
Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Brief 11 - Children Services Budget Management

Overview

- The Government is continuing to deliver on its commitment to ensure every child and young person is known, safe, well and learning by providing further investment in Children and Youth of \$41.556 million across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates comprising of:
 - Foster and Kinship Carer Uplift, \$2.012 million in 2025-26
 - Bringing Baby Home, \$10.32 million over four years
 - Intensive Family Engagement Service, \$8 million over two years
 - Out of Home Care Increase, \$15 million over two years
 - Transition to Independence, \$6.22 million over two years.
- The 2025-26 Budget includes funding totalling \$2.915 million across 2025-26 to 2028-29 for Information - Storage and Access. This initiative is funded from the Digital Transformation Priority Expenditure Program within Finance-General.
- The total Capital Investment Program for 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates for the Children and Youth Portfolio is \$159.5 million comprising:
 - Youth Justice Facilities – Additional funding totalling \$105.3 million has been provided in 2025-26 to bring this project to a total cost of \$155.3 million with the total

remaining expenditure across the forward estimates totalling \$152.6 million; and

- Enhanced Case Management for Children and Young People in Detention and Out of Home Care - \$6.95 million.

Background, data and facts:

2025-26 Budget

- The 2025-26 Department for Education, Children and Young People budget (by Total Expenses by Portfolio and Output) is \$9.80 billion across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates, including \$2.38 billion for 2025-26.
- The expense growth through to 2028-29 is on average 1.95 per cent each year. The level of growth is impacted by the application of the Budget Efficiency Dividend.
- The 2025-26 budget for Output Group 4 – Children Services is \$858 million across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates, including \$225 million in 2025-26. The expense decrease through to 2028-29 is on average a reduction of 4.2 per cent each year.
- The level of decrease is impacted by the application of the Budget Efficiency Dividend and the cessation of fixed term funding arrangements comprising of:
 - U16 Lighthouse Program;
 - Intensive Family Engagement Service;
 - Transition to Independence; and
 - Commission of Inquiry implementation.
- The funding profile for the original 2024-25 State Budget Commission of Inquiry funding has been adjusted in the 2025-26 budget – REFER Brief 64 – COI Funding Allocation – Children and Families - for specifics.
- The 2025-26 budget for Output Group 5 – Independent Children’s and Young Person’s Review Service is \$6.68 million across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates, including \$1.63 million in 2025-26.
- The expense growth through to 2028-29 is on average, 2.07 per cent each year.
- The total Capital Investment Program for Department for Education, Children and Young People across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates totals \$455.31 million.

Of this, \$159.6 million is committed to Children and Youth Services comprising:

- Youth Justice Facilities - \$152.6 million (\$24.8 million in 2025-26)
- Enhanced Case Management for Children and Young People in Detention and Out of Home Care - \$6.95 million (\$1.38 million in 2025-26).
- The Budget Efficiency Dividend related to the Child and Youth Portfolio for 2025-26 totals \$3.0 million.
- In addition, the 2025-26 budget included three new savings targets totalling \$11.4 million across the forward estimates. The indicative share of these savings targets applicable to Children and Youth would be in the order of \$1.2 million. These savings are expected to be achieved through reductions in:
 - Marketing, communications and expenditure improvements,
 - Office and leasing improvements, and
 - Procurement Processes.

2025-26 Key Deliverables

- \$41.556 million of investment in children and youth is committed across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates (\$20.954 million in 2025-26) comprising:

- \$2.012 million for Foster and Kinship Carer Uplift (\$2.012 million in 2025-26);
- \$15 million for Out of Home Care (\$9 million in 2025-26);
- \$10.32 million for Bringing Baby Home transferred from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (\$2.58 million in 2025-26);
- \$8 million for Intensive Family Engagement Service (\$4 million in 2025-26);
- \$6.224 million for Transition to Independence (\$3.112 million in 2025-26); and
- \$2.9 million for Information Management – Storage and Access funded from the Digital Transformation Priority Expenditure Program in Finance General (\$250,000 in 2025-26).

2025 Election Commitments

- Foster and Kinship Carers Uplift funding of \$2.012 million in 2025-26 has been provided to increase the base rate of support payments for all foster and formal kinship carers by 15% for one year.

2024 Election Commitments

- The Government continues to deliver on 2024 Election commitments, with \$11.4 million invested in children and youth across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates.

Funding of \$3.274 million for 2025-26 includes:

- Community Sector Organisations Indexation – Increase - \$1.244 million;
- JCP Youth - \$1.23 million; and
- Youth Offending Place Based Initiatives - \$800,000.

Commission of Inquiry

- Funding of \$37.55 million is committed across 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates to deliver on Commission of Inquiry recommendations that relate to children and youth.
- This is a reduction of \$8.765 million from the 2024-25 Budget of \$46.318 million.
- There are some deliverables where the allocation now ceases in 2025-26, however due to the critical nature of these deliverables in responding to the recommendations, the Department will continue to deliver on these through internal prioritisation of resources.

Those which impact Children Services are Implementation Taskforce and Policy Resources (\$835,000) and Legislative Work (\$300,000) (both held as Whole of Agency deliverables).

- Funding of \$9.46 million is provided in 2025-26 comprising:
 - *Services for Children and Families*
 - Disability Liaison - \$409,000
 - Enhanced Case Management - \$1.374 million
 - Out of Home Care Reform Implementation Unit - \$612,000
 - *Services for Youth Justice*
 - Aboriginal Youth Justice – \$300,000
 - Building Youth Justice Workforce Capability - \$474,000
 - Early Intervention and Diversionary Services - \$1 million
 - Keeping Kids Safe in Detention - \$2.239 million
 - Strengthening Leadership and Cultural Change for Youth Justice - \$880,000
 - Therapeutic Supports and Case Management for Children in Detention - \$1 million
 - Youth Justice Reform - \$1.176 million
 - Critical Case Management funding has been removed in the 2025-26 budget.

For further detail on the Commission of Inquiry 2025-26 Budget movements refer to Table 1 below.

Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



Budget Preparation

- The Department's budget is prepared on an accrual basis that recognises assets, asset depreciation and liabilities such as employee entitlements. Accrual budgeting produces a Net Operating Result deficit, which largely reflects that the Department is not funded through appropriation for non-cash items such as depreciation.

Other Revenue

- Other revenue is also generated through fees and charges applied by the Department. Fees under legislation are increased annually accordance with the Fees Units Act 1997.

Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services s36	Date: 10/10/2025
Approved by:	Glenn Lucas Director Finance and Budget Services	Date: 19/05/2025 & 16/10/2025
Approved by:	Kane Salter Deputy Secretary Business Operations and Support	Date: 24/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 24 October 2025

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Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children's Services

Brief 12 - Efficiency Dividend

TALKING POINTS

- The Budget Efficiency Dividend to be achieved in the Children and Youth portfolio is \$3.0 million in 2025-26 increasing to a structural reduction of \$4.2 million in 2026-27.
- Operating efficiencies remain our priority, while also ensuring that we protect our critical frontline services.
- Services for Children and Families and Youth Justice will continue to operate on a business-as-usual basis in filling allocated positions.
- These essential positions will not be impacted by the Government's current recruitment freeze.
- The Government continues to make substantial investments in frontline services for Children and Families and Youth Justice - ensuring the long-term sustainability of high-quality front line service delivery. These efforts are further strengthened by targeted funding in key areas where it will lead to better outcomes for children and young people.
- Our immediate focus has been on achieving the 2024 - 25 efficiency allocation while also working through purpose driven strategies and actions to achieve the estimated structural reduction of \$4.2 million in 2026-27.
- The Department for Education, Children and Young People has achieved savings in 2024-25 of \$1.0 million in the Children and Youth Portfolio.
- This was \$702,000 short of the 2024-25 Budget Efficiency Dividend target. This shortfall was managed as part of the Department's end of year processes.
- Savings were achieved through not progressing the Stable Permanents Placement Support Program.

- We are focussed on continuing to develop and enhance our practice to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people in care by:
 - Continuing to implement the Permanency and Stability Policy via staff training
 - Developing and publishing placement matching guidance to enhance placement decision making
 - Delivering carer information sessions on Third Party Guardianship
 - Investigate opportunities for increased processing of Third-Party Guardianship applications
 - Exploring opportunities to build workforce capability in ‘family finding’ by partnering with external organisations such as ACCO’s
 - Enhancing practice to identify placements at risk earlier, ensuring appropriate support is provided to increase preservation
 - Investigating opportunities for increased placement preservation services.
- These activities are being managed by the Department within existing resources.
- Further savings will be achieved through this program in 2025-26 and the out years:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
BED Target	3 030	4 1200	4 050	4 050
Achieved	1 084	1 283	1 116
Remaining to Achieve	1 946	2 917	2 934	4 050

Previous Budget Estimates Key Points

- The remaining savings totalling \$618,000 in 2024-25 have been achieved through the global Departmental budget.

- Other short-term strategies that will continue to be considered and applied to achieve Budget Efficiency
Dividend savings include:
 - Ceasing, pausing or scaling back non-priority activities
 - Capturing salary savings that occur through genuine vacancies and the timing of filling those vacancies.
 - This includes salaries may be identified to be frozen through the Government's commitment to 'Right Size' the State Service.
 - Reducing expenditure on non-salary costs with no impact to front-line activity, for example:
 - staff travel and transport
 - consultancies
 - office expenditure and equipment
 - office accommodation
 - staff ICT costs
 - process improvements.
- Strategies will not impact on the delivery of any key Government priorities or front-line services.
- Further work will continue to optimise how we manage staffing resources and associated budget allocations. We continue to seek opportunities to further identify possible efficiency dividend savings.
- The primary focus is to ensure that every child and young person is known, safe and well.
- The 2025-26 Budget has included three additional savings targets for the Department to meet totalling \$11.4 million across the forward estimates (\$1.6 million in 2025-26).
- These savings consist of:
 - Agency marketing, communications and expenditure improvements - \$2.4 million (\$341,000 in 2025-26)
 - Office and leasing improvements - \$4.3 million (\$613,000 in 2025-26) and

- Procurement Processes - \$4.77 million (\$681,000 in 2025-26)
- The indicative share of these savings for the Children and Youth Portfolio is \$1.2 million (\$0.2 million in 2025-26)

Background Financial Tables:

The following table includes the amount of efficiency dividend that has been applied to each output for the Children and Youth portfolio:

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Minister for Children and Youth					
<i>Output Group 4 - Children Services</i>					
4.1 Services for Children and Families	1,422	2,686	3,684	3,544	3,544
4.2 Services for Youth Justice	264	313	468	462	462
<i>Total Output Group 4 - Children Services</i>	1,686	2,999	4,152	4,006	4,006
<i>Output Group 5 - Independent Children's and Young Persons' Review Service</i>					
<i>Total Output Group 5 - Independent Children's and Young Persons' Review Service</i>					
	16	31	44	44	44
Minister for Children and Youth	1,702	3,030	4,196	4,050	4,050

Contact Officer:	XXX phone: xxxxx	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson – Deputy Director FABS	10/10/2025
Approved by:	Glenn Lucas Relevant Director/Manager	Date: 16/10/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcome Deputy Secretary CS&YJO	Date: 31/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 31/10/2025

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Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group 4: Children Services

Brief 19 - Community and Custodial Youth Justice Staffing and Recruitment

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- Funding continues in the 2025-26 Budget for 13.0 FTE operational custodial youth justice staff to support the Keeping Kids Safe in Detention Action Plan. This was allocated in 2024-25 as part of Commission of Inquiry funding.
- Through the 2025-26 Budget, funding of \$1.6 million over three years to build youth justice workforce capability.
- And a further, \$2.7 million over three years was provided to support strengthened leadership and cultural change in Youth Justice.

COI RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.6: Ensure there is sufficient leadership capability in youth detention, and appropriate KPIs are introduced to facilitate cultural change.
- 12.7: Monitor and evaluate progress towards cultural change in youth detention and appoint a culture change manager.
- 12.9 Changing the aptitudes, attitudes and capabilities of youth justice workers, as well as child-centred recruitment and induction processes.
- 12.34 The Department of Education Children and Young People should provide training and professional development for staff who have contact with children and young people in youth detention facilities, and the Tasmania Police should ensure members receive regular training

TALKING POINTS

- Youth Justice staff operate in a complex and sometimes challenging environment, and they demonstrate their commitment to the young people in their care every day.

- The Department has undertaken intensive recruitment activity across Custodial and Community Youth Justice, resulting in new staff being appointed to frontline roles.
- We acknowledge that recruitment and retention in frontline youth justice remains a challenge.
- We know there is always more to do to support the safety of young people in the Community and Custodial Youth Justice system, and we continue to prioritise this important work.
- A Youth Justice Workforce Action Plan 2026 is being developed to address workforce-related Commission of Inquiry recommendations (12.6, 12.7, 12.9 and 12.34).
- The Child Safety and Youth Justice Workforce Action Plan 2026 is due for completion in December 2025.
- The plan will focus on workforce planning, attraction, recruitment, and retention, and ongoing workforce management to ensure that young people in the youth justice system are supported by a valued, capable and skilled workforce.
- Investment is also being made to build youth justice workforce capability, including the implementation of new key leadership and practice support positions at AYDC to improve service delivery and drive cultural change. This includes a Director, Custodial Youth Justice; a Project Manager, Youth Justice; and a dedicated Business Manager. With all three roles filled this has added leadership capacity and operational focus. At Ashley School, an Assistant Principal has been appointed so the Principal can take a broader leadership role across the Centre. Cultural transformation is being led by a newly appointed Cultural Change Lead in line with Commission of Inquiry recommendations 12.6 and 12.7.

STAFFING NUMBERS

- There has been a concentrated effort to recruit more staff to support young people with extensive recruitment campaign occurring across the service.
- As of September 2025, there were 30.31 FTE Community Youth Justice staff members statewide.
- This is up from 23.59 FTE in March 2025, and significantly higher than the 18.77 FTE in March 2024.
- Of these 30.31 FTE staff members:
 - 13.11 FTE are based in the South, 8.55 FTE in the North, and 8.65 FTE in the North-west of Tasmania.
- As of September 2025, there were 2.09 FTE vacant Community Youth Justice positions.
- As of September 2025, there were 105.49 FTE Custodial Youth Justice workers. This is down slightly from the 108.38 FTE in March 2025 and remains higher than then 94.80 FTE in March 2024.
- The Department coordinates regular targeted recruitment campaigns for Youth Worker roles at AYDC. Campaigns promote the rewarding nature of the work to attract people who are passionate about making a difference.
- There were three Youth Worker recruitment campaigns in 2024. From these:
 - 12 offers were accepted from the January 2024 campaign.
 - 5 offers were accepted from the July 2024 campaign.
 - 8 offers were accepted from the October 2024 campaign.
- In 2025, the Department completed two major recruitment campaigns, and is in the final stages of a third campaign for Custodial Youth Justice Youth Workers.
- The March 2025 campaign resulted in four accepted offers.

- A second campaign was launched in July 2025. Nine successful candidates commenced Induction Training at AYDC on 8 October 2025.
- A third campaign commenced in September 2025. This recruitment process is ongoing. More than 200 applications were received.
- A total of 104 eligible applicants were invited for phone screening, and of those, 68 applicants have proceeded to interview.
- Roles are advertised on Tasmanian Government Jobs site, the Department's 'Careers and Employment' page, through LinkedIn and Seek and are published in the Tasmanian Government Gazette.
- Recruitment processes for staff at AYDC are particularly comprehensive. They include psychometric testing that is customised to measure cognitive ability, work style and attributes predictive of suitability to a youth worker role within a custodial environment.
- Suitable international candidates who apply for the Youth Worker role can now be employed by the De on a fixed-term visa.

