



St Finn Barr's Catholic Primary 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 (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 Finn Barr's Catholic Primary School is a Kindergarten to Year 6 school located in Invermay, educating 331 students.

At St Finn Barr's Catholic Primary School, we are dedicated to creating a secure and nurturing environment for all students. Our commitment to safety, inclusivity, and holistic education ensures that each child feels accepted, welcomed, and supported in their journey toward success. Through comprehensive safety protocols, robust support systems, and a diverse range of academic and extracurricular programs, we strive to foster a community where every student can thrive.

St Finn Barr's is committed to creating a secure and nurturing environment for all students. We have implemented comprehensive safety protocols, including regular drills for fire, lockdown, and evacuation procedures. Our campus is equipped with surveillance cameras and secure entry points to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Additionally, we have a dedicated team of counsellors and a robust support system to address any concerns students may have.

St Finn Barr's prides itself on being an inclusive and welcoming community. Our enrollment process is designed to be transparent and supportive, ensuring that families feel valued and understood from the moment they express interest in our school.

At St Finn Barr's, we have zero tolerance for bullying. Our strict anti-bullying policy is enforced through programs such as the Positive Behaviour School (PBS). Initiatives like PBS promote a positive school climate by teaching students the importance of respect, empathy, and kindness. Additionally, we use the UR Strong Wellbeing program and restorative practices, which help build respectful, resilient, and safe students. We also conduct regular workshops and assemblies to reinforce these values and provide students with the tools to stand up against bullying. To further encourage positive behavior, we offer weekly and termly awards.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion extends to welcoming families from marginalised communities. We actively engage with refugee families through initiatives such as the Intergenerational Cafe, Little Finns (English as another Language/Dialect (EALD) and Kinder Teacher program), and breakfast clubs. We hold parent catch-ups for EALD families and host Cuppa and Chat sessions. We celebrate Refugee Week, Harmony Week, and other cultural events to recognise and honour the diverse cultural groups within our school. Our Cultural Studies program and culturally responsive practices, including translation services, ensure every family feels seen, heard, and respected.

Understanding the financial challenges some families may face, we offer a comprehensive fee assistance program. Families in need can apply for financial aid, which is assessed based on their specific circumstances. We follow the humanitarian policy from Catholic Education Tasmania, offering three years of fee assistance and a one-off uniform support payment for humanitarian entrants. Additionally, we provide concession card discounts. We collaborate with local charities and organisations such as the Nagle Alliance, to offer further support, ensuring that no child is denied education due to financial constraints.

Our educational philosophy centres around the holistic development of each student. Our academic programs, including explicit teaching, Multilit, and EALD support teachers and focus groups, are designed to cater to diverse learning needs, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed. We also provide extracurricular activities that promote teamwork, leadership, and personal growth. Through the current Insight Program we use the principals from the Science of Learning to ensure all students are getting the best possible education they can.

During St Finn Barr's Religious Education classes, we focus on imparting the values of compassion, love, and respect for all individuals. We teach students about God's plan for happiness and the significance of each person's unique contribution to the world. Our curriculum includes lessons on moral and ethical decision-making, encouraging students to live out these values in their daily lives.

Pastoral care is a cornerstone of St Finn Barr's support system. We provide personalised counseling services, mentorship programs, and peer support groups to address the emotional and psychological needs of our students. Our comprehensive approach includes onsite counseling, working with families, support networks, and various agencies to achieve the best outcomes for students' overall well-being. We implement well-being programs like UR Strong and Positive Behaviour School (PBS), use restorative practices, and liaise with Allied Health professionals. Our collaborative practices between families and the school ensure that we support each student's pastoral care effectively.

At St Finn Barr's Catholic Primary School, our mission is to educate the whole child, promoting not only academic excellence but also emotional, social, and spiritual growth. Through our inclusive practices, financial assistance programs, and dedicated pastoral care, we ensure that every student and family feels valued and supported. We are proud to be a community that embraces diversity, encourages positive behavior, and upholds the values of compassion, love, and respect. Together, we work towards the best outcomes for our students' overall well-being and future success.

Student Voice:

I like my school because:

- Year 4: I get lots of good education in Maths and Writing and I get help to solve my Maths problems.
- Year 4: I get to spend time with my friends.
- Year 4: I feel safe. I don't know why, I just feel that way.
- Year 3: It is a welcoming community. All the staff and students are kind.

The best thing about my school is:

- Year 3: Everybody helps me to learn. If I find something hard, people always help.
- Year 4: There are great playgrounds and lots of places to play.
- Year 4: Having lots of different people around me.
- Year 4: We learn new things every day.

The teachers at my school:

- Year 4: Are kind and helpful. When you get a question wrong, they help you so you can improve.
- Year 4: Are helpful, especially when I can't figure it out straight away.
- Year 4: Are all kind and are always there when you need help.
- Year 3: Help me be the best I can be with my learning.

I feel happy at my school because:

- Year 3: My friends are here and the teachers are all kind.
- Year 4: You get to go outside and play with your friends.
- Year 4: I get to see my friends every day.
- Year 4: I'm always learning new things.

I feel safe at my school because:

- Year 3: The teachers are always there for me and keep me safe. They listen to me and help me.
- Year 4: The teachers are always outside to help on duty and they help if there is a problem.
- Year 4: I know people have got my back. Everyone has my back.
- Year 4: I can trust the teachers and they all know me, so I feel safe.

In our school we are kind to each other because:

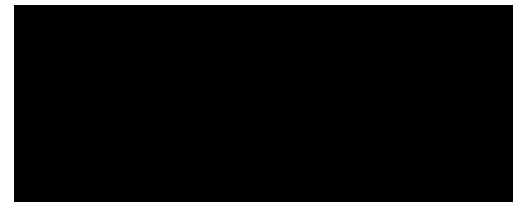
- Year 3: Our teachers always help us, talk to us, and help us to make good decisions.
- Year 4: We are a safe and respectful school.
- Year 4: We don't want anyone to have bad feelings.

Parent voice:

SFB is a welcoming community educating and nurturing students of different cultural backgrounds. Any issue our child has had has always been dealt with swiftly, fairly and in an appropriate manner. All staff within the school are friendly and know all the students, they happily greet them each morning and are welcoming. An extremely diverse community embracing and supporting each other; staff, students, and families. Small, friendly community. The staff are all wonderful, kind, and happy to communicate with parents as needed.

The way teachers are inclusive of all backgrounds and special needs. The communication between teachers is great. We always know what is going on. The admin staff are great and are very empathetic.

The Catholic principles that it is built upon, the values as a whole that the school follows. The current standing it has in the community. The way the school interacts with the community at large and of course the school community. The early learning program and the ability to develop the school's infrastructure and curriculum to suit current needs.



Damien Taylor

Principal

St Finn Barr's Catholic Primary School