

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

IN TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
learners first



Did you know?

Tasmanian Government schools welcome students from all religions, races, cultures and backgrounds.

Schools celebrate diversity, and learning about religion can be an important part of learning about the world. Tasmanian Government schools may teach general religious education as part of the curriculum. General religious education teaches students about various forms of religious thought, belief and expression practised in Australian society and other societies, both currently and historically.

Alternatively, if the school community, you and your child decide it is beneficial, your child may also get to learn about a particular religion. This is known as 'religious instruction'.

Religious instruction is where your child will learn about a particular religion that is not related to a broader education of religious thought, belief and expression. A member of the clergy, or another person permitted by the religious body to which that member or person belongs will provide religious instruction.

Where to start

- If religious instruction is being offered at your child's school, your permission is required before your child may participate.
- The total number of hours of religious instruction provided at a school in a year can't be more than forty (e.g. an average of one hour per week of school).

- Other activities will be available for children who do not want to participate in the religious instruction program.
- Supervision of students undertaking religious instruction will be provided by the school.

For your child

- Religious instruction is voluntary in Tasmanian Government schools.
- An adult who has a Working with Vulnerable People registration will teach religious instruction.
- Religious programs will recognise the diversity of all children's beliefs and will not discriminate.
- Religious programs will be age appropriate.
- Your child may learn about many different religions as part of general religious education.
- Your child will not be told that they must believe in a certain religion or that any one religion is better than another.

Students may participate in a religious instruction program only if:

- You have an understanding of what will be taught.
- You have signed a permission form.

What is a School Chaplain?

- Your school may have a chaplain to assist in the personal and social wellbeing of students.
- School chaplains support the emotional wellbeing of students by providing pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community.



- Some of the things chaplains do include:
 - » providing students and families with support and referrals in times of crisis
 - » running breakfast clubs
 - » developing leadership and support programs
 - » participating in school activities such as sport, camps and gardens.
- Chaplains are not allowed to talk to students about religion, unless the student wants them to.

Where can I get more information?

- Talk to your child's teacher or principal.
- *National School Chaplaincy Program: Guidelines for Tasmanian Government Schools*
www.education.tas.gov.au

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