



**St Francis**  
Flexible School



# PARENT & YOUNG PERSON HANDBOOK 2025

## HOBART

22 Ashbourne Grove,  
West Moonah TAS 7009

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## Welcome to Our School

We are happy to welcome you and your young person to St Francis Flexible School. Our school is a caring place where every young person is supported to learn and grow, especially if they've had a tough start. This handbook will tell you about our routines, how we help young people, and what you as parents and guardians can expect from us.

### What We Believe

At our school, we believe that young people need to feel safe, supported, and calm before they can learn. We focus on building strong relationships with young people and making sure that every day is predictable and safe. h

### Our School Core Principles

We use Four Principles to guide how we act and learn together. These are:

1. Honesty
2. Respect
3. Safe & Legal
4. Participation

By following these principles, young people can have a positive and flexible learning experience. We encourage all members of the school community to follow the core principles as we believe these are principles that will help young people to make good choices at school and in their lives outside school.



## Working Agreements

Working Agreements are sets of guidelines that young people and staff make together to make clear what choices everyone should make during school activities.

**Made Together:** Young People and staff create Working Agreements by talking about how young people act in relation to our four principles: Honesty, Respect, Safe & Legal, and Participation.

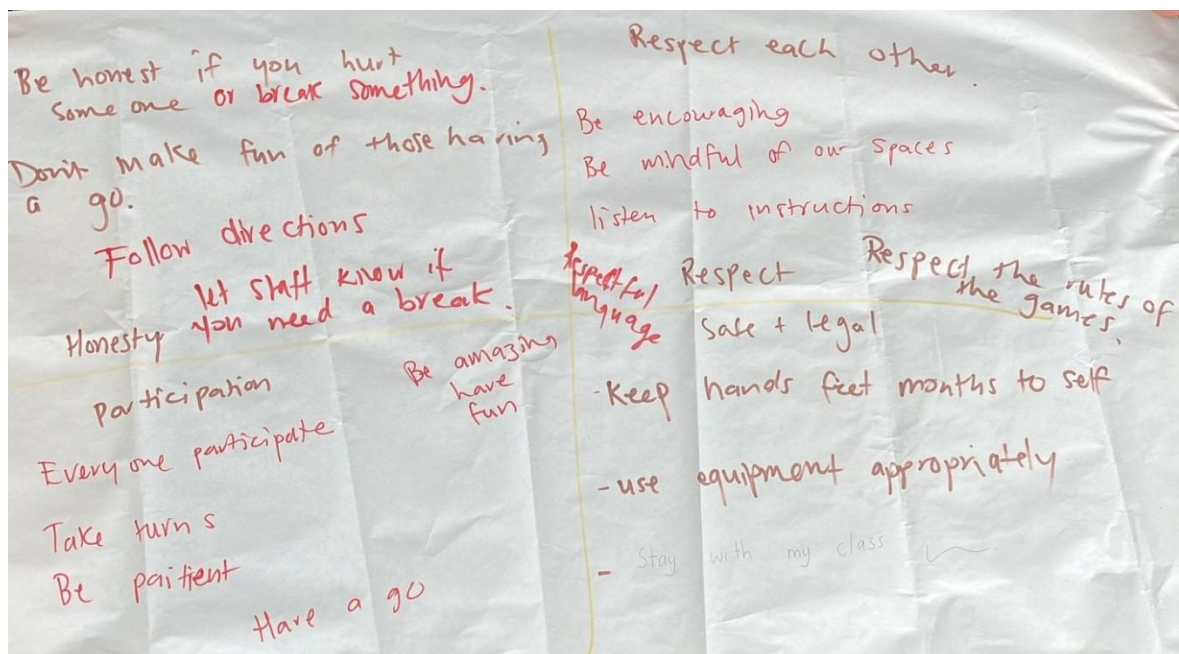
**Fair for Everyone:** The guidelines apply to everyone, so everyone knows what is expected.

