




**KOROWAL
SCHOOL**

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2024



*We acknowledge and pay
our respects to the Dharug
and Gundungurra people,
the traditional custodians
of the land on which we
work and learn, extending
our respect to elders past,
present and emerging.*



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1. MESSAGES FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

Korowal School Board Chair's Report on 2024 **DELIVERED BY THE CHAIR AT THE AGM IN MAY, 2025**

The formal responsibilities of the Korowal School Board (KSB) are laid out in the Constitution and the Policy and Procedures Handbook of Korowal.

These documents say that the role of the KSB is to provide leadership and strategic guidance for the Company and its associated work. Further, that in performing its role, the KSB aspires to excellence in governance standards.

The key responsibilities of the KSB are listed as:

- ensuring the Company meets its fiduciary and legal obligations;
- approving the strategic direction of the Company's work
- appointing the Principal and establishing clear parameters around their level of authority and delegations;
- ensuring adequate reporting is undertaken by management to maintain compliance standards;
- determining appropriate organisational and governance policies to advance the overall strategic objects of the Company.

And to,

- delegate to the Principal operation, conduct and performance of the School

With these responsibilities in mind, Korowal is fortunate to have a Board with a wide range of experience. It comprises a small group of skilled individuals, each strongly invested in the school, with the education, professional experience and personal authority to contribute to roles that, almost inevitably, require the application of intelligence and creative consideration to the processes described above.

The last year has been a busy and important one for the school. New initiatives are enriching the school and the way in which it understands and articulates its place in the Blue Mountains. Moreover, enrolments have risen and as a result the financial position of the school is more secure than it has been in recent years.

A large part of recent developments at Korowal can be attributed to the leadership of Principal Cindy Barnsley and Deputy Principal Matthew Whaley. Both relatively recent arrivals at Korowal, have been able to appreciate the historical character of the school and work with that understanding to project towards a sustainable future that responds to the contextual demands encountered by young people, in education, in current times.

The Board has been pleased with the working relationship it has with the Principal. This has been an open and productive connection. When issues of concern have arisen, the Board has been unafraid to require further information and discussion. It is important that recognition and respect for the duties, responsibilities and sense of commitment of the Board and the Principal be valued by both parties.

The details of the financial position of the school are outlined in the statements presented to the AGM. These describe a position of stability that cannot be taken for granted. The requirements of an expanding school in aged and limiting facilities places demands that the school is responding to. These have financial implications. As have the recent long overdue salary rises for school staff. Careful consideration of income and expenditure is required and the oversight of the Board is important here.

STAFFING

Quality staffing, which is the responsibility of the School Executive, but which the Board has a strong interest in, continues to be a strength of the School. Attracting and retaining staff who have the personal qualities and the pedagogical experience to work to the specific needs of the Korowal community is a priority. At a time when schools in NSW are experiencing teacher shortages it is pleasing that Korowal continues to attract staff who are well equipped to meet Korowal's aims and objectives.

PARENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Increased parental contributions via the recently formed P&F are a new factor in the school. This direct response to needs expressed by the voluntary work of a group of parents is already showing rewards. The identification of specific needs and plans towards their provision has been central to the function of the P&F. Additional services, particularly around the organisation of the school Open Day are being planned. As are fundraising initiatives and schemes to spend those funds. This work has the potential to realise valuable, strategic outcomes.

Korowal is a unique institution. It has held a place in the education landscape of the Blue Mountains for close to 50 years. It has survived through a series of generations of staff and leadership.

Current staff have little direct connection to the founding community of Korowal but there remains a clearly identifiable thread linking the self understanding of the school in 2025 with notions that informed the school's formation.

Challenges continue, as they always will. The school is confronting problems with accommodation. In this regard, it is challenged by the geography of the site. Most significantly, the unfolding demographics of the Blue Mountains region present challenges that demand the school communicate its offerings widely and effectively. The particular experience of Korowal deserves no less.

Central to the school's practice and its promise to new and continuing parents and students is a relationship based approach to learning. Respect for the construction of learning within the community and the manifestation of that learning in all methods of communication is key to Korowal. This is crucial to identity and action at the school. Voice, insight, kindness and mutuality are both taught and enacted. As the Chair of a Board comprised largely of parents, I would like to affirm my ongoing respect for the institution and my ongoing appreciation for the individuals that give it life.

David Wright
Chair, Korowal School Board
AGM 2025.



Principal's Report on 2024

DELIVERED BY THE PRINCIPAL AT THE AGM IN MAY, 2025

It is an honour to welcome you to this Annual General Meeting as the Principal of Korowal School. I begin by acknowledging the Dharug and Gundungurra peoples, the traditional custodians of the land on which our learning takes place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging, and recognise their enduring connection to Country, culture, and community.

YEAR IN REVIEW

2024 was a year of growth, creativity, and renewed momentum at Korowal. From the celebrations of student achievement, including a memorable graduation, a record-breaking Korowal Fair that stood out as both our most successful fundraiser and a celebration of our community spirit, to inspiring art exhibitions and powerful drama productions - our school continued to evolve while remaining grounded in our values and commitment to meaningful learning that has characterised our school for almost 50 years.

EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY

In 2024, Korowal's holistic approach to education continued to guide our work, with a strong focus on oracy and the creation of daily learning experiences that support young people to become confident, creative, and compassionate communicators. Our commitment to nurturing the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of our students remained central, with Oracy practices embedded across the school to strengthen voice, deepen understanding, and foster respectful dialogue.

STAFF

In 2024, Korowal continued to be shaped by the dedication and professionalism of our exceptional teaching, administrative, facilities, and finance staff. Their commitment to our students and to each other has had a profound impact on the life of the school. Through their care, expertise, and collaboration, they have fostered a positive and supportive environment where young people are empowered to learn, grow, and flourish. We welcomed Sarah Bishop, John Phillips, Sassica Whaley (Term 1) and Roisin McLaughlin (maternity leave), Chris Wynd, and Anne Barac.

We also farewelled long standing staff, Kirrily Boyd and Barbara Hall, and Alyssia Murray.

