

# THE JOSEPH VARGA SCHOOL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014



FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2014  
ABN: 84 002 785 775



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## 1. OUR PHILOSOPHY

The JVS was originally established in 1980, to fulfill an inspired ambition to close a gap in existing educational services. JVS is committed to understanding the individual children in our care and positively guiding each one of them to become self-aware and self-disciplined members of society.

Our focus is personal development towards self-discipline, self-control and self-management where external management and discipline is gradually required less and less. We aim to enroll students from mainstream schools, for an intensive intervention program, and, in time, reintegrate them back into the mainstream. JVS is a small school with a caring family feel. Our students are immersed in an accepting, caring and understanding environment, where they can safely experience the rewards of 'well-being'.

Within our positive and welcoming school students can rediscover *'the joy of learning'* and pursue regular study or *'adjusted'* curriculum for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate.

Our Individualised Education, Behavioural and Transitional Programs really do yield enduring gains, be they in Key Learning Areas, or in the directly observable and evidence-based reduction in the incidence and severity of inappropriate behaviours, language and attitudes.

JVS is organised to have a 'family feel' to enable children with special needs, such as learning disabilities, emotional and/or behavioural disorders, to experience a sense of belonging and be honestly heard. In doing so, children *'at risk'* can *'open to'* systematically learning, and acquiring *'lifelong skills'*, in our nurturing, stimulating *'home-like'* environment.

Children are positively encouraged to accept differences among individuals, so each child has rights, dignity, self-esteem, and can happily fit into mainstream society.

The ethos of the school builds mutual trust, guiding the academic, emotional, social, creative development of *'the whole child'*, ensuring that each student ultimately becomes resilient, and independently self-motivating and self-regulating.

JVS's approach works by responding to each child's interests, talents and specific needs, by genuinely valuing the whole child. Our diverse expert team draws on a multidisciplinary formula to implement highly personalised programs in a safe, structured environment.

JVS consolidates its holistic curriculum and creates new possibilities for personal growth, through personal development camps, held each semester, and an ongoing outreach program. This extra-curricular focus is designed to continue to monitor progress and outcomes, while further supporting our students, and their families.

The Joseph Varga School accepts referrals from other government and independent schools, doctors, specialists, and various NSW Government Departments concerned with Family and Community Services, Health and Juvenile Justice.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY CONT.

- To establish a safe, nurturing and accepting environment which promotes the dignity and self-esteem of each child.
- To encourage the acceptance of the differences in individuals.
- To ensure that each child has acquired the necessary skills to be mainstreamed.
- To foster the child's natural curiosity and joy in learning.
- To respond to each child's interests, talents and specific needs.
- To involve each child in participating and taking responsibility for their own learning.
- To implement personal development programs based on a multi-disciplinary approach.
- To promote incidental learning and socialisation by the use of a variety of dimensions.
- To develop a curriculum that provide for the academic, emotional, social, and creative development of each child.
- To provide a climate in which staff development is encouraged through further education eg. in-services
- To commit to to taking responsibility for ones actions.

## OUR STUDENTS

- Children aged from 5 to 18 years of age
- Children who cannot function successfully in mainstream settings
- Children with low self esteem
- Children with emotional/behavioural special needs
- Children with ASD, learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Opposition Disorder and a range of psychiatric problems.



## 2. ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Annual Report provides our school community with fair, reliable, and objective information about school performance measures and policies. This Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies and the school community.

The report covers the following information relating to the school's operation:

- A message from key school bodies
- Contextual information about the school
- Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing
- The granting of Records of School Achievement
- Results of the Higher School Certificate
- Post school destinations
- A summary of professional learning undertaken by teachers during the year
- Workforce composition including details of all teaching staff (as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004)
- Characteristics of the student body, attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school
- A description of how the school manages student non-attendance.
- School Policies and Procedures
- Priority areas for school improvement
- Actions undertaken by the school to promote respect and responsibility
- Parent, student and teacher satisfaction
- Summary financial information



Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 9398 5110 or visiting the school's website at [www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au)

### 3. A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

## Chairman's Report

The 2014-year was a challenging year for the Joseph Varga School as a Registered Special Education provider.

