St Clare’s
Catholic Primary School
Narellan Vale

Annual School Report
2010
About This Report

St Clare’s Catholic Primary School, Narellan Vale is registered by the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wollongong. The CEO is the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report to the Community for this year provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines information regarding School Review & Improvement initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School’s Annual Action Plan.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the Catholic Education Office (CEO). This Report has been approved by Wollongong CEO to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the NSW Board of Studies, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2010.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school:

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Narellan Vale NSW 2567
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Fax: (02) 4647 2847
Email: info@scndow.woll.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.scndow.woll.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Michael Williams
Principal: Mr Kevin J Devine
Date: 17 December 2010
Vision Statement

To create and maintain a Catholic Learning Community grounded in the person of Jesus, the tradition of the Catholic Church and the lives of Ss Clare and Francis. Resulting in a school where children learn that they are of great value, that they have many gifts, and that they can make the world a better place.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message

In a year of significant construction, the school has witnessed an expansion of facilities and notable improvement to some of the older classrooms and facilities within the school. Throughout the year the construction process has required the staff, parents and students be flexible, adaptable and patient. At the time of writing this annual report the extension to the car park is nearing completion and should be operational for the opening of the 2011 School Year.

I take this opportunity to offer my sincere gratitude to all who have supported the school in 2010. The abundant gift of your time, talent and treasure is apparent in the wonderful facilities and experiences offered to the students of this school. Our reputation as a supportive and inclusive community has been built up over many years at St Clare’s through the combined efforts of so many people. Long may it continue!

I wish to acknowledge the highly dedicated and professional staff of this school community and thank our Parish Priest, Fr Michael, for the continued support he offers the school and the families of this community.

Parent Involvement

The past year has been another successful one for the Parents and Friends Association (P&F). More objectives from the 2009 Strategic Plan were completed. The objectives achieved include the installation and purchase of SMART Boards for the school.

Besides financially supporting the school, the P&F Executive and sub-committees have also worked towards continuing to provide a welcoming and friendly environment. Social events such a Mother’s Night Out, Father’s Golf Day, New Parents Welcome Barbeque, Kindergarten First Day Parent Morning Tea, and of course our Annual Fair, were held and provided an opportunity for families to socialise. Our Care Committee offered support to those families in our community who needed a hand.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

In 2010 there were many opportunities for Year 6 to put their leadership into practice. The introduction of our fortnightly School Parliament has given the Year 6 students opportunities
to make their voices heard. This has produced many ideas and given us an understanding of how our country is run and how intense it can be to be put in charge of the country.

The leadership of our school is not just about ourselves, empowering others is important as well, as we are not the only members of our community. Our role as leaders is to Guide, Support and Serve and help younger students to handle conflict. This year we have been buddies to the Kindergarten children, leading them in their first year of independent reading and helping them to see different sides of things.

Using our School Parliament to choose worthy causes, we have had many opportunities to run fundraising events. We have held a coin drive where the Blue, Green and White classes generously donated funds to support Fr Chris Riley’s Youth Off the Streets Program, Autism Australia and St Vincent de Paul. We have coordinated a tinned food drive to assist St Vincent de Paul’s Christmas Appeal, and organised a Jersey Day where students brought in a gold coin donation to wear their favourite sporting team’s jersey. The money collected was given to the Pakistan Flood Relief appeal.

We have been able to run various in-school competitions. These initiatives have included a talent quest, oz tag competitions and a soccer competition. Many Year 6 students also assisted with the organising and running of the Trash and Treasure Stall, which was held at our School Fair.

Being the leaders of our school is a great chance to show our responsibility and care for our school community.

Student Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Clare’s Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Systemic co-educational school located in Narellan Vale. The school caters for students in Years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 605. St Clare's Catholic Primary School is situated in the Parish of Camden. Established in 1994 with a student population of 45 it has grown into a modern three-stream school with a student population of over 600. The mission of the school is to create and maintain a Catholic learning community grounded in the person of Jesus, the traditions of the Catholic Church and the lives of Ss Clare and Francis, which results in children learning that they are of great value, have many gifts and can make their world a better place. The school enjoys a positive affiliation with the Parish community of St Paul's Camden, supporting the sacramental and liturgical life of the parish. A feature of the school is its modern well-appointed facilities that allow for the flexible use of learning spaces, enabling a high level of collaboration between both the students and the staff. The motto of the school- 'A great flame follows a small spark', is lived out each day through the many and varied talents of all those who make up this school community.
### Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LBOTE</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Diocesan Enrolment Policy and Procedures exists to assist schools in the equitable prioritising of enrolment applications and in order to ensure that the requirements of State and Commonwealth legislation are met. This documentation can be found on both the school website [www.scnvdow.woll.catholic.edu.au](http://www.scnvdow.woll.catholic.edu.au) the Catholic Education Office website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2010.

