



St Francis
Flexible School



Hobart Campus **COMMUNITY HANDBOOK** 2026

HOBART

22 Ashbourne Grove,
West Moonah TAS 7009

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Acknowledgement of Country | 3 |
| Prayer | 3 |
| School Logo | 3 |
| Principal's Welcome | 4 |
| Head of Campus Welcome | 4 |
| History | 4 |
| Our Faith | 5 |
| Our School Core Principles | 5 |
| Working Agreements | 6 |
| How We Support Young People to Follow the Principles | 7 |
| Bus Runs | 8 |
| High Winds Bus Procedure | 9 |
| Uniform | 9 |
| Our School Community | 10 |
| Cultural Connection | 11 |
| How We Teach | 11 |
| Negotiating Your Work | 12 |
| Holiday Program | 14 |
| What We Teach | 15 |
| Food | 16 |
| How Guardians Can Support | 17 |
| Mandatory Reporting | 17 |
| Health and Safety | 18 |
| Wellbeing Dogs | 21 |
| Extra Support | 21 |
| Glossary | 22 |

Acknowledgement of Country

We understand and appreciate that the country of Lutruwita/Tasmania belongs to the Palawa people.

We thank them, their ancestors and elders for protecting, preserving, and caring for this land.

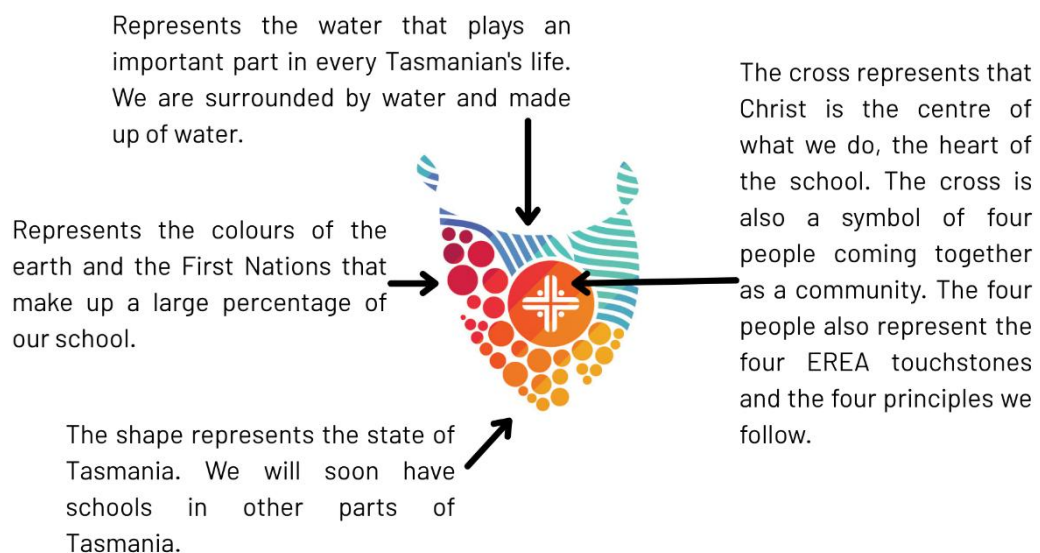
Keeping it whole and strong for future generations.

Prayer

Based on the Prayer of St Francis and our core principles

Let me be the one to bring calm, when everything feels messed up.
Where there is opportunity, help me choose **participation**.
Where there's drama, help me feel peaceful,
Where there's confusion, help me understand.
Help me see the good in people, even when it's hard.
Where there's negativity, let me show thankfulness,
Where I feel lost, help me make **safe and legal** choices to find my way.
Make me be someone who builds others up, when others tear things down.
Help me be patient, and show **respect**, even when it's tough.
Help me make positive change, even if it feels small.
Where silence feels wrong, help me speak up safely and with **honesty**,
And where there's hate or anger, help me spread kindness.