RETENTION AND STAFF SUPPORT

- The health and wellbeing of our staff is of utmost importance, as is retaining a suitably qualified workforce.
- Personal Impact Days are available to support both community and custodial youth workers – particularly those who are involved in serious incidents.
- The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) delivers reflective practice training to AYDC staff. As of May 2025, an ACF Senior Practice Lead will be on site three days a week (up from three days a fortnight).
- A Director of Clinical Services also provides professional advice and practical support to Youth Justice staff.

- In recognition of the challenging environment for AYDC staff, we have implemented a range of strategies aimed at staff health and wellbeing while at work. These include:
 - Access to professional supervision and coaching services for leaders
 - Access for all staff to external psychological services to provide support specifically related to the Commission of Inquiry
 - Access for all staff and their family members to specialist coaching and counselling services
 - Onsite debriefing with teams takes place after a critical incident
 - In-person staff wellbeing presentation during new staff induction processes; and
 - Access to Wellbeing Connect with a full range of employee supports and resources, including health promotive and preventative webinars and self-care resources.

Union Liaison

- The Department liaises with staff and their union representatives regarding the challenges and proposed practice changes at AYDC before implementation occurs.
- This includes sharing information about what is being actioned to ease the challenges, and consultation on future proposed actions. This process ensures support for staff and their representatives when practice changes
- A new AYDC Forum was established between Unions and Portfolio and Operational leaders in August 2025.
- This forum meets monthly to share information, advance solutions related to workforce and service challenges, and to support engagement focused on existing and new facilities.

Background, data and facts:

STAFFING NUMBERS

Table 1: Youth Justice Staff Profile March 2024 compared with March 2025

Area	FTE			Head Count			% of Total
	Mar 24	Mar 25	Variation	Mar 24	Mar 25	Variation	
Community Youth Justice	18.77	23.59	4.82	22	26	4	4%
Custodial Youth Justice	94.80	108.38	13.58	101	114	13	19%
Services to Youth	2.40	1.80	-0.60	3	2	-1	<1%
Youth Justice	7.80	20.10	12.30	8	21	13	4%
Youth Justice Reform	6.58	3.67	-2.91	7	4	-3	1%
Youth Justice Total	130.35	157.54	27.19	141	167	26	28%

Notes for Table 1 and Table 2:

- Services to Youth and Youth Justice includes non-operational staff
- Youth Justice Reform includes the staff temporarily transferred to DPAC (returning to DECYP in July 2025).

Table 2: Youth Justice Staff by Area and Employment Category as at March 2025

Youth Justice	Allied Health Professional		HaHSA General		Health Services Officer		TSSA General		SES Officer		Totals	
	FTE Mar 25	H/C Mar 25	FTE Mar 25	H/C Mar 25	FTE Mar 25	H/C Mar 25	FTE Mar 25	H/C Mar 25	FTE Mar 25	H/C Mar 25	FTE Mar 25	H/C Mar 25
Community Youth Justice	11.31	13	12.28	13	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	23.59	26
Custodial Youth Justice	4.20	5	97.68	102	4.50	5	1.00	1	1.00	1	108.38	114
Services to Youth	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	1.80	2	1.80	2
Youth Justice	1.00	1	6.10	7	0.00	0	12.00	12	1.00	1	20.10	21
Youth Justice Reform	0.00	0	2.67	3	0.00	0	0.00	0	1.00	1	3.67	4
March 2025 Total	16.51	19	118.73	125	4.50	5	13.00	13	4.80	5	157.54	167
March 2024 Total	17.57	21	101.88	108	5.10	6	1.00	1	4.80	5	130.35	141
Variation	-1.06	-2	16.85	17	-0.60	-1	12.00	12	0.00	0	27.19	26

Table 3: Headcount by Region as at March 2025

Select Service	Northern Region	Northwest Region	Southern Region	Total
Custodial Youth Justice (AYDC)	110	2	2	114
Community Youth Justice	7	8	11	26
March 2025 Total	117	10	13	140

Table 3a: Headcount by Region as at 30 September 2025

Select Service	Northern Region	Northwest Region	Southern Region	Total
Custodial Youth Justice (AYDC)	107	2	3	112
Community Youth Justice	11	9	14	34
Sept 2025 Total	118	11	17	146

Table 4: FTE by Region

Select Service	Northern Region	Northwest Region	Southern Region	Total
Custodial Youth Justice (AYDC)	105.18	2.00	1.20	108.38
Community Youth Justice	5.75	7.71	10.13	23.59
March 2025 Total	110.93	9.71	11.33	131.97

Table 4a: FTE by Region as at 30 September 2025

Select Service	Northern Region	Northwest Region	Southern Region	Total
Custodial Youth Justice (AYDC)	100.49	2	3	105.49
Community Youth Justice	8.55	8.65	13.11	30.31
Sept 2025 Total	109.04	10.65	16.11	135.8

Table 5: Staff by Stream

Select Service	Custodial Youth Justice		Community Youth Justice		Total	
	Mar 2024	Mar 2025	Mar 2024	Mar 2025	Mar 2024	Mar 2025
Allied Health Professional	5	5	15	13	20	18
HaHSA General	89	102	7	13	96	115
Health Services Officer	6	5	0	0	6	5
TSSA General	0	1	0	0	0	1
SES Officer	1	1	0	0	1	1
Totals	101	114	22	26	123	140

Contact Officer:	Paul Malett, Manager Strategic Business Planning, Business Planning and Improvement Unit	
Checked by Finance/HR/DSI	DSI – n/a PSS – cleared 13 May 2025 Glenn Lucas, Director FABS - 16/05/2025	Please indicate if this brief has been cleared by Finance/HR/DSI
Approved by:	Claire Lovell Director, Youth and Community Services	Date: 14/05/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 20/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children Services

Brief 26 - Intensive Family Engagement Service

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- 2025-26 State Budget provides funding of \$8 million over two years (\$4 million in 2025-26 and in 2026-27) to continue to support the delivery of the Intensive Family Engagement Service.

TALKING POINTS

- This program provides intensive support to families that have been assessed by the Child Safety Service as experiencing complex issues that directly impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and who are at risk of entering the statutory system.
- The Intensive Family Engagement Service (IFES) aims to build a family's capability to provide their children with a safe, stable and nurturing home environment.
- The 2025-26 State Budget provides for a continuation of funding totalling \$8.0 million over two years (\$4 million in 2025-26 and in 2026-27).
- The goal of the service is to, wherever possible, avoid the need for statutory intervention, to support families to build parenting capacity and to increase safety, preventing entry into the child safety system or into out-of-home care.

- All referrals for Intensive Family Engagement are reviewed by a panel and are assessed for suitability, based on the individual needs of the family, and the type of support available.
- Non-government organisations; Key Assets, 54 Reasons and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, are collectively funded to deliver 88 packages to families in Tasmania annually.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are prioritised for support through the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, with decisions made according to each family's preference.
- Intensive Family Engagement Services are critical for appropriately supporting and preserving Aboriginal families and reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in out of home care.
- IFES is recognised as a critical and highly effective service. There is no intention to vary or reduce the services available, as the outcomes being achieved are significant.
- Future market processes may provide the opportunity to expand the range of providers including where possible, increasing partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to deliver IFES.

IFES REFERRALS FOR 2024-25

- During the 2024-25 financial year, 91.67% per cent of families who participated with the program met their goals and did not require Out of Home Care services.
- 79 of 88 packages have been allocated, including 7 package extensions.
- The total number of referrals to IFES was 72;
 - 23 in the South
 - 25 in the North, and;
 - 24 in the North-West.
- 179 children were referred;

- 56 in the South
 - 65 in the North, and;
 - 58 in the North-West.
-
- 34 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families were supported.
 - 7 families were referred to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre.

BACKGROUND - Intensive Family Engagement Services

BACKGROUND AND WORKFORCE

- In 2017, an Intensive Family Engagement Service trial was undertaken, in accordance with the Strong Families Safe Kids reform program. This was to address an identified service gap for families that do not meet the threshold for intervention by the Child Safety Service but have complex issues around the safety of children and young people in the home.
- Through Intensive Family Engagement, families are provided with support to develop the skills to ensure their children and young people can remain safely at home rather than requiring further child safety service intervention.
- A State Coordinator provides oversight of all aspects of service operations, practice governance, case reviews and the statewide panel's review and assessment process.
- In 2025 there is permanent establishment for 5 IFES Specialist positions and 1 IFES CSO position. Permanency in these roles has benefited more consistent program referrals and data collection.

BUDGET COMMITMENTS AND FUNDING

- In 2025-26 and 2026-27, funding of \$4 million per year (\$8 million total) has been provided to continue to support the Intensive Family Engagement Service (IFES) to help children remain with their families and prevent them from entering statutory care.
- The specific funding allocation for these services will be based on demand, and the Department is currently assessing the appropriate model for the allocation of long-term funding.
- There are currently three non-government Intensive Family Engagement Service Providers, namely:
 - the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre
 - Key Assets
 - 54 Reasons – Save the Children Australia.
- They are collectively funded to provide 88 packages per year.

2023-24 BACKGROUND DATA:

- During the 2023-24 financial year 80 per cent of families who participated met their goals and did not require an Out of Home Care service.
- In 2023-24:
 - **73** per cent of referrals were able to be closed following involvement with the service
 - **44** of the **81** packages delivered were delivered to Aboriginal children and families.

Contact Officer:	Claire Lovell s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Glenn Lucas, Director FABS – 21/05/2025	Please indicate if this brief has been cleared by Finance/HR/DSI
Approved by:	Jason Sowell Director Business Improvement	Date: 15/09/2025
Approved by:	Tiffany Black Executive Director	Date: 15/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary CS&YJ	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 16/10/2025

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Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children Services

Brief 28 - Strong Families Safe Kids Response

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- NA

TALKING POINTS

- Tasmania's Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line (ARL) has changed the way we respond to concerns about children's safety and wellbeing, how we support families, and how government services collaborate with non-government and community organisations to keep children and young people safe.
- All concerns received by ARL are meticulously triaged to assess the most appropriate course of action.
- When it has been assessed as safe to do so, the goal is to intervene early with wrap-around support for families to address concerns and prevent progression to the Child Safety Service for a statutory assessment.
- If a child or young person is assessed as being at immediate risk, the matter is transferred to the Child Safety Service, allocated to a case worker and families are contacted within 24 hours.
- Less urgent matters are provided a differential response by ARL depending on their individual needs and assessed priority.

- The ongoing demonstrated improvements in performance and positive outcomes for children, young people and their families, is testament to a high degree of staff commitment to delivering outstanding service.

Increased demand for *Strong Families Safe Kids Advice* and Referral Line

- Since its implementation in December 2018, the ARL has received a steady increase in demand:
- This is a significant achievement and represents more community members contacting earlier and more often, about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania.
- Increased community and staff safeguarding awareness, through reviews and initiatives such as the Commission of Inquiry, the Tell Someone community awareness campaign, the Reportable Conduct Scheme and the renewed compulsory mandatory reporting training have contributed to an increase in contacts to the ARL.
- The ARL's scope has also broadened to incorporate referral services for Youth Services including Youth at Risk centres and Kids Care Clinics.

IF ASKED ABOUT ALLOCATION NUMBERS:

- **Advice and Referral Line:** All contacts to the ARL are allocated and actioned based on priority.
- Every call and online report is triaged to determine the most appropriate response – including a recommendation for an urgent child safety assessment if warranted.
- In all cases, if a child is assessed to be at immediate risk, they are allocated and seen within 24 hours. This approach has not changed.
- By giving families and carers the support they need earlier, children are less likely to experience abuse and neglect and are less likely to be separated from their families due to safety concerns.

- The ARL provides a holistic response, which can take time. The aim is to engage earlier with families who need support, and to ensure that appropriate support is provided.
- Statutory child safety responses are used only where children are at risk of abuse and neglect, where their family may be unwilling or unable to keep them safe, and whenever they may need protection from harm.
- All matters where children are assessed as being at serious risk and requiring an urgent safety assessment, are referred to the Child Safety Service for a statutory assessment.
- The ARL operates from 8:30am to 5:06pm on weekdays. Calls that are directed to the service outside of these times are triaged and responded to by the Child Safety After Hours Emergency Service.

CHILD SAFETY ASSESSMENT PRIORITY TIMEFRAMES

- The Advice and Referral Line assesses priorities for the referral of cases to the Child Safety Service.
- Cases are actioned by the Child Safety Service within the following specified timeframes, according to priority:
- Priority 1 cases are assigned to staff in the appropriate region for same-day action, unless it is determined that commencement may increase the risk of harm to the child or young person, in which case planned response commencement may be carried forward to the next calendar day.

BACKGROUND:

Table 1 – Contacts to the Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Contacts to the Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line	12,222	14,111	15,039	19,119	21,632	24,030

Table 2 – Child Safety Assessment Priority Timeframes

Priority assessment	Must commence within	Must sight the child within
Priority 1	Same day*	Same day
Priority 2	5 days	As soon as practicable
Priority 3	10 days	As soon as practicable

**Unless determined by the Response Team Leader (in consultation with the Child Safety Manager) that a same-day Priority 1 response may increase the risk of harm to the child*

Contact Officer:	Tiffany Black s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EP R		Please indicate if this brief has been cleared by Finance/HR/DSI
Approved by:	Tiffany Black Executive Director	Date: 16/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 09/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 14 October 2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children's Services

Brief 30 - Accommodation options for OoHC

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- 2025-26 State Budget provides base ongoing funding of \$30 million per year to meet the increasing costs of Out of Home Care.
- On top of this base allocation additional funding totalling \$15 million over two years (\$9 million in 2025-26 and \$6 million in 206-27) is provided support the Out of Home Care.

COI RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommendation 9.1: Funding for out of home care

TALKING POINTS

- The children and young people who access out of home care services are varied, as are their individual needs, meaning the type of accommodation required cannot always be a home-based foster care option.
- In line with the COI Recommendation 9.1, the 2025-26 Budget provides base ongoing funding of \$30 million per year to meet increasing costs of Out of Home Care in relation to; foster care, kinship care, respite care, salaried, and Special Care Packages.
- \$15 million over two years (\$9 million in 2025-26 and \$6 million in 2026-27) has also been provided in the 2025-26 State Budget to further support the ongoing operations of Out of Home Care.
- The Child Safety Service, Community Youth Justice, Homes Tasmania and other government and non-

government services work hard to identify suitable accommodation and wrap-around supports for children and young people in Tasmania.

- It can be challenging to identify suitable accommodation for children and young people who have complex needs and can be an additional challenge that presents when seeking prospective carers.
- During a crisis some young people may temporarily access youth accommodation services.
- Youth accommodation services provide excellent and safe care. Their policies and approaches enable young people to stay voluntarily, provided that the young people are respectful to others and respectful of the accommodation guidelines.
- This mutual and voluntary contract can increase a young person's stability and safety along with providing choice and fostering personal development.
- In 2024 DECYP and Homes Tasmania signed a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to improve housing outcomes for young people in out of home care and youth justice. The agreement:
 - outlines the respective roles for each agency;
 - outlines priority access to accommodation and support for young people in care, or for those who are transitioning out from care or detention; and
 - describes escalation pathways to address any unmet needs of our young people.

- A Work Plan has been developed under the SLA to progress priorities for both agencies. This includes:
 - improved communication and practice level information for operational staff;
 - providing an additional nine Homes Tasmania properties for out of home care (noting seven of the nine properties have been provided);
 - additional supports for young people subject to orders in supported accommodation; and
 - improved access to existing accommodation supported by pathway planning for young people.
- The SLA is governed by an Oversight Group with representatives from both DECYP and Homes Tasmania. The Group meets regularly to actively manage the Work Plan and progress agreed actions.
- The Department is also working with Community Housing and support providers to explore increasing crisis, transitional and long-term accommodation options for young people. This work is using a partnership approach with a focus on providing flexible and responsive accommodation, particularly for those young people in care.