CONNECTION

In 2024, we continued to build on the communication channels established in 2023, including the Sentral Parent Portal and our weekly newsletter, further refining these systems and exploring new ways to engage families. We were delighted to launch a renewed Parents & Families Committee, co-developed with families to serve as a vital conduit for connection and community. This collaborative initiative has created meaningful opportunities for parents and carers to engage with school life, contribute to events, and strengthen relationships across our community. The new P&F model reflects our shared commitment to partnership and belonging, and we extend our sincere thanks to the inaugural committee members and Year Representatives for their energy and leadership.

As part of this focus, we introduced a series of Korowal Parents & Families Workshops designed to support parents in understanding student learning and wellbeing. These included *Atomi Learning* (online) for high school parents, the *Parents & Families Committee Launch, Supporting Your Child's Mathematical Learning* (online), *Think U Know: Online Safety for Parents* (in person) for both high school and primary families, and a *Climate Fresk* workshop.

These sessions have helped build a shared understanding of how we can work together to support our students, both at school and at home, and were complemented by a parent forum each term.

We also continued our strong commitment to student voice and partnership with families, holding over 180 Network Meetings throughout the year. This remains our foremost approach to supporting young people's wellbeing at Korowal, creating space for open dialogue, shared understanding, and collaborative problem-solving between students, families, and staff.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In 2024, the student experience at Korowal was enriched by both enduring traditions and exciting new opportunities. Our HSC students continued to achieve strong outcomes across assessments and final exams, while also leading with integrity and care, setting a positive tone for our school culture. Their leadership was evident not only in their academic pursuits but also in the respectful and inclusive way they engaged with peers across the school. A highlight of the year was their heartfelt graduation, where each student spoke to the transformative impact of their time at Korowal and the deep connections formed with both peers and teachers.

This year also marked a number of firsts for student involvement beyond the classroom. Our students represented the school at the Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA), HICES Educating for Sustainability, HICES Speechcraft, the HICES Music Festival, Youth Leadership Australia programs for both primary and high school students, the International Women's Day Seminar in Sydney, and the NSW Parliament Young Leaders program. Students also participated in regional chess competitions, futsal gala days, and regional cross country running. A new Primary School Run Club was launched, encouraging students to build fitness, confidence, and enjoyment through physical activity in a supportive, inclusive environment. Weekly Food Forest sessions offered our Primary students rich opportunities to explore sustainability, build gardening skills, and deepen their connection with the natural world.

PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS

The Primary Play, devised and performed by our talented Year 5 and 6 students, was a celebration of Oracy, collaboration, and storytelling, captivating audiences and showcasing student creativity. In the High School, the Year 9 and 10 production of *She Kills Monsters* was an outstanding display of student talent, energy, and ensemble work. These performances were complemented by the HSC Drama showcases, which offered compelling and, at times, deeply moving explorations of themes chosen and developed by the students themselves.

Our HSC Visual Arts Exhibition was another highlight of the year, featuring an impressive body of work that reflected the skill, insight, and originality of our senior students. Music continued to be a vibrant part of school life, with both the Junior and Senior Bands performing at assemblies, the Korowal Fair, and other school events. These performances brought joy and energy to our community and provided students with valuable opportunities to collaborate, perform, and grow as musicians. Together, these events demonstrated the strength and diversity of the creative arts at Korowal in 2024, and the many ways our students express themselves through performance and visual storytelling.

CAMPS

Camps continued to be a vital part of the student experience in 2024, offering opportunities for challenge, connection, and personal growth beyond the classroom. This year, Stage 2 students enjoyed a fun-filled adventure at Yarramundi, while Stage 3 explored our nation's capital on their trip to Canberra. Stage 4 experienced a new camp program at Vision Valley in Arcadia, and Stage 5 took part in a coastal learning experience at Mosman Bay Saltwater School.

We also introduced a new Senior School Orientation Week at the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, designed to support connection, confidence, and a strong start to Stage 6.

Camps remain a pivotal part of the Korowal journey, offering students lifelong memories. The new camps received positive feedback from students, staff, and families. These immersive experiences provided the right balance of challenge, teamwork, and reflection, helping to strengthen peer relationships and build resilience.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions in 2024 provided students across all stages with rich, hands-on learning experiences that extended and deepened classroom learning. Highlights included Year 1 and 2's visit to the Woodford Academy to explore local history, and Year 8's excursion to the Seymour Centre for a live performance of *Romeo and Juliet*.

EXCURSIONS (cont.)

Students also participated in curriculum-linked excursions such as Barangaroo City Liveability, Ramses II at the Australian Museum, bushwalking explorations, and STEM-focused experiences. Senior students engaged with programs including the Refugee Camp in My Neighbourhood, BStreetSmart at Qudos Bank Arena, a Driver Education Workshop, and yoga and breathwork sessions through PDHPE. Visual Arts students visited the HSC Art Exhibition, while Kindy students explored Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens. Year 6 capped off their primary years with a celebratory day at Zone Bowling in Penrith, and students across various year levels represented Korowal at Blue Mountains futsal competitions. These excursions supported our students to connect with the world beyond school, enriching their learning with a wide range of experiences.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, we continued to strengthen curriculum design across the school, building on the solid foundations established in recent years. A new HSC course in Design & Technology was introduced, expanding opportunities for students to engage in creative and applied problem-solving at the senior level. We also implemented the updated NSW curriculum for English and Mathematics K–10 across Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 2, and Stage 3. These updates reflect our commitment to aligning with contemporary curriculum standards while maintaining our holistic, integrated approach to teaching and learning.

To further support student success, we introduced Atomi, a curriculum-aligned digital study platform that enhances subject understanding and revision for high school students. We also hosted study skills workshops from Elevate Education for students in Years 7–12, equipping them with practical strategies to manage time, stay motivated, and prepare effectively for assessments. Combined with ongoing curriculum mapping and assessment review, these developments ensure our programs remain rigorous, relevant, and responsive to the evolving needs of our learners.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In 2024, we launched a new three-year Strategic Plan, setting a clear direction for Korowal's continued growth and evolution. This followed a comprehensive review of our previous plan, facilitated by the AISNSW Leadership Centre, which highlighted both the unique strengths of our school and key opportunities for development. Through a series of collaborative workshops involving parents, board members, and staff, we reaffirmed our shared commitment to holistic, student-centred education and crafted a plan that is both reflective and future-focused.