School Logo



Principal's Welcome

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. 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. [Nick McGann](#)



Head of Campus Welcome

Welcome everyone. I look forward to supporting you in your journey here at St Francis. This handbook will tell you a lot about our school, how we support Young People, and what Young People and their guardians can expect from us. It also explains how you can be a great member of our community during your time with us. We look forward to working alongside you. [Donna Brown](#)



History

St Francis Flexible Learning Centre opened in Chigwell (Southern Tasmania) in February 2016 with a small group of students and staff. The school quickly grew, and by 2017, it had more students and staff, leading to the renovation of a larger building. The official Opening Ceremony took place in October 2017.

As the school continued to expand, it became clear that the Chigwell site was no longer fit for purpose. In 2019, the school received a long-term lease for the old Springfield Gardens Primary School, with government support, and moved to a newly renovated site in West Moonah in 2022. The students now enjoy a sense of belonging and appreciate the excellent facilities at this site. During 2025, building commenced on a new senior block, to house the senior classes, a new music room and a fitness space.

During 2023, we officially changed our name to St Francis Flexible School.

In 2027, a second campus will open in Wynyard, to be followed by a third campus in Launceston (to be confirmed).

Our Faith

St Francis is part of Catholic Education Tasmania (CET), which operates 38 schools and colleges across Tasmania, offering students from all backgrounds a quality education enriched by Catholic faith.

St Francis Flexible School is also part of Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA). Our school is guided by the EREA Touchstones:



Liberating Education, which gives every Young Person the chance to learn in a way that works for them.



Gospel Spirituality, which encourages kindness and respect.



Inclusive Community, where everyone feels welcome and safe.



Justice & Solidarity, which teaches us to stand up for fairness and support each other.

While we do not have formal Religion classes, these values shape everything we do, helping Young People build confidence and a positive future.

Our School Core Principles

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

Honesty

Respect

Safe & Legal

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. We call this **operation by principles (OBP)**.

Working Agreements

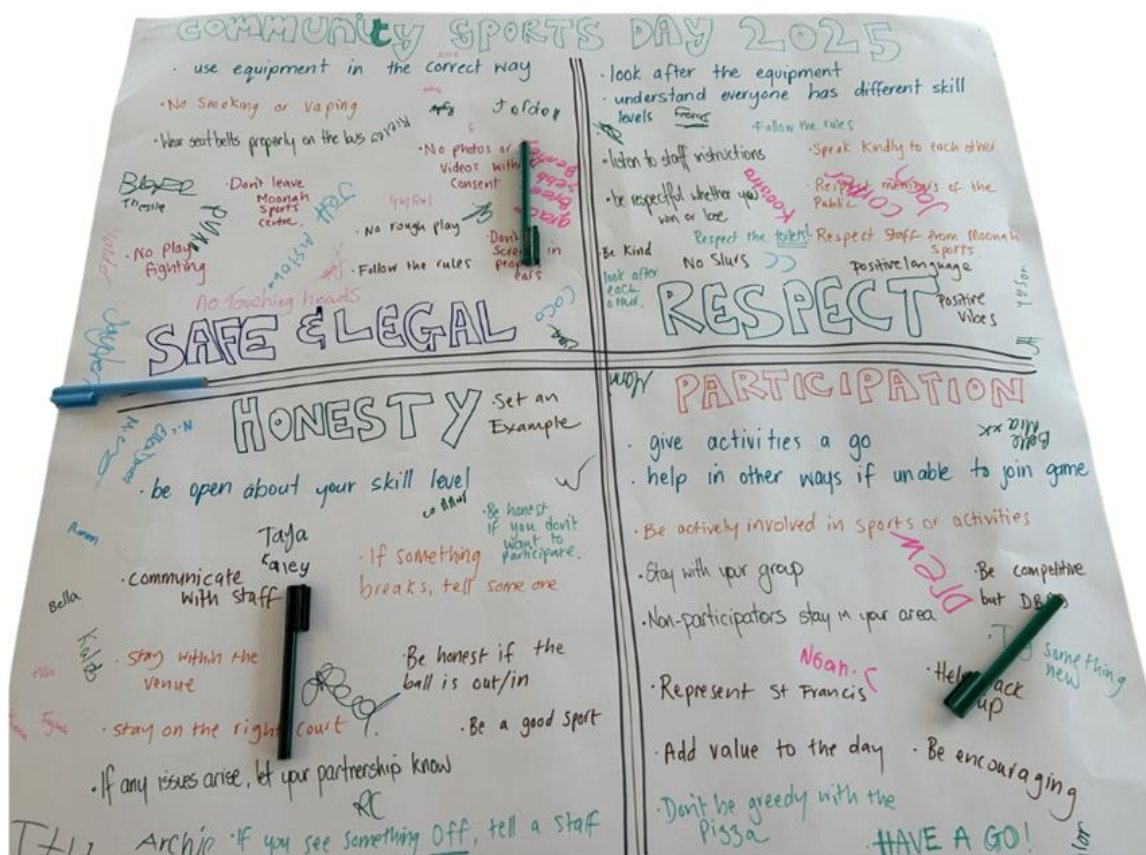
Working Agreements are sets of guidelines based on the four principles that Young People and staff make together to make clear what choices everyone should make during school activities. Working Agreements help everyone feel safe, included, and respected.