Contact Officer:	XXX phone: xxxxx	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Glenn Lucas – Director FABS	19/05/2025
Approved by:	Tiffany Black	13/05/2025

	Executive Director – Services for Children, Young People and their families	
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: 4 - Children Services

Brief 31 - Out of Home Care – Additional Funding

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- 2025-26 State Budget provides additional funding of \$15 million over two years (\$9.0 million in 2025-26 and \$6.0 million in 2026-27) to support the continued delivery of quality out of home care.

Talking Points

- The 2025-26 budget provides additional funding of \$15 million over two years (\$9.0 million in 2025-26 and \$6.0 million in 2026-27) to support the continued delivery of quality out of home care provided by Child Safety Services.
- This uplift in investment supports the continued delivery of this statutory service provided by Child Safety Services and is in line with recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.
- Nothing is more important than keeping children and young people safe from harm. The 2025-26 funding supports the cost of the current demand for these services.
- This funding builds on the support provided in relation to Commission of Inquiry Recommendation 9.1, which provided \$30 million per year in the 2024-25 Budget to increase the baseline funding for Out of Home Care.
- The total Out of Home Care budget is in excess of \$90 million per annum.
- We know how important it is for children to remain with their families, but we also know that sometimes a child or young person may not be able to live safely at home.

- When that happens, the Government's Child Safety Service plays a critical role in protecting children's rights and providing them with care and support in a safe environment outside their family home.
- We are committed to building a high quality and accountable system of Out of Home Care, that meets the needs of children and young people
- As a result of our Strong Families Safe Kids reforms, more families are receiving the support they need to stay together and keep their children safe without the need for statutory child safety intervention. This is a significant achievement.
- This is reflected in the numbers of children in Out of Home Care which has seen a downward trend over the last six years.
- This demonstrates that more issues are being resolved by referrals to family support and other services, successfully diverting families away from involvement with statutory Child Safety and entry into Out of Home Care.
- The recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry will continue to strengthen and build on the work undertaken over the past decade to reform our Out of Home Care system.
- We embrace the Commission's key principle that a high-quality and well-functioning Out of Home Care system is vital to protect children from child sexual abuse, and to respond appropriately if it occurs.
- We are strongly committed to implementing all recommendations relating to the Child Safety Service and Out of Home Care as a matter of priority.

Background, data and facts:

Financial Table

2025-26 Key Deliverable

	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Out of Home Care Increase	9,000	6,000	15,000

Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Glenn Lucas, Director FABS – 26/05/2025	Date: 06/10/2025
Approved by:	Jason Sowell Director Business Improvement	Date: 16/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary CS&YJ	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

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Minister for Children and Youth

Output: Children's Services

Brief 33 - Physical and Sexual Abuse (PSA) Insurance Concerns for OOHC

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NA |
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TALKING POINTS

- We recognise the significant challenge that obtaining Physical and Sexual Abuse insurance may have on some non-government organisations (NGOs) in Tasmania.
- The Department is collaborating with other State Government Agencies, jurisdictional counterparts and Community Service Ministers regarding this national challenge.
- We remain committed to ensuring that essential services – many of which are delivered by NGOs in our community who support those most in need – can continue, including Out of Home Care.
- The Department continues to work with our non-government partners on a case-by-case basis where there is an issue accessing Physical and Sexual Abuse insurance.

Background, data and facts:

- Over recent years, some NGOs across Australia, including Tasmania, have had difficulty renewing or obtaining insurance policies with cover for Physical and Sexual Abuse. This is a result of some commercial insurers having withdrawn their cover from the market.
- Commercial insurers are exiting the market due to the removal of barriers and legal limitations that have historically impeded sexual abuse survivors from making successful civil claims.
- This has led to a substantial increase in the volume of civil claims, especially those relating to historical allegations of abuse.
- In November 2021, Community Services Ministers established an interjurisdictional working group (IJWG), with the aim of exploring longer-term solutions to this issue as it relates to OOHC and youth homelessness services, and in response to the withdrawal of PSA insurance from the market.
- The IJWG was dissolved in 2025.
- The IGWG did not achieve consensus on a national approach regarding PSA insurance. This is largely because each state and territory are at a different stage in addressing the issue.
- Informed by a report by Finity Consulting, commissioned by IJWG, jurisdictions are now working individually on jurisdiction-specific, longer-term solutions to the issue of PSA insurance.
- Responsibility for the issue of PSA insurance from a whole-of-government perspective was transferred from DECYP to DPAC in mid-2024. It is understood there is no current active work for a whole-of-government solution regarding PSA insurance.
- The Department works with funded service providers on a case-by-case basis where they are having issues with PSA insurance.

Contact Officer:	Nina Kolder phone: s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services	Date: 3/10/2025
Approved by:	Clare Wiseman Relevant Director/Manager	Date: 17/9/25
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	18/10/2025

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Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children's Services

Brief 36 - Enhanced Case Management for Children and Young People in Detention and OOHC

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- The 2025-26 State Budget provides \$5.4 million over three years for Enhanced Case Management to support extra Child Safety Officers to achieve the Commission of Inquiry Recommendation 9.16.
- This is in addition to total capital funding of \$8.3 million over four years committed in the 2024-25 State Budget for the development of an Enhanced Case Management system for the Children and Young People in Detention and Out of Home Care project.

COI RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.16 The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) is to ensure all children in care have a case manager, set a maximum case load for Child Safety Officers and regularly publish related data.

TALKING POINTS

- The 2025-26 State Budget provides ongoing funding totalling \$5.4 million over the next three years for Enhanced Case Management resourcing within Child Safety Services.
- This funding is provided to progress Commission of Inquiry recommendation 9.16 - that DECYP should ensure all children in care, including those on guardianship orders until age 18, have a case manager, and that a maximum case load for Child Safety Officers is set.

- This funding will provide the following:
 - A total of 6 FTE extra Child Safety Officers (2 FTE in 2025-26, an additional 2 FTE in 2026-27 and an additional 2 FTE in 2027-28 (\$1.5 million over 3 years).
 - 4 FTE to support business improvement resources within Children and Family Services. These resources are foundational to ensure the systems and services implemented are safe, sustainable and fit for purpose, and that new initiatives developed in response to the Commission of Inquiry can be effectively operationalised and embedded (\$2 million over 3 years).
 - Additional initiatives to attract and retain Child Safety Service and Advice and Referral Line staff (\$1.9 million over 3 years).
- The 2025-26 State Budget provides \$1.38 million in the second year of a \$8.3 million capital project, to develop an Enhanced Case Management system for Children and Young People in Detention and Out of Home Care.
- This commitment is being delivered by continuing the successful Integrated Client Information Program, involving an internal agency team working with collocated technical staff from SRA Technology Ltd.
- Through this program, the first version of the new youth justice system (YJPLUS) was delivered in August 2025, with further enhancements planned for Q2 2026.
- Further design and development work to enable multiple new functions for the child safety system, CPIS (Child Protection Information System), with multiple upgrades expected in 2026.

IF ASKED ABOUT CHILD SAFETY OFFICER STAFFING

Child Safety Officer FTE by region (as of 31 March 2025)

Region	FTE	Headcount
North	29.8	31
North West	21.3	22
South	60.3	63
Total	111.4	116

IF ASKED ABOUT CASE ALLOCATION NUMBERS:

- The Department is implementing strategies to ensure all children and young people have a primary Child Safety Officer.
- The average caseload for Child Safety Officers in Case Management teams was 13.0 children per worked FTE during 2024-25.
- The trigger point for Case Management is 15 children per Child Safety Officer.
- The Trigger Point is the threshold previously agreed through the Tasmanian Industrial Commission (TIC) which triggers a discussion between the worker and their team leader regarding caseload.

Table 1 Children in case management teams during June 2025, by region and allocation status

Region	Allocated to CSO	Not Allocated to CSO	Total
North	191.1	48.6	239.7
North West	129.3	108.4	237.7
South	329.7	264.7	594.4
State-wide	650.1	421.7	1071.8

- The number of children allocated to Child Safety Officers increased from 504.8 on an average day during December 2024 to 650.1, during June 2025.
- The Department has expanded the range and number of specialist support functions and roles within the service. This is based on areas in which it is known that children and young people can benefit from extra specialised supports.
- These roles include:
 - transition to Independence workers who help young people to have everything they need in place when they become young independent adults;
 - staff who can quickly help children and their carers with administrative tasks like applying for birth certificates and other personal identification, payments, registrations, and establishing bank accounts, and
 - staff who can help children establish or maintain family connections.

IF ASKED ABOUT CARE TEAMS AND CARE PLANS:

See Budget Estimates Brief – Care Teams and Care Plans

IF ASKED ABOUT LEGISLATIVE REVIEW:

See Budget Estimates Brief - Children, Young People and their Families Act Review

Financial Table:

The total Enhanced Case Management funding provided in the 2024-25 State Budget is below:

Enhanced Case Management - Operational	2024-25	2025-26	2026-28	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'001	\$'000
Funding to support extra Child Safety Officers to achieve COI recommendation 9.16	1,133	1,962	2,200	2,392	-	7,687
Original Forward Estimates 2024-25	1,133	1,962	2,200	2,392	-	7,687
Adjustment in 2025-26 Budget		(588)	-	-	552	(1,140)
Total		1,374	2,200	1,840	-	5,414

Enhanced Case Management - Capital	2024-25	2025-26	2026-28	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'001	\$'000
Enhanced Case Management for Children and Young People in Detention and Out of Home Care Project	1,374	1,382	2,777	2,793	-	8,326
Total	1,374	1,382	2,777	2,793	-	8,326

- The 2024-25 State Budget provided funding of \$16 million over 4 years for Enhanced Case management (\$7.7 million operational services and \$8.3 million capital services).
- This has been reduced in the 2025-26 budget by \$1.14 million to \$12.4 million over 3 years. (Or approximately \$14.9 million including 2024-25)

Note on changed allocation:

- The Tasmanian Government remains committed to achieving all Commission of Inquiry recommendations.
- The Department is undertaking a holistic review of the COI funding allocation changes. This is being completed in conjunction with the organisational structure changes underway that support delivery. For some elements this will provide more efficient and joined up project support.
- Internal resources will be considered for managing 2025-26 workload.

Contact Officer:	Tiffany Black s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Glenn Lucas, Director FABS	Date: 15/05/2025
Approved by:	Tiffany Black Executive Director	Date: 7/05/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations	Date: 14/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 21/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children Services

Brief 40 - Aboriginal Youth Justice

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- In the 2025-26 State Budget, the government provided \$1.174 million over three years to provide a culturally safe environment for vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, including:
 - recruitment of the Aboriginal Liaison Officer role for the AYDC;
 - support for the application of the Connection with Family and Community policy and procedure, to support young people to remain connected while they are at the AYDC; and
 - funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to engage and provide input into youth justice reforms.

COI RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 12.8: Permanent advisory group comprised of children, including Aboriginal children
- 12.13: Examine the of opportunities for cautioning and community conferencing particularly for Aboriginal children
- 12.14: Fully resource a 24-hour bail system with specialised and trained decision makers who have knowledge of Aboriginal children and young people and the impact of trauma
- 12.15: In sentencing an Aboriginal child, the court must consider additional factors including the consequences of intergenerational trauma, historical discriminatory policies, racism and previous trauma
- 12.23: Provide assistance to members of a child or young person's family or Aboriginal community to frequently visit
- 12.24: Integrate throughcare service for children and young people in detention that is culturally safe for Aboriginal children and young people.
- 12.27: Develop an Aboriginal youth justice strategy, helping to address legislative, capacity building and funding, police discretion, diversion, bail, etc
- 12.28: Co-design new facilities intended to replace AYDC with Aboriginal people and consider a home-like facility for Aboriginal children and youth
- 12.29: Ensure AYDC any replacement facilities are culturally safe for Aboriginal children and young people

- 12.36: Develop a community visitor scheme that includes an Aboriginal independent community visitor
- 12.39: support the needs of Aboriginal children and young people through appointing the Commission for children and young People as a National Preventive Mechanism under OPCAT

TALKING POINTS

- The Government remains highly concerned that vulnerable Tasmanian Aboriginal children and young people continue to be over-represented in our youth justice system.
- This is a national problem. It is inappropriate anywhere.
- We are committed to working with Tasmanian Aboriginal colleagues and local communities to resolve this complex and disturbing issue.
- In the 2025-26 State Budget, the government provided \$1.174 million over three years to provide a culturally safe environment for vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, including:
 - progressing recruitment of the Aboriginal liaison officer role for the AYDC which requires consultation with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and this has not yet occurred due to the need to sequence reform engagement activities;
 - allocating funds to support the application of the Connection with Family and Community policy and procedure, to support young people to remain connected to culture while they are at the AYDC; and
 - providing funding for Aboriginal people and organisations to engage and provide input into the suite of youth justice reforms, including development of a Tasmanian Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy.

- In a partnership with Tasmanian Aboriginal people, this Government is implementing all the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations to deliver on the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system.
- The Government is:
 - Progressing the appointment of a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People to monitor the experiences of Aboriginal children in out of home care and youth justice. This appointment is being progressed by the Department of Justice and remains on track for completion by the end of June 2026.
 - Progressing the appointment of an Aboriginal Senior Executive role within the Department under Commission recommendation 9.7 to oversee and report on implementation of Aboriginal youth justice initiatives with this scheduled for completion by the end of June 2026;
 - developing an Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy, created in partnership with Aboriginal people and organisations, which is underpinned by self-determination and focuses on prevention, early intervention and diversion strategies for Aboriginal children and young people; and
 - engaging in partnership with Aboriginal colleagues on each and every element of the Commission recommendations.
- We have engaged with Aboriginal organisations and established a Youth Justice Reform Aboriginal Reference Group to coordinate input on:
 - prevention and early intervention initiatives;
 - diversion and bail support services;
 - our model of care and practice models;

- the new facility; and
 - the Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy.
- The Youth Justice Reform Aboriginal Reference Group began its work in May 2024 and meets bimonthly and on demand. The Group was recently extended for two more years to continue its work on youth justice and out-of-home care reforms.
- We regularly engage with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre on youth justice and out-of-home care reforms, including through the National Agreement on Closing the Gap processes.

Tasmanian Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy

- The work on developing the Tasmanian Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy will continue to focus on opportunities to promote and support Aboriginal led services for Aboriginal children and young people.
- Work on the strategy is undertaken in parallel to engagement on a suite of youth justice reforms.
- We work closely with the Youth Justice Reform Aboriginal Reference Group and Aboriginal leaders to understand the priorities and firsts steps for Aboriginal led services and coordinate cross-agency engagement on strategic priorities.
- On 15 April 2025 the Government released the *Have Your Say* pamphlets and poster to formally launch public consultation on the development of a Tasmanian Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy.
- The launch had been preceded by discussions with key Aboriginal organisations and individuals to ensure engagement is Aboriginal-led and informed.

- The pamphlets on the Tasmanian Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy continued the community discussions and development of strategies to address the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in Tasmania's youth justice system.
- To provide time for full consideration of the many issues impacting the over-representation of Aboriginal youth in the justice system, public engagement was extended until 18 July 2025.
- The Department for Education, Children and Young People is consolidating responses and will continue discussions with Aboriginal organisations and individuals in identifying our next steps, working together on drafting the Strategy.
- Further engagement is planned for late 2025 and early 2026. The Strategy is scheduled for completion by the end of June 2026.

BACKGROUND:

- Aboriginal children and young people make up approximately 5% of the Tasmanian population but represent approximately 40% of the population of children in the youth justice system.
- A similar over-representation gap is evident for Aboriginal children and young people in socio-economic indicators highlighting disadvantage in education, health, early childhood development, employment, housing, family safety, land and sea rights, and disability.
- Two projects with Aboriginal organisations are currently underway:
 - The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre – total project value of \$285,000 for the Palawa Youth Justice Project to develop a practice model for vulnerable Aboriginal children.
 - Melaythenner Teeackana Warrana Aboriginal Corporation – total project value of \$285,000 for an Aboriginal Youth Hub Model in the Launceston area for young people at risk of engagement with the youth justice system.
- The majority of funding has been paid for these programs with the outstanding balance of 20 per cent due to be paid in January 2026, which is an unfunded budget risk.
- In the 2025-26 State Budget, the government provided \$1.174 million over three years to provide a culturally safe environment for vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, including:
 - recruitment of the Aboriginal Liaison Officer role for the AYDC;
 - support for the application of the Connection with Family and Community policy and procedure, to support young people to remain connected while they are at the AYDC; and
 - funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to engage and provide input into youth justice reforms.