**You Can Negotiate:** Young people can ask to change Working Agreements, but they must still follow the principles.

**For Different Activities:** Working Agreements are made for different times and activities (i.e. by and for a class or a whole school event, Out and Abouts etc.)

## Why Working Agreements are important:

They help everyone feel safe, included, and respected.



## How We Support Young People to Follow the Principles

At St Francis Flexible School, our staff show Unconditional Positive Regard. This means we support and care for young people no matter what. Even if they make mistakes, staff help them learn from those mistakes in a positive way.



If a young person struggles to follow the principles, we talk with them about their behaviour and help them understand how to make better choices next time. Our focus is on learning from mistakes, not punishment. We call these conversations **OPBs** (Operations by Principles). The goal is to support learning and growth in a positive way.

If the problems involve other young people, we will use **CPS** (Collaborative Problem Solving). **CPS** helps solve problems by working together. First, by listening and understanding the young person's feelings. Then, by identifying the problem and brainstorming solutions together. We choose solutions that work for everyone and try them out. **CPS** builds trust, teaches problem-solving skills, and improves young people's skills in being able to work with other people.

If a young person consistently does not follow the principles or cannot be safe at school, they may be offsite for some time. If a young person is offsite, they are supported to learn at home and school staff will contact them regularly for wellbeing and learning support until they can safely return to onsite learning. Staff with parent/guardians' permission may visit the young person at home as part of this support.



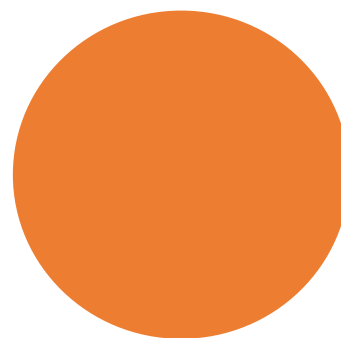
## Daily Routine

Having a regular routine helps young people feel safe and ready to learn. Here's what a typical school day\* looks like:

- 8:00 AM Bus runs start
- 9AM: Buses start arriving  
Breakfast is available in the café
- 9:30 AM: Morning Session\*\* includes Circle Time
- 10:55 AM: Recess (Toastie Time) – Toasted Sandwiches and other nice food available in café.
- 11:15 AM: Middle Session\*\*
- 12:45 PM: Lunch – Cooked lunch available in café
- 1:15 PM: Afternoon Session\*\*
- 2:30 PM: End of the School Day – Bus Runs

\*Friday is a shorter school day with afternoon bus runs starting at 1pm.

\*\* Minimum 30 minutes of participation is expected in each session



## Bus Runs



The school provides transport to and from school for any young people who would like to use it. Bus runs pick up at planned stops in the following areas: New Norfolk, Bridgewater, Eastern Shore, Northern Suburbs, and the city. We are unable to provide individual pick-ups and drops offs outside of this. If a young person can make their own way to the Glenorchy or Springfield Interchange, we will collect from there if staffing allows.

## Uniform

St Francis does not require young people to wear a uniform. Young people may **choose** to wear St Francis items provided on enrolment, but they are not required to do so. These items include the school hoodie, polo and shorts, leggings and/or trackpants. Extra uniform can be provided by speaking to your young person’s class partnership.



## Flexi School Practices

Every morning starts with **Circle Time**. This is when the class talks about what will happen during the day and checks in with each other. This helps young people feel ready for the day ahead.

**Community Meetings** are held every Tuesday and Friday. They are the flexi school version of an assembly. The school community meets in the café to nominate (shout out) young people who have been following the principles well. School news is also shared. On a Friday, there is a draw for movie tickets - all young people who have received a shout out for the week are included in the weekly draw.



**Community Games** are also held on a Friday. These are an opportunity to participate in activities with young people from other classes.

## How We Teach

Each young person is in a core class. Each class is staffed by a class partnership. This partnership is made up of a teacher, youth worker and class leader.

