

HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Seek the truth
Holy Rosary
Catholic School

29th August 2024

Response to Government Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools

Holy Rosary Catholic School is a Kindergarten to Grade 6 school located in Claremont. As a two stream school we educate 428 students. Our school also has 3-5 Year Old Long Day Care run by CatholicCare on its site making it a wonderful introduction to our school community.

It is our pleasure to be able to contribute to the State Government Inquiry into Bullying and Discrimination. Holy Rosary Catholic School takes pride in the many proactive programs and policies in place to support our students and their families.

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.

Holy Rosary Catholic School is a safe place for students because we have clear expectations of respect, safety, and learning embedded in our culture. We enforce a comprehensive behaviour management policy and procedures that ensure a consistent and fair approach to student conduct. Our anti-bullying policy, child safety policy, code of conduct, and adherence to child safety standards all contribute to a secure and supportive environment. Staff members are carefully selected and undergo professional learning in mandatory reporting and safeguarding twice a year to stay current on best practices. This commitment to safety and quality has made our school a sought-after institution, earning us a good name in the community.

We welcome families who seek the education we provide by offering smooth transitions into kindergarten and assigning buddies for new students across all other grades to help them feel at home. We host social occasions such as Welcome Barbeques, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander welcome events, and our Annual Family Breakfast to foster a sense of community. Families receive class handbooks and welcome packs, which include rosary beads and a history of the school. Holy Rosary Catholic School tours are available to familiarise families with our school. Regular parent-teacher conversations ensure ongoing communication, and individualised transition plans are created for new students if needed. We also host coffee and chat sessions for parents and guardians to foster informal discussions and we provide weekly updates on upcoming events to keep families informed and engaged.

We have zero tolerance for bullying and utilise a range of programs to encourage respect, courtesy, and consideration for others. Our anti-bullying policy is central to our efforts, supported by the Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum (PEEC) Wellbeing School Program, which promotes overall student wellbeing. We conduct online safety sessions and collaborate with TAS Police for cyber safety presentations to educate students on safe internet practices. Events like RUOk days and the Bullying No Way: National Week of Action, reinforce our commitment to combating bullying. Additionally, online safety is integrated into our Digital Technology curriculum, and personal wellbeing is emphasised through our Health curriculum.

At Holy Rosary Catholic School we welcome families from the margins with comprehensive support systems in place. Our English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) coordinator provides dedicated assistance to humanitarian entrants, ensuring they receive the help they need to assimilate into the community and succeed. We offer uniform and stationery supplies support to alleviate financial burdens as well as running a breakfast program along with providing snacks, lunches, and drink bottles to ensure all students who are in need are well-nourished. Smooth transitions are facilitated through personalised meetings with our Student Support Coordinator (SSC) to address any unique needs and challenges.

Holy Rosary Catholic School provides fee assistance for families in genuine need by offering several forms of support. We follow up with families holding health care cards to ensure they receive applicable discounts, and we provide family discounts and hardship allowances for those facing financial difficulties. For humanitarian entrants, we offer specialised assistance to help them integrate smoothly. Additionally, we offer flexible payment plans to ease the burden of school fees, ensuring that all families have access to the education we provide.

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

- **Breakfast program:** Ensuring students start the day nourished.
- **Focussed Intervention Teachers (FIT) and a Prep co-teacher:** Providing comprehensive support and intervention.
- **Student Support Coordinator (SSC):** Centralising assistance for diverse student needs.
- **Whole school well-being program:** Promoting a culture of wellness across the school.
- **MultiLit suite of resources and programs:** Offering whole-class and small group interventions.
- **Insight:** Utilising data to inform teaching strategies and student support.
- **Allied Health professionals:** Collaborating with the SSC and working on-site to address specific student needs.
- **Wellbeing hub:** A dedicated space for student support and resources, incorporating the mapali sensory space which provides a calming environment for sensory needs.
- **Wellbeing meetings:** Regular discussions with leadership and CatholicCare counsellors to support student needs.
- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** Facilitating teacher collaboration and development.
- **Learning Plans:** Tailored plans to meet individual student needs, including alternate individualised programs in the early years for some of our high need's students
- **Assessment schedule, reporting, and parent-teacher conversations:** Keeping families informed and involved in their child's progress.
- **Online feedback:** Providing real-time updates on student progress and goal setting.

- **Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander annual plan:** Targeting specific well-being and academic goals.
- **Extended learning program:** Offering both support and enrichment opportunities.

By integrating these programs and structures, we ensure that every student feels accepted, welcomed, and positioned for success.

Our Religious Education classes teach everyone about God's plan for our happiness and the importance of every person, incorporating a variety of supportive and enriching elements. We use the ILRE (Instructional Leader: Religious Education) model to provide all teachers with support, but in particular, early-career and non-Catholic teachers to help them effectively deliver Religious Education lessons.

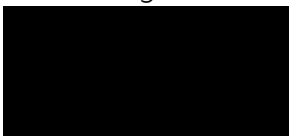
We maintain strong links with the St Bernards, Claremont parish, and Fr. Suresh has an active presence in the school, enriching our religious community. Our Sacramental Program prepares students for key milestones in their faith journey. Visible symbols throughout the school and dedicated prayer spaces in classrooms foster a spiritual environment. The RE Hub serves as a resource for teacher planning and collaboration, with guidance from Subject Matter Experts.

Holy Rosary Catholic School's commitment extends beyond the classroom through fundraising for charitable works and visits, reflecting our values in action. We adhere to the Archbishop's charter and actively respond to its call. Together, these elements ensure a comprehensive and supportive religious education for all students.

We support pastoral care at Holy Rosary Catholic School by providing a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that addresses the needs of both students and staff. For our students, we have five days of CatholicCare counsellors available to offer professional support. The PEEC program (Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum) is integrated into our school to promote overall wellbeing. We utilise Chronicles to track behaviour, wellbeing, and medical needs, ensuring that each student's individual circumstances are monitored and addressed. Morning check-ins help us start the day by gauging students' emotional and mental states, allowing us to provide timely support when needed.

Staff pastoral care is also a priority. We celebrate and acknowledge our teachers and support staff on special occasions such as World Teacher Day and the start of the year. Wellbeing Wednesday is celebrated at assemblies to highlight and promote positive well-being practices. Additionally, the mapali Sensory Room provides a dedicated space for students to decompress and manage sensory needs, contributing to a supportive and nurturing school environment.

Kind regards



Mrs Susan McGann
Principal
Holy Rosary Catholic School