Aboriginal Youth Justice	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total
Aboriginal Liaison Officer	66,421	136,465	145,318	143,510	491,714
Funding to support families	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,000
Funding for Aboriginal organisations to undertake consultation		300,000	200,000	200,000	700,000
Culturally appropriate programs		100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
Totals	116,421	586,465	495,318	493,510	1,691,714
Decrease in allocation 2025-26 budget		-286,000	-115,000	0	-401,000
• Updated allocation for 2025-26 budget for 3 years		300,465	380,318	493,510	1,174,293

Aboriginal cultural programs at Ashley Youth Detention Centre

- The Connection with Family and Community policy and procedure was implemented in June 2024.
- The policy provides a foundation for children and young people in detention to build and maintain connections with family and community, which is recognised as being critical for wellbeing.
- Importantly it allows for increased financial assistance for families and Aboriginal (and other) community group members to visit children and young people in youth detention.

- Ashley school engages with the Aboriginal Education Service, the Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC), and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service (TALS) to provide programs and services to Aboriginal children and young people.
- This includes an Aboriginal Education Program facilitated by external Aboriginal Education Support Officers during school terms.
- This program provides a culturally safe space for young people to engage in conversations around cultural identity, external supports, and exploring Aboriginal history.
- Currently TALS is facilitating an educational program during the school term helping young people understand the law across a range of areas such as cyber offences and sexual assault.
- Ashley is committed to establishing a yarning circle at the Centre. This initiative is dependent on the successful recruitment to the Aboriginal Liaison role to ensure the Yarning Circle is established in a culturally appropriate way.

Aboriginal cultural programs in Community Youth Justice

- Young people are connected to culturally appropriate programs as relevant to each individual, as identified with the young person.

Aboriginal Culturally Responsive Practice Lead (formerly Aboriginal Liaison role)

- This key role, once recruited to, will be located within the recently established Office of the Chief Practitioner in DECYP.
- It will involve the provision of cultural safety and culturally responsive practice expertise and advice to service managers and executive leadership across DECYP, and to develop and implement practice improvements tailored to service delivery areas and the professional workforce overall.
- The Statement of Duties for this role is being finalised, and next steps include approval and advertising the role.
- Considered recruitment to this role is important so that Aboriginal young people are supported to access culturally appropriate programs and increase awareness for all young people AYDC.

Contact Officer:	Brett Noble, Manager Aboriginal Youth Justice Reform mobile: s36	Date: 17/09/2025
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR		
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 18/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children Services

Brief 44 - Isolation Practices at AYDC

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- N/A

COI RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.32: Amend the *Youth Justice Act* and update relevant procedures with regards to isolation.

TALKING POINTS

- Isolation cannot be, and is not, used for punishment or disciplinary purposes.
- At times there is an increase in both numbers of young people sent to AYDC by the courts, and unexpected staff absences, which can result in periods of operational isolation for young people in their rooms.
- The Department is working to ensure these periods are minimised and the Centre can return to, and consistently maintain, full operations.
- While there have been operational challenges at AYDC, the Department acknowledges the dedication of the hard-working staff.

Increased numbers of young people including on remand

- The number of young people in AYDC fluctuates day-to-day due to factors such as sentencing and remand, as determined by the Court.
- The average daily number of young people in detention increased from **13.6 in 2022-2023** to **16.3 in 2023-2024**.

- The **figure for 2024-2025 is 15.8 young people**. This data relates to averages and therefore is not presented as whole numbers.
- Unsentenced young people remain at AYDC on remand whilst their matters are progressed through the Courts.
- As a principle, processes seek to minimise the number of young people in detention and the length of stay.
- However, there are some complex court matters which can lead to lengthy periods of remand for some young people.
- This is outside the control of AYDC and occurs for several reasons involving the Magistrates Court and Supreme Court, legal representatives, and prosecution services.
- **The Department is unable to comment on individual matters for privacy and confidentiality reasons.**
- Whilst young people are on remand, they receive case management support by allied health professionals at AYDC.
- As part of our comprehensive youth justice reform, we are focusing on reducing the numbers of young people coming into contact with the youth justice system.
- Our approach aims to minimise the numbers of young people in AYDC by investing in diversionary programs and strengthening intensive case management approaches.
- Integrated care planning approaches are being developed to align with the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility Model of Care and ensure a throughcare approach across the youth justice continuum.
- Research on positive behaviour support models, incorporating the perspectives of AYDC staff and young people on Centre programs, is also underway.

The use of isolation at AYDC

- The Department has advised that for the safety of the young people at AYDC and staff, there are certain staffing

ratios that must be met. These are assessed prior to the commencement of each shift.

- Ratios are determined by a range of factors, including the complexity of young people's needs, behavioural patterns, the relationship dynamics between young people, including any potential conflict or issues, and other relevant security and risk factors.
- Young people may request to be isolated in their rooms voluntarily to self-regulate or as a personal preference.
- Those young people are then monitored at least every 15 minutes in line with the legislative requirements of observation.
- If a young person's behaviour presents a threat to the safety and security of other young people or staff at the Centre, they may be isolated in their room after an incident.
- During this time young people are monitored, supported and provided an opportunity to self-regulate. This type of isolation is only used when needed and for the shortest time possible.

Support for young people while in isolation

- Centre staff continue to support young people during the use of operational isolation, including through exercise breaks, access to phone calls, programs and activities, and schooling can also continue.
- Ongoing psychological support through telehealth services are available to young people on a weekly basis combined with regular visits from the onsite case managers.
- The Australian Childhood Foundation has a Counsellor onsite four days a week working with young people.
- In addition, a psychiatrist attends AYDC monthly, and a general practitioner also attends the Centre every Friday and, as part of their practice, includes primary mental health care.

- The Centre also has onsite primary health care nursing services who are also able to provide primary mental health interventions.
- These health services are provided by the Department of Health.

Use of Isolation Procedure

- The AYDC Use of Isolation Procedure is currently being reviewed and updated to further support improvement of AYDC processes and align with COI Recommendation 12.32, due to be implemented by July 2026.
- Within the scope of this review, a proposed new model of isolation has been developed in consultation with the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, and the Office of the Custodial Inspector and approved in principle by the Department.
- The proposed new model of isolation aligns with recommendations, standards, and conventions to ensure the rights and dignity of children and young people are upheld.
- The new isolation procedure will be implemented at AYDC by July 2026.

IF ASKED: compliance with legislation

- In late 2023, it became apparent that the isolation practices used at AYDC were not compliant with the *Youth Justice Act*.
- The Department immediately made changes to improve processes, which remain in place:
 - Recording any time a young person is subject to isolation using a process and system which prompts Youth Workers to monitor and manage young people's movements and complete regular wellbeing checks, as well as recording when and why movement was restricted.

- The introduction of a monthly safety and security isolation reporting process. The report is forwarded to the Commissioner for Children and Young People, the Custodial Inspector as well as key Departmental stakeholders.

Isolation data recording practices and reporting limitations

- Isolation data is collected but not currently held in an easily reportable format and is difficult to quantify due to the complex nature of the practice and environment.
- However a new IT system YJPlus was successfully launched in August 2025 and AYDC staff are using this system to record all instances of isolation.
- The YJPlus reporting functionality continues to be developed and refined as staff adjust to recording information in the new system. Over time, this will make regular reporting on isolation data more streamlined and accurate.

BACKGROUND, DATA AND FACTS:

Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



Contact Officer:	Loga Nadar Manager Youth Justice Policy and Projects Phone: s36	
Checked by DSI/FABS/PaC(HR)	DSI Team	<i>Please indicate if this brief has been cleared by DSI/FABS/PaC(HR) if relevant</i>
Approved by:	Shane Murdoch A/Director Custodial Youth Justice Services	Date: 19/09/2025
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 22/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output: Children Services

Brief 46 - New Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- The 2025-26 Budget provides additional funding totalling \$105.3 million to progress the delivery of new fit for purpose youth justice facilities.
- This investment takes the total project to \$155.3 million from \$50 million committed in 2023-24.
- \$4.7 million has been spent on the project as at 30 September 2025.
- The Government allocated \$40 million in the 2022-23 State Budget for youth justice facilities.

TALKING POINTS

- The Government is committed to closing the Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC) as soon as possible.
- The decision to close AYDC and build a new facility aligns with the recommendations of the Tasmanian Government's Commission of Inquiry and the Youth Justice Blueprint which prioritises therapeutic approaches and long-term reduction in crime.
- Design of the new facility is well underway.
- Early works landscaping has commenced.

- The Masterplan was released for public consultation in May 2025, and the Application for Planning Permit was lodged with the Southern Midlands Council on Friday 22 August 2025 which are both key milestones for the project.
- The target date for completing construction of the new facility is the end of 2027 with the facility being operational in early 2028. This is subject to planning approvals, detailed planning and procurement.
- The new facility is part of a broader reform program aimed at improving youth justice in Tasmania by providing a therapeutic model of care that focuses on early intervention, prevention and rehabilitation, with detention as a last result.

Youth Justice Model of Care

- The Model of Care for the new facility is child-centred and rights based. It is grounded in a 'child-first, offender second' approach.
- This approach views the child or young person first and foremost as a child, with unmet unique wellbeing needs that are required to be identified and met by a service response that understands the drivers of offending behaviour and the promotion of protective factors that reduce the risk of re-offending.
- It recognises that rehabilitation is the primary purpose of sentencing a child.
- The Model of Care is being informed by the international children's rights standards.
- This approach prioritises child-centred care for all children, assures every child has the right to protection from harm, enables participation in decision-making, provides their basic needs, and ensures healthy development and preparedness for leaving detention.

- The vision of the Model of Care for the new facility is *“to enable an environment where children and young people experience the highest standards of child centred, rights-based, and therapeutic care and education, services and opportunities, supporting them to enhance connections, return and remain successfully in the community”*.

Youth Justice Facility Masterplan

- The Masterplan for the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility was released for public consultation in May 2025.
- The design focuses on providing education and other services that children and young people need to live positive lives and avoid re-offending when they return to the community.
- The Masterplan provided 20 beds which includes:
 - 16 residential beds,
 - two treatment beds in a health centre and
 - two orientation beds to support new arrivals if needed
- The Community Consultation and Feedback Summary Report, which summarises the feedback received, was made publicly available on the Department’s website in July 2025.

Development Application

- The Application for Planning Permit was submitted to the Southern Midlands Council, as the Planning Authority, on 22 August 2025.
- The Development Application is based on a 24-bed facility, four more beds than outlined in the Masterplan.

- These beds are not currently funded for construction; however they have been included in the Application as a forward planning measure, enabling the facility to be expanded if required.
- This change responds to consultation feedback about possible long-term demand, ensuring that this limited expansion could proceed without the need for further planning approval.

Facility Cost

- Delivery of the Masterplan has informed a re-assessment of the cost to be considered in the 2025-26 State Budget process.
- The 2025-26 Budget provides additional funding totalling \$105.3 million to progress the delivery of new fit-for-purpose youth justice facilities. This investment takes the total project to \$155.3 million from \$50 million committed in 2023-24 (which includes the \$40 million which was allocated in the 2022-23 State Budget for youth justice facilities).
- \$4.7 million has been expended on the project to date (as at 30 September 2025).
- This includes:
 - Site selection assessments (e.g. Aboriginal heritage assessments, natural values, infrastructure feasibility)
 - Lead Design Consultants to design the facility, including development of the masterplan, schematic design to support the application for planning permit, and detailed design of the new facility which is underway.
 - Consultants to design early works landscaping, access road, water supply and upgrades to the road leading to the site.

- Stakeholder and community engagement activities.

The future of current staff working AYDC

- The department recognises the uncertainty the new facility brings to staff working at Ashley Youth Detention Centre including what this change might mean for them and their families.
- The care and support that they provide for the children and young people at AYDC is highly valued and we are committed to continuing to support them through the transition.
- The Department for Education, Children and Young People is currently working on a Workforce Plan that will detail the options available for AYDC staff and how they will be supported through the change.

Commission of Inquiry recommendations

- The Commission of Inquiry recommendations related to this project include:
 - 12.1 – Closure of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre
 - 12.16 – New Youth Detention Centre
 - 12.28 – Aboriginal Co-design
 - 12.29 – Aboriginal Cultural Safety

Stakeholder Consultation

- Consultation continues with the local community and key stakeholders. It is a priority that the local community are aware and engaged through the design and delivery of the new facility.
- Key feedback received to date includes the desire for the facility to be low-scale, discrete and well screened.

- Common concerns included how lighting, noise, security, traffic and the facility's access location will impact nearby landowners as well as what measures will be in place for landowners to feel safe.
- This feedback continues to be used to inform the design of the new facility.
- Consultation with Aboriginal organisations has commenced to inform the Model of Care and design of the cultural building and cultural spaces within the facility.

Early Works Landscaping

- The Department has executed a contract for the provision of early works landscaping with local Tasmanian company, Pakana Services Land Management.
- Pakana Services is a registered charity developed to provide work and training for Aboriginal people in natural resource management, agriculture and other industry sectors.
- All profits made by Pakana Services are invested into the company to further develop the skills of Aboriginal Tasmanians.
- The early landscaping works will focus on perimeter screening around the proposed project site. Commencing this work early is critical to the development of the new Facility, allowing time for larger screening species to establish and mature before operations begin.
- Landscaping is an essential component of the project, designed to provide privacy for both neighbouring residents and the facility.

Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



Connection with family, community and culture for young people

- Connection with family and community, including visits with young people are a very important aspect of the Model of Care.
- Because Aboriginal young people are overrepresented in the custodial youth justice system ensuring they remain connected with culture during a custodial sentence is vital and part of the new facility operational planning and design.

- Consideration is being given to how best to support families and community service providers to access the new facility from across the state, enabling them to engage with children and young people whilst they are at the new facility.

Calls to close AYDC immediately

- We understand the calls for closing the Ashley Youth Detention Centre sooner and to deliver alternative arrangements for children and young people at AYDC.
- If there were suitable alternatives of course the government would take them. The department is acting now to ensure the safety and oversight of children and young people at Ashley.
- This includes ensuring there is full staff complement delivering a therapeutic model of care to support the children and young people at Ashley, while we plan for the transition to our new facility at the same time.
- This approach includes improving options to keep children and young people out of detention and to prevent re-entry to custodial youth justice settings.

UK Youth Justice Site Tour

- Engaging with subject matter experts nationally and internationally is essential to ensure the new facility reflects best practice and supports a therapeutic approach to the care of children and young people.
- In July 2025 the Secretary, Department for Education, Children and Young People, and the Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet visited youth justice and secure care facilities in Ireland and Scotland following an education delegation/study tour organised by the Susan McKinnon Foundation.

- Key learnings from the Study Tour will be incorporated into the design and operations of the new facility.
- The three sites chosen in Dublin and Glasgow have relevance to the implementation of the COI Recommendations related to the new youth justice facility. These were:
 - Oberstown Children Detention Campus (Dublin)
 - Crannog Nua Alternative Care Facility (Dublin)
 - St Mary's Kenmure Secure Care (Glasgow)
- Key take-aways from the Study Tour included:
 - Referring to the young people as *children* is a powerful reminder that every child matters.
 - A structured day supported by education, intensive programs, and outdoor activities is essential to creating a calm and purposeful environment.
 - The school environment should replicate, as much as possible, a traditional model with individual classrooms, various subjects, and high staffing levels for students.
 - Early engagement and genuine partnerships with the community are vital to long-term success.
 - High staffing ratios and quality personnel are critical to safety and outcomes.
 - Innovative approaches and tailored responses need to be provided to children and young people's unique behavioural needs.
- The study tour provided valuable opportunities to exchange ideas and insights to inform our operating model, support commissioning of the new facility, and explore future opportunities for staff exchanges.