The outcome was the identification of three strategic imperatives, Inquiry as a Way of Being, Agency and Voice, and Social and Environmental Impact, which honour what is most valued at Korowal while guiding us toward meaningful growth. This plan is our roadmap for ensuring we continue to provide the highest quality, values-based education for every student from Kindergarten to Year 12.

CULTURE & DIVERSITY

In 2024, our commitment to celebrating culture and diversity remained an integral part of school life. Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week were marked by rich, meaningful experiences that deepened our understanding of First Nations histories and cultures.

We were honoured to welcome Wyniss, who shared stories, dances, and songs highlighting the traditional games and play of the Torres Strait Islands. We also welcomed Gundungurra Elder David King and parent and community leader Wayne Cornish, whose workshops and storytelling helped students and staff connect more deeply with Country and Indigenous knowledge.

NAIDOC celebrations included a dynamic performance by the Wangara Dancers and hands-on opportunities for students to explore Indigenous perspectives through art, music, and conversation, strengthening our ongoing commitment to respect, inclusion, and reconciliation.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

In 2024, we were thrilled to further deepen our international relationships through meaningful cultural exchanges. We welcomed ten students and three teachers from our sister school, Mirai Gakuen, located in the coastal town of Genkai, Japan. Hosted by generous Korowal families, the students experienced life in the Blue Mountains, joined classes, cooked Australian meals with our language students, and visited local landmarks including Scenic World and Echo Point. The visit was enriched by a community dinner and warm connections formed between students, families, and staff.

We also proudly reinstated our Japan Trip for Year 9–12 students, with 15 students and staff travelling in December for an unforgettable cultural immersion. This cultural tour gave our students the opportunity to experience daily life in Japan, furthering our commitment to fostering global citizenship, empathy, and intercultural understanding.

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS

In 2024, we made important strides in enhancing our campus facilities to better support student wellbeing, learning, and community engagement. We undertook a range of campus upgrades to enhance the functionality, safety, and aesthetics of our learning environment. The Primary School outdoor bathrooms were fully renovated with new tiling, toilets, vanities, and hand dryers, significantly improving comfort and accessibility for our younger students. We also repaired and repainted the heritage verandah outside the library, preserving an important part of our school's character.

Inside the library, the senior study room was remodelled to better support focused learning, and a new office was created for the Stage 6 Coordinator, providing dedicated space for student support and academic planning. Across the grounds, we addressed key infrastructure needs including drainage repairs in the Primary playground, pressure washing of all school walkways, and ongoing gardening maintenance to ensure our campus remains clean, welcoming, and well cared for.

Thanks to parents Kirrily Boyd and Ra Cass, we added a new Gaga Court to the lower oval.

Another key initiative was the School's decision to take over operation of the Korowal Canteen for the first time. Our goal was to run the canteen as a cost-neutral service that benefits both families and students. Thanks to Felicity Moeckel-Hughes, Harold David and Melanie Williams for bringing this project to fruition. We also thank parent volunteers, particularly Gini Taylor, who helped us open every Thursday, adding an additional day to the canteen opening times.

FUNDRAISING & GRANTS

We worked in earnest to increase our fundraising efforts with \$21k raised towards the Master Plan with the support of parents and community members.

Staff applied for numerous grants to support our programs, sustainability practices, and upkeep of the school, culminating in \$56k in grants.

KOROWAL SCHOOL BOARD

I extend my sincere thanks to the Korowal School Board Directors for their ongoing commitment to the governance of our school.

Throughout the year, they have generously shared their time, skills, and expertise.

I would particularly like to acknowledge David Wright for his leadership as Chair, Deputy Chair Michelle Montgomery, and long-serving Directors Mat Spiteri and Greg Lucas for their valuable contributions to the Finance and Resources Committee.

We extend our deep gratitude to Greg Lucas, who stepped down after more than a decade of service, including serving as Board Chair, and Mat Spiteri for his years of dedicated involvement.

We thank Nathanael Hunter, Pinou Barr, Natalie Young and Suneeti Rekhari for their contributions to the Board.



CLOSING REMARKS

The success of 2024 has helped us to look ahead with optimism and purpose. 2024 was a year of renewal, of deepening our connections, broadening opportunities for students, and launching our new Strategic Plan, which places inquiry, agency, and social and environmental impact at the heart of our work. I am proud to lead a school community that is caring, values-driven, and committed to providing purposeful education.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, engaged families, and remarkable students. Your belief in Korowal's ethos and your contributions throughout the year have strengthened our community. With strong educational programs, authentic relationships, and careful stewardship, we continue to grow as a leading independent school. I look forward to what we will create together in the years ahead.

Cindy Barnsley,
Korowal School Principal,
2024



2. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

Korowal School is progressive and innovative – we respond to the evolving needs of our society. Our core philosophy places children at the centre of decision making. Our mission is to educate and, to us, education is more than examination results. A model that develops the whole person is the foundational philosophy of the school.

About Korowal

Korowal is an independent, secular and co-educational Kindergarten to Year 12 School. Situated on seven beautiful hectares in the Blue Mountains town of Hazelbrook, we offer a learning and social environment that is nurturing, inspiring, and creative.

Korowal is governed by a single school council, the Korowal School Board (KSB), typically made up of teachers and parents/carers. This allows for the consensual and efficient operation of the school, both administratively and educationally, and encourages a constructive partnership between parents/carers and teachers.

The daily running of the school is in the hands of the School Principal and the Executive. The Principal is the school's Chief Executive Officer and reports to the Board. Our Principal is Cindy Barnsley.

Education

Education at Korowal is informed by the following principles:

Relationships are at the heart of the educational experience. Relationship to self, to others, to learning and to the environment. Students are on first name terms with staff in honour of our equality as human beings.

Creativity can be seen across all subjects. It is 'how' we approach learning that encourages lateral, creative, expansive thinking. We value process over product.

Play is seen as a child's right. To be creative while surrounded by beauty, to develop in their own time. Education is not seen as a race.

Curiosity is embedded throughout our classes. We encourage questioning and discourse. We analyse, evaluate and reason by asking how and why to further understanding.

Self-Expression is held as important for each individual within the community. There is no school uniform.

Regenerative Practice in all things is a goal. Treading lightly and being responsible for our impact on the environment is a constant focus.