The school consolidated its financial position even further and as a result of the strong governance the school has put in place we have been able to achieve a better result than initially expected. It was noted by the Directors and the management team, that more work will need to be done to secure future funding for the School and the Directors entered into a strategic planning phase.

The result of the planning was to identify the main focus of the school and the future planning of the environment in which we operate. This led to an identified new and exciting direction for the School.

The Joseph Varga School as of the new 2015 year will become an Autism Spectrum Disorder Focus School (ASD) and we believe this will place the School in a better environment to respond to our student needs.

This is the first step in a long process to redefine the School and be placed to provide a more tailored learning experience for our students. The next step in this transition was to secure future funding and assist the financial management of the facilities. This has been achieved and now places the School in a position to redevelop the learning environment for an ASD focus.

The Directors would like to thank all our staff during this period and acknowledge the results are rewarding for all parents and students.

I would also like to thank the other Directors for their assistance throughout the year in addition to our Principal Dan Lynch for his continued leadership and dedication throughout the year.

I am again optimistic about the school's future and certainly look forward to the continued benefits to our students under the new direction.

Yours Sincerely

**Raymond Collins**  
Chairperson

#### 4. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Since 1980, JVS has been providing education services to children with learning disabilities, autism, conduct disorders, and/or emotional disturbances.

We are committed to understanding, as individuals, the children in our care and positively guiding each one of them to become self aware and self disciplined members of society. Our approach is to comprehensively understand the needs of each child and tailor a program that best caters for and supports the child's educational and emotional development.

JVS provides a welcoming, accepting, safe and supporting environment that has a *'family feel'*. Many children who have previously *'fallen through the gaps'* of mainstream schooling have excelled in the environment unique to our little school.



Further information regarding the history and context of the school can be found at:

[www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au)

## 5. STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

The school participates in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

As the majority of our students have learning and emotional needs which result in significant delays in their learning and achievement, NAPLAN testing can be a challenging experience for our students; and in some instances students are granted and exemption from participation.

The consequent results do however supply JVS with valuable information in which to inform short/long term planning and programming to meet student needs.

| School facts 2013                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                       | Student background 2013                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|----------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| School sector                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Non-government                                                        | Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | -           |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| School type                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Special                                                               | School ICSEA value                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | -           |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Year range                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | U, K-10                                                               | Average ICSEA value                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1000        |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Total enrolments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 36                                                                    | Data source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | -           |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Location                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Metropolitan                                                          | <b>Distribution of students</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| <b>School staff 2013</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                       | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Bottom quarter</th> <th>Middle quarters</th> <th>Top quarter</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>School Distribution</td> <td colspan="3">Data not reported</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Australian Distribution</td> <td>25%</td> <td>25%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100</p> |             |  | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters | Top quarter | School Distribution | Data not reported |  |  | Australian Distribution | 25% | 25% | 25% |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Bottom quarter                                                        | Middle quarters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Top quarter |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| School Distribution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Data not reported                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Australian Distribution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 25%                                                                   | 25%                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 25%         |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Teaching staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 7                                                                     | <b>Students 2013</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Full-time equivalent teaching staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 7                                                                     | Total enrolments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 36          |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Non-teaching staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1                                                                     | Girls                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 2           |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1                                                                     | Boys                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 34          |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| <b>School finances 2012</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                       | Full-time equivalent enrolments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 36          |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Total net recurrent income                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | \$1,290,251                                                           | Indigenous students                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | -           |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Per student net recurrent income                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | \$30,720                                                              | Language background other than English                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 8%          |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Total capital expenditure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | \$25,210                                                              | Student attendance rate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 90%         |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| <b>Links</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| School website                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <a href="#">The Joseph Varga School</a>                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| Sector, system or association website                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <a href="#">Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales</a> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| <b>School satisfaction information</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |
| <p>All schools are required to report on parent, teacher and student satisfaction in their annual reports. In 2012, nationally consistent school opinion survey items were agreed by education ministers for parents and students (known as the National School Opinion Survey). A survey and data collection tool that can collect responses to the National School Opinion Survey was made available for all schools to use in August 2013. Schools can use the national parent and student survey items to report on school satisfaction in their annual reports. See the school annual report for information on parent, teacher and student satisfaction.</p> <p>For further information about the National School Opinion Survey, see <a href="#">School opinion information</a> on the ACARA website</p> |                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |  |                |                 |             |                     |                   |  |  |                         |     |     |     |

Details of 2014 results can be found at:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/ResultsInNumbers/Index/74935/TheJosephVargaSchool/43750/2013>



## 6. THE GRANTING OF RECORDS OF SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT (ROSA) AND RESULTS OF THE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

As a small transitional school student enrolment and participation in secondary education fluctuates from year to year.