Made Together: Young People and staff create Working Agreements by talking about how Young People act in relation to our four principles.

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).



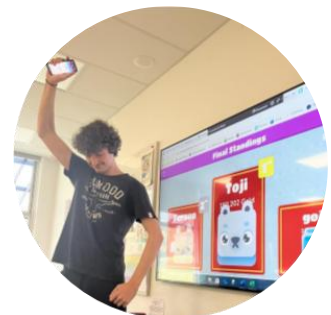
How We Support Young People to Follow the Principles

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 **OBPs** (Operation 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. With guardians' permission, staff 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 |
| 9:00 AM | Buses start arriving/Breakfast available in the Café |
| 9:30 AM | Session One* - <i>includes Circle Time</i> |
| 11:10 AM | Recess (Toastie Time) – <i>toasted sandwiches and other nice food available in Café.</i> |
| 11:15 AM | Session Two* |
| 12:45 PM | Lunch – <i>Cooked lunch available in Café</i> |
| 1:15 PM | Session Three* |
| 2:30 PM** | End of the School Day – Bus Runs |

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

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

Bus Runs

The school offers free transport to and from school for any Young Person who wants to use it. To use our buses, Young People need to be prepared to operate by the principles, especially around the use of seatbelts. If after support someone can't do that, they may not be allowed to catch the bus. The bus picks up from set stops in these areas:



- New Norfolk
- Bridgewater
- Brighton
- Glenorchy
- Clarence
- City

We are unable to provide individual pick-ups and drop-offs outside of this. If a young person can get themselves to the Glenorchy or Springfield Interchange, we may be able to pick them up from there if we have enough staff. Metro bus 542 also has a stop on 12th Avenue, which is a five-minute walk to school.

High Winds Bus Procedure

For the safety of students and staff, all bus runs will be cancelled if the Bureau of Meteorology issues a strong or gale force winds warning. The strong winds play havoc on the buses, especially when travelling over the bridges. If we run buses in the morning, we will not cancel the afternoon runs, however, the day might be shortened due to the warnings.

Our procedure is that a text message will be sent to the community informing that the bus runs are being cancelled due to the wind. School will operate as normal; however, all activities requiring bus transport will not happen. We will, where possible, still collect from Glenorchy or Springfield interchange in a car.

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 items may be provided via our front office staff. Years 10 to 12 Young People are offered a personalised Senior Hoodie during their time in the Senior Years.



Our School Community

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 meet 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 opportunities to participate in activities with Young People from other classes, building community along the way.