Social Justice and Equity is our aim, as we work to keep our fees as low as possible. We offer several scholarships in Primary and High School. We provide significant discounts for third and subsequent children. As an inclusive community, we support the integration of students with additional needs and are richer for this.

Features

COMPRESSED CURRICULUM - HSC

Our compressed delivery HSC program offers a flexible alternative that equalises workload across the senior years.

Each subject is studied intensively for one year and examined at the end of that year. We offer flexibility within a senior college environment.

We support and inspire students towards their potential and goals.

Our program has a consistent record of success across the curriculum and supporting students to develop their human potential and reach their tertiary and career goals and aspirations.

Facilities

Korowal School has a large hall, library, ball court, meadow, mini-oval, outdoor gym circuit, and canteen which are all shared from Kindergarten to Year 12. Students are given access to facilities according to the timetable.

PRIMARY

We have eight classrooms in the Primary School and a Library Reading Room for Primary Students attached to the main library.

Each cohort has their own classroom and depending on the timetable, classes move in and out of teaching spaces to allow for Japanese, Art and PE.

HIGH SCHOOL

We have twelve High School teaching spaces that include two Visual Arts/DT rooms, two Science Labs, a Multimedia Room, Music rooms, a dedicated Drama space and the Learning Hub. Students have access to computers in the library and workspace for study.

SENIOR SCHOOL

Year 11 and 12 classes are held in the High School teaching spaces listed above. In addition, Senior School students have a common room in which they can study, prepare food, and relax between classes and a dedicated senior student study space.

Transport

Korowal is accessible by train and bus from Penrith and most Blue Mountain towns. Korowal buses transport Primary students to and from school between Emu Plains and Katoomba.

Korowal Studios

The Korowal Studios also operate from our school facilities and offer individual and group tuition in the creative and performing arts, provided by a team of talented and experienced artists. Tuition is available within and outside of school hours. In 2024, offerings included access to tuition in piano, drums, guitar, bass, mandolin, musicianship and theory, and woodwind.

Sport, Outdoor Education and Co-curricular

Our curriculum rotates students through a wide variety of sports, dance, fitness programs and physical challenges. Students in the upper Primary years and Junior High School have the opportunity to participate in inter-school sporting events as well as in Korowal's annual events, Primary and High School Swimming Carnivals, the Fun Run and the Huff n Puff Gala Day. High School students undertake a structured series of outdoor adventures in our Outdoor Education Program, with our annual school camps. Primary students regularly take advantage of bushwalking in the Blue Mountains National Park, which is on our doorstep. Years 7-10 students engage in a co-curricular program once each week and choose a new activity each semester.

Each class, from Year 3 through to Year 12, participates in an annual camp featuring outdoor education adventures from the the upper years of primary through to senior high school years. Korowal students also attend a variety of cultural activities, and have represented the school in sporting events.

Characteristics of the Student Body

At the time of the 2024 census, Korowal had 242 enrolled students from Kindergarten to Year 12, with a close to even split of male (55%) and female students (45%) with a small group of students identifying as non-binary.

Of these 242 students, 4% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 5% were from a language background other than English.

We encourage students to explore, accept and support one another's cultural backgrounds, beliefs and values. Our community is built on the relationships that students, teachers, staff, parents and carers foster. This provides the foundation for learning within a nurturing environment, thus supporting the journey towards becoming engaged young adults.

While Korowal is a comprehensive K-12 school, there is a strong focus brought to creativity and imaginative play. A creative approach to education is known to assist in developing neural pathways that enhance learning.

Many of our alumni are pursuing careers in science, archaeology, history, design, psychology, music, architecture, law, social science, and performing and visual arts.

Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA): 1077

These statistics can be found on the [ACARA My School website](#).



3. STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY & NUMERACY TESTING

Student performance on NAPLAN has previously been provided to ACARA for uploading to the My School website and is available for viewing at the [ACARA My School website](#).





4. SENIOR SCHOOL OUTCOMES

Records of Student Achievement

Eighteen students applied for, and were granted, a Record of Student Achievement (RoSA) through BOSTES in 2024. One of these students applied for and received a belated Record of Student Achievement.

Higher School Certificate

At Korowal School, the HSC is delivered through our Senior School compressed curriculum model, which offers a sustainable and student-centred alternative to the traditional HSC structure, where all subjects are examined at the end of Year 12.

In this model, Year 11 and 12 students learn together, and each subject is taught intensively over the course of one year, with the HSC exam completed at the end of that year. This approach mirrors university-style study and assessment patterns, promoting deeper focus and reducing student workload.

This model also enables us to offer a broader range of HSC subjects, supporting greater choice and flexibility within our small, connected learning community.

Students here choose a subject because they want to study it. They are no prerequisites required to demonstrate enrol in subjects following Year 10. For this reason, we see some slight variations within subjects and candidate numbers between subjects fluctuate.

Of our graduating Year 12 cohort, no students in Year 12 undertook vocational or trade training.

In 2024, 28 students in Year 11 and 12 sat for the NSW Higher School Certificate in 13 courses. Ten courses were based at Korowal School and three courses (Ancient History, Community and Family Studies & Earth and Environmental Science) were studied via Distance Education.

100% achieved a mark of 50 or higher in all of their courses with 100% achieving at least one band 3 - 6 in their courses.

Seventeen students graduated from Korowal in 2024 with 100% achieving their HSC credentials at that time.

It is always challenging to analyse data with a small cohort of students as an individual's results will greatly affect statistical data. Three courses, Biology, Drama and Industrial Technology, were above the state average and no courses aligned with the state average while all other courses were below the state average. The variations of these results ranged from -1.2 to -13.44. In most cases, this reflected the results of 2 to 4 students being below the state average rather than an entire class.

All course results were analysed by their respective teachers and evaluated in line with individual student performance to determine potential trends that need to be addressed.

