn in both English and the Gathang language (the language of the Worimi people) and be embedded within the broader community at St Philip's Christian College Port Stephens.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

SPCC Gilibaa aims to bridge the gap by offering a culturally supportive environment where Aboriginal students can learn both academic subjects and their heritage, including the Gathang language. With small class sizes and intensive programs in literacy and numeracy, SPCC Gilibaa emphasises cultural identity and aims for its students to continue thriving in their education beyond primary school.

The classroom programs are systemic and intensive, with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy, delivered in a culturally supportive and enriching environment. Our goal is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach high school having achieved personal success, maximising their opportunities both in high school and beyond. Our hope is that every student who graduates from SPCC Gilibaa in Year 6 will continue their secondary education at St Philip's Christian College Port Stephens.

In order to promote strong academic growth, class sizes are small, between 12 and 16, and are taught by a fulltime teacher and a teacher's aide.

In addition to promoting numeracy and literacy, the classroom programs emphasise cultural identity and understanding. The Worimi community and its organisations actively participate in teaching Aboriginal practices, history, language, and culture. This partnership gives all St Philip's students the opportunity to understand and celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to our society. A strong cultural foundation is

built through immersion in culture, focusing on the Four Pillars of Culture Land, Language, Story, and People. The curriculum incorporates Gathang, the language of the Worimi people, into everyday classroom use, with designated language sessions to introduce new concepts. Learning Gathang systematically lines up with components of English grammar as students learn how to build language sentences.

Director of Aboriginal Education, Mr Jonathan Lilley, believes this deep immersion into Aboriginal culture within the classroom is a key to the success of the program.



2. Outcomes And Results

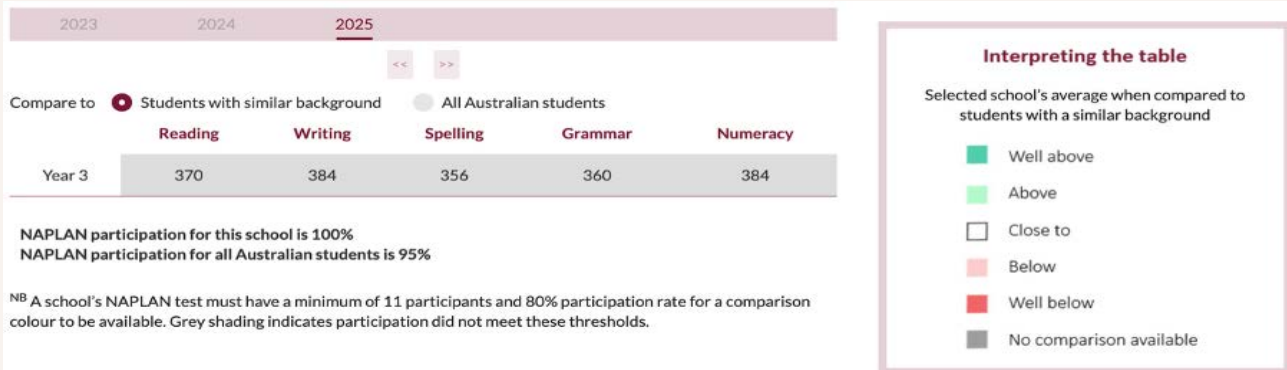
Student Outcomes In Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

NAPLAN RESULTS

This year was the first year that SPCC Gilibaa students sat the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data shows current levels of achievement for students enrolled in Year 3 2025.

The participation of SPCC Gilibaa students in NAPLAN this year was 100%, which is an incredible result considering it was the first year of participation.

The table below shows the average results for our College for the 2025 school year.



Senior Secondary Outcomes (Student Achievement)

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

St Philip's Christian College Gilibaa in 2025 was a Kindergarten to Year 4 school. Therefore there are no Higher School Certificate results to report on for this annual report.



3. Staffing

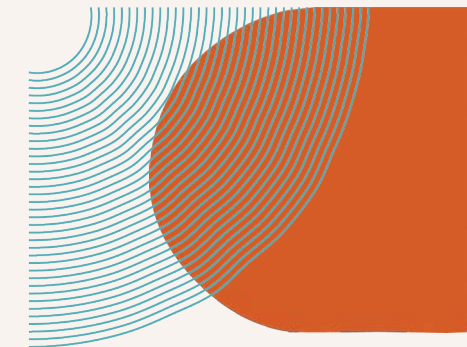
Accreditation Status

At SPCC Gilibaa, we do not have any staff seeking Proficient Teacher Accreditation. All staff are in a Maintenance Period and tracking well with hours. There are currently no staff seeking a higher level of accreditation.

