



Catholic  
Education  
Tasmania

# **Inquiry into Bullying and Discrimination in Tasmanian Schools**

Catholic Education Tasmania  
submission to the Standing  
Committee on Government  
Administration Committee A



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## Introduction

Catholic Education Tasmania welcomes the opportunity to make a submission as part of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Bullying and Discrimination in Tasmanian Schools.

As a Catholic organisation, the Gospel of Christ compels us to be attentive to the pastoral care, and the social and emotional wellbeing of all our students, families and staff. We take a system-wide approach in ensuring all Catholic Education Tasmania students and staff are treated respectfully and fairly. Bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination are all rightly abhorred by Catholic Education Tasmania.

This inquiry has provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the steps we take to ensure that our schools offices are safe for our students and staff, particularly in the context of Parliament's inquiry into discrimination, prohibited conduct, bullying and harassment in schools.

Our submission focuses on the measures in place within Catholic Education Tasmania to prevent, monitor and address bullying, harassment and discrimination within the existing legal and regulatory framework.



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**Executive Director: Catholic Education Tasmania**

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## Overview of Catholic Education in Tasmania

Catholic schools were originally established to support and nurture the faith development of Catholic children, whilst providing everyone with the highest standard of learning and care.

Today, there are 38 Archdiocesan schools in Tasmania. Our schools are places where spiritual, educational, physical, moral and social formation is provided for every child or young person who walks through our doors.

As an education provider, Catholic Education Tasmania is responsible for the education, safety and wellbeing of 17,000 students across Tasmania. We employ over 4,000 staff.

Catholic Education Tasmania responds to the needs of all members of our school communities in a sensitive and just manner which respects the innate dignity of every human person.

We provide education in freedom, faith, knowledge, responsibility and service. Catholic Education Tasmania has mandated a wide range of policies and procedures to protect all individuals (students, staff and families) from experiencing bullying and discrimination for the entire duration of their engagement with Catholic Education Tasmania. For example, we have a modern online reporting framework which aims to ensure that any concerns and complaints can be confidentially raised, and appropriately and respectfully resolved.

We do not discriminate on the basis of religion, sex, race or status. This is reflected in our present enrolment profile which includes: 33% Catholics, 17% other Christians, 29% no religious affiliation and 21% other or unknown religious affiliation.

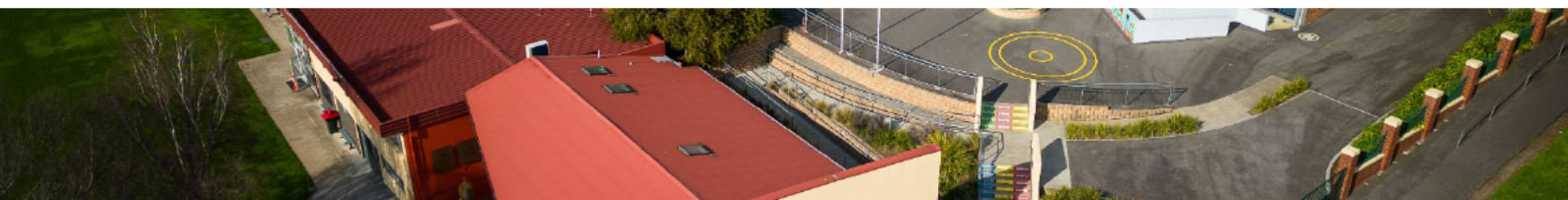
We provide options for underprivileged, disadvantaged, and marginalised persons. For students within those cohorts, our enrolments are typically overrepresented with respect to the general

population and/or enrolments within Tasmanian state schools. By way of example, the current percentage enrolment of students with a disability in Tasmania's Catholic schools is almost 20% higher than in Tasmanian Government schools.

## Response to the Terms of Reference

This response addresses the following aspects of the Terms of Reference from the perspective and experience of Catholic Education Tasmania:

(a)	Inquire into and report upon direct and indirect discrimination, prohibited conduct, unequal and disadvantageous treatment, bullying and harassment in Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff.
(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.
(c)	Examine the obligations and duties of Tasmanian schools under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 and other relevant statutes and policies 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.
(f)	Determine the impact of discrimination and bullying on student participation, retention and educational outcomes, and on staff recruitment, retention, workplace safety and career development.





## Terms of Reference (a)

### **Direct and indirect discrimination, prohibited conduct, unequal and disadvantageous treatment, bullying and harassment in Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff.**

Catholic schools in Tasmania provide a preferential option for underprivileged, disadvantaged, and marginalised persons.

The following reports provide critical, important information to provide key insights into student and staff wellbeing.

### **Data on bullying & harassment in Tasmanian Catholic schools: Tracking student behaviour data 2021 - 2024**

#### Overview

In 2021, Catholic Education Tasmania established a Wellbeing Working Group with an objective to measure and track student behaviour in shared-funded schools.<sup>1</sup>

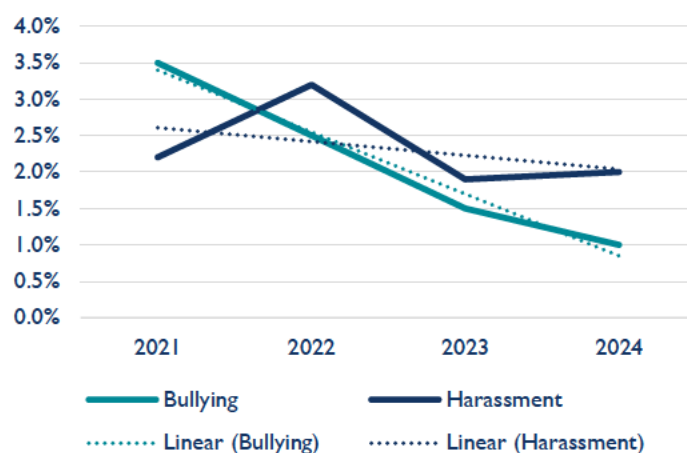
12 of our 38 Catholic Education Tasmania schools participated in this pilot project. Following the success of the pilot, shared-funded schools were encouraged to move to the system templates.

#### Survey outcomes

Data was collected from 2021 through July 2024 and demonstrated a trend of reduced rates of bullying and harassment during the period, illustrated below. It is significant to note that during this period, CET has seen an increase in enrolments.

Of the 15 behaviour fields captured in the behavioural templates, harassment accounted for 2.1% of all incidents, and bullying for 1.5%.

**Bullying and Harassment Rates  
(2021 - 2024)**



<sup>1</sup> Catholic Education Tasmania directly manages the funding of 27 schools, which are referred to in this submission as “shared funded schools”. 11 schools have ‘internal’ capacity to manage their own funding and receive this directly; though they are still essentially governed by Catholic Education Tasmania. 3 Tasmanian Catholic Schools (St Virgil’s College; St Francis Flexible Learning Centre; and Domonic College) are independently governed and manage their own funding although fall within the remit of the Archdiocese of Hobart.

### Data on bullying in Australian Schools: Outcomes from PISA report, May 2024

The most recent and authoritative research into student bullying, safety and its effect on learning was released by PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) in May 2024. World-wide, some 690,000 students took part in PISA 2022.

The international research, in partnership with the Australian Council for Educational Research, encompassed 13,437 15-year-old students from 743 Australian schools. 7,052 students were from Australian Government schools, 3,254 (24.2%) students from Australian Catholic schools, and 3,131 students from Australian Independent schools. Overall, some 6% of participating students were from Tasmania.

Volume II focuses on a variety of constructs related to 15-year-old students' experiences at school, which illustrate student background characteristics and schooling environments, including sense of belonging, student-teacher relationships, disciplinary climate, exposure to bullying, students' resistance to stress, curiosity, perseverance, shortage of educational staff and shortage of educational material (De Bortoli, L., Underwood, C., Friedman, T., & Gebhardt, E. (2024). PISA 2022. Reporting Australia's results. Volume II: Student and school characteristics. Australian Council for Educational Research. <https://doi.org/10.37517/978-1-74286-726-7>).

### General Findings

- ❖ Students in Tasmania reported a less favourable disciplinary climate than students in all jurisdictions except those in the Northern Territory, in mathematics classes
- ❖ Students in Tasmania reported the highest levels of bullying in Australia
- ❖ Students in Tasmania attended schools with higher perceived instructional leadership than students in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory

### Findings Specific to Catholic Schools compared with Government Schools

- ❖ **The percentage of students in Catholic schools who reported a great sense of belonging was almost double that of students in government schools. (p.17)**
- ❖ **Seven times more students in Catholic schools reported positive student-teacher relationships than was reported by students in government schools. (p. 29)**
- ❖ **Twice as many students in Catholic schools reported good levels of teacher support than did students in government schools. (p. 40)**
- ❖ **Twice as many students in Catholic schools reported a favourable disciplinary climate than was reported by students in government schools. (p. 50)**
- ❖ **Six times more students reported exposure to bullying in Government schools than did students in Catholic schools. (p. 62)**

While PISA provides many positive signs, it shows that students in Tasmania, generally, reported higher levels of bullying than other states. It does not explore the causative mechanisms behind that; though CET accepts that schools (be they public, Catholic or otherwise independent) all have a role to play in improving this result.



## Data on younger students: Additional Assessment Tool of the Wellbeing of Primary Students

To understand the social and emotional wellbeing of our primary age students, Catholic Education Tasmania uses a friendly and engaging computer game called

### Rumbles Quest

This is a robust and reliable measure of social and emotional wellbeing for primary school students. It provides a scientifically validated process for assessing multiple dimensions of child wellbeing.

It uses age appropriate methods that are designed to help 6-12 year old children report directly about the way they experience the world.