Combined Bands 3-6 HSC Results in comparison to the State

Subject	Year	Korowal	State
Biology	2024	100%	97%
	2022	94%	86%
	2020	89%	90%
Business Studies	2023	89%	88%
	2021	80%	86%
	2019	100%	83%
Chemistry	2023	100%	86%
	2021	100%	88%
	2019	89%	88%
Drama	2024	100%	98%
	2022	100%	100%
	2020	100%	100%
English Advanced	2024	94%	100%
	2023	100%	99%
	2022	100%	99%
English Extension I E3-E4	2023	100%	94%
	2021	100%	94%
	2019	100%	96%
English Extension II E3-E4	2023	100%	86%
	2021	100%	82%
	2019	67%	77%
English Standard	2024	100%	93%
	2022	73%	88%
	2020	91%	89%
History Extension E3-E4	2023	33%	88%
	2021	0%	77%
	2019	0%	77%
Industrial Technology	2024	90%	86%
	2022	90%	86%
	2020	100%	80%

Subject		Korowal	State
Mathematics Advanced	2024	83%	94%
	2022	88%	94%
	2020	77%	95%
Mathematics Extension I E3-E4	2024	0%	80%
	2022	100%	73%
	2020	0%	74%
Modern History	2023	77%	84%
	2021	88%	98%
	2019	87.5%	86%
Music I	2023	100%	98%
	2021	100%	83%
	2019	100%	98%
Physics	2024	100%	86%
	2022	100%	86%
	2020	100%	85%
Society and Culture	2023	100%	95%
	2021	100%	94%
	2019	100%	94%
Studies of Religion II	2024	83%	94%
	2022	100%	93%
	2020	100%	92%
Visual Arts	2024	100%	100%
	2022	100%	98%
	2020	100%	98%



5. TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, ACCREDITATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Professional Learning

ACEL: Ferocious Warmth One Day Workshop - Tracey Ezard
ACEL: Leadership workshop on organisational culture and creating a culture of learning
AISNSW: Critical Thinking Course
AISNSW: Cyber Security Symposium 2024
AISNSW: Data storytelling for school Business Managers
AISNSW: Future Ready Conference
AISNSW: Governance symposium: Risk
AISNSW: Governance workshop
AISNSW: ICT Management and Leadership Conference
AISNSW: Identifying and responding to children and young people at risk
AISNSW: Investigations masterclass
AISNSW: Planning and programming new English 3-6 syllabus
AISNSW: Planning and programming new mathematics 3-6 syllabus
AISNSW: Reputation risk
AISNSW: The role of the Chair
AISNSW: Truth and Beauty Conference
ASBA: Training Scholarship
Ben Tallboys: Dealing with difficult parents
Ben Tallboys: Workplace management
Designing an Impactful Primary and Secondary School
Drama NSW: Creative Confluences Teacher
Drama NSW: Drama Evolved: Navigating the new syllabus
Dynamic Learning Group: Inquiry Learning workshop

Edith Cowan University: Genius Short Courses
ETA: Introduction to English extension 2
Governance Institute of Australia: Certificate in Governance and Risk Management.
HICES: Educating for Sustainability
HICES: Termly Heads of School Branch Meetings
IBO: Primary Years Programme conference
ITE Institute of Technology Education: Annual conference
Jolly Education and Training: Jolly Phonics
Jolly Education and Training: Jolly Phonics Introduction course
LawSense Pty Ltd: Registration for Lawsense School Law NSW
LawSense Pty Ltd: School Building Projects & Property Management
Mental Health Service: The MHS Conference 2024
OHS Health & Safety Marketplace: Fire Awareness and Extinguisher Training Course
Open Dialogue Symposium, Katoomba
Open Dialogue workshop, Katoomba
PD4Maths Pty Ltd: Mathematics Teacher Workshop
Pulse First Aid Training: Provide First Aid Training
ReimaginED, Woodleigh School
Riley Callie Resources: March Yarn and Learn Online Panel Discussion
State Library Teacher Librarian Conference
TAFE: Food handling skill set
The Inquiry Educators Summit (Online)
The Rite Journey Level 1 Training, Sydney
The University of Sydney: Aboriginal Education Matters: An Introductory Workshop
The University of Sydney: Managing Classroom Wellbeing
THRIVE X MYST Blue Mountains: Evidence-based practical classroom strategies for children
Struggling to manage their emotions (anxiety and trauma-informed practice)
Toddle Sydney: Sydney School Leaders meet up
Trauma and Learning: Meeting complex support needs for educators



Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	No. of Teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	2
Proficient Teacher	28
Total number of teachers	30

All teachers have teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines.

6. WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

This description of the Korowal School workforce is extracted from the information published on the ACARA website from the August 2024 census.

Workforce	Total
Teaching staff	30
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	23.6
Non-teaching staff	24
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	14.3

Korowal School had no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff in 2024.



7. STUDENT ATTENDANCE, RETENTION RATES AND POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Attendance

As a registered non-government school in accordance with the Education Act 1990, we are required to keep a register of enrolments and daily attendances of all students at the school using the ministers common code of recording.

At Korowal, these registers are maintained in electronic form which has been approved by the Minister for Education. Korowal School complies with all regulatory bodies and keeps all necessary documentation on student attendance, including participating in student attendance audits.

In New South Wales, all children from six years of age are legally required to attend school or be registered for home schooling. After they complete Year 10 and until they turn 17 years of age, students then have the following options:

- Enrol in full-time further education and training (eg. TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship)
- Undertake full-time, paid employment of an average of 25 hours per week; or
- A combination of the above.

Children are expected to attend all school activities, on time.

Absences are required to be explained in one of the following methods:

- A note or email to the school
- An form via Sentral Parent Portal
- A telephone call to the school office
- A verbal explanation to the school
- A Doctor's certificate (requested after 3 consecutive days absent)
- Application for Exemption From School are formally submitted to the Principal for consideration and approval.

Attendance Data

The attendance information below is calculated for the entire school year for each grade. The whole school attendance rate for students for the 2024 school year was 86% and is broken down according to the year group in the graph below. Leave can consist of sick leave, extended sick leave and other approved leave.

Year	Level	Attendance Rate %
Kindergarten		91%
Year 1		88%
Year 2		83%
Year 3		89%
Year 4		79%
Year 5		88%
Year 6		88%
Year 7		85%
Year 8		87%
Year 9		78%
Year 10		82%
Year 11		90%
Year 12		91%
Whole School		86%

Exemptions

In 2010 the Minister, under section 25 of the Education Act 1990, delegated the power to Principals of non-government schools to grant and cancel a Certificate of Exemption from being enrolled and attending school, in certain prescribed circumstances. When the parent of a student of compulsory school age seeks an Exemption from Attendance at school or an Exemption from Enrolment, Korowal will process the parent's application in accordance with the NSW Department of Education's guidelines.

