



St Paul's Catholic School

Paice Street,
Bridgewater Tasmania 7030

Ms Anita Dow MP
Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools
Parliament of Tasmania
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

30th August 2024

Response to Government Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools

St Paul's Catholic School is a small Catholic primary school located in Bridgewater, Tasmania with an enrolment of 205 students from Kindergarten to Year 6. We also accommodate Ludo Education and Care catering for children from 3-5 years of age. Our Kindergarten and Ludo programs operate in conjunction with each other as they share spaces and combine their programs in our newly refurbished Early Learning Centre. Ludo is operated by Catholic Care and is licensed as a childcare provider under the Child Care Act (Tasmania) 2001. Last year Ludo received an "exceeding rating" under the National Quality Framework.

At St Paul's, we welcome students from all families seeking the education we provide as we are a diverse school accommodating students from Bridgewater, Gagebrook, Herdsmans Cove, Old Beach, Brighton, Glenora, Granton, New Norfolk, Dromedary, Pontville and Honeywood. We have an Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 881 and a Direct Measure of Income (DMI) of 84. Our My School data indicates the distribution of students as 66% in the bottom quartile, 32% in the middle quartiles and 2% in the top quartile. Our 2024 census data indicates that we have 20.4% (or 41 students) who are Catholic and 79.6% (or 164 students) who are non-Catholic. We have 104 boys and 101 girls. The partnership between parents/guardians and staff working together is an essential part of the development of relationships within our school community. We strive to develop within our community an attitude of respect and acceptance where all members are valued. As an educational community, we aim to challenge students to express their opinions and communicate effectively and creatively, so that they may become resourceful and effective problem-solvers with a commitment to life-long learning. We are a fee-paying school but endeavour to keep St Paul's affordable for our families. We offer support for families and have 56% of our families receiving concession for their fees.

As a school we pride ourselves on our inclusion and the diversity in programs accommodating and supporting students with many additional needs and from diverse backgrounds. We currently have 86 students (or 42% of students) on the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD). Of these students, 10 are extensive, 25 are substantial, 46 are supplementary, and

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five are Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice. This has increased from a total 39 students on NCCD in 2018. We also have 11 students awaiting assessment and four kindergarten students currently not included in this number. We also have 59 (or 29%) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and 9 English as an Additional Language or Dialect students. Students with additional needs, talents and gifts are given appropriate opportunities, challenges and experiences to develop their potential and meet their learning needs. Individual educational plans are developed in consultation with teachers, student support coordinators and parents for students who require assisted educational support programs. Targeted intervention, extension and enrichment form the basis for catering for the diverse learning needs of students. In 2024 we have introduced direct instruction in writing, reading, spelling and Mathematics for all students focusing on their ability and their zone of proximal development. We use researched, targeted programs that introduce only 15% of new content in each lesson following the research on Cognitive Load Theory, the Science of Reading and the Science of Learning. All our teachers have received extensive professional learning in this and receive ongoing and continual coaching. Pre-Lit and Mini-Lit are also fully implemented in the Early Years to develop a sound base of phonological and phonemic awareness. All our kindergarten students receive speech screeners and assessment as needed. We work closely with Rosie Martin from Speech Pathology Tas. to implement appropriate speech and language programs for our students. We employ a speech assistant to work solely on speech development with students in need. This has had great results for our students.

Our mission statement is "We aim to develop and nurture all of our school community to reach their full potential by: invoking the charism of the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers to encourage faith and a spiritual journey with Christ; providing rich learning experiences that develop the whole child, that are valued and promoted within all aspects of school life; and developing a welcoming school community built on relationships based on mutual respect." We live this out daily through our three expectations of RESPECT, LEARN and SAFE. These three expectations are promoted, discussed, displayed, lived and shared. Students receive praise, rewards and awards for their efforts and achievement in showing these expectations in their daily school life.

Each year, students engage in Rumble's Quest as a measure of their social and emotional well-being. Teachers analyse the data and support students who may be vulnerable in any of the 5 areas. Children who may not feel safe at home are immediately identified and a connection made with our school counsellor. If anyone doesn't feel safe at school we go a little deeper and ask all students to colour identify safe and unsafe places at school. This information is used to support playground supervision areas. We support and educate students in their respect towards others and have a zero tolerance towards bullying, physical aggression and any form of harmful behaviour towards other students or adults. We teach and re-teach expected behaviours in all lessons and areas of the school. We use the program "You can Do It" to ensure continuity throughout the school and access the e-safety Commissioner online resources for safety, anti-bullying and respect online. We keep thorough and accurate data on behaviour and in 2023 we reported 42 cases of bullying and 33 of harassment

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and this year to date 25 cases of bullying and harassment. Each case has been dealt with individually and parents involved in the outcome of these.

We often receive messages of appreciation from our families.

have three grandchildren who attend St Paul's Catholic School at Bridgewater. My daughter is a single mother of five who has special needs. We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to St Paul's for all they have done for our family. When things have been difficult with the children and their needs, the staff have been so patient and understanding. We feel totally supported.

The Teachers' handle every situation with such care and professionalism, even if it has been a difficult day. The teachers and aids do an amazing job and their patience is wonderful.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jo Clark

Principal

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