In 2014 one student received a Record of School Achievement.

One student transitioned into first year HSC studies, in collaboration with TAFE.



## 7. POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS (SECONDARY SCHOOLS ONLY)

Our students receive a solid education in a caring Special Education environment as they work towards reintegration with the mainstream.

We do not hold students back when they are mainstream ready. In 2014 we have achieved 100% success rate with 3 longstanding students reintegrating successfully back into mainstream education schools or TAFE.

## 8. A SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING UNDERTAKEN BY TEACHERS DURING THE YEAR

The total amount spent on professional learning for teachers at Joseph Varga School in 2014 was \$5,880. The teaching staff participated in a variety of professional learning to improve their standard of teaching competence, curriculum development and effectiveness with respect to catering for Students with Special Needs.

Professional learning included:

- Training conducted by the Association of Independent Schools in the area of Child Protection.
- All staff being trained in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention.
- Staff participation in the annual Redbank School Conference.
- Staff participation in Tony Attwood ASD conference

## 9. WORKFORCE COMPOSITION AND TEACHING STAFF

Details of the workforce composition of full-time staff and the specific characteristics of all teaching staff (as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004) are summarised in the 2 tables below:

### Teaching Staff

| Category                                                                                                                                                                                            | Number of Teachers                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| (i) having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, | 4 (delivering the curriculum)<br>1 (Executive Administration) |
| (ii) having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications               | Nil                                                           |

### Workforce Composition- 2013

| Workforce Composition | FTE                                 | Indigenous |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Teaching              | 4                                   | Nil        |
| Administration        | 1 (including 2 accredited teachers) | Nil        |

## **10. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY, ATTENDANCE RATES FOR EACH YEAR LEVEL AND THE WHOLE SCHOOL AND A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL MANAGES STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE.**

As a Special Education provider all students who attended the school in 2014 were professionally diagnosed with either an ASD, an emotional disturbance, psychiatric illness, behaviour disorders, among other multiple disabilities. In many cases students have more than one diagnosis.

Student attendance is recorded daily and non - attendance is followed up in every instance unless a parent advises the reason.

Parent meetings are held to resolve and support any issues of ongoing unexplained non-attendance.

Mandatory reporting procedures apply where absences are extended or the student may be at risk.

The average student attendance per grade in 2014 was: -

**Kindy:** 96 %  
**Year One:** 99.45%  
**Year Four:** 99.48%  
**Year Five:** 98.28%  
**Year Six:** 98.58%  
**Year Seven:** 93.55%  
**Year Eight:** 93.3%  
**Year Ten:** 98.77%  
**Year Eleven:** 98.97%  
**Total:** 97%

## **11.SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

A full suite of the Joseph Varga School Policies and Procedures (including enrolment, student welfare, anti-bullying, discipline and complaints and grievances and all others) are publically available on the schools website [www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au)

Parents are officially notified, with one terms notice, when the Board updates policies from time to time.

As a condition of enrolment is that parents acknowledge that they have made themselves familiar with the school's policy and procedures on the website.

## 12. PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Joseph Varga School is committed to the ongoing improvement of the quality of education programs provided and the safety and welfare of students.

The following priorities for improvement were set for 2014 and throughout the year the school demonstrated achievement of all priorities:

