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To Whom It May Concern

Response to Government Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools

Please find Marist Regional College's response to the State Government's *Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools*.

Part A is compiled by the Marist Regional College Leadership Team and **Part B**, by the Student Representative Council Executive.

Part A

Our school is a safe place for students because:

At Marist Regional College, we prioritise the safety and well-being of our students above all else. Our dedicated staff work tirelessly to create an environment where students feel secure, supported, and valued. We implement comprehensive safety protocols, including regular drills, clear anti-bullying policies, and robust reporting systems to ensure any concerns are addressed promptly. Our pastoral care team and counsellors are always available to support students emotionally and mentally, fostering a sense of security and belonging.

We welcome families who seek the education we provide:

Marist Regional College is committed to providing a holistic education that nurtures academic excellence, personal growth, and spiritual development. We welcome families who share our values and seek a community where their children can thrive. Our inclusive approach ensures that every family feels respected, valued, and integral to the school community. We maintain open lines of communication with parents and caregivers, encouraging their active participation in their child's educational journey.

We have zero tolerance for bullying. We use the following program/s to encourage respect, courtesy and consideration for others:

At Marist Regional College, we have a strict zero-tolerance policy for bullying. To promote respect, courtesy, and consideration, we implement programs such as the GEM (Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness) Framework, Restorative Practices, and peer mentoring initiatives. The College has started to review and rebuild its Behaviour Management Policy to become a Positive Behaviour Support Policy.

These programs teach students about the importance of empathy, kindness, and the impact of their actions on others. We also conduct regular workshops and assemblies focusing on character education and the development of social skills.

We welcome families from the margins:

Marist Regional College is committed to inclusivity and diversity. We extend a warm welcome to families from all backgrounds, including those from marginalised communities.

Our goal is to create an environment where every student feels included, respected, and supported, regardless of their socio-economic, cultural, or personal circumstances. We actively work to remove barriers to education and provide equal opportunities for all.

We provide fee assistance for families in genuine need by:

Recognising that financial constraints can be a barrier to education, Marist Regional College offers fee assistance to families in genuine need.

Our fee support provides financial aid based on a confidential assessment of each family's circumstances. We work closely with families to ensure that no child is denied the opportunity to attend our school due to financial hardship. This Principal, as a student of Marist Regional College, received fee assistance to attend.

We believe that student well-being comes from being accepted and welcomed and from experiencing success in learning. All our education programs are aimed at these goals. Specifically, we utilise the following programs and structures:

Student well-being at Marist Regional College is fostered through acceptance, welcome, and academic success. We offer a variety of programs and structures to support these goals, including:

- **Learning Plans:** Tailored educational programs to meet the unique needs of each student, particularly those students with disabilities or other needs that require targeted intervention.
- **Well-being Programs:** Initiatives such as mental health awareness, and resilience-building activities.
- **Academic Support:** Tutoring, study skills workshops, and enrichment programs to help students achieve their full potential.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** A wide range of sports, arts, and clubs to promote engagement and a sense of belonging.

The College has developed a Pastoral Care and Well-Being Educational Framework, which highlights the specific, social educational programs offered to our students throughout their six-year journey at Marist Regional College.

Our Religious Education lessons teach everyone about God's plan for our happiness and the importance of every person:

Religious Education Lessons classes at Marist Regional College are designed to teach students about God's plan for our happiness and the inherent worth of every individual. We emphasise the values of compassion, respect, and service to others, helping students understand the importance of treating everyone with dignity and love. Our curriculum includes discussions on moral and ethical issues, encouraging students to reflect on their beliefs and actions in the context of their faith.

We support pastoral care in our school by:

Pastoral care is a cornerstone of the Marist Regional College experience. We support pastoral care through:

- **Dedicated Pastoral Care Groups:** Staff members who focus on the emotional and social well-being of students receive extended periods on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week.
- **Mentorship Programs:** Grouping students with mentors from Senior Years to provide guidance and support.
- **Counselling Services:** Professional counsellors and a dedicated College Psychologist are available to assist students with personal, social and emotional challenges.
- **Community Building Activities:** Events and programs that foster a sense of community and connectedness among students, staff, and families.

Part B: Provided by the MRC Student Representative Council Executive

I like Marist Regional College because:

- *It provides a breadth and diversity of subject options*
- *Supportive environment where the teachers make an effort*
- *Embraces diversity; every person is unique and has different interests, pursuits and cultures etc.*

The best thing about Marist Regional College is:

- *A strong sense of community and belonging*
- *There are shared goals that work towards together, to bring to life*
- *That we have a contemporary approach to Catholic education that has “eyes looking forward, but our feet stand firmly on the grounds of tradition”*
- *We lead and learn through truth; the Gospel values inform our way of living and leading.*

The teachers at Marist Regional College:

- *Are enthusiastic in sharing their gifts of providing a holistic education*
- *Do their very best to provide and accommodate for varying student needs*
- *Include our subject matter experts, who are very knowledgeable and share this with others.*

I feel happy at Marist Regional College because:

- *There are strong, positive, relationships that are evident between students and staff*
- *We have commonality and a strong identity, with each person accepted for who they are.*

I feel safe at Marist Regional College because:

- *There is always support available irrespective of the issue at hand*
- *There are high expectations for all; these are clear, easily understood and can be followed.*
- *The College values, rooted in the Gospel and the spirit of our founders, provide a guiding light which we consider as a “safety net”*
- *Religious Education, over the last six years, has provided the example of Jesus, which gives all members of the community model for living.*

In our school, Marist Regional College, we are kind to each other because:

- *We want the best for each other; there are differences between each person, but we strive to uphold the dignity of all.*
- *Well-being is prioritised by all.*

Please do not hesitate to contact my office should you require any further information.

Regards

Gregg Sharman
Principal