Between 2021 and 2023 4,087 primary school students engaged with the Rumble's Quest game.



In summary:

**88%**

of students said school is a nice place to be

**93%**

of students said they feel safe at school

**93%**

of students said a grown up always listens and help when they need them or feel upset

**92%**

of students know how to get help when things go bad

## Complaints Made About Catholic Education Tasmania to Statutory Authorities

Catholic Education Tasmania appreciates and supports the right of students, teachers and families to make complaints to the Anti-Discrimination Commission, and the important role of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner to uphold the operation of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998. In a fair and democratic society, there must be a balancing of individuals rights to be free from unlawful discrimination, and a corresponding right of faith organisations to uphold their beliefs, tenets and doctrines.

Complaints against Catholic Education Tasmania are comparatively rare. In the last 4 years, Catholic Education Tasmania has been a respondent to 2 complaints made to the Anti-Discrimination Commission.

It is our practice to deal with each complaint on its merits. In our experience, most complainants have a genuinely held belief that they have been subject to conduct contrary to the Act. That said, vexatious complaints have been made which cause a significant drain on Catholic Education Tasmania's resources.

In the overwhelming majority of cases, the subject matter of the complaint is nuanced and involves finely balanced questions of fact and law. In the realm of Anti-Discrimination legislation and a faith based education organisation, such nuance cannot be avoided, and reasonable people may well differ on the interpretation of conduct affecting them. In our experiences, most complainants have obtained legal advice, and are legally represented throughout the process.

For that reason, Catholic Education Tasmania typically seeks to resolve most complaints at conciliation on terms acceptable to the complainant and their legal representatives.

When responding to complaints to Equal Opportunity Tasmania, Catholic Education Tasmania always provides information on the steps that are taken within the organisation to prevent discrimination and prohibited conduct, as required under s104 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998.

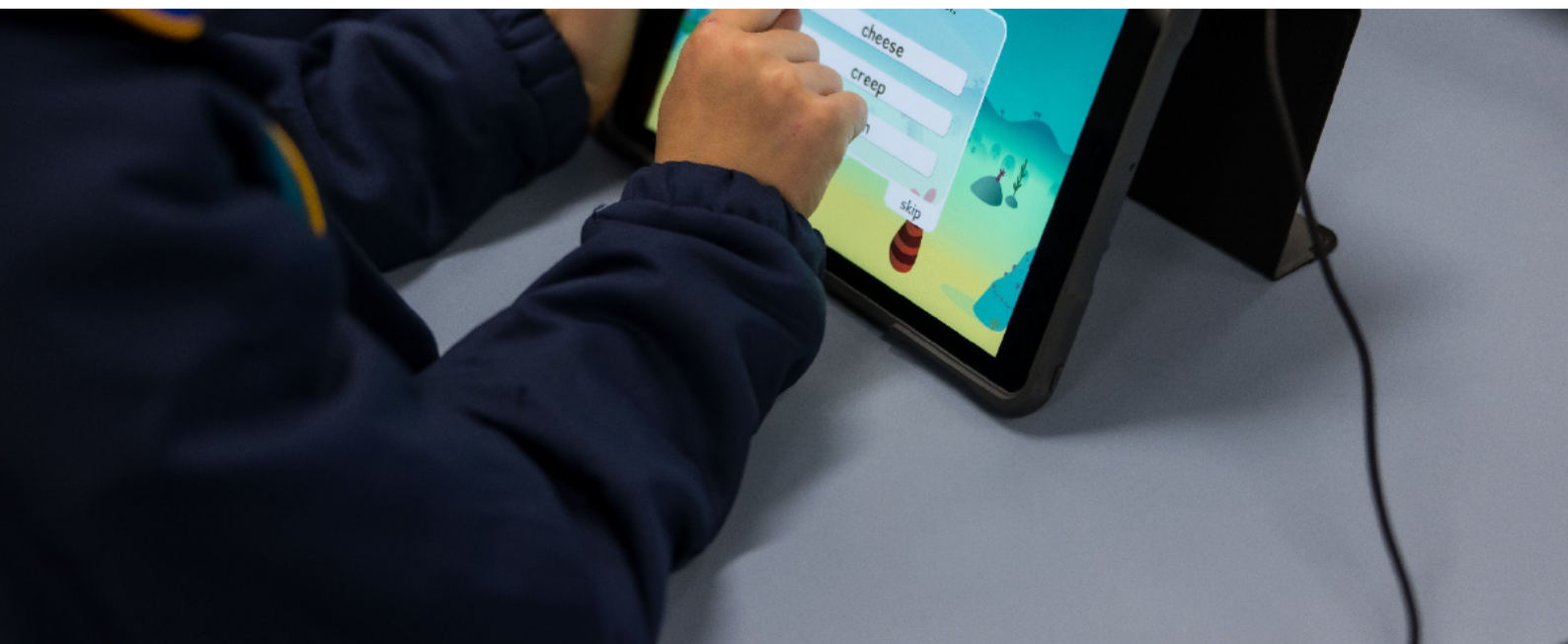
**No adverse findings have ever been made against Catholic Education Tasmania by the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal or TASCAT to the effect that we have failed to meet our obligations under s104 of the Anti-Discrimination Act.**

### Applications for “stop bullying” orders to Fair Work Commission

**Catholic Education Tasmania has never been a respondent to an application to Fair Work Commission for stop bullying orders.**

### WorkSafe Tasmania

**Catholic Education Tasmania has not had any recorded intervention from WorkSafe Tasmania in respect of alleged bullying in the workplace.**





## Terms of Reference (b)

### Measures necessary to prevent and remedy discrimination and bullying in regard to students and staff

Catholic Education Tasmania recognises the challenge presented by bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination.

We strive to ensure that all staff and students are protected within the school environment.

As an **educational provider to children and young people**, our schools work hard to teach, create and sustain safe, supporting, positive and inclusive environments where all students can confidently engage in their learning.

As an **employer** we regulate the workplace through a framework of policies, procedures, training and practices aimed at providing our staff with physical and physiological safety.

As a key **member of the local community**, we understand the importance of a shared responsibility between school staff, parents/guardians, students and the school community in working to eliminate bullying and harassment.

Catholic Education Tasmania employs a range of measures with respect to efforts to prevent and remedy discrimination, harassment, and bullying, these include:

- ❖ Leadership commitment to reinforcing a **positive culture**.
- ❖ Promotion of respectful relationships and positive behaviour through **education**.
- ❖ **Policies and practices** to prevent and respond to unacceptable behaviour.
- ❖ Ongoing staff **training**.
- ❖ Providing pathways for individuals who experience discrimination, bullying, and harassment to voice their concerns and have these addressed.
- ❖ Regular reviews of our policies, procedures and practices for continuous improvement and the incorporation of learnings and best practices.

### Maintaining Child Safe Communities

Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to maintaining and encouraging an organisational culture where children and young people feel safe, are treated with respect and protected from harm.

It does this by putting in place the settings required to establish and maintain Catholic Education Tasmania as a child safe community within the context of applicable legislation and the [\*National Principles for Child Safe Organisations\*](#).

In partnership with parish communities, and with parents and guardians who serve as primary educators, Catholic school staff are dedicated to the integrated formation of the whole person in safe, positive and faith-filled school communities that nurture wellbeing and holistic development. In addition to fully inclusive and engaging teaching programs for knowledge and understanding, these school communities teach moral values to enable students to become active and respectful members of society.

Faith and community underpinning our approach to remedying and preventing bullying.

A significant aspect of the Catholic school is its clear commitment to a community of learning and of faith. It is a celebrated *family – parish – school* partnership, a cohesive community in which each individual is known, valued, loved and supported. The Catholic school pays special attention to the quality of interpersonal relationships in the school community.

It is part of the practice of each school community to gather regularly to pray, to celebrate shared beliefs and to rejoice in the achievements of individuals and groups. These gatherings role model positive, expected and acceptable behaviours.

Students are also encouraged to reach out to those less fortunate than themselves by participating in fundraising, awareness campaigns and acts of service.

### **Faith formation of students**

“Catholic schools are committed to the faith formation of all students which inspires and empowers them to be witnesses to the Gospel individually and in community to live virtuous and ethical lives.”

A Framework for Student Faith Formation in Catholic Schools,  
National Catholic Education Commission 2022

Catholic schools hold annual student retreats and reflection day programmes to provide opportunities for students to identify and commit to ways in which they can ensure everyone is treated with dignity and respect, viewing everyone as brother and sister.

### **Religious Education within Tasmania Catholic Schools**

Catholic Education Tasmania seeks to serve the mission of the Catholic Church and contribute to the fabric of society by enacting its stated commitment to delivering an education that is *student-focused and Christ-centred, providing learning for life*, as inspired by Christ's own mission: “*I have come that all may have life, life to the full.*” John 10:10

“The totality of school life aims to give witness to and support students on the path towards a personal integration of faith and life. The religious life of the school has various interrelated components: its Catholic identity, charism and culture, the sacramental and liturgical life of the community, artwork, icons and symbols, engagement in social justice, the classroom learning and teaching of religion. These are part of an overall curriculum imbued with a contemporary Catholic world view and a focus on Christ that is evident in all that the school community does.”

A Framework for Student Faith Formation in Catholic Schools,  
National Catholic Education Commission 2022

The curriculum content is reflected, modelled, expressed, experienced and reinforced in the whole school environment, fostering quality relationships between students and staff, in a welcoming and engaging physical environment. The content of the class programme is reinforced by the faith environment and religious life of the Catholic school which aims to nurture and enrich the development of the individual through prayer, celebration of the liturgy and sacraments, formation, and social justice activities.