Workforce Composition

School Staff	FTE
Teaching Staff	4
Full-time Equivalent teaching staff	2.8
Non-Teaching Staff	11
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	3.26





4. Attendance

Student Attendance Rates For Each Year Level And The Whole School

YEAR	HEAD COUNT	FULL YEAR EQUIVALENT	FULL DAYS	ABSENCE	ATTENDANCE	ATTENDANCE %
Kindy	11	8.97	1,41	177	1,464	89.21%
Year 1	8	6.54	1,197	173	1,024	85.55%
Year 2	2	1.46	267	28	239	89.51%
Year 3	9	8.69	1,590	124	1,466	92.20%
Year 4	3	2.64	483	52	431	89.23%
Total	33	28.3	5,178	554	4,624	89.30%

How The School Manages Non-Attendance

The SPCC Student Attendance Policy outlines the process that is used to ensure compliance with the NSW Education Amendment (School Attendance) Bill 2009. The law in NSW states that all children between the ages of six and below the minimum leaving age are required to attend school regularly. Parents and Carers are legally responsible for their children's attendance while the school is responsible for maintaining and monitoring the Attendance Register. In the Attendance Register, Principals are required to ensure information relating to absences of students from school for medical or other reasons is noted. In addition, any particulars need to be added about any unsatisfactory school attendance of compulsory school aged students.

The school's Attendance policy indicates that the school informs parents/ carers of absences, by sending an SMS daily, following up with a phone call and email by the student's teacher and/ Director of Aboriginal Education when there is an identified concerning pattern of absences. Attendance Plans and Attendance Improvement Plans, where necessary, are created to improve attendance. For habitual and chronic absences the school notifies the Department of Community and Justice.

5. School Policies

Policies

THE FOLLOWING SCHOOL POLICIES ARE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

- [Anti-bullying](#)
- [Child protection](#)
- [Discipline](#)
- [Enrolment](#)
- [Managing complaints](#)

<https://www.spcc.nsw.edu.au/schools/tailored-education/gilibaa/our-school/policies>



6. Stakeholder Satisfaction

Parent, Student And Teacher Satisfaction

I love working at Giliba, because the students learn culture by engaging with culture and country.

This creates such a confidence and connectedness to their identity and their community.

The kids are so excited to come to school because they get to learn about who they are.

They would not get this depth of opportunity at another school.

Alannah
Gilibaa Learning Support
and Speech Therapist

Gilibaa has provided our son with a strong sense of family and community. His transition into kindergarten has been seamless. The staff maintain regular communication with us, which allows Levi's needs to be addressed and opportunities to be created collaboratively. As a result, Levi has excelled academically, culturally, and in his faith. He is developing leadership skills well beyond his years, which will serve him throughout his life.

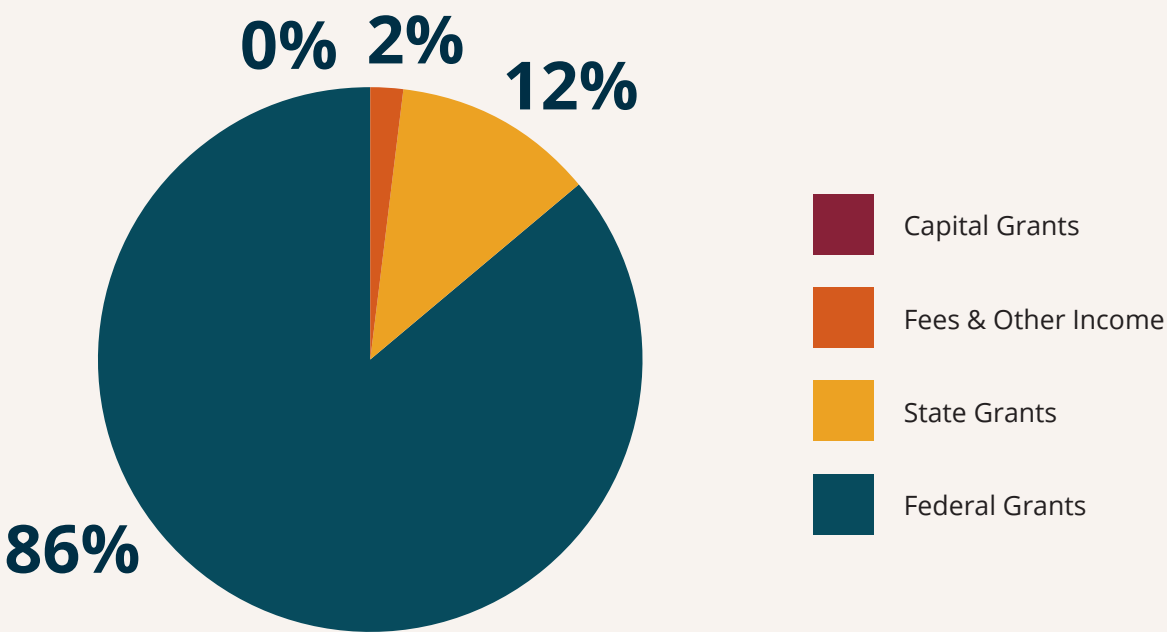
The school has also created a safe and welcoming space for our daughter, who is still a few years away from starting school. She is already learning about culture, community, being part of Gods family, and becoming familiar with the school community and expectations.