Background, data and facts:

- Planning for the delivery of the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility transitioned from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) to the Department for Education, Children and Yong People effective 1 July 2025.
- Prior to 1 July 2025 the project was being delivered by the Youth Justice Reform Taskforce led by DPAC.

Contact Officer:	Sharyn Cody, Executive Director	16 September 2025
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services	6/10/2025
Approved by:	Sharyn Cody	Date: 14/10/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations	Date: 14/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output: Children Services

Brief 47 - AYDC Refurbishment

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- The Government committed \$5.0 million in 2023-24 to undertake priority infrastructure upgrades at Ashley Youth Detention Centre in response to the recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry.

TALKING POINTS

- We understand the calls for closing the Ashley Youth Detention Centre sooner and to deliver alternative arrangements for young people on remand.
- If there were more appropriate alternatives available when a Court determines that a young person will be detained, we would use them now.
- Ashley Youth Detention Centre will close. The new youth justice facility is being designed in line with the Commission of Inquiry recommendation for a detention centre that is smaller and therapeutic.
- In the interim, we have undertaken priority infrastructure upgrades to continue to support the safety and wellbeing of young people and staff at the current Centre. This necessary work is in direct response to the Commission of Inquiry.
- In October 2024, Fairbrother started work on the following upgrades at AYDC:
 - Construction of a Control Room for monitoring the Centre's extensive CCTV network.

- Upgrades to the Centre's secure entry and addition of a non-contact visitor room that enables visitors who choose not to be screened on entry to still safely visit young people.
- The construction work for these Centre improvements has been completed.
- In 2025-26 six new Safety and Security Officers have been recruited to operate the Control Room and manage Centre entries and exits.
- Upgrades have also been made to young people's accommodation units, the gym and secure courtyards to allow open-air exercise.
- In addition to the construction works, new fire-retardant therapeutic furniture and an advanced smoke detection system is being introduced to further support safety at the Centre.

The new smoke detection system

- This system is an additional smoke sensor in rooms, as recommended by a consultant fire safety engineer.
- This additional fire system monitors for smoke and sends an alarm if detected. It is funded outside of the \$5 million Commission of Inquiry allocation.
- The system is required as a condition of the installation of new therapeutic (or soft furniture), which was delivered in April 2025 and is currently being installed as part of the upgrades to young people's accommodation units.

Upgrades to accommodation units

- Accommodation unit upgrades have been undertaken to optimise the safety and wellbeing of young people.
- These include upgrading unit courtyards and constructing a new yard in one unit.
- Medical hatches are being installed in bedroom doors, as recommended in the Centre's 2024 fire safety review.

- Installation of fire-retardant moulded polyethylene desks and beds has commenced.

New bedroom furniture

- Existing bedroom furniture in two units has been replaced due to water damage from fire sprinklers.
- Moulded polyethylene furniture, which is already used in other parts of Centre, was selected as a more therapeutic and 'home-like' option – as opposed to steel furniture.

Details of the construction work at AYDC

- A dedicated Control Room (construction complete)
- Secure entry upgrade, including a non-contact visitor room (complete)
- Administration Office upgrade (complete)
- Renovations to Franklin and Liffey units, including furniture and new TV infrastructure to bedrooms (complete)
- Gym floor refurbishment (complete)
- New courtyard for Liffey unit (largely complete)
- Revamp of Franklin courtyard (underway)
- Advanced fire-detection system (underway)

Costs to upgrades to AYDC

- Construction material costs have escalated in recent years.
- Safety and security in a detention centre context is costly.
- Extensive consultation with architects and a specialist builder is included in the overall cost.
- Building and fitting out a reliable Control Room with specialised monitoring and CCTV equipment is important to the overall security of the Centre.
- Accommodation unit upgrades such as the installation of medical hatches, fire-retardant furniture and advanced smoke sensors address recommendations made in the fire safety review.

- The upgrade includes a gym refurbishment to provide a safer play surface and allow young people better access to recreational facilities while at AYDC.

Damage at AYDC following the incident on 5 October 2025

- On Sunday afternoon on 5 October 2025, an incident occurred at AYDC resulting in significant fire damage to the parts of the Centre.
- Safety, security and wellbeing of children, young people, staff and the community is the Government's highest priority.
- All necessary actions were taken by staff to minimise the impact and relevant services immediately contacted, including Tasmania Police and Tasmania Fire Services.
 - Young people at AYDC were involved in the incident, however, individual details cannot be disclosed due to privacy and confidentiality reasons.
- While no one was injured, the incident has resulted in significant damage to some areas of the Centre, leading to temporary disruption to usual Centre operations.
- Immediate action was taken to ensure the young people at the Centre remained safe, not significantly impacted and their rights maintained. Suitable temporary arrangements are in place for all young people to restore access to usual Centre programs.
- The Department has acted swiftly. Actions to ensure the AYDC building is safe for everyone has already occurred and work is going.
- The assessment of the building damage and the cost of restoration to the damaged areas is being assessed.

New Control Room

- A Control Room has been constructed to enable dedicated safety and security staff to monitor CCTV cameras across the site.
- The Control Room has not been significantly impacted or damaged as a result of the incident on Sunday 5 October 2025.
- The Control Room is in the Centre's Gatehouse building, which is the secure access point for all young people, staff and visitors.
- Safety and Security Officers have been recruited and trained to staff the Control Room and Secure Entry.
- Control Room staff will monitor CCTVs across the Centre, noting there is no CCTV coverage in young people's rooms. The control room is scheduled to be fully operational by the end 2025.
- Upgrades have also been made to the Gatehouse building's Secure Entry to support mandatory screening via the x-ray 'bag' scanner and walk-through metal detector.
- A new non-contact visitor room has been constructed and the administration office has been upgraded.

Background, Data and Facts

Safety and security advice

- Stage 1 of a safety review of the Centre’s fire systems and furniture was completed in 2024 by a fire engineer from Castellan Consulting.
- The AYDC Control Room design was informed by a security audit conducted by the Security Consulting Group (SCG) in 2024.

Costs

- Total expenditure on the refurbishment project up to July 2025 is \$5,003,308.
- The total cost includes use of specialist consultants (including fire, architecture and building advice and planning).
- Total expenditure for Fairbrother for the same time is \$3,897,439
- Table 1 shows a basic breakdown of expenditure from both Commission of Inquiry allocated funding and additional expenditure from the AYDC budget.

Table 1:

Fund source	Item	Expenditure Oct 2023 to July 2025
COI funding (\$5 million)	Contractor payments Includes Gatehouse internal works, unit internal works, TV infrastructure, courtyard external works, project variations, construction admin and professional services	\$3,897,439
	Consultancy payments For specialist advice and planning.	\$832,126
	Separate contract payments Includes Wormald Fire System upgrade to 2 units, medical hatches, TV supply and installation, Wormald design fees, stools for 2 units.	\$233,839
	Miscellaneous payments (fees and insurance)	\$39,904
	TOTAL to date	\$5,003,308
AYDC budget	Painting	\$181,232
	Electrical	
	Security	\$133,807
	TOTAL to date	\$733,750
		\$1,048,789

- * Note: Prior to October 2022, AYDC was part of the Department of Communities.

Fire system

- On Sunday 5 October 2025, the fire system was activated due to a fire at AYDC.
- Ongoing work is occurring at AYDC to ensure the Centre remains safe for staff and young people following the incident.
- Tas Fires Service was quickly notified and immediately responded, which minimised the building damage.
- The assessment and clean up actions are ongoing and supported by Tas Fire Services and Tasmania Police, including other necessary services.
- The Centre currently (pre-upgrade) has a fire suppression system that includes:
 - Heat-activated sprinklers in bedrooms and unit common areas that release water to put out fires.
 - Additional smoke sensors (advanced VESDA - Very Early Smoke Detection Apparatus). It interacts with the sprinkler system to prevent flooding if a sprinkler head is damaged. This is installed in 7 bedrooms.
- To safely install therapeutic furniture at AYDC, a second detection system (a version of VESDA) will be installed in the remaining bedrooms. This system monitors for smoke and sends an alarm if detected.
- VESDA will be installed in the Franklin and Liffey units as a priority by Wormald (contracted by Fairbrother) with other units to follow.

Government policy, election or budget commitment:

- The Government committed \$5 million in 2023-24 to undertake priority infrastructure upgrades at Ashley Youth Detention Centre in response to the recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry.
- The cost of restoration to damaged areas of AYDC following the incident on Sunday 5 October 2025 is currently being assessed.

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Approved by:	Shane Murdoch A/Director Custodial Youth Justice Services	Date: 19/09/2025
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 22/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output: <output Number>

Brief 52 - AYDC transports of young people by contractors

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

Not applicable

COI RECOMMENDATIONS

12.10: Use appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance by volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors with the professional conduct policy.
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TALKING POINTS

- The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) engages an external contracted provider to transport young people to and from Ashley Youth Detention Centre.
- Transports are made to and from courts or reception prisons and for scheduled medical and other appointments while at AYDC. Young people are also transported to scheduled locations when they are bailed or released.
- Transports are required 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and sometimes at relatively short notice. Due to a combination of unpredictable journey times and recruitment challenges, the Department uses external contractors for these transports.
- At least two contracted workers are assigned to each transport, which is typically for one young person only, with the safety and security of young people during transport a primary consideration for the Department.

- Contractors must hold security licences, which require national police checks and must complete the Department's Safeguarding Training, which provides an understanding of how to report concerns and keep young people safe. They must also have a current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.
- Transport costs are charged on an hourly basis, depending on the day of the week and time of day.
- The department is currently in the process of replacing an existing leased transport vehicle with a larger vehicle that is being customised to meet safety, security and therapeutic requirements.
- A safe and effective transport service is a priority for the department.

External secure transport tender process

- A Launceston-based company – Essential Security – has been contracted since August 2023 to provide transport services on behalf of the department. This contract is due to end in October 2025.
- In 2024-25, the transport service cost was \$235,643.
- During July 2025, the Department commenced a public tender process applying the required Tasmanian Government procurement process to secure a transport service provider from October 2025.
- Essential Security – one of five businesses who submitted a tender – was the successful tenderer.
- The contract execution process is underway..
- The contractor prior to August 2023 was Wilson Security.

Secure transport of young people - service improvements

- The new contract with Essential Security provides an opportunity for the department to improve the transport services for young people and to improve processes such as handovers briefings, journey reporting and debriefing with AYDC staff.
- Work is also underway to develop induction training for transport service workers that will provide an understanding of the Centre and young people in the youth justice system, as well as procedures and transport processes. This is particularly important to support the youth justice reform agenda.
- Where resourcing permits, Custodial Youth Workers (Centre staff) will accompany young people on their journeys to provide enhanced support to them.
- The use of body worn cameras and dual channel radios on transports is being explored to allow further safeguarding for children and young people during transport to and from AYDC.

Procurement of a new customised vehicle

- The new vehicle has been identified as a superior transport solution to the existing vehicle currently in use. The new vehicle is more spacious than the existing vehicle and has been ordered without seats to allow for customisation.
- The new vehicle is expected to be operational in 2026. This timeframe considers the therapeutic customisation planning, consultation with regulatory bodies and modification work to ensure the vehicle is suitable for transportation of young people.
- Customisation planning is ongoing, but it is proposed that the customised vehicle will include two front-facing secure passenger enclosures that will:

- include clear viewing panels to provide the young person with a view ahead and to the side, while maintaining their privacy from members of the community.
 - include door/s that can be fixed in an open position where safe to do so.
 - be temperature controlled, well-ventilated and fitted with speakers.
 - enable the young person to communicate with and see workers in the van.
 - be easy for young people to enter and exit, particularly in an emergency.
 - include cameras, head protectors and an automatic step to support safety.
- Customisation is expected to take place in Tasmania, with procurement of a supplier underway but not yet confirmed.
 - Transport vehicles are currently stored in Launceston. Provision of a second storage site in Hobart is being explored, with a view to reducing waiting times for young people being transported from the South.

Background, data and facts:

Transport service costs

- There is no set transportation cost per young person, rather the cost is based on an hourly rate as outlined in the table below.
- In 2024-25, this transport service cost totalled \$235,643.
- Transport occurs on an as-needs basis and therefore there is no full contract value figure.
- The hourly rates applied in 2024-25 and the revised (reduced) rate from October 2025 (under the new contract) are outlined below.

Table 1: Hourly rate for transportation of young people in detention

Day	Period the rate applies to	Hourly rate 2024-25 (excl GST)	Hourly rate from Oct 2025 (new contract)
Monday to Friday (Day)	6:00 hours to 18:00 hours	\$57.24	\$49
Monday to Friday (Evening/Night)	18:00 hours to 24:00 hours 00:00 hours to 6:00 hours	\$63.13	\$55
Saturday	00:00 hours to 24:00 hours	\$70.99	\$64
Sunday	00:00 hours to 24:00 hours	\$84.72	\$77
Public Holiday	00:00 hours to 24:00 hours	\$98.48	\$91

	June 2023	June 2024	June 2025
Transport service costs by financial year	\$171,471	\$259,496	\$235,643

Commission of Inquiry Recommendation

- **Recommendation 12.10**
The Department for Education, Children and Young People, in developing a professional conduct policy (Recommendation 20.2), should ensure:
 - d. the Department uses appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance by volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors with the professional conduct policy.

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Checked by DSI/FABS/PaC(HR)	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services	5/10/2025
Approved by:	Shane Murdoch A/Director Custodial Youth Justice Services	Date: 19/09/2025
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 22/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group 4: Children Services

Brief 53 - Use of Force

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

Not applicable

COI RECOMMENDATIONS

12.9: Changing the aptitudes, attitudes and capabilities of youth justice workers, as well as child-centred recruitment and induction processes

12.33: Amend the Youth Justice Act and update relevant procedures with regards to Use of Force.

12.34: Provide regular training and professional development for custodial youth justice staff on laws, standards, policies and procedures regarding use of force.

TALKING POINTS

- The use of force is prohibited under our Youth Justice legislation, except in specific circumstances to ensure the safety of young people and staff in the detention setting.
- The Awareness, De-escalation and Protection (ADP) approach has a greater focus on de-escalation, replacing pre-existing behaviour support approaches (the MAYBO technique).
- Training in the lawful and safe use of force is an important part of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre Youth Worker induction program.
- In March 2025, the new Awareness, De-escalation and Protection training course was introduced into the AYDC training schedule.

- Specifically tailored for Tasmanian youth justice requirements, this four-day course teaches situational awareness, de-escalation and safe teamwork skills to maximise the safety of young people and staff.
- An ADP train-the-trainer package has been developed to enable in-house training of ADP to other AYDC staff and provide refresher training from early 2026. This will support continued upskilling of the AYDC workforce, and the best support for young people in detention.

Awareness, De-escalation and Protection (ADP) training

- In June 2024, Resolution Education was contracted to develop training for AYDC Youth Workers and other operations workers.
- The ADP training is:
 - trauma-informed, considering the needs of young people in detention
 - focused on safe on-physical interventions to protect both young people and staff
 - accessible making it easy for staff to understand, apply and communicate
 - delivered using a 'train the trainer' model to support ongoing training and skills development.
- Resolution Education provides de-escalation, conflict resolution and occupational violence training to a variety of operational settings, including health and corrections.
- ADP training has a strong emphasis on facilitated discussion and experiential learning. It aims to establish safety through an understanding of young people and their behaviours as well as the environment.