## **Pastoral Care and Wellbeing System Programs that are promoted and implemented within Catholic Education Tasmania**

The following is a summary of programs offered and delivered within Catholic Education Tasmania to promote and ensure wellbeing:

### School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support

School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a multi-tiered framework to make schools more effective places. It establishes a social culture and the behaviour supports needed to improve social, emotional, behavioural, and academic outcomes for all students. The reporting from this program was noted in the previous section of this document.

### Circle Solutions

Circle Solutions is a safe, fun, and effective pedagogy for social and emotional learning. Circle Solutions for Student Wellbeing provides a clear and effective process for teaching and learning that incorporates the principles of Agency, Safety, Positivity, Inclusion, Respect and Equality. It is an effective way of developing positive relationships, enhancing resilience and encouraging students to take responsibility for the emotional climate of their classroom.

### The Resilience Project

The Resilience Project (TRP) delivers emotionally engaging programs, providing practical, evidence-based mental health strategies to build resilience and happiness. Through presentations, school curriculum, events, the TRP App, and Wellbeing Journals, the benefits of Gratitude, Empathy, and Mindfulness are shared with easy ways to practice these in everyday life. Emotional Literacy, Connection and Physical Health education and activities are also incorporated as they are foundational contributors to positive mental health.

### RULER

RULER is an approach to social and emotional learning (SEL) that teaches emotional intelligence to people of all ages, with the goal of creating a healthier, more equitable, innovative, and compassionate society.

### It Starts with Us

It Starts with Us looks at how school staff members can manage student behaviours through proactive measures that maximise student engagement and minimise the need to respond using a physical response. The course covers:

- ❖ The brain's role in behavioural responses
- ❖ The effect of trauma on childhood development and behaviour
- ❖ Behaviours of concern (challenging behaviours)
- ❖ How to de-escalate a situation when students are dysregulated
- ❖ Strategies for keeping yourself and others safe

The course is aligned with PBS, RULER, and many other programs commonly used within Catholic Education Tasmania. At the end of the course participants:

- ❖ Understand the factors that influence student behaviour
- ❖ Recognise that some student behaviour is driven by biological responses
- ❖ Have an increased awareness of their own actions and behaviours and how these can influence student behaviour
- ❖ Are able to identify proactive strategies that minimise behaviours of concern, and
- ❖ Understand the legal and ethical factors that guide appropriate responses to behaviours of concern

#### Peaceful kids, Peaceful classrooms

The 'Peaceful Kids' program is a Mindfulness and Positive Psychology based program to lessen anxiety and stress and increase resilience in children. This program helps children to build their emotional resilience, so they are better equipped to deal with the day-to-day stresses that life brings them.

#### Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices is about creating and nurturing meaningful and just relationships. Good quality relationships between students, teachers, school leadership, and other staff humanise the classroom and help create an effective learning environment. Restorative practice is a way of being, thinking, interacting, teaching, and learning - with relationships at the centre of all we do, every day. Restorative practices create safe, supportive spaces in schools where we learn to engage in and learn from crucial, honest, and sometimes difficult conversations.

#### Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum

Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum (PEEC) is a research based, developmentally sequenced Positive Education curriculum designed for students from Early Learning through to Year 12. Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum provides a structured approach to wellbeing education, where students are taught key wellbeing concepts to help them lead healthy and fulfilling lives. The key themes of Positive Relationships, Positive Emotions, Positive Health, Positive Engagement, Positive Accomplishment and Positive Purpose provide the framework for students to learn about concepts such as gratitude, forgiveness, kindness and compassion, grit and persistence, curiosity, and motivation.

#### Rainbows

Rainbows is a series of programs which fosters emotional healing among children and young people grieving losses from life-altering crises and trauma. Through facilitated peer groups Rainbows supports youth to navigate grief of all kinds including death, divorce, incarceration, abandonment and many others.

Volunteer facilitators conduct weekly gatherings in our schools. These facilitators are endorsed by either their school Principal or by a church authority and are trained to recognise and address the ramifications of bullying.



Rainbows is initially a 'Listening' program to encourage children to grieve and grow after their experience of loss. The facilitators of the small groups of participating children are expected to model acceptance and inclusivity of all who apply to participate.

This modelling also attempts to show how to express feelings of pain in the context of the experience of loss lived out by the participants. The individual facilitator models and encourages both empathy and the language associated with feelings of loss.

In Rainbows, every participant's family structure is accepted and valued. Each participant is valued for their own unique qualities and gifts and encouraged to find the inner strength to become the best person they can be and embrace their differences.



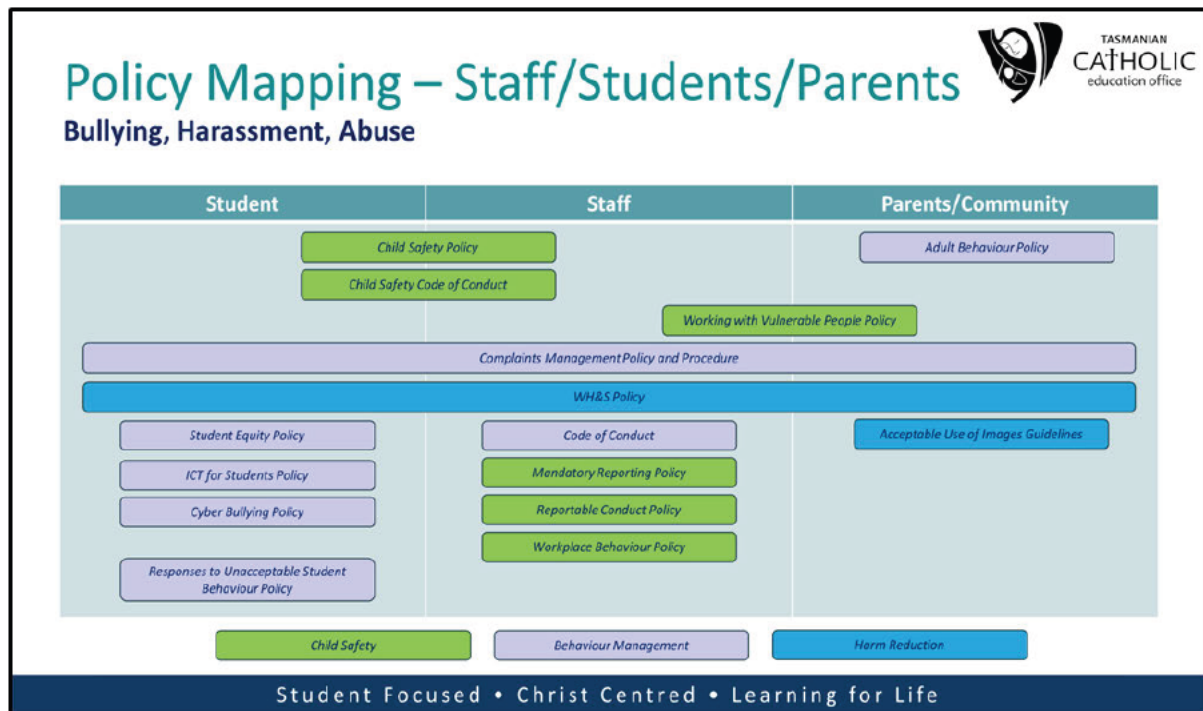


## Our Policy Framework

Catholic Education Tasmania has developed a suite of policies and procedures to provide clear parameters on what is, and is not, acceptable conduct within Catholic Education Tasmania.

Through this policy framework we assist staff, students and parents/carers to understand their obligations with regard to discrimination, bullying, harassment, and abuse.

The key policies are mapped in the below figure.



A summary of these policies can be found in the Appendix.

All current Catholic Education Tasmania policies are publicly available via the website, which can be accessed here: ([Policies - Catholic Education Tasmania](#)). It is Catholic Education Tasmania's practice to seek legal advice on policies and procedures to ensure that they are compliant with Catholic Education Tasmania's legal obligations and are aligned to overarching Archdiocese of Hobart Policies.

## Training & Enforcement

All Catholic Education Tasmania staff receive mandatory training in applicable policies, both upon commencement and at regularly 'refresher' sessions.

Contraventions of the Employee Code of Conduct or Workplace Behaviour Policy are dealt with in accordance with Catholic Education Tasmania's obligations to its employees in accordance with applicable industrial requirements, including the Tasmanian Catholic Education Single Enterprise Agreement.

## Complaints Process

### Complaints Management Policy and Procedure

All individuals have the right to raise a complaint and to have their concerns treated with equity, dignity and respect during the process. Catholic Education Tasmania has a strict 'no tolerance' policy towards bullying and discrimination in managing complaints and commits to thorough investigation.

Catholic Education Tasmania's *Complaints Management Policy and Procedure* provide clear direction to students, parents/guardians, staff, and members of the community to raise concerns and complaints.

All individuals have the right to raise a complaint and to have their concerns treated with equity, dignity and respect during the process. Catholic Education Tasmania has a strict 'no tolerance' policy towards bullying and discrimination in managing complaints and commits to thorough investigation.

Under the *Complaints Management Procedure*, an individual can raise a complaint in the following ways:

- a) To a school or school staff member
- b) By contacting their manager or your next in line manager (if a staff member)
- c) To the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office
- d) To Catholic Education Commission Tasmania (which is the Governing Body)
- e) Via the Catholic Education Tasmania Feedback Portal

Catholic Education Tasmania offers multiple avenues in acknowledgment that people have varying degrees of comfort in raising complaints. If required, additional support, including language translators for individuals with limited English, will be made available to assist.