A/Prof Danielle Manton
Parent

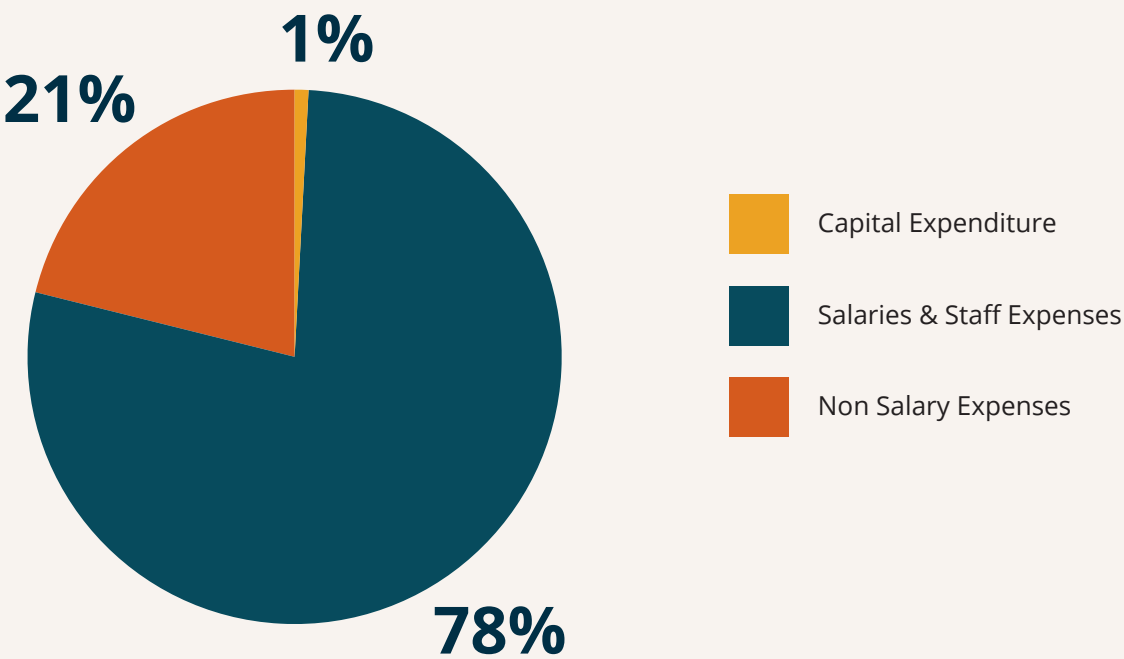


7. Financial Information

Income 2025



Expenses 2025



A group of children in scout uniforms are walking along a dirt path in a forest. The path is bordered by a pond with lily pads on the left and tall grasses on the right. The children are wearing black hats and white shirts with green accents. One child in the foreground is shielding their eyes from the sun. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The background features large, textured tree trunks and dense foliage.

"If you are faithful in little things,
you will be *faithful* in large ones..."

LUKE 16:10



Gilibaa

FOR THE WHOLE OF LIFE

02 4919 5490

spcc.nsw.edu.au

gilibaa@spcc.nsw.edu.au

182 Salamander Way

Salamander Bay NSW 2317

ABN 34 002 919 584