Community Events are held throughout the year. These include Swimming, Athletics, Winter Sports, Formal, Christmas Extravaganza and more. Formal Community lunches are also held twice a term. These are an opportunity for the school community to enjoy a three-course meal together in a restaurant atmosphere.



Each term, the school has a **Community Focus** to encourage Young People to explore new ideas and try new skills. Previous focuses have included respectful language, participation, growth, resilience and independence.



Cultural Connection



We are committed to honouring and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. With guidance from our aboriginal support worker, a Palawa member from Lutruwita, we are building strong connections with local indigenous communities, creating meaningful learning experiences for our students and staff. Each class explores cultural learning in different ways – from painting, yarning, and storytelling to understanding Aboriginal history and identity. Our aboriginal support worker also supports students who identify as indigenous in their learning here at school and on country as part of the wider Tasmanian Aboriginal Community.



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 use explicit high impact teaching strategies when working with our Young People as well as 1:1 and small group teaching and interventions as required.

We know that every young person learns differently.

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 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. CGS's are held twice a year and are the basis of our school Reports for each young person.

We have a strong school focus on participation. It is important for Young People to understand that active participation in learning is expected. At the CGS, we ask all Young People to agree to 30 minutes of focused participation per session, participate in small group or one-on-one learning with intervention staff and complete learning checks when asked.

While 30 minutes of participation is expected in each session. That can look different for everyone. It should, however, include:

- Being with your class or in your classroom
- Trying your best
- Following staff instructions
- Negotiating by following school processes
- Following working agreements



Negotiating Your Work

There are opportunities for you to negotiate how you participate.

Negotiations in the class: So that you can participate in learning, you can negotiate with your class partnership about what participation in the classroom looks like for you in that session. You may do this when you need a different type of work, if you need easier or harder work or if you need to work on a different topic, you can negotiate to do that.

Negotiating to work outside of the class: There are no negotiations in Session One, so you can focus on your growth and build connections with your class. You may choose to negotiate working in a different space in Sessions Two and Three. The process for this looks like:

- Talk to your class partnership about moving.
- They will check with the other class.
- If approved, take your work with you or join an activity in the new space.
- If you stay in your own classroom, try another way to stay involved!

To encourage participation, we offer many types of learning opportunities. These include:



Whole Class Teaching: Teachers work with their whole class groups to focus on specific concepts and learning.



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, chess club, skateboarding, gym, and guitar group.



Small Group Interventions: Young People work with staff in small groups to focus on extension and/or support in targeted skill areas, such as English or Maths.





Careers and Pathways: A variety of work-ready programs are offered at the school. Career planning and work experience opportunities are supported by our Careers and Pathways teacher.



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



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



Out and Abouts: These are regular (often weekly) class trips outside of school that help Young People learn and grow in new ways. Each Out and About has a specific learning focus. A letter is sent out each term with the planned trips. If a Young Person is at school they must attend the Out and About with their class.

Holiday Program

We offer a holiday program during school term breaks. 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, mathematics and digital literacy, but also develop life skills, such as working well with others and managing their own wellbeing. Senior students can also do VET courses, learn pre-work skills and earn micro credentials. St Francis works with outside organisations through our Careers/Pathways teacher to help Young People access work experience and potential employment.

We offer interventions 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.