The Catholic Education Tasmania Feedback Portal was created for individuals to also be able to raise a complaint through an online channel and is also where all complaints raised with, and investigated by, the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office are recorded.

## Continuous Improvement

Catholic Education Tasmania operates a continuous improvement cycle across our governance, schools and administration to adapt to legislator reform, changing circumstances, recommendations and feedback in order to foster a culture of excellence. Policies and procedures serve as the backbone of our operational consistency, and continuously improving them ensures they remain relevant and effective.

Reviewing and refreshing our training on the ways of working connected to these policies ensures that employees are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills, enabling them to perform at their best.

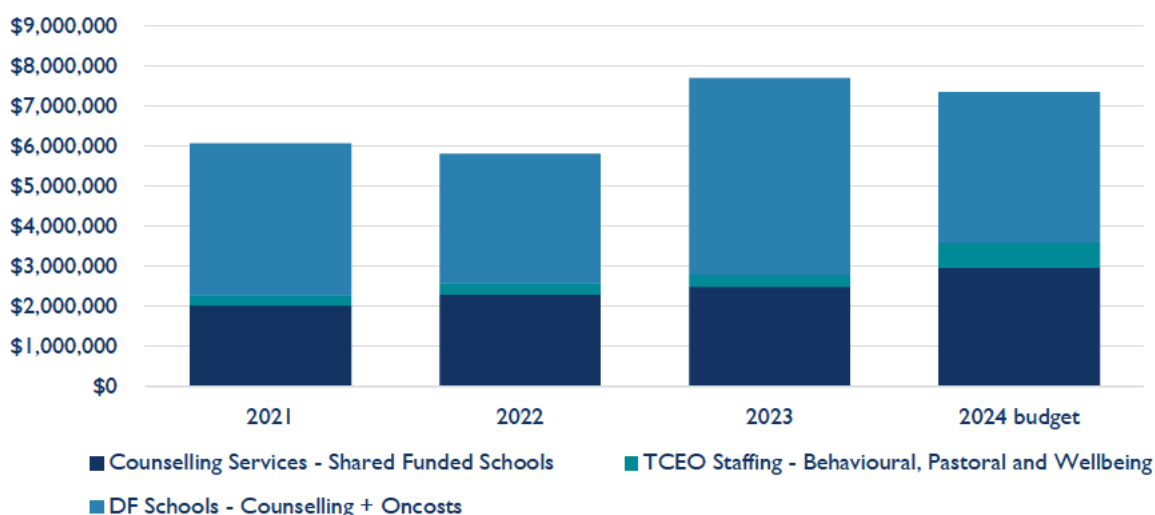
## Prioritising Investment in Student Counselling and Support

Catholic Education Tasmania also recognises the need for a robust support framework for students.

Our ongoing investment in the provision of counselling services and resources for behaviour, pastoral care and wellbeing is significant.

This reflects the priority focus placed on wellbeing by Catholic Education Tasmania, to create an environment where students feel nurtured and able to raise any concerns.

Investment in Student Wellbeing and Counselling  
(2021 to 2024)





## Terms of Reference (c & d)

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### **What are the obligations and duties of Schools under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 and other relevant statutes and policies in regards to students and staff, and what efforts are being made, and should be made towards meeting those obligations.**

At Catholic Education Tasmania, we strive to provide an environment in which students and staff can flourish, knowing that their rights and dignity are respected.

The creation of a positive and mutually supportive environment based on courtesy, respect and consideration commences at the enrolment stage for new students, and at the onboarding stage for new staff members.

Catholic Education Tasmania is confident that its training, systems and processes are such that it meets and exceeds its legal obligations and duties under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 and other applicable legislation.

### **Policies and procedures to ensure obligations and duties are fulfilled**

Some of the relevant policies and procedures that ensure this (in addition to those mentioned elsewhere in this submission) include:

#### Student Enrolment Policy and Procedures

All Catholic schools operate under the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania Enrolment Policy and Enrolment Procedures to ensure a system approach to enrolments. Under this policy, Catholic Education Tasmania does not discriminate against families and children seeking to enrol in Catholic schools.

The Enrolment Policy recognises exceptional circumstances where flexibility and discretion are required. For example, Catholic schools may give priority to the enrolment of children with special pastoral circumstances, social or educational needs, including students with additional needs. The *Enrolment Procedures* provide information on the enrolment process for families of Humanitarian Entrant Background and the additional support available from Catholic schools including provision of an interpreter, uniform assistance and fee relief.

The *Enrolment Procedures* also provide information on pastoral care, mental health and wellbeing support that can be offered to students and families in Catholic schools.

It has been developed in accordance with the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania *Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy*. This support may include trauma counselling, student support services, accessing the Rainbows Program, and/or other system initiatives and arrangements.

#### Enrolment Policy and Procedures Training

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office runs annual enrolment workshops with all Catholic schools and the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office to train staff involved in the enrolment of students, covering legal obligations, system processes and documentation.

Catholic Education Tasmania regularly engage training from external consultant, including lawyers, to attend these workshops, presents sessions to the staff, and provides a reference handout for staff.

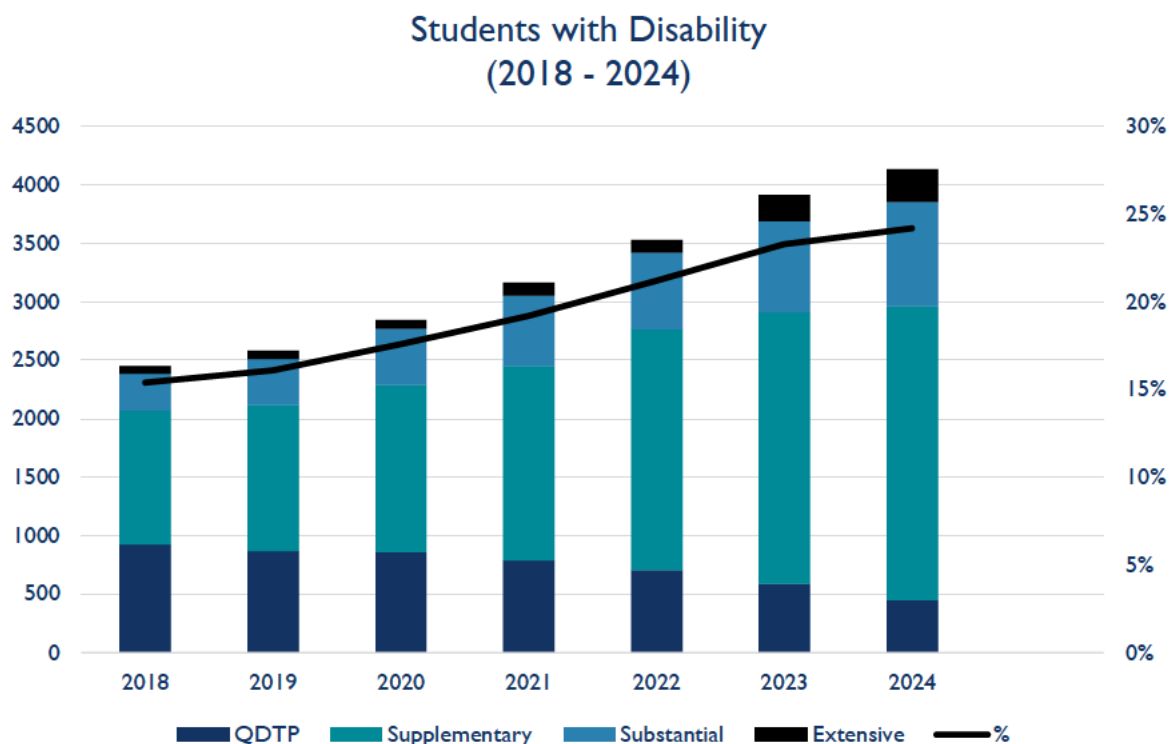
## Students with Disability

The fundamental ethos and mission of Catholic Education Tasmania is to welcome and provide quality education for all students who seek a Catholic education, including students with disability.

Our schools pride themselves in building a culture of inclusion by welcoming students with disability, providing inclusive environments and supporting diverse learning needs. We value their uniqueness and gifts and consider our school communities enriched by students with a disability.

Since 2018, there has been an annual growth in both student numbers and in the proportion of students with disabilities across our 38 schools. At the time of the 2024 census, Catholic Education Tasmania had 4,133 students (24.2%) with a disability. Of these students 323 are imputed.

In comparison, figures published by the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) for the 2024 census had 58,301 enrolled students, of which 9,141 are classed as Students with disability (15.7%).



Since 2018, there has been an annual growth in both student numbers and in the proportion of students with disabilities across our 38 schools. At the time of the 2024 census, **Catholic Education Tasmania** had 4,133 students (24.2%) with a disability.

In comparison, figures published by the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) for the 2024 census had 58,301 enrolled students, of which 9,141 are classed as Students with disability (15.7%).

## Data on student diversity (K - Year 12)

Based on annual 2023 student census information for Catholic Education Tasmania students, Kindergarten to Year 12, we know that:

- ❖ The ratio of male:female enrolments in Tasmanian Catholic schools is comparatively even; though slightly skewed towards female enrollment due to there being 2 female only colleges (and 1 male only college).
- ❖ 6% of students were born outside of Australia, with there being over 80 countries represented in our schools.
- ❖ 9% of our school community identify as First Nations students.
- ❖ 66% of our students are of faiths other than Catholic, or of no reported faith.