Management of Non Attendance

Students are required to attend school. Parents/ Carers are responsible to advise the school of their child's absence by either phoning the school office on the day of the absence, emailing the school, submitting a form via the Parent Portal.

Students who arrive at school after the start of the school day must present to the office and sign in advising the office of their reason for being late, this needs to be verified by their parent/carer.

Attendance is registered in the school's administrative database, Sentral, which automatically generates an email to families for each absence or unexplained late sign in. Families going on extended leave must complete an Application for Leave form (in accordance with legislation) and submit to the school office for authorisation from the Principal. The parent is notified of the outcome via authorised certificate or directly from the Principal.



Korowal maintains a dedicated approach to addressing student non-attendance and works with students, parents/carers, external agencies and various staff within the school to identify issues impacting on a student's ability to attend school regularly. The consideration of the students wellbeing, learning difficulties and learning goals, in addition to their outside of school life circumstances when working with the student to improve their overall attendance.

To monitor and improve attendance, Korowal School has implemented a four-stage process to support staff in managing their responsibilities for the overall improvement of students attendance.

Stage 1 - Indicators of potential Attendance Concerns

Stage 2 - Action of Identified Indicator of Attendance Concern

Stage 3 - Attendance Referral & Support

Stage 4 - Graduated Attendance Improvement Plan

Retention Rates and Post-School Destinations

Of the 27 students enrolled at the end of Year 10, 2022, 55% went on to graduate from Korowal in Year 12 in 2024.

Each year it is an absolute pleasure to hear the stories of our recently graduated students. As is often the case, Korowal's 2024 graduating students have made important life decisions based on their whole selves, taking into account their wellbeing, strengths, capacity, purpose and their passions. Numerous students have taken a gap year to build life skills, travel and experience new places, and undertake paid work and save.

Students who moved into further study are working towards qualifications in a diverse range of areas including Science, Art, History, English, and Engineering. Students from our graduating class of 2024 were accepted at the following institutions:

- University of Sydney
- National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA)
- Macquarie University
- The University of Notre Dame
- Australian National University
- Western Sydney University

8. ENROLMENT POLICY

Enquiries for enrolment at Korowal School can be made by booking a tour and/or completing the Expression of Interest Form via the school's Open Apply enrolment platform, accessible through the school website. Following an enquiry, families are invited to tour the school and complete a formal Application for Enrolment. Electronic copies of the Primary and High School Student–Parent Handbooks, along with the Fee Schedule, are available on the website.

Once an application is received, the pre-enrolment process begins and may include:

- Interview with teacher and/or Leadership Team
- Contact with the student's previous school
- Contact with medical professionals (if relevant)

- Additional interviews with specialist teachers or wellbeing staff (as needed)

Enrolment at Korowal School is conducted in accordance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. Parents and students are required to read and sign relevant documentation before commencing.

Once enrolled, families are expected to support the school's ethos and comply with all school policies and guidelines to maintain ongoing enrolment. [The Korowal Enrolment Policy](#) is available on the Korowal School website.



9. OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

The School is committed to the achievement of the highest standards of education in which the security, protection and comfort of students and staff remains the highest priority. Policies and guidelines are issued for all staff, responsible in any way for the conduct of educational activities at Korowal School. Korowal School strictly prohibits any form of corporal punishment. Furthermore, the School does not encourage or condone the use of corporal punishment by any other persons, including family members.

Korowal School implements policies and procedural guidelines to support students, parents/caregivers, staff, Executive staff and the Board of Directors to guide decisions, achieve positive outcomes and create boundaries for acceptable behaviour. The policies and procedural guidelines are developed in accordance with the educational goals, purpose, and values of the school and in accordance with legislation. All policies are regularly reviewed by the Executive Team.

All guidelines remain subject to all current Child Protection Legislation.

Policies are available on request from the Korowal School Office, via the school intranet (Google Drive) and Student Welfare, Anti-bullying, Discipline, and Complaints & Grievances are available on the [Korowal School website](#). There were no changes to these policies in 2024.

Procedural Fairness

As stated in all relevant policies, policies are based on principles of procedural fairness. Korowal School acts on the following definition of procedural fairness: *Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what is sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and 'right to an unbiased decision'.*

The 'hearing rule' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:

- Know the allegation related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter.
- Know the process by which the matter will be considered.
- Respond to the allegation.
- Know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.

The 'right to an unbiased decision' includes the right to:

- Impartiality in an investigation and decision making.
- An absence of bias by a decision-maker.

To support procedural fairness, it is required that confidentiality is held around matters being dealt with between the School and the parents and students involved.

10. SCHOOL DETERMINED PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic Priorities

Our 2024–2027 Strategic Plan set a clear and future-focused direction for learning and community life at Korowal. It is shaped by three key imperatives that reflect our values, aspirations, and the evolving needs of our students and world:

- Inquiry as a Way of Being
- Agency and Voice
- Social and Environmental Impact

These imperatives are not isolated initiatives but interconnected principles that guide everything we do. They reflect our belief that education should nurture curiosity, empower students to take ownership of their learning, and equip young people to act with integrity, compassion and purpose in a complex world.

These imperatives are held together by a strong focus on community and connection - with each other, with place, and with the world beyond the school. This Strategic Plan is both a roadmap and a shared commitment to the kind of school we want to be: one that fosters thoughtful, courageous, and compassionate learners.



INQUIRY AS A WAY OF BEING

We foster a school culture where curiosity drives learning. Inquiry is not an initiative; it is a mindset. We are embedding inquiry-based learning across all years to encourage students to ask deep questions, explore different perspectives, and build critical, creative, and reflective thinking skills. Students learn how to learn, not just what to learn, developing independence, confidence, and a lifelong love of discovery.

AGENCY & VOICE

We place students at the centre of their learning. When students are empowered to speak, question, and lead, they develop self-awareness, responsibility, and resilience.

Through Oracy, Open Dialogue, and Restorative Practice, we are creating environments where learners use their voices with confidence and listen with care. We're building a culture where every student has the opportunity to shape their learning journey and contribute meaningfully to our community.

SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Our students are supported to understand and respond to global challenges through inquiry, action and reflection. From student-led projects and regenerative practices on campus, to service learning and partnerships with community organisations, we are cultivating a strong sense of social responsibility.