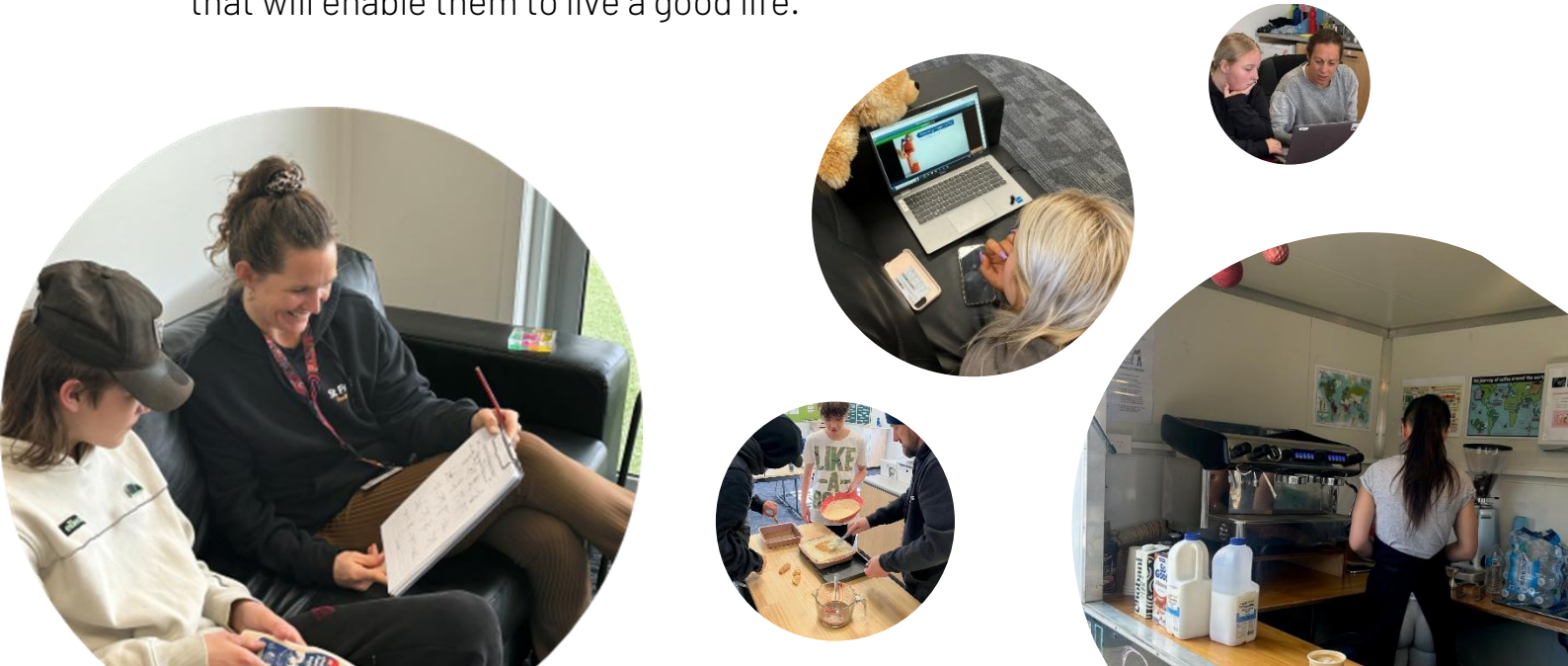
Bond Blocks: A maths program that supports students to fill the gaps in their maths learning.

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

Mathematics Extension: for those with special interest or skills in this area.

English Extension: for those with special interest or skills in this area.

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 | Ham/Cheese Croissants Cereal Toast Smoothies | Toasties Smoothies | Butter Chicken Naan bread Fried Rice Fresh Fruit |
| FRIDAY | Smoothies Toast Cereal | Toasties Smoothies | BBQ Salads Potato Bake Fresh Fruit |

How Guardians Can Support

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. **Staff are available for contact between 8am and 4pm on weekdays.**

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. It is the law that Young People attend school.

Signing Out: Young People under 18 need permission from a 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.

Attend CGS meetings twice a year: These meetings are held in the first three days of Term 1 and the last three days of Term 2. Young People and guardians meet with the class partnership to reflect on previous learning and set the learning goals for the next semester (a semester is two school terms).

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: 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: 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 the guardian. This needs to happen with any new medication or changes to medication. Please speak to your partnership when anything with your Young Person's medication changes.