## Workforce Diversity

The 2023 staff census information, along with data on teacher religious affiliation, highlights diversity within the Catholic Education Tasmania workforce. This data provides valuable insights into the range of religious beliefs and affiliations present among employees, reflecting the pluralism of our school communities. Based on this data, we know that:

- ❖ Our workforce is predominantly female (76%), which is reflective of the profession, particularly at the primary level.
- ❖ Our teachers are evenly distributed across the age categories and we welcome the breadth of life experience for the benefit and engagement of our students.
- ❖ 57% of our Principals and Deputy Principals are female.
- ❖ More than half of our teaching staff are of faiths other than Catholic. The high percentage of teaching staff identifying as Catholic reflects Catholic Education Tasmania's commitment to uphold the teachings, doctrines, beliefs, tenets and principles of the Catholic Church

## Education to Promote Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

Family, Relationships and Sexuality Education in Catholic Education Tasmania schools is integral to the personal development and formation of children and young people.

The Australian Catholic Bishops in their Social Justice Statement for 2022-2023, *Respect: Confronting Violence and Abuse* (August 3, 2022), emphasised –

*The teaching of Christ urges us to promote relationships marked by respect and freedom rather than coercion and control. The message of the Gospel is not a message of domination of one person over another but a message of mutual esteem and kindness.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> Respect: Confronting Violence and Abuse - Social Justice Statement 2022-2023 Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, 2



### Circle of Life Program

Catholic Education Tasmania endorses *Circle of Life* for Family, Relationships and Sexuality Education in its schools to **safeguard, prevent, respond, and support recovery** from unacceptable behaviour, discrimination, harassment, and bullying in reference to (but not limited) the characteristics of age, race, sex or disability (Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act 1998).

*Circle of Life* promotes the equal dignity of every human being created in the image and likeness of God by **proposing** a Christian vision of the human person that offers a way of living aligned with moral law inscribed into our very nature.<sup>3</sup>

Specifically, *Circle of Life* presents the Catholic perspective for the Relationships and Sexuality Education focus area of the Health and Physical Education learning area of the Australian Curriculum, complementing the teaching of the *Good News for Living* curriculum for Religious Education in Catholic schools from Foundation to Year 12.

*Circle of Life* explicitly teaches

- ❖ Family, relationships and sexuality education
- ❖ Growing and changing
- ❖ Safeguarding and body safety
- ❖ Respectful and consensual relationships

*Circle of Life* also provides for the professional development of teachers, education of parents and carers, and resources for further conversations within both the school and family environment.

The content of the *Circle of Life* program is designed and delivered in such a way that enables growth in knowledge, understanding and skills of students as they progress through the stages of development and year levels of schooling.

### **Supporting a culturally safe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education**

Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to providing opportunities for learning and connection for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, teachers, families and communities.

This is achieved through the delivery of comprehensive and culturally safe cultural experiences, learning, and professional development opportunities to enhance the recognition, respect, and nurturing of the unique cultural identity of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Cultural safety is determined and validated by our network of independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, Knowledge Sharers, and Community members who are guiding and working in our schools every day.

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<sup>3</sup> Male and Female He Created Them - Congregation for Catholic Education for Educational Institutions, 17

“It’s been great to be part of a long journey with Catholic Education and seeing such significant growth and opportunities provided for our students and People. I have worked with so many dedicated teachers and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Team at Catholic Education Tasmania, who are focused on providing learning, wellbeing and cultural outcomes for students and school communities.

*In my opinion, Catholic Education Tasmania is by far the leading educational provider of cultural experiences and connections for students and families in Tasmania, with a growing network of Aboriginal knowledge sharers and educators”.*

Uncle Rodney Dillon  
Aboriginal Elder and Knowledge Sharer



**Uncle Hank Horton**

Aboriginal Elder and Knowledge Sharer

*"I feel supported when I work in Catholic Schools, and I enjoy the opportunity to share my Cultural knowledge. Students, teachers and school leaders at Catholic Schools welcome me and value what I have to share about Tasmanian Aboriginal history."*

*From my experience, I see every day that our Aboriginal students are supported in learning about their culture in a positive and culturally safe learning environment provided by Catholic schools."*

**Djuker Hart**

Aboriginal Elder and Knowledge Sharer

*"I feel supported when I work in Catholic Schools, and I enjoy the opportunity to share my Cultural knowledge. Students, teachers and school leaders at Catholic Schools welcome me and value what I have to share about Tasmanian Aboriginal history."*

*From my experience, I see every day that our Aboriginal students are supported in learning about their culture in a positive and culturally safe learning environment provided by Catholic schools."*

**Bron Dillon**

Aboriginal Elder and Knowledge Sharer

*"Wayti Culture & Knowledge has a strong working relationship with many Catholic Schools around Lutruwita / Tasmania. Wayti's network of knowledge sharers are continually impressed by the way in which Catholic education invests in the cultural support and learning for our students."*

*As an Aboriginal mother of children at a Catholic school, I know that my children are receiving culturally authentic and safe learning experiences, supported by dedicated staff, teachers, and administrators."*





### Validated by Research

Our investment in, and support of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education was endorsed by the University of Tasmania and Deakin University, who performed research assessing literature, student data and case studies and included a survey of school/community leaders from 22 schools.

*Deep commitment of Catholic Education Tasmania to supporting the learning and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and evidence of successful work in relation to cultural responsiveness and well-being for students; improved knowledge and awareness for staff; and connection with community organisations.*

### Research findings

Our holistic approach to nurturing and supporting the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge sharers, cultural practitioners, and Community leaders is driven through a series of initiatives and programs, outlined below:

### Student Equity Policies and Procedures

The Catholic Education Tasmania *Student Equity Policy and Procedure* articulates its commitment to providing accessible and equitable educational opportunities to its diverse student population.

The system's definition of equity encompasses a wide variety of educational adjustments, programs and strategies that enable access and participation to educational programs for all students. It requires an allocation of support and resources according to a student's level of need and includes recognition that some students require additional resources in order to have an equal opportunity.

Catholic Education Tasmania's funding models and processes have been developed to ensure system funding provides for, and supports, students in line with the system Student Equity Policy.

The Student Equity Procedure provides more information on its obligations under this policy, including, but not limited to, the requirement to:

- a) *Provide a learning environment that does not accept harassment, bias and discriminatory practices and promotes personal respect, general well-being and physical and emotional safety.*
- b) *Strive to educate all enrolled students with programs to match the capabilities and needs of the students. The content, language and methodology of the education programs should be differentiated in order to meet the diverse educational needs of all students.*
- c) *Provide professional learning opportunities to enhance an understanding of the recognition of differences and the factors that contribute to educational disadvantage, especially an appreciation of factors such as: poverty, disability, sexuality and, cultural and linguistic diversity.*

### School Fee Assistance Policy

The objective of the *School Fee Assistance Policy* is to provide access to a Catholic education for families with eligible children who are unable to meet the fee requirements due to financial hardship.

This is aligned to Catholic Education Tasmania's mission to provide a preferential option to the underprivileged, disadvantaged and marginalised. It allows those families who are in genuine financial hardship to receive support and maintain their dignity and removes discrimination on the grounds of financial capacity.

As noted in the policy, fee assistance is accessible to all families willing to support the Catholic identity regardless of their personal, financial and/or pastoral circumstances. No family supporting the Catholic identity should be denied a place at a Catholic school because of an inability to pay full fees. Catholic Education Tasmania provides four forms of fee assistance for families:

#### 1. Discount for families with a Concession Card

Provided to an individual with an eligible Concession Card that qualifies for remission, who is legally responsible for the payment of fees, whose child appears on the Concession Card that is current on the first day of term.

#### 2. Discounts for families with three or more children in Catholic schools

A family is eligible to receive this discount if there are three or more children enrolled in any Catholic Education Tasmania school across the state.

Number of Children	Applicable Discount (per child)
3	10%
4	20%
5 or more	30%

#### 3. Humanitarian entrant families

A Humanitarian entrant family is one that holds a humanitarian visa, issued by the Australian Government under The Refugees Convention. In accordance with the Archbishop of Hobart's expectation and the system's Catholic mission and principles of social justice, Catholic Education Tasmania schools waive all school fees for humanitarian entrant students for a period of three years, post enrolment in Catholic Education Tasmania. At the end of three years, schools will assess these families in accordance with the policy regarding fee remissions for families in financial hardship.

The system also provides financial support for the provision of initial uniform, the payment of interpreter fees for enrolment meetings and funding to support the first four years of the student's enrolment in Catholic Education Tasmania schools.

#### 4. Fee remissions for families in financial hardship.

Financial hardship is when a family is willing, but unable, to meet its contractual school fee obligations. Catholic Education Tasmania assesses fee remission for families in financial hardship based on the total family income with reference to the Henderson Poverty Lines. Fee remission will normally only apply in the year it is granted and is reviewed by schools annually with families.

If a parent/guardian believes the School Fee Assistance Policy has not been applied correctly by a Catholic Education Tasmania school, they have the right to seek a review by the Finance department at the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office. If a further and final review is requested, the matter will be determined by the Catholic Education Tasmania Director: Corporate.

## 5. Independent Students

Independent Students enrolling themselves to finish their education and meet the criteria are not charged school fees as Catholic Education Tasmania automatically applies 100% fee remission in these circumstances.

### Implementation of technology to protect staff and students

There are numerous ICT systems and services implemented or under development across Catholic Education Tasmania to control device usage and access to inappropriate websites.

These are designed to protect staff and students from inappropriate contact, harassment, bullying and undesirable online conduct.

#### Email Security

Catholic Education Tasmania implements a suite of ICT systems and services to actively protect both staff and students from both malicious and harmful emails. All schools across Tasmania utilise industry standard email environments.

In addition to this Catholic Education Tasmania is currently rolling out a multi-layered approach to e-mail filtering across the email domains within our schools to promote a safe and respectful communication environment that promotes staff and student wellbeing. This technology was officially launched into production on 26 June 2024 and is currently in trial across 71% of our schools.