To best meet the needs of the young people we put classes together based on the young person's preferred styles of participation or support needs. Our aim is to place each young person in a classroom environment that best suits them.





We know that every young person learns differently, we offer diverse types of learning opportunities:

**Collaborative Goal Setting (CGS):** Collaborative Goal Setting is how we set goals for each young person’s learning. This means making plans that fit each young person’s needs and strengths and learning pace. Young people, teachers, youth workers and parents/guardians work together to set these goals. CGS’s focus on helping students do better in school and support their wellbeing, while keeping track of their progress. These CGS’s are held twice a year and are the basis of our school Reports for each young person.

**Personal Projects:** Young people can work on projects that interest them, helping them build important skills.

**Negotiations:** If a young person doesn’t want to join a certain activity, they can talk with the class partnership to find another option.

**Out and Abouts:** These are trips outside of school that help young people learn and grow in new ways. Each Out and About will have a specific learning focus.

**Specialist Lessons:** Young people have an opportunity to participate with their class, individually and small groups in Music, Art, Drama and PE.

**Electives:** Young people have an opportunity to sign up weekly to a variety of electives. These change each term, but include opportunities like mountain bike riding, surfing, bushwalking, boxfit, gym, chess and guitar group.

**Careers and Pathways:** A variety of work ready programs and career planning with specialist staff is offered.

**Holiday program:** Is offered in each holiday period. The program often includes creative projects, Out and Abouts, and social events. It helps young people stay connected with schools and supports them to continue to develop skills outside the regular school year.



## What We Teach

St Francis connects each young person's learning goals developed in the CGS meetings to the Australian Curriculum. We work with the young people's interest while focusing on the general capabilities of literacy, numeracy, digital literacy as well as personal and social capabilities. These areas help students not only improve in reading and mathematics but also develop life skills, such as working well with others and managing their own wellbeing. Senior students can also do VET courses and earn micro credentials. St Francis works with outside organisations to help young people gain employment.

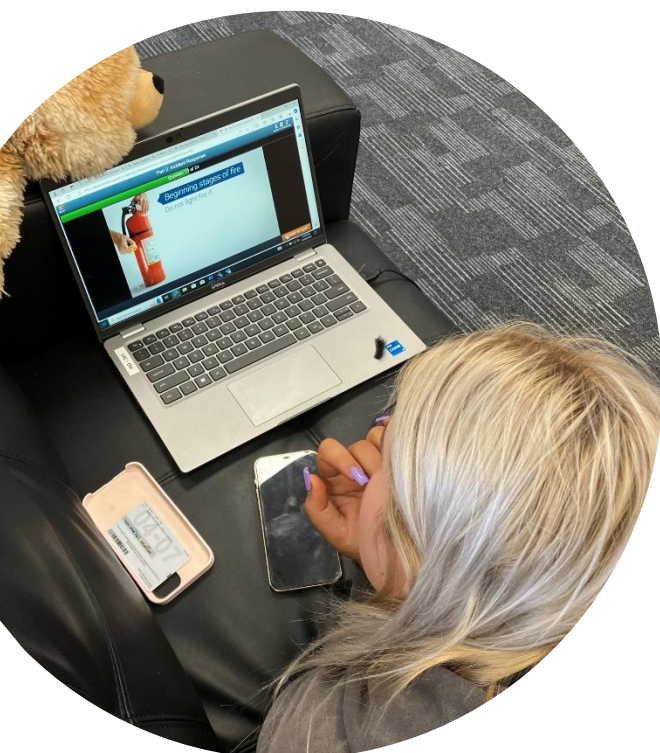
We offer programs to improve students' skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. These include:

**MacqLit:** A literacy program that helps students improve their reading, writing, and thinking skills.

**The Writing Revolution:** A writing program focused on teaching students how to communicate clearly and organise their ideas.

**Insight Mathematics:** A mathematics program that covers topics like numbers, algebra, geometry, and data analysis.

St Francis is committed to creating an environment where young people can have a strong voice in their learning, getting the help they need to build skills that will enable them to live a good life.