Students learn that their choices matter, and that they have the power to make a difference.

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, we continued to strengthen curriculum design across the school, with a focus on consistency, clarity, and learner engagement. This work was shaped by the rollout of the new NSW curriculum, which emphasises strong foundational skills, streamlined content, and clearer post-school pathways.

We implemented the new English and Mathematics syllabuses in K–2, prioritising essential skills and deep understanding. Across Years 7–10, we aligned our programs with updated guidance, reducing content overload and sharpening focus on what matters most. In anticipation of senior syllabus changes, we also began reviewing Years 11–12 to support future study and employment pathways.

Our professional learning groups continued to play a central role, supporting collaboration, curriculum refinement, and the ongoing development of dialogic practice and inquiry.

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

In 2024, we continued to expand our co-curricular program to complement academic learning and provide students with opportunities to explore new interests, strengthen existing skills, and build connections across year levels.

Students in Years 7–10 participated in a wide range of activities, including Sustainability, Chess, Digital Art, STEM & Robotics, and Craft. New offerings this year included Theatre Sports, Karaoke, Basketball, Dungeons & Dragons, and a Cabaret group with lighting, costume and set design, all of which were enthusiastically embraced.

The program's success reflects strong staff involvement and fosters community by connecting students with peers and teachers through shared passions.



11. INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

In the Primary School

In 2024, we continued to embed the values of respect and responsibility across Primary School life. Building on previous years, we sustained a consistent focus on behaviours and experiences that support students to care for themselves, others, and the environment.

We remained committed to our whole-school rules:

- Look after yourself
- Look after other people
- Look after your things
- Look after other people's things
- Look after the environment
- Above all, be kind

These values were regularly referenced in Personal Development lessons, Restorative Practice conversations, and assemblies, where wellbeing, safety, and learning issues were explored. Assemblies provided a space for the Primary cohort to reflect on shared responsibilities and celebrate positive contributions.

Bush School days were a highlight, offering rich opportunities to practise care, collaboration, and environmental stewardship. In 2024, funds raised through the Bush School BBQ enabled us to engage guest educators including artists Peta Morris and Sanne Maestrom; Gundungurra Elder Uncle David King; educator Wenone Hope; and scientific illustrator Zorana McDavitt.

These workshops enriched learning and created meaningful opportunities for respectful interaction with new mentors. Uncle David King's NAIDOC-themed workshops were especially powerful, guiding students to reflect on their relationship with nature and deepening their respect for Country.

Our Year 6 students continued as peer leaders, supporting Kindergarten children with care and gradually stepping back as confidence grew. To support their leadership, all Year 6 students attended the Youth Leadership Academy at the ICC in Sydney in Term 1. This inspiring event built students' confidence, communication, and understanding of leadership through service, complementing our in-school programs.

Throughout the year, students took part in camps, excursions and incursions that extended learning beyond the classroom. Highlights included Kindergarten's trip to Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens, Stage 1's visit to Wentworth Falls Lake, a NAIDOC incursion with Wyniss through Musica Viva, camps at Yarramundi and Canberra and Stage 3 students at the HICES Gifted and Talented Camp, with Elise Alt leading Oracy workshops. We also enjoyed sporting events such as gala days, the Huff and Puff Gala, and K-6 swimming

These experiences continue to strengthen a culture where respect, kindness, and responsibility are not just rules, but ways of being and caring for one another.



In the High School

Respect and responsibility remain central to the culture of Korowal High School, guiding how we learn, relate, and grow together. These values shape our everyday interactions and reflect a deep commitment to both individual rights and collective responsibilities.

Our guiding principles include:

- Upholding the right of everyone to be themselves
- Celebrating the identity of all
- Keeping everyone mentally and physically safe
- Celebrating the difference in others
- Celebrating the gifts of others
- Allowing people to be vulnerable
- Helping others find strength

These principles are embedded in daily life through our focus on Oracy, Open Dialogue, and Restorative Practices. They form the foundation of how we build relationships, support one another, and create an environment where academic and personal growth are nurtured.

In 2024, these values were reflected in the many creative works produced by our students across a range of performance opportunities.

Most notably, the HSC Drama Showcase featured a series of powerful, original works that explored identity, social issues, and personal experience. These performances exemplified courage, creativity, and collaboration, offering students the chance to share their voices in a supportive and respectful space.

Through both rehearsal and performance, students demonstrated resilience, empathy, and a willingness to take creative risks. The strength of their work reflected not only their individual talents but also the culture of encouragement and mutual respect that defines our school.

We continued to foster connection through daily Morning Circles, beginning each day with a shared greeting and acknowledgment of our relationships. Weekly Mentor Time and our High School Assemblies provided further opportunities to reflect on learning, our school's values, and celebrate the diversity of our student body and the broader Blue Mountains community. These practices reflect our ongoing commitment to nurturing a respectful, inclusive, and compassionate learning environment - one where every student is known, supported, and empowered to thrive.



12. PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The School aims to work in partnership with students and families to support the best educational outcome for each learner.

Staff

Staff continue to share questions, feedback, and concerns through Morning Meeting, weekly cluster meetings, and direct conversations with the Executive, Wellbeing Coordinator, and Leadership Team. Opportunities to reflect and respond are also provided via surveys following Staff Development Days and Professional Learning sessions.

In 2024, staff also participated in the AWE Awesome Schools Wellbeing Survey, completed anonymously, to help evaluate and strengthen wellbeing and belonging within the school community.

Staff Responses

Work meaning

How meaningful is the work you do? 8.6/10

Work effort

On average, how much effort do you put into your job on a daily basis? 9.0/10

Work pride

How proud do you feel to work for your organisation? 8.3/10

Work motivation

How motivated are you in what you are doing for your job? 7.9/10

Job satisfaction

All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job? 7.4/10

Wellbeing enablement

In general, how satisfied are you that your school supports and enables student wellbeing? 8.2/10





Thanks to the Korowal staff and teachers for creating an amazing environment here where students can embrace who they are and be proud of who they are in an incredible nurturing environment. As a parent to be able to see your kid left into a place where you know they're going to be loved and cherished as much as you do - it's quite an incredible thing.