### Student Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Management of Student Non Attendance

Children are required to supply notification as to the reason for their non-attendance on the day that they return to school, the school administration staff issue reminder notices to families who fail to comply.

### Staffing Profile

There are a total of 34 teachers and 10 support staff at St Clare’s Catholic Primary School. This number includes 22 full-time, 11 part-time teachers.

### Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 3 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff Retention*
Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2010 was 97.61%. This does not include planned leave such as maternity or long service leave. The teacher retention rate from 2009 to 2010 was 97% with two of the part time staff taking leave in the 2010 School Year.

Professional Learning

Professional learning opportunities are highly valued and sought by all members of St Clare’s Catholic Primary School staff. During 2010 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes. These included:

- The development of a school wide approach to the teaching of students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
- A focus on developing a whole school approach to the teaching of writing;
- The development of a series of professional learning courses in the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a tool to enhance learning;
- Workshops and professional learning experiences in the teaching of Number sense;
- Staff spiritual formation through a whole school staff development day; and,
- Attendance at the Origo Education Ground works Conference.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2010 was $714 per staff member. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

The liturgical life of the school was somewhat effected by the significant construction work that had taken place during the course of the year. In school liturgies were reduced due to a lack of a suitable assembly place. The school was able to continue to support the liturgical life of the parish by providing a large number of sacramental associates to support the delivery of the parish based sacramental programs and associated parish liturgies. In addition the students from, Years 2-6 took an active role in the celebration of Mass, by taking on many of the parish roles and participating in singing and liturgical movement on seven different occasions at the Sunday evening parish Mass.

The school was again active in the support of a variety of social justice initiatives including Caritas, Catholic Missions and the St Vincent de Paul Society. In 2010 a social justice group was formed to promote awareness about the plight of the poor and underprivileged. A large number of students from Years 5 and 6 were actively involved in the lunchtime program.

As a culminating action from the Year 4 Religious Literacy Assessment the students of Year 4 staged an Expo of their work and developed a range of activities to raise money for the
victims of the Pakistan Flood Disaster. Over $940 was raised through the student’s resourcefulness and initiative.

In August the school’s Feast day was celebrated at St Paul’s Church in Camden. Unfortunately heavy rainfall in the week leading up to the celebration prevented the students from participating in post liturgy celebrations at Onslow Park.

A highlight of the 2010 calendar was the celebration liturgy for the Canonisation of Mary MacKillop. St Clare’s, along with the students and staff of each of the other Catholic schools in the parish, assembled for a memorable liturgy and fun activities at Magdalene Catholic High School. The liturgy and fun activities highlighted the productive partnership that exists across the Catholic schools of the parish.

**Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully implemented within schools across the diocese in 2010. In 2010 the school cohort consisted of 74 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 30th August 2010 and 74 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task is based on the Unit: *One With God’s Creation* and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending. Overall the students demonstrated a strong knowledge of the Mass and the liturgical year of the Church. In questions related to common prayers of the church the students performed well. The students were slightly below the diocesan average in some questions related to the Saints and the timing of the events of Holy week. Overall the response to the questions presented in Religious Literacy Assessment were equal to, if not significantly better than the Diocesan average in a large number of questions in Part A of the test.

For Part A 8% of students were placed in the developing level, 65% in the achieving level and 27% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 18% of students were placed in the developing level, 59% in the achieving level and 23% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 15% of students were placed in the developing level, 61% in the achieving level and 24% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

**Financial Summary**

In 2010 the school commenced a major construction project using funds allocated from the Commonwealth Government from the Building the Education Revolution program. The works consisted of the construction of a new Multi- Purpose Learning Area, the refurbishment of the Year 3/4 classroom block, toilet block and extension to the school canteen. In early 2011, it is expected that an extension of the school car park will be completed.
In 2010 the P&F donated almost $54,000 for the purchase of resources and some necessary infrastructure to improve pedestrian access to an area at the rear of the school library. The funds generated through P&F fundraising were directed toward improving ICT in the school. In March 2010, 4 new SMART Boards were installed in classrooms. On the final day of the 2010 School Year a further 18 SMART Boards were delivered to the school for installation in early February 2011. The purchase of this new technology was made possible through a school Technology Loan from the Catholic Development Fund and funds raised through the P&F body.

In 2010 a section of the school staffroom was partitioned off to create a number of small offices and workspaces for staff to use. The cost of this work was approximately $12,000 and paid for using funds from the parish SEDSO account.

One of the significant operational costs to the school is the cost of electricity. In 2010 the school successfully applied for a $50,000 National Solar Schools Grant from the Commonwealth Government. Completion of this work will occur in the 2011 School Year.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Clare’s Catholic Primary School for the year ended 31 December 2010. This data is taken from the 2010 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Student Welfare

Introduction
St Clare’s strives to be a place of belonging where all are treated with dignity and respect. The school aims to be a place of justice, proclaiming the gospel message of hope.