## Food

St Francis provides three meals a day to the young people. The meals are cooked fresh at the school each day by our kitchen staff.

Young people and families can also be supported with food packs to take home if required. Please talk to your class partnership if you require a food pack.

Young people have access to food and drink throughout the day as required.

## Typical Menu

	BREAKFAST	MORNING TEA	LUNCH
MONDAY	Bacon /Egg Rolls Cereal Toast Smoothies	Toasties Smoothies	Salad Bar Ham/Salami/ Chicken Salads Fresh Fruit
TUESDAY	Pancakes Cereal Toast Smoothies	Toasties Smoothies	Banjos Spinach & Ricotta Cannelloni Pasta Bake Fresh Fruit
WEDNESDAY	Bacon Egg Muffins Cereal Toast Smoothies	Toasties Smoothies	Roast Pulled Beef Roast Potato &Veggies Fresh Fruit
THURSDAY	Croissants Ham/Cheese Cereal Toast Smoothies	Toasties Smoothies	Butter Chicken Naan Fried Rice Fresh Fruit
FRIDAY	Smoothies Toast Cereal	Toasties Smoothies	BBQ Salads Potato Bake Fresh Fruit

## How You Can Help

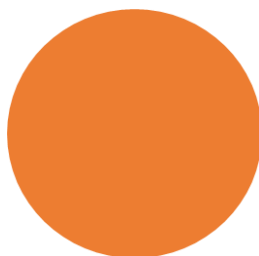
We want to work together with you to support your young person's learning. Here's how you can stay involved:

**Communication:** We will keep you informed about your young person's progress and any challenges. If there is anything that is happening outside of school that may impact on your young person's ability to learn or be safe, we encourage you to let us know.

**Attendance:** It is important for your young person to come to school every day. If they're absent, we ask that you let us know. We will contact you if we have not heard from you.

**Signing Out:** Young people need permission from a parent or guardian to leave during the day.

**Support the Principles:** Encourage and support your young person to follow the four core principles. This includes being a good role model and following the principles when you are interacting with the school and the wider local community.



## Mandatory Reporting

All staff are required to report any concerns about a young person's safety, following legal guidelines. Mandatory reporting in Tasmania means that certain people, like teachers, doctors, and police, must by law contact Child Safety Services if they think a young person is at risk of harm, participating in illegal activity or are likely to harm others. This is done to help keep young people safe.

## Health and Safety

**Medication:** Parents or guardians need to share detailed information about their young person's medication, like what the medicine is, how much to take, and when to take it.

**Medical Forms:** Parents or guardians must fill out and send in special forms that say it's okay for the school to give their young person medicine. These forms need to be signed by both the parent/guardian and a doctor.

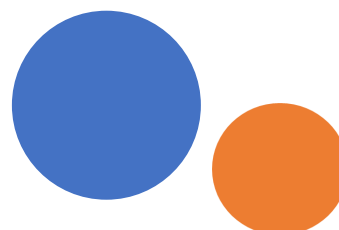
**Legal Forms:** Parents or guardians are expected to provide any legal information which supports the school to keep their young person safe. This includes court orders and similar documentation. We ask that such information is shared at enrolment and that updates are provided to the school at the earliest opportunity if things change whilst their young person is enrolled.

**Your young person's safety is particularly important to us. Here are some of our key safety guidelines:**

**Acting Safely:** If a young person acts in a way that endangers themselves or others and does not follow staff instruction to change the behaviour when requested, they may be offsite the following day. Examples include continued play fighting; climbing on the roof; repeated deliberate damage of property.

**Substance Use:** If a young person is affected by drugs or alcohol, they cannot stay at school. We will make sure they get home safely. They may be offsite the following day.

**Vaping:** If a young person has a vape at school, they will be asked to hand it in. If this happens, that will be the end of the matter. If they chose to keep the vape, they will be offsite for one day.