We are so grateful that our son got to experience this school. You can spot a Korowal kid from a mile away, and it's because of the incredible compassion and kindness and ability to be truly authentic and to invite others to be yourself too. So I want to thank these extraordinary students and teachers who support them.

I just wanted to say thank you everyone for being so supportive of my daughter. She's had the most wonderful time and has really come into her own since coming to this school.

Parents


Parents continue to give feedback and raise concerns with class teachers, administrative staff, Executive staff and when necessary, the Korowal School Board. Families have access to the School's Complaints Handling Policy and Protected Disclosure Service, which are both available on the Korowal School website. A member of the Executive team strives to greet parents each day in the turning circle at drop-off and pick up to form relationships and field any questions or concerns parents may have. The above recounts are from parents of our 2024 Year 12 graduating class.

Any member or non-member of the Korowal Community can complete a [Complaints, Compliments or Suggestions Form](#), located on the Korowal School website.



Students

Students are supported to ask questions, raise concerns and seek help from their Year Mentor, Stage Advisor and the Wellbeing Coordinator. The Executive Team is also available and readily hears proposals, feedback and concerns raised by students. Graduating students were invited to reflect on their time at Korowal. Comments below are from our 2024 graduating class.



I just want to thank all my teachers, I really could not have done any of this without you.

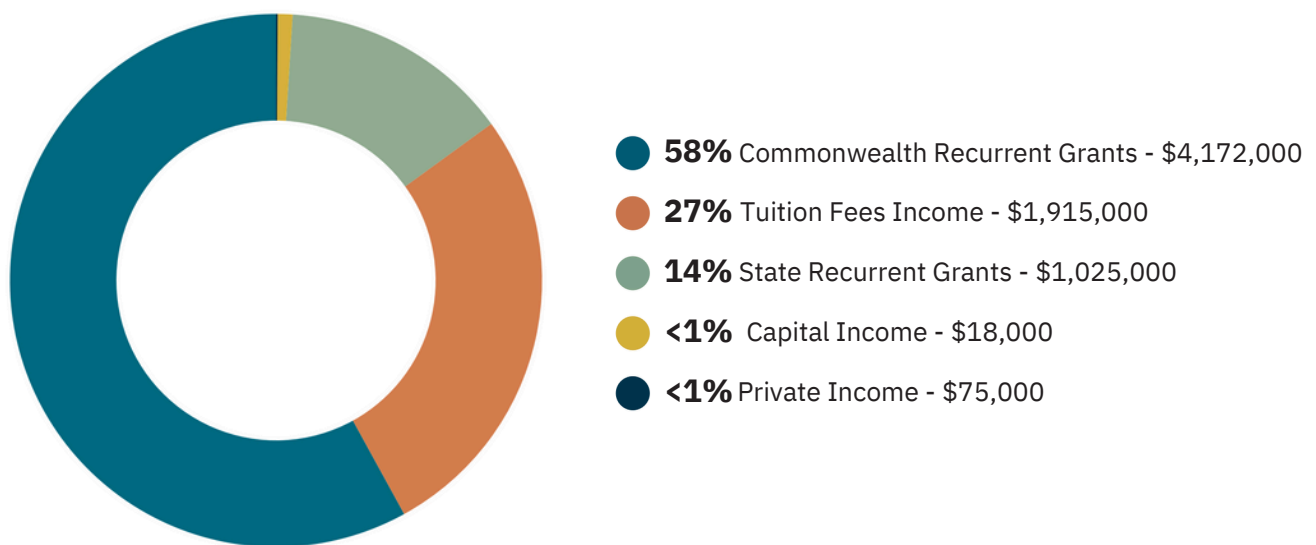
I was able to develop friendships along the way that made me feel so special. I was able to feel accepted for who I am, have my voice heard and to feel more creative...

"I will cherish the memories that we have made together"

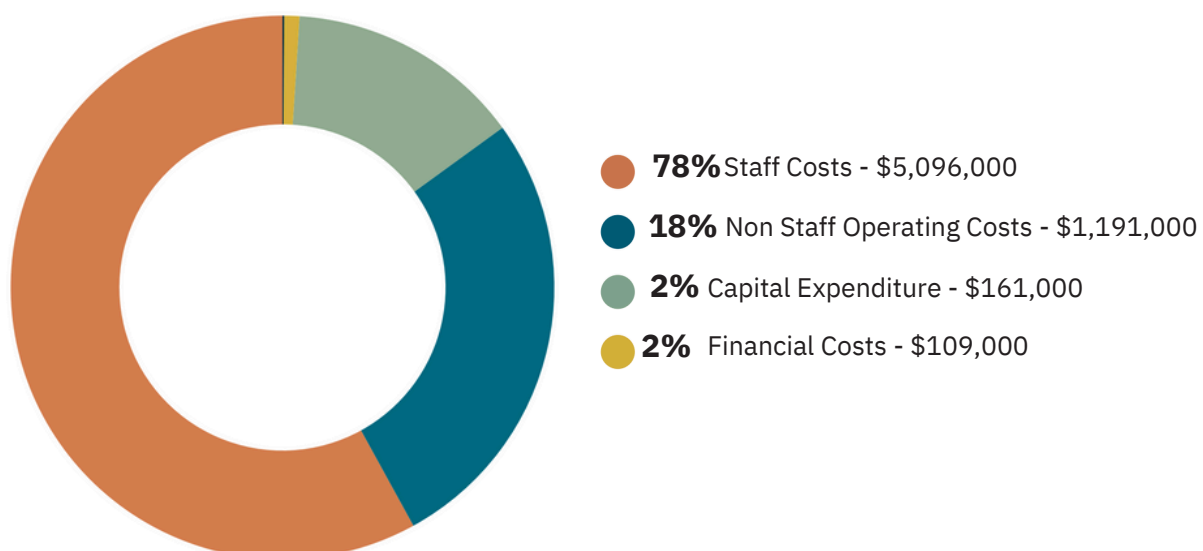
13. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The following graphs and tables display the dissection of income and expenditure for Korowal School Limited for year ended 31.12.23

2024 Recurrent and Capital Income



2024 Recurrent and Capital Expenditure



Above figures are derived from Korowal School's audited 2024 financial statements and 2024 (2024 data) Financial Questionnaire lodged with Australian Government Department of Education & Training.





KOROWAL SCHOOL



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