Pastoral Care
In 2010 the staff were involved in a professional development program to assist staff in supporting students with an ASD. The school explored how resources could be best utilised to develop the social and communication skills of this particular group within the school. A lunchtime program known as ‘Kids Club’ was introduced in Term 3 and operated for both infants and primary children three days per week. The program provided an opportunity for students to interact and play games with other students in a more structured environment, enabling the teachers involved, to coach students for success in play based activities with their peers.

The school was able to build on the existing transition to school program for Kindergarten by providing a more comprehensive program for students with an ASD transitioning between grades and for the Year 6 students transitioning to local high schools.

A number of opportunities were provided for the students to display their leadership qualities to the broader community through their involvement in a range of community initiatives, including: The Camden Australia Day Parade, the Campbelltown Vietnam Veteran’s Day and the Camden Remembrance Day Memorial; The ANZAC Day Dawn Service and Fun Run, the Fisher’s Ghost Fun Run, the Stations Of the Cross at Maryfields, the Campbelltown Catholic Club annual Mass, The Mass of Thanksgiving for Saint Mary of the Cross, the sale of Peace Eggs for the Mater Dei special school and the Light up Camden Festival.

The school maintained its strong association with the Mater Dei School, by supporting the schools integration program, which resulted in two grades from Mater Dei visiting Year 2 and 5 each fortnight.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to a safe and supportive environment. The principles, guidelines and procedures set out in the Policy documents Maintaining Right Relationships and Safe Work Environment are the framework for school leaders, students, staff and the wider community to develop a safe and supportive environment. The Diocesan Complaints Handling Procedures forms an important element in the Diocese’s commitment to ensuring safe and supportive environments for school communities. These documents can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2010.

In compliance with the NSW Reform Act 1990, Corporal Punishment is banned in all schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.
Learning and Teaching

Introduction
In 2010 the school continued to implement the School Review and Improvement (SRI) tool “How Effective Is Our Catholic School?” There were three key areas selected for action at the conclusion of the review process. The key areas included the Provision for the Diverse Needs of Learners, Integration of ICT and Teaching Practices (Writing). Each staff member was an active participant in the review and improvement cycle.

Curriculum & Pedagogy
A key curriculum focus for 2010 was the area of writing. The staff explored ways in which they could improve and enhance writing in the classroom and in particular ways in which to improve the quality of planning, editing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Teachers identified ways to engage students in the writing process and incorporate explicit teaching into the writing episodes. A useful resource was developed by the staff to assist in maintaining consistency and in building sophistication in the writing process across the school.

During 2010 the staff identified professional goals to be met during the school year. Teachers arranged collegial visits to observe the practice of their colleagues in areas identified for growth.

In 2010 the students received two reports to communicate academic progress to parents. The report format aims to provide information to parents about student progress and provides information about areas parents may wish to work on to support their child’s academic learning. Parents were invited to attend student led conferences in Term 2.

Further work was done in developing teacher capacity in the teaching of numeracy in 2010. The school successfully applied for a Diocesan Learning Community Project worth $8,000, to help support teacher professional development and mentoring in the teaching of Number Sense. Teachers from almost every grade benefited from the professional development experience.

Cross Curriculum
Students were again encouraged to participate in the Premier’s Reading Challenge to assist in promoting a love of reading high quality literature. In 2010, 352 students participated with 17 students receiving a gold award for four years participation.

The students were invited to trial and participate in a large number of sporting events in 2010, these included, Cricket, Soccer, Netball, Basketball, Rugby League, Rugby Union, AFL, Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics. The students achieved a high level of success with a
number of students making representative teams. Two students achieved success at a National level using the pathways available through school sports program.

Meeting the needs of all students

A continued commitment to meeting the diverse needs of students was again apparent in 2010. The staff sought to address these learning needs through the implementation of a variety of strategies that provide an engaging and stimulating learning environment. Teachers who had students with special educational needs devised an individual plan (IP) to cater for the particular learning needs of the student. Transition meetings were held each semester to discuss with parents student progress and set goals for further improvement.

Staff at St Clare’s undertook professional development by completing the Positive Partnerships modules online to support staff in learning about students with an ASD.

The Reading Recovery Program continued to provide support to students in Year 1 with an intensive one to one reading program. In 2010 a staff member was trained in delivering the program and 22% of the students in Year 1 cohort were able to access the program and were successfully discontinued.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

During 2010 grades were involved in incursions and excursions to support the learning that occurs in the classroom. These included Kindergarten attending the movies and Narellan Library, Year 1 visited the zoo, Year 2 visited Wildlife World and the Aquarium, Year 3 attended a Walking Tour of the Rocks, Year 4 visited IMAX and the Powerhouse Museum to learn about space, Year 5 attended and overnight camp to Teen Ranch in Cobbitty and Year 6 attended a camp in Canberra to coincide with learning about Parliament.