- ADP training commenced in March 2025. The majority of Operations staff (57) completed this training within six months of its introduction. Remaining active staff who have yet to complete all ADP modules completed the training in October 2025.
- Centre staff working in Admissions, Cultural Change, Administration and Case Management have also undertaken the training.
- To support ongoing practice, regular 90-minute ADP video-led practice sessions have been provided to Operations staff. However, the ability to practise regularly has been impacted by staff shortages.
- In 2026, select Operations staff will undertake ADP train-the-trainer education to enable in-house training as required. This will reduce ongoing ADP training costs.
- ADP will continue to be delivered as part of the Centre's Youth Worker induction training program and continues to be part of future induction programs. The fourth induction for the year is scheduled to be held in December 2025.
- An ongoing focus on upskilling the workforce on reasonable use of force to ensure safety and security of young people will continue through the ADP model, the Youth Justice Act review process, and an updated AYDC Use of Force Procedure.

FAQs only if pushed/asked

Was Use of Force used in the AYDC October 2025 incident?

- Safety and security are always a priority for the staff when interacting with young people. The ADP training teaches staff to ensure personal safety of themselves and young people if an incident occurs.
- While the ADP focuses on de-escalation techniques, where necessary, under the ADP training staff are trained to remove themselves from escalated incidents that cannot be safely managed and where personal safety is at risk.
- Staff also act according to the Emergency Response Procedures as needed.
- Use of force was not applied in the incident at AYDC on 5 October 2025, because the young people involved were in the AYDC outdoor gym area when the incident commenced.

Background, data and facts:

- The new YJPLUS online information and reporting system was successfully launched in August 2025 and will support the consistent recording of use of force data.
- Gathering this information has previously been challenging due to multiple reporting systems in place at AYDC.
- Improving use of force record-keeping and reporting fulfill recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission (6.39) and the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional settings (12.9; 12.18).

Review of AYDC IRC

- The Centre's Independent Review Committee (IRC) meets weekly at the Centre to review all documented incidents involving the use of force, use of isolation, serious assault or considered a serious incident (such as a fire, an escape, and instances of harmful sexualised behaviour).
- The IRC assesses whether the practice used by those involved in the incident complies with Centre policies, procedures and approved training techniques, as well as relevant legislation; is trauma-informed and justified. The IRC was established in 2022 under Objective Four of the interim Keeping Kids Safe Plan released that year. It is chaired by an external consultant.
- In April 2025, Deputy Commissioner of Tasmania Police Jonathan Higgins commenced a three-month secondment to the Department for Education, Children and Young People. As a Principal Advisor in the Office of the Secretary, Mr Higgins reviewed the IRC and assisted more broadly with organisational alignment of complaints management.
- As part of the review, an Interim Assessment Panel provided support to assess matters relating to the use of force, isolation, searches and other complaints from young people in detention.
- Recommendations from the review are focused on strengthening the framework and assessment processes, particularly in relation to how use of force incidents are referred and managed and are being actively assessed for implementation by the Department

ADP development and training costs

- The ADP (Awareness, De-escalation and Protection) model was developed by Resolution Education in 2024, with delivery of the training modules from March 2025.
- The cost of developing the ADP model was \$68,712.

- The cost to deliver ADP training from March to 30 June 2025 was \$39,636. This included Resolution Education trainer travel and accommodation costs.

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Approved by:	Shane Murdoch A/Director Custodial Youth Justice Services	Date: 19/09/2025
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 22/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations)	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 22/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

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Output: Children Services

Brief 54 - Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act Review

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- Policy resources in the Department are leading the review of critical portfolio legislation Department including the *Teachers Registration Act 2000* (Recommendations 6.10 - 6.15), the *Youth Justice Act 1997* (recommendations 12.12 - 12.15) and the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (recommendations 9.15, 9.27, 9.34).

COI RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.15: Tasmanian Government should fully implement all elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle, including through a range of activities specified by the Commission of Inquiry.
- 21.9: Tasmanian Government should review the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* to give the Magistrates Court the power to order that a child who has displayed harmful sexual behaviour engage in a therapeutic intervention for harmful sexual behaviours.

TALKING POINTS

- The *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (The Act) provides the legislative framework to help ensure children and young people in care in Tasmania have the best care and protection possible.
- The Act is currently under review by the Department for Education, Children and Young People who is responsible for administering the Act.
- Work has commenced, leveraging what had previously been completed in the former Department of Communities, however this has been slowed to prioritise the earlier Commission of Inquiry legislative changes required, including the *Teachers Registration Act* and *Youth Justice Act*. The work of the review will align with comprehensive

reforms taking place including Bright Lives Uplifting Care, the Model of Care for Out of Home Care, potential policy considerations which arise from the review of the *Youth Justice Act* and alignment to the broader work being undertaken around COI recommendation 9.15 – implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

- It is important that the review of the Act is undertaken in a manner that is consistent with reform activity currently underway and provides the best foundation for Tasmanian children and young people to be known, safe, well and learning.
- Along with providing an avenue for implementing Commission of Inquiry recommendations, a review of the Act provides an opportunity to ensure the Act is meeting community expectations and keeping children safe.

What did the Commission of Inquiry (Col) recommend be changed in CYPFA?

- The Commission of Inquiry made two recommendations relevant to the Act (Recommendations 9.15 and 21.9). Recommendation 9.15 recommends changes that bring the Act in line with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.
- Recommendation 21.9 will give the Magistrates Court the power to order that a child who has displayed harmful sexual behaviour engage in a therapeutic intervention for harmful sexual behaviours.
- These are not due until July 2029.

What has been achieved with the review so far?

- Leveraging the process advanced by the former Department of Communities, research and policy work is well underway, with initial engagement with stakeholders being used to inform the direction of the review.
- The review is on track for completion in 2029.

What changes have been identified as being required to date for the Act?

Keeping Aboriginal Children Safe

- The Act Review will consider how to best incorporate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Placement Principles to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in out of home care.
- The Review will also consider how to align with further work underway to create greater consultation and involvement in family group conferences with recognised Aboriginal organisations (Col Recommendation 9.15).
- This includes the Commission of Inquiry recommendation to develop a statutory framework and plan for transferring child safety decision-making authority for Aboriginal children to recognised Aboriginal organisations (Col Recommendation 9.15).

Strengthening services for children

- The Review will consider implementation of Recommendation 21.9, giving the Magistrate's Court the power to order a child who has engaged in harmful sexual behaviour to engage in therapeutic intervention, with or without their family.

Background, data and facts:

What opportunities will the review provide?

- This is the opportunity:
 - to align Tasmania's approach to child safety and wellbeing to include shared responsibilities and accountabilities
 - to provide a more user-friendly, practical and modern legislative framework
 - to provide mechanisms to keep Aboriginal children safe, strengthen services for children and enhance the Rights of the Child.

Attachments (see below):

- Commission of Inquiry Recommendations on amending the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Placement Principles

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Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Secretary Finance and Budget Services	5/10/2025
Approved by:	Alice Blake Relevant Director/Manager	Date: 16/09/2025
Approved by:	Jenny Burgess Deputy Secretary Strategy and Performance	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Attachment 1 - Commission of Inquiry Recommendations on amending the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997

Recommendation 9.15

The Tasmanian Government should fully implement all elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle by:

- a. increasing investment in Aboriginal-led targeted early intervention and prevention services for Aboriginal families, including family support and reunification services, to a rate equivalent to the representation of Aboriginal children in the Tasmanian child safety system
- b. adopting and reporting on measures to reduce institutional racism and supporting decolonising practices in the Department for Education, Children and Young People to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal children in out of home care
- c. ensuring that the Aboriginal status of all Aboriginal children in contact with Child Safety Services is accurately identified and recorded at the earliest opportunity, and appropriately shared with non-government out of home care providers and carers
- d. introducing legislation to amend the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 to:
 - i. require decision makers to consult with a relevant recognised Aboriginal organisation in relation to any decision likely to have a significant impact on an Aboriginal child—in particular, decisions about whether to remove a child from their family and where a child should live;
 - ii. require the involvement of a relevant recognised Aboriginal organisation nominated by an Aboriginal child, or their advocate, in family group conferences, case planning and cultural support planning in respect of the child;
 - iii. create a statutory framework and plan co-designed with Aboriginal communities for transferring child safety decision-making authority for Aboriginal children to recognised Aboriginal organisations

Recommendation 21.9

The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 and the Youth Justice Act 1997 to:

- a. give the Magistrates Court explicit power to order that a child who has displayed harmful sexual behaviours (and their family) engage in a therapeutic intervention for harmful sexual behaviours;
- b. ensure the Magistrates Court has the power to divert from the criminal justice system a child who has been charged with a criminal offence and who has engaged in harmful sexual behaviours, by adjourning the criminal proceeding to enable the child to engage in a therapeutic intervention and discharging the child where the intervention has been completed successfully.

Attachment 2 - The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle

Placing children in out-of-home care in accordance with the established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle placement hierarchy.

The Placement element of the Child Placement Principle sets a hierarchy of preferred placement options for carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. The placement hierarchy is designed to ensure the highest possible level of connection to family, community, culture and country is maintained for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child in out-of-home care. The placement hierarchy is as follows:

1. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous relatives or extended family members (kin)
2. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the child's community
3. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-based carers

The 3 options above are preferred placement types. If these preferred options are not available, as a last resort, the child may be placed in:
Another care arrangement (such as with a non-Indigenous carer or in a residential setting).

If the child is not placed with their relatives or kin (that is, level 1 in the placement hierarchy), the placement should be within close geographic proximity to the child's family.

Maintaining and supporting connections to family, community, culture and country for children in out-of-home care.

The Connection element of the Child Placement Principle relates to support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care to maintain or re-establish connections to their family, community, culture and country. This element is considered especially relevant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed with non-Indigenous carers.

Connection covers a broad range of actions and supports that can facilitate the maintenance or re-establishment of connection to culture and can be measured by reporting on children in out-of-home care living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers.

Protecting children's rights to grow up in family, community and culture by redressing causes of child protection intervention.

The Prevention element of the Child Placement Principle relates to supporting families and building capacity in communities to care safely for their children. This will protect future generations from the devastating effects of removal from family, community, culture and country. To protect the rights of children to be brought up in their families, it is necessary to ensure that families have equitable access to quality service supports.

Ensuring the participation of community representatives in service design, delivery and individual case decisions.

The Partnership element of the Child Placement Principle ensures that participation extends beyond consultation to genuine inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives in the decisions that are made about children at all stages of child and family welfare decision-making.

Ensuring the participation of children, parents and family members in decisions regarding the safety, belonging and wellbeing of their children.

The Participation element of the Child Placement Principle ensures the participation of children, parents and family members in decisions regarding the care and protection of their children. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families have the best knowledge about the caring strengths and risks that exist in their own families and communities. Involving family members in decision-making can help to widen circles of support for parents and children, identify placement options with family and community and ensure families take responsibility for plans to address safety concerns that are of their own making.

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Children Services

Brief 55 - Commission of Inquiry – Child Safety and Youth Justice Reform

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

COI RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommendations – Chapter 9 – Child Safety
- Recommendations – Chapter 12 – Youth Justice

TALKING POINTS

Commission of Inquiry Recommendations

- The safety and wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people is the government's highest priority. The government is committed to building a system of continuous improvement to ensure all children and young people in our care are safe, well and supported.
- Significant progress has been made by the Department for Education, Children and Young People to achieve real, practical changes to improve the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania.
- The Department continues to take action to deliver the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families interacting with the youth justice, the care system and its supports.

- The next phase of recommendations are due to be implemented by 1 July 2026. These include:
 - 18 recommendations to support Out of Home Care reform actions; and
 - 17 recommendations to support Youth Justice reform actions.
- This government continues to work with key stakeholders across all levels of government, community organisations, children and young people, carers and the wider community to prioritise the implementation of these reforms.
- The work of keeping children safe does not stop once COI recommendations are implemented.
- That is why the government is continuing to implement proactive safeguarding strategies and resources to support our staff to keep children and young people safe from child sexual abuse.
- The Department is making meaningful progress and remains committed to continuous improvement by learning from those with lived experience and engaging actively with the sector to ensure that change is both effective and enduring.
- The voices of children and young people are at the heart of these reforms. Their safety, wellbeing and futures depend on the actions we take now.
- The Department has completed its quarterly report on progress of COI recommendations for the period ending 31 July 2025.
- The progress report for 1 May 2025 to 31 July 2025 is available on the *Keeping Children Safe* public website.

Youth Justice Reform

- The government has provided a clear plan for how we are supporting young people with offending behaviours through the delivery of the following foundational strategic plans that build on reforms already underway to implement the Commission's recommendations:
 - **Change for Children:** is the Government's 10-year Strategy to create child safe cultures and systems.
 - **The Youth Justice Blueprint 2024-2034:** details the Government's plans for youth justice reform.
- Both strategies emphasise the Tasmanian Government's responsibility to implement all 191 recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry and related reviews, such as the Disability Royal Commission.
- Additionally, the *Keeping Kids Safe in Detention Action Plan 2024-2026*, released in December 2024, outlines our plan for right now to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at Ashley Youth Detention Centre.
- A central pillar of Youth Justice Reform is a comprehensive review of the *Youth Justice Act*, which is currently underway.
- The review is evidenced-based, and includes careful review of other countries and jurisdictions that are achieving positive results in addressing youth crime and making communities safer.
- The Youth Justice Action Plan 2024 - 2025 contained five priority areas that lay the groundwork for long-term change, which reflect the Youth Justice Blueprint objectives and actions.

- These priority areas include action on a series of immediate and short-term priorities:
- **Youth Justice Model of Care**
 - In December 2024, the Youth Justice Model of Care was publicly released.
 - **Next action:** The development of a self-assessment tool to measure implementation of the Model of Care, support change management and identify priority actions is underway, along with a sector education and training calendar to provide ongoing support for implementation and shared understanding.
- **The Youth Justice Diversionary Framework**
 - In March 2025, the Department publicly released the Youth Justice Diversionary Services Framework.
 - **Next action:** The first step for implementing the Framework is to conduct a review of community conferences and police cautions, as recommended by the COI.
- **Bail Support and transition programs**
 - The design of an assisted bail and transition from detention system is underway.
 - A 24/7 Youth Bail Support Model is being developed to provide safe, stable accommodation and trained workers to help children and young people to attend programs and services to support their needs, and to comply with their conditions of bail.
 - Programs being progressed now include trials of place-based approaches in Hobart's northern suburbs, a Youth After-hours Diversion Service (YADS).

- **Next action:** the recommendations response from the review of 54 reasons Bail Support and Transition from Detention program is being prepared.
- **Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy**
 - In April 2025 the Department formally launched the *Have your Say* public consultation on the development of a Tasmanian Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy.
 - To allow full consideration of the issues, public engagement occurred over several months, closing in July 2025.
 - **Next action:** the Department is consolidating responses and will continue collaborate with Aboriginal organisations and individuals to work together on drafting the Strategy.
- **New Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility**
 - Site assessments completed and the site confirmed at Pontville Road, in southern Tasmania.
 - Development of the Masterplan including community consultation in May 2025.
 - Development Application submitted to Southern Midlands Council on 22 August 2025.
 - **Next actions:**
 - continuation of facility planning and design
 - Consultation continues with the local community and key stakeholders, including local businesses.
 - Construction is scheduled to be completed by 2027 and operational in 2028.

- To guide and inform youth justice reform, five key groups were established and include government departments, experts across the sector, Aboriginal leaders and community voices:
 - Youth Justice Reform Expert Panel
 - The Youth Justice Reform Expert Panel (Expert Panel) was formed under the Youth Justice Reform Taskforce in August 2024.
 - Excluding the Chair, the Instruments of Appointment of the members of the Expert Panel expired on 26 August 2025.
 - The government is considering appropriate options for accessing relevant youth justice-related expertise during the next phase of the reform initiatives.
 - Youth Justice Reform Cross Agency Steering Committee (CASC)
 - Youth Justice Reform Aboriginal Reference Group
 - Youth Justice Reform Community Engagement Group (CEG)
 - Youth Justice Reform Cross-Agency Working Group (CAWG)

Out of Home Care Reform

- This government embraces the Commission's key principle that a high-quality and well-functioning Out of Home Care system is best placed to protect children from child sexual abuse.
- The government is committed to building a high quality and accountable care system, that advances the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people in care.