**The 2014 priorities for improvement set and achieved by the school are shown below:**

| Priority                                                        | Initiative                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Achievement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child Protection                                                | Research ‘best practice’ Child Protection approaches in similar schools with the goal to become a leader in this field.                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff trained in Non Violent Crisis Intervention - promotion of Care, Welfare, Safety and Security</li> <li>• Installation of CCTV throughout whole school</li> <li>• Regular review of Policy and Procedures</li> <li>• Implementation of daily behavior analysis to monitor behaviour and target support areas</li> </ul>                   |
| Behaviour Management<br>Promotion of respect and responsibility | Research ‘best practice’ behaviour management approaches in similar schools with the goal to ensure a consistent whole school approach that best supports the specific needs of our students and promotes respect and responsibility. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Risk Assessments by psychologist to identify risks and provide supporting strategies to mitigate risks.</li> <li>• All staff trained in Non Violent Crisis Intervention – promotion of Care, Welfare, Safety and Security</li> <li>• Implementation of daily behavior analysis to monitor behaviour and target support areas.</li> </ul> |
| Information Technology                                          | Research how Information Technology is best used in other schools with the goal of upgrading infrastructure to cater for our students needs.                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of Smart boards in each classroom, one to one I pads and one to one Macbook Airs.</li> <li>• Whole staff training in</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    |                                                                                                                                                                   | best practice use of technology in the classroom.                                                                                                                |
| Student Engagement | Research 'best practice' teaching pedagogies that demonstrate improvement in student engagement with the goal of implementing a consistent whole school approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in Professional Development by all staff in best practice pedagogies used to assist ASD learners</li> </ul> |

**Identified priorities for improvement in 2015 are:**

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Physical Learning Environment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for upgrade of learning spaces and physical environment based on best practice models for children diagnosed with ASD.</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Professional Development</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide staff with regular professional development opportunities to ensure staff remain up to date with best practice pedagogies for ASD learners</li> </ul> |
| Child Protection                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure high standards of child protection are maintained.</li> </ul>                                                                                          |
| Student Engagement                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure 'best practice' teaching pedagogies in classroom</li> <li>Student interest based curriculum</li> </ul>                                                 |

**13. PROMOTION OF RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The 'Promise to Improvement' is a commitment made by each student to make a personal effort to improve their attitude, to show respect to themselves and others, and to take ownership and be accountable for their actions. The 'promise' is matched by a commitment made by the school and parents to understand and support the child in these endeavours. The 'Promise' is our contract with each child, the foundation on which behavioural, social, emotional and academic improvement rests.



Further details can be found at [www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au)

#### **14. PARENTS, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION**

The school values highly the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. The school conducts termly parent and teacher meetings where feedback is sought by parents set to specific criteria. The school also provides open parent meetings and conducted formal meetings with staff in which feedback for review was sought.

Overall the parents of JVS greatly value the care provided by the school.

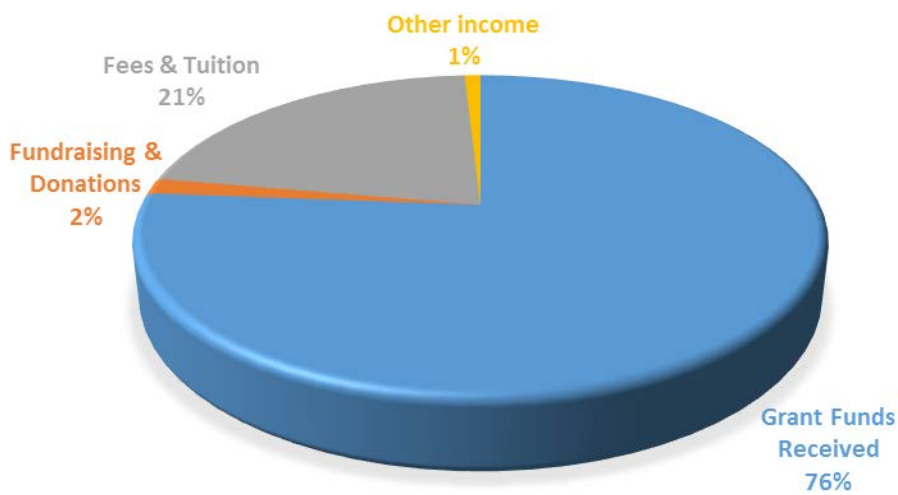


***Working Together***

## 15. SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

School Income broken down by Funding Source. The Joseph Varga School is fully accountable for all funding that it receives. Each year, the school’s accountants submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the School. This statement details the income and expenditure of the school. In addition, the financial accounts for the school are audited annually. The following information represents the income and expenditure for the year ending 31 December 2014.

### INCOME SOURCES 2014



### EXPENDITURE 2014