In the area of Physical Education, St Clare’s once again took an active role in participating in numerous sporting carnivals and gala days. The students also took part in the school based swimming program at Mount Annan Leisure Centre. Students participated in a number of clinics held during the year at school in Cricket, Rugby Union and Rugby League.

Students in Year 6 attended Magdalene Catholic High School as part of a transition program. The students participated in woodwork and food technology activities and learnt about some of the procedures particular to a high school setting.

University of New South Wales competitions in the areas of Mathematics, Science, English and Writing were made available to the students in Year 5 an 6. Two students represented in the St Clare’s in the North West Cluster of Schools Diocesan Public Speaking Competition.

Professional Learning

The staff engaged in a wide range of professional development experiences in 2010. Four staff attended the Quality Learning Seminars in April. Two staff attended and extended
literacy course that focused on the Reading and the Teaching of Comprehension. Six staff visited a local Catholic Primary School to explore ways in which SMART Board Technology was used to engage learners across the curriculum. Two staff attended an extended course in the teaching of Number Sense. Three staff attended the Positive Partnership – Autism Spectrum 4 day course after which all staff completed the Positive Partnership ASD online modules. Twenty staff attended the Origo-Groundworks Conference that focused on the teaching of numeracy. Six staff attended the Australian Literacy Association Annual Conference on the Australian English Curriculum. All staff members were provided with access to 9 in-school workshops for the development of skills in the teaching of ICT.

**Student Achievement**

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

**NAPLAN**

The NAPLAN was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May 2008. NAPLAN replaces the previous State-based Basic Skills Test and the results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

The school participated in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2010, for the purpose of diagnosing individual progress in numeracy and literacy to parents and teachers as well as providing vital information to the school regarding the teaching and learning program offered at St Clare’s. Information from the National Assessment was forwarded to individual parents and the school towards the end of Term 3 this year.

**Student Achievement in Bands**

The NAPLAN assesses aspects of literacy and numeracy in Years 3 and 5. It provides valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
### Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

Students are considered to be achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) if they are in the lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) or if they have been exempt from NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5), represents students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.
Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parents
With 25% of parent surveys returned, the overall feeling was that the school is successful in assisting the children in developing their child’s understanding of the Catholic Tradition. Parents indicated that there were many opportunities to become involved in the school and felt that information about activities and events were effectively communicated. 12% of respondents felt that their child was not challenged to maximise their learning potential. This area has been scheduled for review in the 2011 School Year.

Staff
Staff responses indicated that the school provided a safe and supportive environment, however, 8% of respondents felt that the students did not fully understand their rights and responsibilities.

Students
In the student survey administered, almost every child agreed that the school assisted them in developing an understanding of the faith and that the teachers encouraged them to learn to the best of their ability. Of those students who participated in the survey, 12% indicated that there had been occasions where they had felt unsafe at school. Further work may need to be done to assist students in knowing who to turn to for assistance with a problem at school.

School Review and Improvement
School Review and Improvement is an ongoing process of self evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. It informs action planning at the school level to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Above all, Catholic schools must be good schools with a strong learning orientation and a strong sense of purpose. In all aspects of improving and developing, schools should be learning-centred, constantly striving for excellence and have the student as their primary focus.

School Review and Improvement components reviewed and rated in 2010:

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
  - 1.3 Catholic Life and Culture
    There are a range of programs and initiatives, which educate students to respect the human dignity of all persons.

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
  - 2.4 Integration of Information and Communication Technology.
School based policies and practices facilitate and reflect an innovative approach to the use of ICT to improve student learning.

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  - 3.3 Teaching Practices
    There exists a whole school approach to the delivery of pedagogy in the area of writing. The learning community adopts a collaborative and reflective approach to teaching and learning enhanced by targeted professional development.
  - 3.2 Provision For the Diverse Needs of Learners
    The school has effective processes and practices to identify and support learners with special needs through appropriate intervention. An effective and systemic approach to transition exists.

- **Key Area 5: Resources, Facilities and Finance**
  - 5.1 ICT Resources
    The school ICT approach is developed in conjunction with whole school plans. The school places a high priority on and supports professional development in ICT.

- **Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management**
  - 7.1 Planning For Improvement
    The school develops and implements annual action plans that focus on school improvement.

**School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2011:**

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
  - 1.4 Parents, parishes and broader Church

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
  - 2.1 Educational Potential

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  - 3.6 School Climate, Learning environment and Relationships
  - 3.7 Professional Learning

- **Key Area 4: Human Resource Leadership and Management**
  - 4.2 Professional Development of Staff
  - 4.5 Overall Compliance with legislation and other requirements

- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**
  - 5.4 Financial Management