- To achieve this, the government continues to prioritise investment in our system of Out of Home Care, as well as a range of initiatives to better support children and young people.
- A significant and interconnected governance and advisory model has been established to inform and guide the reform work.
- This includes an independent expert panel to guide reform work and ensure it is evidence-based and informed by best practice. The Panel is chaired by Professor Leah Bromfield.
- It also includes:
 - An advisory group of children and young people with lived experience of Care.
 - A Foster and Kinship Carer Advisory Group (facilitated by the Foster and Kinship Carers Association of Tasmania).
 - A Statewide Service Provider Reference Group (facilitated by the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare).
 - An Aboriginal Reference Group (shared with youth justice reform).
- The Government is working on a Roadmap and supporting Action Plan in consultation with key stakeholders to clearly outline our approach to improvement.
- The Government is approaching change in a strategic and coordinated in the way to ensure the changes implemented are effective and enduring over time.
- This Government is taking the time to get it right, acknowledging that there are some immediate actions being progressed, as well as continuing the work already underway to safeguard children and young people.

Throughcare support for young people

- COI funded clinical service and case management positions will drive the delivery of safe and high-quality therapeutic services towards the support of young people with the most complex and intensive unmet needs.
- Work is ongoing to co-design a Case Management Policy Framework.
- This integrated care planning is informed by the emerging Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility Model of Care, which outlines both the operating philosophy and organisational framework which guide the way children and young people are cared for while in detention.
- This integrated care planning will help to provide structure for service delivery to young people in detention, as well as those under community supervision orders.
- The care planning framework will ensure a throughcare approach across the youth justice continuum as well as a coordinated approach to assessing and responding to the individual unmet needs of young people.

BACKGROUND:

Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



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Checked by DSI/FABS/PaC(HR)	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Secretary Finance and Budget Services	6/10/2025
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 9/10/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary (CS&YJO)	Date: 10/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 16/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Children and Youth

Output: Children Services

Brief 56 - Youth Justice Act Review

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- The 2024-25 State Budget provided funding of \$277,000 in 2024-25 and \$300,000 in 2025-26 for Policy Resources to lead the review of critical portfolio legislation within the Department including the Teachers Registration Act 2000 (Recommendations 6.10 - 6.15), the Youth Justice Act 1997 (recommendations 12.12, 12.13(1)(c), 12.15(a), 12.31(1), 12.32(1) and 12.33(1), 21.9)) and the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (recommendations 9.15, 9.27, 9.34).
- The 2025-26 funding was reduced to zero in the 2025-26 budget.
- Some internal Department resource will be prioritised for managing 2025-26 workload.

COI RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 12.12: Ensure legislation to replace or amend the Youth Justice Act 1997 contains updated general principles of youth justice that reflect contemporary understandings of child development.
- 12.13(1) (c): The Tasmanian Government, in reviewing current diversion processes and developing a Diversionary Services Framework, should introduce legislation to widen the range of alleged offences in respect of which diversion may be pursued and create a presumption in favour of pre-court diversion for children and young people.
- 12.15(a): Amend the Youth Justice Act to introduce sentencing requirements including providing for rehabilitation as primary purpose and graduated, trauma-informed sentencing.
- 12.31(1): Amend the Youth Justice Act to ensure the Act expressly prohibits fully unclothed searches of children and young people in detention.
- 12.32(1): Introduce legislation to amend the Youth Justice Act to ensure the Act clarifies the definition of isolation, prohibits and criminalises the use of isolation as punishment.
- 12.33(1): Introduce legislation to clarify the use of force provisions, prohibit the use of force as punishment or to secure compliance and criminalise the use of force in contravention of the Act.
- 21.9: Amend the Youth Justice Act to ensure that the Magistrate's Court has explicit power to order a child who has engaged in harmful sexual behaviour to engage in therapeutic intervention.

TALKING POINTS

Evidence-based legislative reform

- To truly deliver on this Government's commitments, including closing Ashley Youth Detention Centre, the Youth Justice Blueprint, the Commission of Inquiry Recommendations, National Closing the Gap Agreement, and the Disability Royal Commission Recommendations, we need a smart, strategic approach. One that focuses on improving outcomes for children and making our community safer. A central pillar of this reform is a comprehensive review of the Youth Justice Act, which is currently underway.
- A significant body of research has been undertaken to inform the review of the Act.
- Consultation with critical stakeholders on the approach to delivery of the Review has been undertaken in recent months.
- The evidence is clear that we need to intervene earlier and divert children and young people from the justice system, provide the right services in a coordinated manner and engage or re-engage children and young people with education, health and support services to achieve effective and sustainable solutions. The Department is drawing from the evidence in other countries and jurisdictions that are achieving positive results in addressing youth crime and making communities safer.
- The Government is taking a rights-based approach – this includes the rights of the child and young person and the rights of the victim and the community – and addressing the consequences of behaviours through restorative justice approaches.
- Coordination across the sector – including government and non-government - is imperative and has already started through a number of forums.
- A working group with representatives from the Department of Health, Department of Police, Fire and Emergency

Management, Department of Justice, and this Department is meeting regularly to advance cross cutting legislative issues.

- The next step is consultation. Targeted engagement will commence shortly with key stakeholders including children and young people with lived experience of the justice system, Aboriginal communities, the youth justice and community service sector and victims of crime.
- Next the Government will release a discussion paper for public consultation in early 2026.
- This collaborative approach is critical to make sure the review doesn't just tick boxes — it reflects lived experience, service needs and drives real, lasting change.

Background, data and facts:

Current Status

- Advice is being prepared for Government on the approach and timeline for delivery. It is anticipated this will be considered by Cabinet on 8 December 2025.
- The Review timeline is aligned with the opening of the new Youth Justice Facility to ensure that the new facility is supported by appropriate legislation.

Work Undertaken to Date

- Comprehensive work has been undertaken on the Youth Justice Act review including:
 - Developed a series of evidence-based background papers on trauma-informed approaches to youth justice, a public health model for youth justice, embedding human rights approaches to youth justice legislation, child development and the historical context for the development of the Youth Justice Act including a review of second reading speeches.
 - Reviewed key regulatory frameworks including the Commission of Inquiry recommendations, Disability Royal Commission Recommendations, Youth Justice Blueprint, Closing the Gap Agreement, Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework and Child and Youth Safe Standards.
 - Developed an early draft paper, including comprehensive international and domestic jurisdictional scans, to inform the policy position for the Col Recommendations due to be implemented by 2026.
 - Prepared draft governance documents to underpin the review including draft Minutes on the Terms of Reference for the Act Review and Steering committee.
 - Undertaken preliminary presentations and consultations with internal business units to inform the scope of the review.
 - Contributed comprehensive feedback to inform the development of key related outputs including the Youth Justice Model of Care, Diversionary Services Framework and Model of Care for Youth Justice Facilities and provided feedback on related legislation including the Bail Bill 2024.
 - Preparation of a position paper to inform the development of model and mechanisms to inform the review of the Youth Justice Act.
 - Drafting of the Discussion Paper is currently underway.

Table 1. Commission of Inquiry Recommendations identified as requiring amendment to the Youth Justice Act 1997.

Agreed Time Frame	Rec	Content
2026	12.12	Amend the Youth Justice Act to update the principles of the Act to reflect contemporary understanding of child development.
	12.31(1)	Amend the Youth Justice Act to ensure the Act expressly prohibits fully unclothed searches of children and young people in detention.
	12.32(1)	Introduce legislation to amend the Youth Justice Act to ensure the Act clarifies the definition of isolation, prohibits and criminalises the use of isolation as punishment.
	12.33(1)	Introduce legislation to clarify the use of force provisions, prohibit the use of force as punishment or to secure compliance and criminalise the use of force in contravention of the Act.
2029	12.13(1)(c)	Amend the Youth Justice Act to widen the range of offences where diversion may be used and create a presumption in favour of pre-court diversion.
	12.15(a)	Amend the Youth Justice Act to introduce sentencing requirements including providing for rehabilitation as primary purpose and graduated, trauma-informed sentencing.
	21.9	Amend the Youth Justice Act to ensure that the Magistrate’s Court has explicit power to order a child who has engaged in harmful sexual behaviour to engage in therapeutic intervention.

The comprehensive review of the Youth Justice Act will also include consideration of the following Col Recommendations:

- Col recommended reforms that could be strengthened/ enabled by amendment to the Youth Justice Act.
- Col recommended reforms where no specific legislation has been nominated.
- Col recommended reforms requiring amendment to the YJA to ensure legality of the proposed reforms.
- Reforms outside the scope of the Commission of Inquiry recommendations that pertain to youth justice.

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Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Glenn Lucas, Director Finance and Budget Services – 23/05/2025 and 10/10/2025	Please indicate if this brief has been cleared by Finance/HR/DSI
Approved by:	Sarah Williams Acting Director GRSL	Date: 16/09/2025
Approved by:	Jenny Bu Deputy Secretary (Strategy and Performance)	3/11/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 21/10/2025

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Minister for Children and Youth

Output 4: Children Services

Brief 57 - Youth Justice Reform

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- 2025-26 Budget provides \$3.68 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 (\$1.176 million in 2025-26) to support the Youth Justice Reform Taskforce. The taskforce was formed in July 2024 with initial funding provided to DPAC in 2024-25.
- 2025-26 Budget provides \$1.5 million over two years (\$800,000 in 2025-26 and \$700,000 in 2026-2027) for Youth Offending Placed Based Initiatives, to support new local initiatives and partnerships that offer innovative, place-based solutions that target the root causes of youth offending.

COI RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1: The Tasmanian Government should close Ashley Youth Detention Centre as soon as possible.

12.12: Ensure legislation to replace or amend the *Youth Justice Act 1997* contains updated general principles of youth justice that reflect contemporary understandings of child development.

12.13: Review current diversion processes, develop a Diversionary Services Framework and increase diversion options for children and young people.

12.14: Examine effectiveness of existing bail support program and establish a 24-hour bail system for children and young people.

12.16: Creating a child-focused new youth detention system.

12.24: Establish an integrated throughcare system for children and young people in detention.

12.27: Development of an Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy.

12.28: Ensure any new detention facilities are co-designed with Aboriginal communities.

12.29: Ensure AYDC and any new detention facilities are culturally safe.

TALKING POINTS

Youth Justice Reform Taskforce (2024-25)

- The Youth Justice Reform Taskforce was established in July 2024 within the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) as a whole-of-government initiative to accelerate urgent reform priorities identified by the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.
- Funding of \$2.45 million was allocated to DPAC during 2024-25 to establish the taskforce unit, Expert Advisory Panel and Community Engagement group as well as funding for programs to broker community led solutions and accelerate outcomes for young people in the youth justice system, all of which were actioned.
- The Taskforce was given a clear 12-month mandate to deliver foundational reforms that would set the direction for long-term change through the Youth Justice Blueprint 2024–2034.
- The Youth Justice Reform Taskforce Action Plan 2024–25 was released in October 2024 to guide this work. The Action Plan focused on five priority areas:
 - implementing a Youth Justice Model of Care;
 - expanding early intervention, prevention and diversion programs;
 - developing bail support and transition options;
 - co-designing an Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy; and
 - progressing the design and masterplan for a new Youth Justice Facility.
- Over the 12-month period, the Taskforce worked in partnership with children and young people, Aboriginal leaders, community organisations, and government agencies to deliver against these priorities.

- Key achievements included:
 - Tasmania's first Youth Justice Model of Care
 - A new Diversionary Services Framework
 - Place-based initiatives in Brighton and Glenorchy
 - Establishment of the Youth After-hours Diversion Service
 - Consultation on an Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy
 - Confirmation of the Pontville site and masterplan for the new Youth Justice Facility.
- The Action Plan Report 2024–25 was finalised in July 2025 to capture the outcomes of this work.
- From 1 July 2025, responsibility for implementing the next phase of reform transitioned back to the Department for Education, Children and Young People and is leading ongoing delivery of the Youth Justice Blueprint and related initiatives.
- The 2025-26 Budget includes \$3.68 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 (\$1.176 million in 2025-26) to support the Youth Justice Reform Taskforce, now part of this Department.
- The next phase of the reform will be outlined in the second Youth Justice Blueprint Action Plan which is under development and will be completed by February 2026.

Youth justice reform governance

- Delivery of youth justice reform actions are supported by governance arrangements that ensure transparency, accountability for progress and well-articulated outcomes.
- Under these governance arrangements, the Department has convened the Youth Justice Reform Community Engagement Group, which operates as a forum of 34 representatives from key community service organisations to provide input into youth justice reform in Tasmania.
- A Youth Justice Reform Expert Panel was formed and provided independent advice on the transition to a therapeutic model for youth justice.

- The Expert Panel met seven times to support the youth justice reform work and the ongoing requirement for this group is being assessed by the Department.
- The Youth Justice Reform Aboriginal Reference Group has provided valuable advice on the Youth Justice Model of Care, Youth Justice Diversionary Services Framework, and new detention facility.
- The Government will continue to work closely with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and other external stakeholders including service providers, Aboriginal organisations and the judiciary to ensure a coordinated whole of system approach.

24/7 Youth Bail Support Model

- To ensure that we are not unnecessarily detaining children and young people, appropriate bail support options, including supported accommodation are required.
- Maximising opportunities for children and young people to be admitted to bail and minimising the number of children and young people on remand was also a focus of the Commission of Inquiry.
- A 24/7 Youth Bail Support Model is being developed to provide safe, stable accommodation and trained workers to help children and young people to attend programs and services to support their needs, and to comply with their conditions of bail.
 - The Model is out for consultation with the Youth Justice Community Engagement Group and government stakeholders and will be finalised by December 2025.
 - Funding of \$1.4 million from the Commission of Inquiry is being applied to increase support to young people at risk and young people on bail to progress the implementation of the model during the 2025-26 financial year.

- Every child and young person's interaction with the youth justice system is unique and often involves multiple touchpoints across a range of government, non-government, Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations, and other community partners.

Throughcare support for children and young people

- To support the realisation of better outcomes, children and young people require an effective throughcare approach that allows for uninterrupted, coordinated, integrated and consistent case planning and support.
- Under a throughcare approach, supports move with the child or young person as they enter and exit at various stages of the service continuum. This approach allows children and young people to develop meaningful relationships with service providers and in turn, increase their trust in services.
- Applying a throughcare approach also reduces the need for children, young people and their families to repeat information and reduces the volume of repetitive administrative process, which can lead to further distress and trauma.
- Processes and procedures to ensure effective throughcare are being built into the review of case management procedures within AYDC (COI recommendation 12.19)

Youth Justice Model of Care

- The Youth Justice Model of Care (Model of Care), released in December 2024, provides a future outline for a coordinated and consistent approach to delivering trauma-informed, evidence-based, and culturally safe services to children and young people in contact with, or at risk of interacting with the youth justice system in Tasmania.
- The purpose of our Model of Care is to deliver therapeutic, culturally safe, integrated, collaborative and timely responses that are evidence-informed, rights-based and work together to support children and young people in, or at risk of interacting with the youth justice system, as well as their families and their broader communities.

- The Youth Justice Model of Care Implementation Plan outlines the strategies and timelines to operationalise the Model of Care which is underway. The Implementation Plan, which ends in July 2026, contains a number of youth justice initiatives to build on and ensure services are consistent with the Model of Care.
- Working to the Model of Care will ensure service delivery is child and young person centred and there is shared understanding on what a therapeutic approach to youth justice means.
- The Model of Care is built on nine principles that reflect national and international best practice approaches to support children and young people in, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system.
- The Commission of Inquiry's recommendations informed our work on the development of the Model of Care for children and young people engaged in the youth justice system.
- A working group of government, non-government organisation and Aboriginal organisation representatives are working to the Model of Care Implementation Plan to develop the following tools for use by youth justice sector practitioners:
 - a self-assessment tool to measure implementation of the Model of Care, support change management and identify priority actions has been drafted and will be finalised by December 2025. Once finalised the tool will be implemented within the youth justice sector;
 - a sector education and training calendar to provide ongoing support for implementation and shared understanding; and case studies to support implementation of the Model of Care is underway and will be finalised in February 2026. The calendar will be shared with the youth sector once completed.

