

ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE

30 August 2024

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

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

St Mary's College is the only all-girls Catholic school in Tasmania for Kindergarten to Year 12, located in Hobart and educating 975 students.

***We welcome families who seek the education we provide by having a clear vision and mission.***

In a world of constant change St Mary's College strives to live the teachings of Jesus Christ within the Tradition of the Catholic Church, developing just and compassionate people who are resilient, responsible and informed and ready to commit to society. Operating with the Presentation charism, our vision is to offer a dynamic environment in which young people are able to fulfil their spiritual, academic and personal potential.

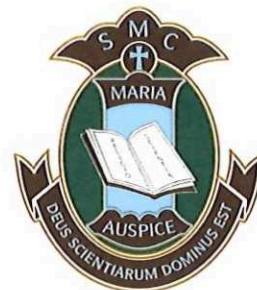
The Presentation values of respect, responsibility, relationships and resilience are the cornerstone on which we build our vision and underpin all that we do at St Mary's College, along with the touchstones of hospitality, compassion and simplicity.

***St Mary's College is committed to a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment.***

All bullying and harassment issues are approached proactively and in accordance with the College's Mission Statement, and the Presentation values and Restorative Practice Framework.

At St Mary's College, we provide students with multiple opportunities to engage and develop their understanding of bullying and harassment and its impact on others within the College Pillars Wellbeing Program. These include:

- E-Safety Modules
- URStrong
- Brave Hearts
- Speak-Up Stay ChaTTY
- Peer Support (2024 - Training Term 4)
- SchoolTV
- Eddie Rice Camps
- Real Talk
- Body Shaming



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- Positive Education (PEEC)
- Bounce Back
- Safety Ambassadors (Year 11/12 Mentoring Program)
- Bullying No-Way Resources
- ThinkUKnow (Tas Police/AFP)
- Cyber Safety Solutions
- Restorative Practice
- Bullying & Harassment Guidelines

Another goal is to foster connectedness and belonging. We work closely with parents/guardians as partners in their daughter's education. We provide parents/guardians with extensive wellbeing resources via the College website (SchoolTV and Mind Matters).

***We provide fee assistance for families in genuine need by offering two types of assistance –***

1. Concession card discounts (for eligible card holders)
2. The College Fee Assistance – this is income based and is assessed on individual family circumstances. Any family is welcome to apply.

Approximately 10% of our families access the College Fee Assistance Scheme.

***We welcome families on the margins through our inclusive caring environment:***

The St Mary's College mission permeates all the College community says and does. We promote and develop the full potential and integrity of each individual in our diverse community, respecting and celebrating individual differences. We seek to provide excellence in education within our College community which promotes inclusiveness, simplicity, welcome and a strong focus on social justice.

### ***Pastoral Support***

At St Mary's College we believe that the basis of a good school is good pastoral care, and we take this aspect of education seriously. The Director of Senior School, Middle Years Leaders and the House Leaders with committed teams of Pastoral Care teachers, are pivotal to the health and happiness of the student body. In the Junior School the Director and Deputy Directors working closely with the class teachers to support student wellbeing. We acknowledge that learning only takes place in an environment where the learner feels comfortable, so helping students to achieve an optimum degree of comfort in school is a priority.

We are continually reviewing our policies and procedures to make sure that we are providing the best possible learning environment and believe that we are giving our students opportunities to grow in confidence.





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St Mary's College also engages with external providers such as:

- Safe Families Strong kids
- Headspace
- Working it Out
- Clare House - CAMHS outpatient clinic
- CAMHS Royal Hobart Hospital
- The Kids Helpline
- Beyond Blue
- Butterfly Foundation
- Eddie Rice Camps
- Tasmanian Police
- Youth Resilience Survey

### ***Bullying and Harassment Report Statistics 2024***

Bullying and harassment reports are recorded in the College Learning Management system, Connect. In 2024 there have been:

- 71 reports of bullying/harassment
- 22 reports of inappropriate physical contact
- 20 reports of inappropriate language
- 7 reports of threatening behaviour

Our Religious Education program explicitly teaches the Catholic faith with a focus on the dignity of the human person, Catholic social teachings, and the Gospel values.

St Mary's College undertakes an annual survey to assist the College Advisory Council and College Leadership Team in determining the quality of the educational experience provided. The following results were obtained from the 2024 student and parent validation survey.

#### **Student Responses**

- 100% of students reported that they have experienced bullying/harassment.
- 100% of students reported that they have experienced inappropriate physical contact.
- 100% of students reported that they have experienced inappropriate language.
- 100% of students reported that they have experienced threatening behaviour.
- 100% of students reported that they have experienced discrimination.
- 100% of students reported that they have experienced cyberbullying/harassment.

#### **Parent Responses**

- 100% of parents reported that they have experienced bullying/harassment.
- 100% of parents reported that they have experienced inappropriate physical contact.
- 100% of parents reported that they have experienced inappropriate language.
- 100% of parents reported that they have experienced threatening behaviour.
- 100% of parents reported that they have experienced discrimination.
- 100% of parents reported that they have experienced cyberbullying/harassment.



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