



# *St. Joseph's Catholic School*

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## **Response to Government Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools**

This submission addresses the particular areas of (b) and (d) of the terms of reference: (b) inquire into and report upon the measures necessary to prevent and remedy discrimination and bullying in Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff (and d) examine and recommend what efforts are being made and should be made towards meeting those obligations by Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff.

St Joseph's Catholic School is a Kindergarten to Grade 6 school located in Queenstown educating 70 students.

St Joseph's Catholic School is a safe place for students because we support the pastoral care of all students. Programs taught reinforce and promote the consistency and expectations throughout the whole school. We use the following program/s to encourage respect, courtesy and consideration for others.

**Positive Behaviour Support** with rewards and consequences taught to each class. This occurs at the beginning of each year. The matrix for expectations are based on the three rules of Be safe, Be respectful, Be a learner. The behaviours expected around the school in all areas can be addressed with these three simple rules. Students are rewarded with good decisions with footprints.

- Classes have acknowledgment structures (both individually and class)
- in assemblies
- whole house gets a reward at the end of each term

When things go wrong, behaviours are followed up in a consistent and fair way. Students are reminded of the expectations. They are able to acknowledge and understand why they need to improve and have some alternatives to try the next time they find themselves in a similar situation.

### **RULER program** (to teach about feelings and how to respond to and manage feelings)

This program involves each class (and staff) creating a class charter based on the feelings students want to feel at school. Classes then develop and commit to the behaviours required for the feelings to be lived out each day. Revisiting the charter to hold each other to account is a way to create safety and a feeling of belonging. Recognising, labelling and understanding emotions is an

additional benefit of this program. Teaching the skills for recognising the range and variety of emotions and their impact on their ability to learn and interact with others.

### **Making Jesus Real (MJR)**

MJR has been reintroduced in 2024 to all classes. This program reinforces the teachings of Jesus and makes our Catholic faith come alive. Students are provided with skills and strategies about how to live out our Gospel values.

### **The Resilience Project**

Taught throughout the school on a fortnightly basis. This program looks at the elements of gratitude, empathy and mindfulness.

At St Joseph's Catholic School we believe that student well-being comes from being accepted and welcomed and from experiencing success in learning. All of our education programs are aimed at these goals. Teachers and staff know their students well. Specifically, we utilise the following programs and structures that cater and support each individual by collecting and using data to create teaching moments. These include:

- Spelling Mastery
- Initialit
- Prelit
- Corrective Reading
- Shaping Minds
- Rocket Maths
- Explicit teaching
- Daily reviews
- Check for understandings

A range of specialist subjects are taught which allow students to shine in different arenas. This is appreciated by students (as seen below).

*'The extra curricula are like music. Music is really fun for me and we get to learn how to play instruments.'*

*'the nice teachers here the students here and all the things we learn here like Auslan and Music and Lote and reading and spelling, maths and daily pe and normal pe and wholeschool mass art it is calming and fun and you can make your imagination come to life'*

Bullying is not a behaviour that we have seen in St Joseph's Catholic School in recent times. Rarely, a student may be unkind or mean on purpose. Students are aware of how the choices they make can impact others and that being kind is what they need to choose to be more like Jesus. They

know and understand that being kind makes our school a better place and makes themselves and others feel happy. We have zero tolerance for bullying.

As St Joseph's is a remote community, the school provides many opportunities and celebrations that students participate in. These are numerous and again wide ranging to cater for as many students as possible.

Cultural days - NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week, day on country

Subject specific celebrations - Book week, Science week

Camp experiences - 3-6 classes have camp experiences

Involving whole community - Carols, Unconformity festival, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, 125 year celebrations, school assemblies

Sport experiences - Carnivals, Aussie sport in schools, Fitness classes, after school fitness

Faith based - Whole school Mass, Baptism, Sacramental program,

Our religion classes teach everyone about God's plan for our happiness and the importance of every person. Religion is taught as a subject and is experienced through a range of other experiences whilst at school. These include whole school masses, whole school prayers, Christian Meditation, Daily prayer, Footsteps of Jesus rewards and reminders.

### **Staff Voice**

Staff member 1

*Our school is a safe place for students as every staff member knows every child by name and invests time in understanding the needs of the child, not just the behaviours. The environment is welcoming and friendly. Respect is reciprocated between all adults and students. Everyone cares for each other. Big kids and little kids play together and care for each other.*

Staff member 2

*Our school is a safe place for students because the students know it is a requirement to be safe and if they are not there are consistent consequences.*

*We welcome families who seek the education we provide because that is what we are here for. We want students to come to the school and learn.*

*We believe that student well-being comes from being accepted and welcomed and from experiencing success in learning. All of our education programs are aimed at these goals. Specifically, we utilise the following programs and structures we use Positive Behaviour Support and our values include being respectful, being safe and being a learner. We constantly tell students when they are doing the right thing.*

*Our religion classes teach everyone about God's plan for our happiness and the importance of every person and to treat people how they would like to be treated. We teach that we follow in Jesus' footprints by being kind and helping others.*

### **Student Voice**

I like St Joseph's Catholic School because .....

*It has multiple learning opportunities for kids like me.*

*My school is very supportive and has a lot of energy.*

The best thing about St Joseph's Catholic School is .....

*We are like one big family (we all know each other(well))*

*We get to learn new things everyday and understand things better too.*

The teachers at my St Joseph's Catholic School ...

*Are really nice, sometimes some can be strict but they understand what I struggle with and want I am really good at.*

*Care for me and check if I am ok.*

I feel happy at St Joseph's Catholic school because ...

*my friends are there to support me in what I do. My school provides my with a safe learning space and my classmates are really nice*

I feel safe at St Joseph's Catholic school because ...

*the teachers are nice and the students too, everyone has personality that they like to shine out*

*Everyone knows everyone and if someones upset we always check in on them*

*The teachers*

At St Joseph's Catholic School we are kind to each other because ...

*because we are a community*

*if we hurt someone on purpose its mean*

*we know that one we will get in trouble if we're not but i think we are because we all get along and have lots in common*

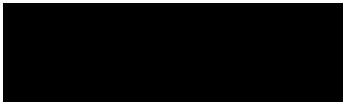
*because you should always treat someone how you want to be treated*

*We all are well known, We take care of each other, We listen to each other*

### **Parent/guardians testimony- Board 2024**

*St Joseph's Catholic School is a safe place for students because we belong. Due to the small class sizes, there is a feeling of community connection between parents/guardians, teachers and students. Parents/guardians have trust in the supportive staff at the school to cater for each individual with sensitivity and confidentiality. Students are provided with opportunity and tools as they are taught the skills to help them blossom.*

We welcome families who seek the education we provide. We have a wide range of families at St Joseph's Catholic School. In the past 18 months we have welcomed many new families from the community that have transitioned from the nearby Department School. Families have approached our school due to the focus that we provide on learning and the calm, consistent and caring way that students are encouraged and taught, particularly in regards to behavioural expectations. We provide fee assistance for families in genuine need by meeting with parents. As a small community students and families are known well. They are treated with respect, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of need.



Teresa McLeod  
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St Joseph's Catholic School