#### Technology Approval and Device Management

Catholic Education Tasmania implements a suite of products to manage, monitor and maintain staff and student devices across Tasmania. These mobile device management platforms are used to manage and control the applications installed on school-owned devices.

The Catholic Education Tasmania mobile device management platforms are aligned to the new Catholic Education Tasmania Technology Approval Process which reviews the safety of applications in light of the National Safer Technology 4 Schools framework, Australian Privacy Act, Australian Privacy Principles and the Australian Cyber Security Centre Essential Eight. The approval process was launched in January 2024 to provide a formal process to ensure the technology and applications used in our schools are supporting the privacy, confidentiality and wellbeing of staff and students.

#### Web Filtering

Catholic Education Tasmania implements protections against harmful, unsafe and malicious websites for staff, students and guests. These tools assist Catholic Education Tasmania in preventing and responding to events which occur within the school context.

Our web filtering provides a baseline set of policies, which prevent staff and students from accessing certain inappropriate material and cannot be overridden. In addition, Principals are given the discretion to further block access to certain websites deemed problematic, such as web forums.



## eSafety - Cyber Bullying and Discrimination

Catholic Education Tasmania has prioritised eSafety in order to safeguard students and staff against cyber bullying and discrimination.

### Governance Oversight of eSafety

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office recognises the risks within the online environment and has embedded eSafety within its governance and policy portfolio at a system level. Working closely with the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office Information and Communication Technologies Team and with the Child Safety Officer, they regularly report on eSafety matters to the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania, the system governing authority. Catholic Education Tasmania also has a representative on the eSafety Commissioner's National Online Safety Education Council.

The Catholic Education Commission Tasmania receives external reports on online bullying and discrimination that are incorporated into system strategies, policies and procedures. Some examples of the types of material considered include:

- ❖ Use of deepfake attacks in cyber bullying (School Governance by Complispace, 2021).
- ❖ The Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)
- ❖ Mind the Gap Report regarding parental awareness of children's exposure to risks online (eSafety Commissioner Report, released February 2022).
- ❖ Women in the Spotlight: How online abuse impacts women in their working lives (eSafety Commissioner Report, released March 2022).
- ❖ Online safety education hub for schools (eSafety Commissioner, 2024).
- ❖ eSafety Commissioner training resources and webinars.

### Catholic Education Commission Tasmania ICT for Students Policy

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for Students Policy provides parameters for acceptable, unacceptable and unlawful use of IT and encourages students to practise cyber-safety at all times. Under the policy all written, graphic, audio and other materials created, produced, communicated, stored or accessed on Catholic Education Tasmania ICT are the property of the school and are subject to monitoring by the school.

A serious breach of this policy may result in the student losing access to ICT resources for a period of time and/or other sanctions. Unlawful and/or serious misuse of ICT will result in the matter being referred to the police, other government/regulatory agencies (e.g. eSafety Commissioner), and/or online media platforms.

### Management of Social Media

In 2021, Catholic Education Tasmania implemented a new process for the management of comments via social media to address the use of comments on online platforms in relation to defamatory statements and their ability to cause harm, following the High Court's decision in the *Fairfax Media Publications Pty Ltd v Voller*; *Nationwide News Pty Ltd v Voller*; *Australian News Channel Pty Ltd v Voller* HCA 27 (Voller decision).

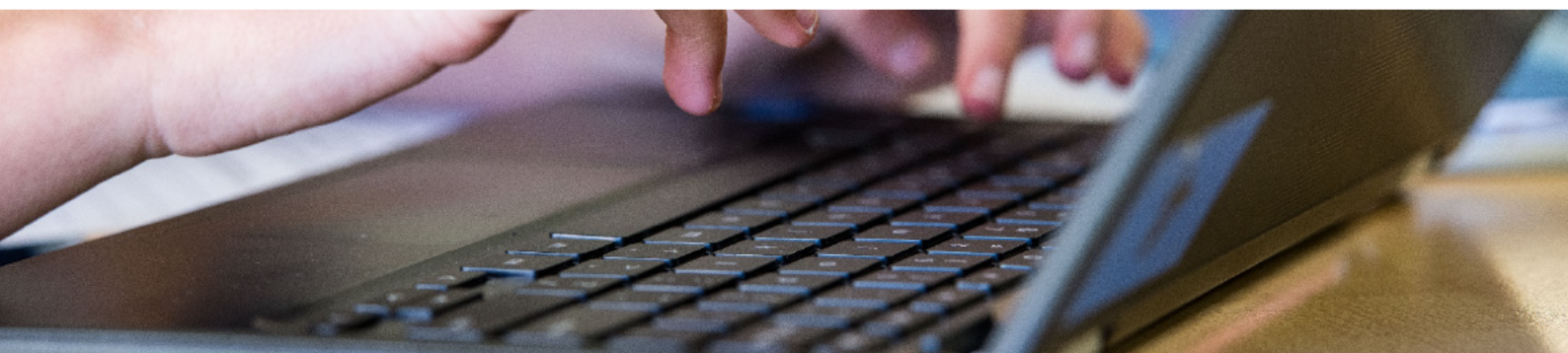
Changes implemented included increased monitoring of comments, disabling comments and expanding the use of filters to minimise the risk of defamatory comments.

### Benchmarking Schools' Use of eSafety Resources

In 2023 the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania ran an eSafety Survey with Catholic Education Tasmania schools, with 35 of our 38 schools participating. This assessed the eSafety resources available to schools and the extent to which they were used and promoted. System level data will be collected on an annual basis (next survey due Term 3, 2024) to identify gaps in resource use and training with further system strategies regarding eSafety matters ensuing.

### Catholic Education Tasmania Technology Approval Process

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office established a Technology Approval Process in 2023 in response to a growing number of concerns regarding student privacy and online safety, particularly the increased use of online platforms for bullying and discrimination. This process has been rolled out to 27 of 38 Catholic Education Tasmania schools and is designed to protect students from cyberbullying, discrimination, child safety risks, misuse of information and malicious targeting. To illustrate, this approval process will decline any online applications containing mainstream chat functions that cannot be disabled.



## Term of Reference (f)

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### **Examine and report on the impact of discrimination and bullying on student participation, retention and educational outcomes, and on staff recruitment, retention, workplace safety and career development in Tasmanian Catholic Schools**

Clearly, discrimination, harassment and bullying can have significant adverse outcomes for affected students, staff and families.

“Bullying has a significant emotional impact on students. Students can experience a wide range of negative emotions, including anxiety, fear, sadness, anger and shame as a result of being bullied. Constant exposure to these experiences can lead to depression, low self-esteem and mental health problems. Bullied students often have difficulty concentrating on their studies, which can affect their academic performance and personal development leading to a decrease in social participation, isolation and a lack of self-confidence (Esquivel et al., 2023).”

PISA 2022: Reporting Australia's results,  
Volume II Student and school characteristics, page 57

Catholic Education Tasmania, has a 'no tolerance' approach to bullying, harassment or unlawful discrimination.

Reduction in the detrimental impact to self-esteem and mental health from harmful behaviours leads to a correspondence increase in concentration on studies, elevated academic performance and increased personal development.

This in turn improves social participation and self-confidence and reflected in higher levels of parent satisfaction and increased enrolment.

We believe that the effect of our hard work to reduce rates of bullying and harassment within Catholic schools is reflected in our consistently high rates of student achievement of their Tasmanian Certificate of Education, and Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank.

While Catholic Education Tasmania is proud of its efforts to eliminate and minimise bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination within our organisation, we are never satisfied and accept that there are always ways that we can learn and progress through reflection and analysis.

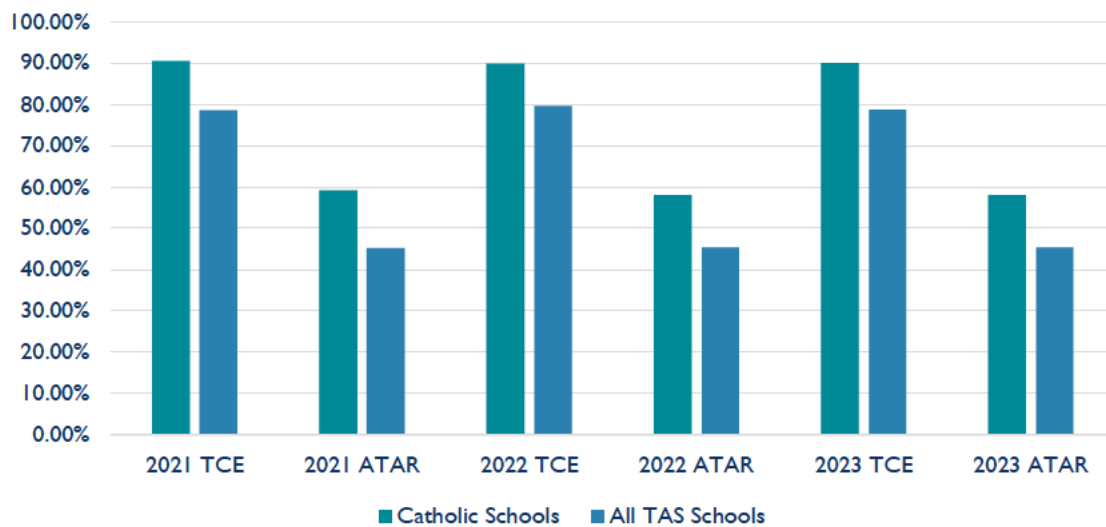


## Student Participation – Academic Achievement

### Year Twelve Results 2021-2023

Catholic Education Tasmania's academic achievements are validated by our Year 12 results with a higher percentage of Catholic school students achieving a TCE (Year Twelve Certificate) and an ATAR when compared to all Tasmanian schools.