**Tobacco:** We provide support for young people trying to quit smoking. From the start of 2025 smoking will not be possible onsite.

**Violence:** Acts of violence or encouraging violence including threats will be treated seriously and may result in being offsite.

**Leaving Site:** If a young person leaves site without permission from a parent/guardian, they are not to return to school that day. Parent/Guardians will be notified.

### Use of IT Devices

It is an expectation that young people will follow the school principles when using school digital technology (laptops, iPads etc).

They should show Respect by reporting any technical issues or damage promptly to school staff.

They should keep to the Safe & Legal principle by not engaging in activities which go against school policies or the law, including (but not limited to) accessing harmful websites, sharing copyrighted materials without permission, or engaging in cyberbullying or harassment.

### Mobile Phones:

- **Keep Calls Short:** If young people need to make a call, we encourage them to keep their phone calls short, ideally under 5 minutes.
- **Stay Out of Class:** We also ask young people to make and/or take calls outside of the classroom so that the learning of others is not affected.
- **Use Break Times:** We ask young people to try to make calls during breaks.
- **No Face Timing Around School:** We ask that young people don't walk around the school using FaceTime or other video calls.
- **Focused Learning:** There will be times when young people are requested to turn their phone off and put them out of sight to avoid disrupting learning.



## Respectful Language:

We ask all members of our community to remember the importance of choosing their words carefully and being mindful of how their language affects others. Disrespectful or hurtful language, whether directed at peers, teachers, or staff, can have a lasting negative impact and disrupt the sense of safety and inclusion we strive to maintain.

## Wellbeing Dogs



We have a variety of dogs that come onsite to support the wellbeing of young people. We understand that young people will have different feelings of comfort with this. We use a program called Dog's Connect to support our practice with this. The program will not involve anyone who does not wish to be involved. We know that wellbeing dogs have a positive impact on many people in our community, and connection with our wellbeing dogs are offered on a great variety of levels. We do ask that all members of our school community follow the three key expectations with the wellbeing dogs.



## Extra Support

Our staff are trained to help young people not just with schoolwork, but also with their emotional and social needs. If your young person needs extra help, please let us know. The young person is also encouraged to speak to staff about any assistance they may need.

The school employees First Nations support staff, psychologist, specialist teachers and teacher assistants. This helps us provide the best possible cultural and broader learning opportunities and support for our young people.

# Feeling Unsafe?

**No One** is allowed to threaten you, hurt you or touch you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or afraid

Talk to someone!

What to do

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN HURT OR FEEL UNSAFE**

- Talk to an adult you trust.
- This might be the staff in your classroom, a youth worker, Deputy Principal or Principal.

**IF YOUR FRIEND DOESN'T WANT TO TELL AN ADULT**

- You should still speak with a trusted adult, even if your friend has asked you not to. It is more important to make sure that your friend is safe and protected.



Nick



Donna



Jason



Dane



Erin



Nathan

What will Happen

**IF YOU TELL AN ADULT AT SCHOOL**

- The adult will listen to you
- The information will not be shared with the person who is making you feel unsafe.
- In some cases the people helping you are required to tell the police, Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice & Referral Line and/or your family if it's safe to do so.



Claire



Mika



Sarah

**OTHER HELP**

eHeadspace [www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au) or 1800 650 890

KidsHelp Line [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au) or 1800 551 800

Police (000)

Talk to your doctor, psychologist, social worker, youth worker or another trusted adult.







We hope this handbook gives you a clear idea of how we support your young person at school. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Our enrolments contact is [st.francis.flc@ereafsn.edu.au](mailto:st.francis.flc@ereafsn.edu.au)

### Further Information

Please feel free to contact:

Principal Nick McGann ([nick.mcgann@ereafsn.edu.au](mailto:nick.mcgann@ereafsn.edu.au)) OR

Deputy Principal Donna Brown ([donna.brown@ereafsn.edu.au](mailto:donna.brown@ereafsn.edu.au)).