Parents Responsibilities

Medication For Young People



- 1 Fill out and hand in the Medication Permission Form every year or whenever the medicine changes
- 2 Make sure you bring the medicine in the exact way and amount it needs to be given. Staff are not allowed to change the medicine, like cutting tablets.
- 3 Bring medicine that is not expired and is in a pharmacy label bottle or a Webster-pak from the pharmacy.
- 4 Never send medicine in bags without labels, food containers, lunch boxes, or any other packaging that isn't meant for medicine.
- 5 Tell the school quickly if your young persons medicine, health condition, or treatment plan changes.
- 6 If your young person takes their own medicine, you must have the medical specialist complete the form provided by the school.

**Thank you for your support
in keeping the young
people safe at school**

Legal Forms: 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, and inappropriate behaviour in toilets (i.e. more than one Young Person in toilets together).

Substance Use: If a young person is affected by drugs or alcohol, they cannot stay at school. We will contact guardians if Young People are under 18 and 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 choose to keep the vape, they will be offsite for one day. This includes when travelling in school vehicles or while participating in school activities that are offsite such as Out and Abouts.

Tobacco: Smoking is not allowed onsite. There is a designated offsite smoking area. This is only available to Young People before school, and at toastie and lunch times. The school provides support for Young People who would like assistance in managing their addiction.

Scooters and Bikes: Bikes and scooters belonging to Young People must be secured by staff on arrival. Helmets must be worn at all times when riding bikes that belong to the school or the Young Person.

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

Leaving Site: If a Young Person leaves site without permission from a guardian, they are not to return to school that day. If the Young Person is under 18, 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 that 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 five minutes.
- **Stay Out of Class:** We also ask Young People to make and/or take calls outside 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 Video Calls Around School:** We ask that Young People don't walk around the school using 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 other Young People or staff, can have a lasting negative impact and disrupt the sense of safety and community we wish to have.



Wellbeing Dogs

We have a variety of wellbeing 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 Dogs 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. These expectations are:

1. Say hello to the person first then the dog.
2. Give the dog lots of space when passing the dog.
3. Only touch the dogs in a calm and friendly way.

Extra Support

Our staff are trained to help Young People not just with schoolwork, but also with their emotional and social needs. Young People are encouraged to speak to staff about any assistance they may need. The school employs psychologists, specialist teachers and teacher assistants. This helps us provide the best possible learning opportunities and wellbeing support.



FEELING UNSAFE?

TALK TO SOMEONE

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

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.

YOU WILL BE BELIEVED



Nick



Donna



Jason



Dane



Claire



Erin



Sarah



Nath



Mika

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, Nick, Donna or class leader.

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.



Pulse Health is a free health service for young people. Drop in or call.

404 Main Road
Glenorchy

6166 1421



Headspace Hobart is a free health service for young people. Call or email for an appointment.

49 Liverpool Street
Hobart

62313908

headspace@thelink.org.au



Free support & counselling
online chat or phone.

1800 551 800



24/7 phone line to
speak to a nurse.

1800022 222



Speak to
staff at school.

**Places I Can
Go For Support**



Mental Health
information and
safe chat.

Glossary

Collaborative Goal Setting (CGS) Meetings

These are meetings we have twice a year with Young People and their guardians to talk about learning and wellbeing goals for the upcoming semester (two terms).

Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS)

A way that we work with Young People to solve problems by working together.

Operation By Principles (OBP)

A Young Person shows their operation by principles through being honest, participating, being respectful, and acting safely and legally.

Out and Abouts (O&A's)

Out and Abouts are excursions that our classes go on together with their class partnerships.

Semester

A semester means two terms (Semester 1 is Terms 1 and 2 combined; Semester 2 is Terms 3 and 4 combined).

Unconditional Positive Regard

Our staff support and care for Young People no matter who they are or what they may have done.

Working Agreements

A Working Agreement is a shared plan between Young People and staff about how we work together to make school a safe, respectful and positive place to learn and enjoy activities.

St Francis Flexible School (SFFS)

At times in documents, the name of the school is shortened to the first letters of each word.



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 stfrancis@flexi.edu.au

School Phone Number: 0427 249 286

School website <https://stfrancis.flexi.edu.au/>