**TCE and ATAR Achievement  
(2021 - 2023)**



## Surveys and Feedback

### Annual Parent Approval Survey

As part of our school review and validation processes, Catholic Education Tasmania has conducted in-depth parent approval surveys annually since 2021. These surveys attract a response rate of about 40% (approximately 5,529 parent responses). The surveys indicate consistently high levels of parent approval for our schools. Given the response rate, the results provide meaningful feedback.

The following statements achieved consistently high parent approval scores:

My child's school is a welcoming and caring community where everyone is treated with respect.

My child's school promotes justice, compassion and service

I respect the principal and school leadership team at my child's school

The policies and procedures of my child's school are documented clearly and are easily accessible.

My child's school provides me with clear, timely and relevant information.

I am committed to an ongoing association with My child's school

My child's school has a good reputation in the local community.

I recommend my child's school to others

My child's school offers a broad and relevant curriculum.

At my child's school, each child is encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability.

I have confidence in the teaching staff at my child's school

My child/ren receive/s a curriculum that is consistent and appropriate for their year level and ability.

Staff at my child's school are accessible, respectful and respond promptly to my concerns.

The grounds, buildings and outdoor facilities at my child's school are well-presented and maintained.

The classrooms are well presented and stimulating places for learning.

The school is well equipped with learning and teaching resources.

### Student Surveys

Students conveyed a strong sense of pride in their school community, sharing their experience with others and establishing strong bonds with classmates. Good behaviour was also witnessed.

The highest scoring responses from students were:

I respect the principal and school leadership team at <school>.

Staff at <School> show respect for each other

### Staff

Staff responses were collected from a range of statements about different aspects of their school community. Results indicated that staff consider their school to be a fair and equitable workplace with a welcoming community. They expressed overall satisfaction with their schools and indicated that they would recommend Catholic Education as an "employer of choice"

The highest scoring statements in the Staff survey were:

<School> is a welcoming and caring community where everyone is treated with respect

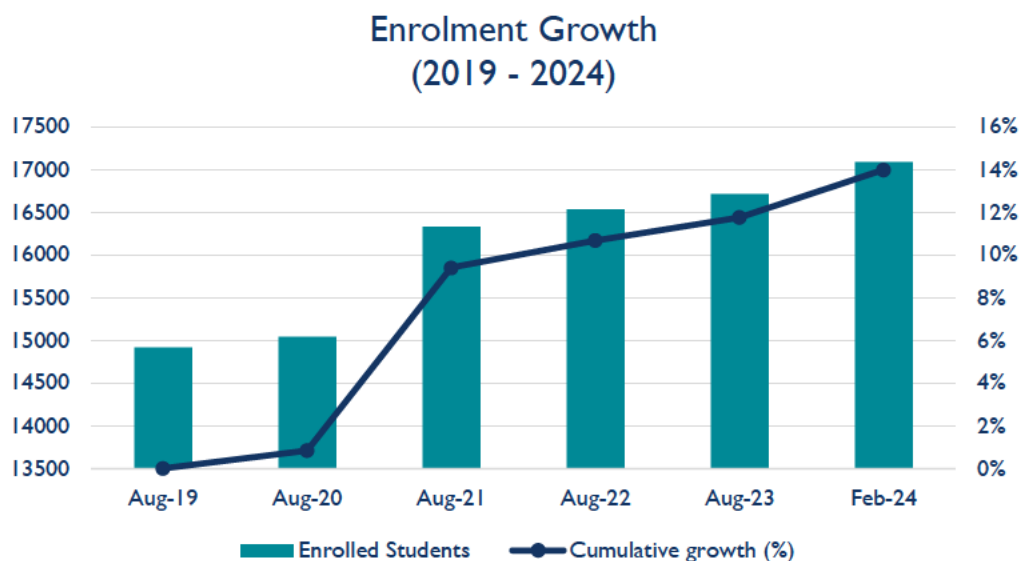
I would recommend Catholic Education as an 'employer of choice'

### Significant Enrolment Growth for the Past Six Years

Since 2019, Catholic Education Tasmania school enrolments have grown by 2.8% year on year (15% between 2019 and 2024).

This represents a total increase in student numbers of about 2,000 more students being educated in Catholic schools today than were in 2019.

This indicates a strong preference for our education system amongst parents/guardians for their children and validates our work in creating an environment in which students grow and flourish.





## Appendix

### Summary of Relevant Catholic Education Tasmania Policies

Staff	Students	Community
<p><b>Child Safety Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ States Catholic Education Tasmania's commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation and explains how this is achieved through a combination of policies, procedures, participation, and reporting of concerns.</li> </ul> <p><b>Child Safety Code of Conduct:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Specifies what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour by adults regarding Children and Young People.</li> <li>❖ Aims to protect Children and Young People from harm, to reduce opportunities for abuse or grooming to occur and to promote child safety in all Catholic Education Tasmania operational environments.</li> <li>❖ It forms a core element of Catholic Education Tasmania's Child Safety Program and operates under the auspices of Catholic Education Tasmania's Child Safety Policy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mandatory Reporting Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mandatory reporting</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Equity Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to ensuring that all students have equitable access to the benefits of education for life.</li> <li>❖ Schools are committed to enacting all reasonable and practicable measures to respond to diversity of need and experience, respect distinctive cultural and racial identities, and value contributions of all ability groups by making appropriate educational provision within the curriculum.</li> <li>❖ Educational services provided will reflect the diverse needs and varying preferences of all students.</li> <li>❖ Students, parents/carers are recognised as partners together with teachers in the teaching/learning process and opportunities are provided for communication and collaboration between all.</li> </ul> <p><b>ICT for Students Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Information and Communication Technology and Social Media provides opportunities for significant</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adult Behaviour Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Sets out clear standards for the behaviour of Catholic Education Tasmania adults when in a Catholic Education Tasmania workplace.</li> <li>❖ All persons have the right to attend a Catholic Education Tasmania school, childcare operation, OSHC operation, and/or Tasmanian Catholic Education Office site with the expectation that their rights and dignity will be respected, and without fear of aggression, violence, or abuse.</li> <li>❖ Violent, abusive, or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated on Catholic Education Tasmania premises, at Catholic Education Tasmania events, or in any other context where actions are directed towards students, staff, or parents/guardians, whether the behaviour is physical, verbal, or through written or electronic communications.</li> <li>❖ All visitors in Catholic Education Tasmania premises or at Catholic Education Tasmania events and those who come into</li> </ul>

requirements form a critical element of Catholic Education Tasmania's endeavours to protect Children and Young People from harm.

- ❖ This Policy has been developed to enable Catholic Education Tasmania Workers to fulfil their mandatory reporting requirements, while also meeting other reporting requirements under Catholic Education Tasmania's Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023

#### **Reportable Conduct Policy:**

- ❖ Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to acting immediately and appropriately upon becoming aware of any instance or any allegation of Reportable Conduct.
- ❖ Instances or allegations of Reportable Conduct that meet the threshold of a Reportable Allegation or a Reportable Conviction as defined under the Reportable Conduct Scheme of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 must be also managed in accordance with the requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

#### **Working with Vulnerable People Policy:**

- ❖ The application of working with vulnerable people (WWVP) registration requirements is an integral

educational value. Access is provided to Students as a tool to support learning and as such should be used in accordance with the expectations of the School and balanced with the School curriculum.

- ❖ The Catholic Education Commission Tasmania is committed to its Schools providing School Environments that:
  - Are stimulating and productive environments for learning, teaching, and administration;
  - Reflect the highest standard of accountability and sensitivity to the dignity of the human person;
  - Support knowledge of and respect for equality and cultural inclusion; and
  - Are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, bullying, and harassment.

#### **Cyberbullying Policy:**

- ❖ Catholic schools and offices have a responsibility to provide educational and workplace environments that promote the dignity and respect of everyone within their organisations and therefore must aim to eliminate bullying in all of its forms.
- ❖ Cyberbullying, like all other forms of bullying, must therefore not be tolerated in our places of learning and work for it has a negative impact on all who

contact with the Catholic Education Tasmania community are expected to conduct themselves in a calm and respectful manner.

- ❖ Equally, Catholic Education Tasmania staff are expected to behave professionally at all times when interacting in the Catholic Education Tasmania community.

#### **Acceptable Use of Images Guidelines:**

- ❖ Though our schools operate under strict guidelines regarding the publishing of students' images, they cannot control the actions of students, families, or others in relation to the publication of unofficial images.
- ❖ However, as noted in the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania Enrolment Form, it is contrary to each school's ethos for photographs or film taken of students participating in school activities to be publicly displayed (including social media) without prior permission of that student's parents or guardians.

