

29 August 2024

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

(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



We are proud to say that John Paul II Catholic School is a safe place for students. We are a Kinder to Grade Six school of 227 students in Rokeby, Tasmania. We have a wide range of supports in place to cater for every student. We have excellent resources, including two school counsellors and a school chaplain, who are always ready to provide support to students who are in need.

We have implemented several additional measures to ensure our students get to school safely and have the best chance to succeed in school. We offer a bus service each morning and afternoon to remove the barrier of parental transport capacity. This has proven to make a significant improvement to student attendance.

Each morning our caring staff provide a free breakfast and physical activity time so our students can start the day well. Students are involved in making and serving breakfast, as we see this as an opportunity to give our students additional responsibilities and leadership roles. We have also implemented a lunch program, where every student is offered a hot, nutritious lunch every day.

We have zero tolerance for bullying and our clear positive behaviour approach allows explicit teaching of all expected behaviours. We use several programs to encourage respect, courtesy and consideration for others, including Bravehearts - Child sexual abuse prevention, Speak Up Stay Chatty - mental health awareness, Think U Know - Police Cyber Safety Program, along with our own well-being programs delivered by our school counsellor and chaplain. These programs include targeted social skills and friendship development programs designed to teach our students how to be great friends and the behaviours to expect from great friends.

We welcome families from the margins and actively promote partnerships between families and school. Our PAKT (Parents and Kids Together) Program is designed to strengthen family and school relationships, build self-esteem and educate families and students about protective behaviours. Alongside our bus, breakfast and lunch programs, we also provide fee assistance for families in need. We have made a commitment to our community that the inability to pay fees will not impact our students' education.

We believe that an important part of student well-being is experiencing success at school. One element of this is academic success. We use evidence-based programs

which align with current research into the science of learning. Every student participates in targeted literacy and numeracy programs which allow every student to make progress and succeed with their learning. We provide opportunities for students to engage in extension activities and for intervention programs to support accelerated learning. Along with academic success we believe it is important for our students to have success in the arts. Our specialist art program allows students to succeed in visual arts and our specialist music program allows students to develop skills, along with a love and appreciation for music. Our dance program recently allowed over 50 students to participate in the Southern Tasmanian Dance Eisteddfod, where they were able to experience success through their hard work and preparation. Our religion classes teach everyone about being considerate and compassionate members of society who care [REDACTED] who are in need.

A word from our students...

- *I like my school because it has an amazing community which is caring. It is a safe and respectful place because people are looking after each other.*
- *The best thing about our school is the teachers are funny! There are fun activities like footy colours day, Easter egg hunt, book week, Winter Woollies Day, Minute to Win it Talent Show, Wheels Day. I love the hot lunches and school camp!*
- *The teachers at my school are funny, caring, nice, patient, helpful, exciting and amazing.*
- *I feel happy at school because I have friends. Everyone is kind to each other. There is a wide variety of activities. People know how to share. We meet, greet and treat each other with respect.*
- *I feel safe at school because the teachers are helpful. No one can hurt you because there is no bullying allowed. Sometimes people get hurt but the teachers always deal with it.*

We are JP2! We follow the footsteps of Jesus which means you be kind and respectful to others.

A word from our parents...

- *As a parent, I truly appreciate the safe and inclusive environment that John Paul II Catholic School provides for all students. The dedication of all staff to embrace diversity ensures every student and their families feel respected, valued and supported.*
- *In 2021 I started taking my young family along to the Setup for Success session being held at John Paul II Catholic School after seeing it advertised. From the first session we attended we were made to feel very welcomed and at home by the warm and welcoming staff. This first encounter with the school had a positive effect on us and we continued to attend these sessions. After not long we could tell the teachers and staff had a real passion for what they did, and*

John Paul II

CATHOLIC SCHOOL



the school had a real sense of community about it. From here we made the decision to send our children to the school. We have been very happy with our decision to attend John Paul II Catholic School; our children are always excited about attending school. We have been very impressed with how the staff around the whole school get to know your child by name. We feel at ease knowing our children are attending a school which provides a nice personal touch for each child. We love being a part of the safe, warm and welcoming school community that John Paul II Catholic School offers.

Ben Morgan



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