

# CATHOLIC EDUCATION in TASMANIA

## CURRENT ISSUES:

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Catholic schools reflect and celebrate the diversity of contemporary Tasmania and Australia. They make a substantial contribution to society and to the Catholic Church in Australia, particularly in Tasmania.

Our mission is to be more than providers of high-quality education that advances the common good of society. We have a fundamental belief in the intrinsic value of each student based on a distinctive educational vision inspired by the example and message of Jesus Christ.

Through our Catholic identity and mission, and through the commitment of our staff, our educational programs demonstrate the integration between learning and living the Christian life. Our schools and colleges teach that a life lived in the love of God and in the Christian service of others has purpose and meaning.

### Key facts about Catholic schools in Tasmania

- More than 16,000 students (K-12) attend 38 Catholic schools and colleges across Tasmania.
- With 2,300 teaching and support staff in those schools, Catholic education is a significant Tasmanian employer.
- Tasmanian Catholic schools receive significant government funding, which covers 81 per cent of the cost of schooling, on average. Fees and private income cover the rest.
- On average, Tasmanian Catholic schools are funded at 92.5% of that of government schools\*.
- Catholic schools are welcoming and inclusive communities, with the number of students with disability, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increasing significantly in the last five years.
- Tasmanian Catholic schools have relatively equal numbers of Catholic and non-Catholic students.

### Key issues for all Tasmanian Catholic schools

#### 1. **Respect for religious freedom in Catholic schools.**

Catholic schools, respecting the rights and freedoms of families to choose schooling for their children in the Catholic tradition, should continue to be free to form and instruct students in the Catholic faith and celebrate the faith as an integral and inseparable activity of the Catholic school.

#### 2. **Government funding that keeps pace with school costs.**

At the very least any increase in school funding at the rate of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from 2018 could see funding increases fail to keep pace with school costs. That could lead to even larger fee increases, affect school quality or lead to school closures.

\*Data source: most recently available My School funding data 2015.

Authorised by John Mula, Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission, Emmett Place, New Town, Tasmania



3. **Government funding that is needs-based.**

School funding should reflect students' learning needs, with greater educational need attracting additional funding. Catholic schools' commitment to meeting the learning needs of all students requires appropriate government funding.

4. **Government funding to support the refurbishment and maintenance of Catholic schools.**

Parents currently cover the majority of building costs in Catholic schools. Government funding is needed to maintain and upgrade existing Catholic schools to ensure students have access to quality learning environments.

5. **Respect for the autonomy of Catholic schools.**

The ability of Catholic schools and systems to meet the local needs of a school community is one of their strengths. Government funding arrangements should respect the identity, integrity and autonomy of Catholic school and education systems.

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