<p>part of Catholic Education Tasmania's recruitment processes and workplace entry protocols.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This policy has been developed to prevent the engagement or entry of Workers who are known to be a risk to the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of children.</li> </ul> <p><b>Work Health and Safety Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Work Health and Safety Policy applies to all Catholic Education Tasmania Workers and Other Persons at Workplaces owned, managed or controlled by the Employing Authorities and approved off site Workplaces.</li> <li>❖ All members of the Catholic Education Tasmania community have a collective and individual responsibility with regard to the prevention of workplace harm to health and safety through elimination or minimisation of risks created by work requirements.</li> <li>❖ Supervision of students, implementation of strategies to prevent bullying from occurring in the school environment, and complying with mandatory reporting obligations are elements of the Work Health and Safety Policy.</li> </ul>	<p>are touched by it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The purpose of this policy is to articulate the rights and responsibilities of all in the Catholic education sector with regards to cyberbullying.</li> </ul> <p><b>Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The aim of this policy is to provide parameters around the types of disciplinary action that can be taken by a Catholic school in Tasmania, in response to student behaviour that is unacceptable and has a negative impact on other students and/or staff.</li> <li>❖ Everyone has the right to a learning environment free from bullying, intimidation, and physical danger, and has the fundamental right to feel safe, secure, and happy at the Catholic school of their choice.</li> <li>❖ This includes being protected from behaviour deemed unacceptable by an individual student.</li> <li>❖ All students have the right to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity when dealing with all circumstances that may arise during their education.</li> </ul>	
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## Summary of Catholic Education Tasmania Complaints Process

Staff	Students	Community
<b>Complaints Policy and Procedure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Catholic Education Commission Tasmania Complaints Management Policy and Procedure that Catholic schools operate under ensures there are multiple avenues available to students, parents/guardians, staff, and members of the community to raise concerns and complaints.</li> <li>❖ All individuals have the right to raise a complaint and Catholic Education Tasmania will treat all individuals with equity, dignity, and respect throughout the complaint process.</li> <li>❖ There is no tolerance of bullying or discrimination as part of the complaints management process and Catholic Education Tasmania takes any complaint regarding matters of bullying or discrimination occurring seriously and will always investigate these matters.</li> </ul>		
<b>Child Safety Mandatory Reporting - Child Safety Notification:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ All Mandatory Reporters shall comply with obligations under applicable legislation, Mandatory Reporters must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Notify Tasmania Police on 000 if they believe a Catholic Education Tasmania Student has been Sexually Abused or is in immediate danger of being Abused, Harmed or Neglected.</li> <li>❖ Notify the Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line (1800 000 123) as soon as practicable if they have a Child Safety Concern regarding a Catholic Education Tasmania Student.</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Notify the relevant Principal and Catholic Education Tasmania's Child Safety Officer as soon as practicable that they have contacted Police or the Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line by completing Catholic Education Tasmania's Child Safety Notification Form.</li> </ul>		
<b>Child Safety Mandatory Reporting - Inappropriate Staff Behaviour (Child Safety) Notification:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Concerns that a Catholic Education Tasmania staff member has breached the Child Safety Code of Conduct are reported via the Inappropriate Staff Behaviour (Child Safety) form</li> <li>❖ Any Catholic Education Tasmania worker who suspects that a Catholic Education Tasmania Worker has engaged in Reportable Conduct must report their suspicion using the Inappropriate Worker Behaviour Form in accordance with Catholic Education Tasmania's Reportable Conduct Policy.</li> </ul>		

## Summary of Catholic Education Tasmania Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students

### Aboriginal Student Success Teachers and Key Teachers in our schools

Catholic Education Tasmania supports a network of 45 dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Success Teachers (Secondary Schools), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Key Teachers (Primary), and Aboriginal Teacher Assistant positions.

Every Catholic school is funded to engage an Aboriginal Student Success Teacher and/or Key Teacher to support and improve learning, wellbeing and cultural outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families, and communities.

These teachers are supported by designated School Service Leaders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Team at Catholic Education Tasmania.

The key roles and responsibilities of our Aboriginal Student Success Teachers and Key Teachers include:

### Educational Support

- ❖ Assist in developing and implementing strategies to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' learning, wellbeing and cultural outcomes.
- ❖ Monitor and report on the academic progress of these students and recommend localised actions to support improvement.

### Curriculum Development

- ❖ Integrate and facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the curriculum.
- ❖ Collaborate with teachers to develop culturally relevant teaching materials.

### Community Engagement

- ❖ Build strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.
- ❖ Organise and participate in community events to enhance cultural awareness in the school.
- ❖ Organise the acknowledgment, commemoration and/or celebration of significant events on the Torres Strait Islander calendar including NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week events.

### Professional Development

- ❖ Facilitate and provide staff with training and resources to enhance their understanding and competency of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.
- ❖ Promote ongoing professional learning in culturally responsive pedagogy including the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership standards 1.4 (Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students) and 2.4 (Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for teachers).

### Advocacy

- ❖ Advocate for the needs, interests, and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, families and communities connected with the school.
- ❖ Serve as a liaison between the school, families and Aboriginal communities.

## Cultural Safety

- ❖ Ensure schools and facilities, policies and culture are culturally safe and visually representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and histories.
- ❖ Ensure our schools are free from any form of racial exclusion or discrimination.

### Biannual Aboriginal Student Success Teacher, Key Teacher and Aboriginal Teacher Network Days

Catholic Education Tasmania supports a network of Aboriginal Student Success Teachers, Key Teachers and Aboriginal staff through facilitating two biannual statewide 'Network Days'. These days address our requirements under the AITSL standards 1.4 and 2.4.

These days are an opportunity for staff to explore networking opportunities, share success and challenges and hear from Aboriginal Community leaders and knowledge sharers. They are an opportunity to provide feedback to Catholic Education Tasmania on our efforts to support learning, wellbeing, and cultural outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

### Aboriginal Knowledge Sharers and Educators Portal

Catholic Education Tasmania has partnered with First Nations Direct, an Aboriginal-owned information systems platform, to develop and administer the Aboriginal Knowledge Sharers and Educators Portal (AKSEP).

AKSEP is a resource for supporting schools and the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office to connect and engage with Aboriginal knowledge sharers, resources and events and increase understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and histories.

The Aboriginal Knowledge Sharers and Educators Portal is fully aligned with the Australian Curriculum Cross Curriculum Priority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Culture.

AKSEP also supports 'Story Mapping' - an interactive space for all Catholic Education staff, Aboriginal knowledge sharers, and businesses to share experiences and best practices for delivering Aboriginal cultural education and learning experiences, as well as staff professional development and the work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Team.

By aligning with the objectives outlined in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy Priority Areas, Story Mapping empowers stakeholders within the Catholic Education Tasmania network to deliver impactful educational outcomes for all students.

The sharing of 'stories', learnings, and successes across Catholic Education Tasmania, was recommended by Deakin University to provide a user-friendly online format to collect, map, and present information. The framework is accessible to classroom teachers and leaders and includes practical examples from other schools linking to research and policy directives.



### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Team

Catholic Education Tasmania funds a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Team within the broader School Leadership and Schools Service Team, who work statewide within the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office. The Team consists of five staff members, including:

- ❖ Senior Consultant: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education (statewide);
- ❖ School Service Leader: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education (statewide 18 schools); School Service Leader: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education (statewide 18 schools);
- ❖ Aboriginal Community Liaison and Transition Officer: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education (statewide); and
- ❖ Executive Support: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.

Collectively, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Team has a broad range of responsibilities, including, but not limited to:

- ❖ Supporting the Catholic Education Tasmania network of 38 schools and four offices in their delivery of curriculum priorities, specifically those relating to Aboriginal education and learning;
- ❖ Supporting a large network of Aboriginal Student Success Teachers and Aboriginal Key Teachers across our schools;
- ❖ Administering, endorsing, and reviewing school 'Annual Plans', and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific funding and expenditure for all of our schools;
- ❖ Ensuring the cultural appropriateness of cultural and Aboriginal learning activities, immersions and excursions facilitated by our schools;
- ❖ Contributing towards Catholic Education Tasmania's national obligations and commitments to progressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, including participation on national bodies including the National Catholic Education Commission Aboriginal Education Network;
- ❖ Developing and overseeing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific policy for Catholic Education Tasmania, including oversight of Catholic Education Tasmania's Reconciliation Action Plan and commitment framework;
- ❖ Administering the Aboriginal Knowledge Sharers and Educators Portal;
- ❖ Supporting Aboriginal knowledge sharers and building relationships with key Aboriginal Community rightsholders, organisations, and people;
- ❖ Coordinating and contributing to associated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reporting and data requirements;
- ❖ Enhancing the cultural learning, competency, and understanding of the broader Catholic Education Tasmania staff;
- ❖ Ensure schools and facilities, policies, and culture are culturally safe and visually representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and histories;
- ❖ Ensure our schools are free from any form of racial exclusion or discrimination;
- ❖ Improving outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and
- ❖ Coordinating significant events on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar.

### Annual Plans and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific funding

Catholic Education Tasmania is a primary enabler and contributor to the growing Aboriginal knowledge sharing and cultural education sector in Tasmania. This is delivered through our formal Annual Plan for the application and administration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific funding to each school.

Our funding model provides autonomy for schools to develop and implement a local program of initiatives, fostering relationships with local Aboriginal Communities, Elders, and knowledge sharers and connecting with and engaging the broader school Community.

A per capita model has been developed to support specific programs to deliver seven key outcome areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education:

- ❖ Culture and Identity
- ❖ Literacy and Numeracy
- ❖ School and Child Readiness
- ❖ Partnerships
- ❖ Leadership Quality Teaching and Workforce Development
- ❖ Attendance and Engagement

Transitions Points and Pathways to Post School Options. These outcome areas are based on the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy 2015. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap further strengthens and informs priorities.

### Supporting Transition

Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to supporting student transition from school to higher education, further training, or employment.

The Aboriginal Transitions Officer supports Key Teachers and staff in schools to help transition Aboriginal students, predominantly in Years 10, 11 and 12. The role works with our school liaison and Careers Counsellors, Year 10 Coordinators, College staff, TasTAFE, University of Tasmania, and Workskills to find suitable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Students are provided with education pathways, employment opportunities and resources to guide them in understanding the options available and assist in planning for the future. This information supports them throughout their transition, ultimately improving outcomes



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