Background, data and facts:

Youth Justice Reform Taskforce Action Plan 2024-2025 Report

- The Youth Justice Reform Taskforce Action Plan 2024–25 Report (the Report) was finalised in July 2025 to capture the outcomes of the Taskforce work in DPAC.

The Report has now been published on the Keeping Children Safe website.

Financial Table

2024-25 COI funding

- The 2024-25 State Budget provided funding of \$4.3 million over 3 years (from 2025-26) to establish a Youth Justice Reform Taskforce. Initial funding was provided to DPAC in 2024-25 (\$2.450 million).
- Ongoing funding has been provided to build on the Youth Justice Blueprint and will support innovative local initiatives and partnerships that target the root causes of youth offending in local communities. Initial funding was provided to DPAC in 2024-25 (\$800,000) with DECYP to continue this work from 2025-26 onwards.
- This has been reduced in the 2025-26 budget by \$612,000 to \$3.7 million over 3 years.

Youth Justice Reform	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 '000	Total \$'000
Youth Justice Reform Team	-	1,376	1,466	1,447	4,289
Original Forward Estimates 2024-25	-	1,376	1,466	1,447	4,289
Adjustment in 2025-26 Budget		(200)	(212)	(200)	(612)
2025-26 Budget - Total	-	1,176	1,254	1,247	3,677

Note on changed allocation:

- The Tasmanian Government remains committed to achieving all Commission of Inquiry recommendations.
- The Department is undertaking a holistic review of the COI funding allocation changes. This is being completed in conjunction with the organisational structure changes underway that support delivery. For some elements this will provide more efficient and joined up project support.
- Internal resources will be considered for managing 2025-26 workload.

2024 Election Commitment

	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 '000	Total \$'000
Youth Offending Placed Based Initiatives	-	800	700	-	1,500

Contact Officer:	Anita Doig phone: s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Glenn Lucas – Director FABS	20/10/2025
Approved by:	Jamie Synnott Director Service Transformation and Change	Date: 19/09/2025
Approved by:	Peter Whitcombe Deputy Secretary Child Safety and Youth Justice Operations	Date: 14/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 21/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Education

Minister for Children and Youth

Output Group: Corporate

BRIEF 6 - DECYP's response to re-sizing the State Service

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

N/A

TALKING POINTS

- All employees in the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) are highly valued for the critical work they do to support children and young people in Tasmania.
- The Government's focus is on ensuring the public sector is efficient, effective, and sustainable – with the right people, in the right roles, in the right places.
- The recruitment freeze is a measured response to broader fiscal challenges, with a focus on protecting essential services that directly support children and young people.
- Support for managers and constructive ongoing discussions with Unions throughout this time are absolute priorities for the Tasmanian Government.
- The department has established an internal process to manage vacancy requests, ensuring service continuity and alignment with Government priorities.
- Most roles in the Department provide direct support and care to children and young people. It is anticipated that the majority of roles will continue to be filled through usual recruitment activities.

IF ASKED: DOES “FRONTLINE WORKER” INCLUDE:

1. TEACHERS

2. CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS; AND/OR

3. YOUTH WORKERS?

- Yes. The Department’s workforce is largely made up of frontline roles that provide direct support and care to children and young people.
- The Treasurer’s Media Release mentioned several examples of professions that would easily be perceived by the public to be frontline, essential workers, like teachers, police officers, etc.
- The listed examples contained in the Treasurer’s Media Release were not intended to be exhaustive, and there are a range of other roles that the department would consider as essential frontline workers to deliver its core services.
- There is not a one size fits all approach. The Department carefully reviews matters following a panel-led vacancy review process defined by a formal Terms of Reference.
- Recruitment for teachers, child safety officers and youth workers and other frontline roles will continue as needed.

IF ASKED: What about Non-Frontline Roles?

- To be clear, there is not a universal definition or list of ‘essential’ roles across the department.
- Most roles in the Department provide direct support to the children and young people in our care. For example,
 - other in-school roles include teacher assistants, psychologists, and school nurses to name just a few.
 - Other Child Safety and Youth Justice roles include policy and project officers, administrative staff to name a few.

IF ASKED: HOW IS THE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATING WITH STAFF?

- The Department is committed to supporting its staff throughout the implementation of the freeze.
- Constructive and ongoing engagement with unions has been prioritised, ensuring transparency with a continued focus on staff wellbeing.
- Clear communication has been provided to all managers on the process and guiding questions ensure the impact to children and young people is considered first and foremost.
- The Department continues to focus on its core responsibilities – including providing high-quality education and care – while reviewing how it can operate more efficiently.

Background, data and facts:

- An Advisory Panel was established in March 2025.
- Given 6 months of operation, the Panel has recently been subject to review to ensure alignment with Government programs and department priorities.
- This Panel supports the Secretary's decision-making on vacancy requests and associated recruitment activities during the freeze.
- This process ensures decisions are consistent with the Department's strategic direction, protect frontline service delivery, and reflect workforce sustainability goals.
- The Panel meets weekly and is supported by updated systems and guidance regarding all vacancy requests from each portfolio in the Department.
- A set of questions has been developed to guide decisions around the types of roles and functions that are essential to delivering core services for both children and young people. Questions also encourage managers to consider staff if a role is not filled and whether roles support key priorities such as Commission of Inquiry recommendations, the Independent Review of Education and the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement.
- The Advisory Panel process is applied consistently across the Department and does not encourage the identification of one work area or workforce group, over another.
- The Panel considers all vacancy requests except Employment Register advertisements.
- There have been no vacancy requests suspended or declined in schools; child and family centres; or operational areas in children services or youth justice. Such positions continue to be filled through usual recruitment activities.
- The Panel has reviewed and recommended over 690 essential job requests to the Secretary.
- At 26 September 2025, the number of job requests rejected by the Panel process is 18 and Portfolios have pro-actively declined 16 job requests.
- Work is progressing in the Department to identify structural reductions of positions through targeted reductions where the resourcing does not impact on service delivery areas.

Contact Officer:	Alex Terhell phone: s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services	6/10/2025
Approved by:	Adam Clifford Member Advisory Panel Director Operations Schools and Early Years Portfolio	Date: 5/09/2025
Approved by:	Sue McKerracher Deputy Secretary People and Culture	8/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 18/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Education

Output Group: Education

Brief 13 - COI Funding Allocation Changes – 2025-26 and outyears

Overview

- The total Commission of Inquiry (COI) recurrent funding for the Education Portfolio is \$6.78 million across the forward estimates with \$2.3 million to be expended in 2025-26.
- In addition to Education Portfolio specific COI funding, Whole-of-Agency recurrent related COI funding allocations across the forward estimates is \$4.4 million.
- The 2025-26 State Budget has resulted in the following changes to COI funding allocations as follows:
 - Reductions to Education’s allocations totalling \$2.4 million across 2025-26 to 2028-29.
 - Reductions to Whole of Agency allocations totalling \$3.1 million across 2025-26 to 2028-29.
 - Specifically there is currently no provision for on-going funding of any elements in 2028-29. This will be subject to future budget decisions.
- The Government remains committed to the implementation of all the recommendations, therefore the Department will continue to deliver on these through internal re-prioritisation of resources.
- The Capital Investment Program for 2025-26 includes \$1.5 million for the Teachers Registration Board’s Customer Relationship Management System. There has been no change to the original budget allocation for this item.

Background, data and facts:

2025-26 Budget – Commission of Inquiry Funding Allocation Changes

For further detail on the Commission of Inquiry 2025-26 Budget movements refer to attachment 1.

Responses to COI funding allocation changes is set out in following table:

COI funding allocation	\$ Change	Response to change	COI recommendation/s
<i>Education:</i>			
Teachers Registration Board - Resourcing	Decrease \$1.5 million across 2025-26 to 2028-29, as follows: \$0.1 million per annum across 2025-26 to 2027-28. \$1.2 million in 2028-29.	Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister	6.10; 6.11; 6.12; 6.13; 6.15; 6.16
Office of the State Archivist – Increasing Information Management Capability Across Whole of Government	Decrease of \$0.5 million in 2028-29.		12.4
Teachers Registration Board - Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System	Decrease of \$0.2 million in 2028-29.		6.10; 6.11; 6.12; 6.13; 6.15

COI funding allocation	\$ Change	Response to change	COI recommendation/s
Education Regulation	Decrease of \$0.1 million in 2028-29.	Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister	6.4; 6.5
Child and Youth Empowerment	No decrease in 2025-26. Decrease of \$0.8 million across 2026-27 to 2028-29.		9.6; 12.8
Whole of Agency			
Reducing Harmful Sexual Behaviours	Decrease of \$1 million in 2028-29		6.9; 9.17; 9.28; 12.30
Implementation Taskforce	Decrease of \$0.8 million in 2025-26.		All DECYP COI recommendations
Office of Aboriginal Policy and Practice and Implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle	Decrease totalling \$0.4 million as follows: \$0.1 million in 2025-26; and \$0.3 million in 2028-29.		9.7; 9.15

COI funding allocation	\$ Change	Response to change	COI recommendation/s
Complaints Management System	Decrease of \$0.3 million across 2025-26 to 2028-29.	Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister	9.2; 9.31; 12.35; 16.2
Policy Resources for Legislative Work	Decrease of \$0.3 million in 2025-26		6.10; 6.11; 6.12; 6.13; 6.14; 6.15; 9.15; 9.27; 9.34; 12.12; 12.13; 12.14; 12.15; 21.9
Volunteer and contractor management - System Development	Decrease of \$0.3 million across 2025-26 to 2028-29.		6.5

Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



Notes:

1. Includes Child Youth and Empowerment budget allocation which was transferred from Children Services portfolio to Development and Support in 2024-25
2. This deliverable is required to continue in 2025-26 and will be funded from with the Department's existing resources.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Lucas/Jacqui Wilson	
Approved by:	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services Glenn Lucas – Director FABS	Date: 10/10/2025 GL – 16/10/2025
Approved by:	Kane Salter Deputy Secretary Business Operations and Support	22/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	23 October 2025

Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Education

Output Group: 1 Education

BRIEF 21 - More Staff in Schools

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

- The Government's 2024 Election Commitments provide incentives and pathways to attract more staff in schools via:
 - A commitment to employ 25 new mathematical and science teachers across Tasmania with 11 recruited so far;
 - Providing \$500,000, over three years commencing in 2024-25, to fund 20 additional scholarships for speech pathologists and school psychologists;
 - A pilot package to provide financial incentives to attract teachers for hard-to-staff schools, which is in place and operating in the 2025 school year;
 - Providing \$750,000, over four years, to develop a package to expand the Vocational Education and Training workforce and attract industry experts and skilled tradespeople to deliver more VET in government schools; and
 - Committing \$15 million to build new, and upgrade existing, teacher residences in rural and remote communities, with the first phase of upgrades to units in Queenstown nearing completion.

TALKING POINTS

- Workforce continues to be a strategic priority and one of the Department's key focus areas is school staff.
- In an effort to boost recruitment, DECYP engaged in the following:
 - New promotional videos were created, showcasing the benefits of teaching in Tasmania. These videos featured across a range of platforms including social media and DECYP digital channels. They achieved wide digital reach (360,000 views) and helped increase application rates.
 - Targeted advertising on sourcing platforms such as LinkedIn Talent Solutions and Seek, alongside

- expanded use of social media to drive awareness. As part of this, a new LinkedIn Life page was set up, enhancing the transparency and appeal of departmental culture for potential applicants.
- Updated digital collateral was developed emphasising Tasmania's teaching benefits and incentives.
 - There was personalised engagement with new applicants on the teacher register.
 - DECYP representatives participated in career expos and forums to connect with prospective teachers. This rounded out a holistic and future-facing recruitment strategy.
 - Visa sponsorship was arranged for five international teachers – two of whom specialised in Mathematics and Science, helping to address subject-specific workforce shortages.
 - Conversions to permanency for eligible school staff were made following amendments to Employment Direction No.1 (ED1), demonstrating a strong commitment to workforce stability and long-term employment. This saw the successful conversion of 192 teachers, equivalent to 138.65 FTE, and 430 school support staff, totalling 231.43 FTE, across Terms 1 and 2.

2014-2025 TEACHER VACANCY RATE COMPARISON

- As at 30 September 2025, there were 18.6 FTE classroom teacher vacancies in schools, reflecting normal seasonal fluctuations. 90.7% of schools were fully staffed at this time.
- There is no more important investment in the education of Tasmania's young people than employing quality teachers and school support staff.
- Between 31 March 2014 and 31 March 2025 the Tasmanian Government has employed an additional:

- 511.89 FTE teachers;
- 107.01 FTE professional support staff;
- 814.48 FTE teacher assistants; and
- 91.72 FTE education support specialists.

RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

- National Teacher recruitment campaigns over several years have been successful in attracting new quality applicants for employment in schools state-wide.
- Since 2018, 632 permanent Teachers have been appointed through targeted annual campaigns and related strategies, which have included a focus on regional and hard to staff schools and specialisations.
- Since 2022, 361 fixed-term Teachers have gained permanent status through change of employment status processes.
- The 2024 campaigns and initiatives resulted in:
 - 78 applicants found suitable for appointment via the National Teachers Recruitment Campaign
 - 32 Graduates found suitable for appointment;
 - 50 applicants appointed through early progression to permanency conversions; and
 - 27 Teach for Australia associates across the 2024 and 2025 cohorts.
- New talent attraction recruitment strategies include:
 - Mainland University Graduate Attraction Program. Collaboration with 5 universities that have students undertaking education qualifications, Charles Sturt University, Curtin University, Deakin University, Swinburne University and University of New England.
 - New service agreement in place to assist with employer sponsored teaching opportunities under a Skilled Migration Pathway. Currently 5 applications are in progress, 2 of which are Maths/Science specialised.

- Tactical approach to international candidates, via received applications and also proactive sourcing for specialisation vacancies only. Sponsorship consideration for hard-to-source specialised roles only.
- Enhanced partnership with TRB to satisfy qualification alignment to ensure a smooth registration process.
- In September 2024 a new Teacher Campaign: 'Make a Difference', was launched as a follow-up to the National Teachers Recruitment Campaign. While primarily aimed at secondary Teachers, this initiative enhanced the Department's brand presence both statewide and nationally and supports the More Teachers, Quality Teaching Action Plan which is a key output of our Education Workforce Roundtable.
- Future recruitment actions will also align to the new DECYP Workforce Strategy 2025-2030 Bright Futures: Our People Make the Difference, which will include a focus on improved workforce data to understand current and future needs, with a specific action plan for our education workforce.

TEACH TASMANIA SCHOLARSHIP

- The Teach Tasmania Scholarship is a new scholarship program for eligible Bachelor of Education and Master of Teaching students studying full-time at the University of Tasmania from 2024. Delivered in partnership with UTAS, 50 Scholarships were made available. Recipients need to be Tasmanian residents, study full-time and undertake professional experience placements in Tasmanian government schools.

TEACHER INTERN PLACEMENT PROGRAM

- The Teacher Intern Placement Program is a key action of the More Teachers, Quality Teaching Action Plan developed in 2018 by the Education Workforce Roundtable. Following a review in 2022 a revised target program participation was set at 40 for 2023 and 45 from 2024 onwards.
- 2025 – 20 interns (1 cancelled due to personal circumstances)
 - 2024 – 34 interns
 - 2023 – 26 interns
 - 2022 – 25 interns
- Application for the program is strong but converting interest to placements is challenging and the Department is exploring ways to increase placement numbers. Many UTAS students don't meet the entry requirements and the scholarship fund is not sufficient to avoid the need to maintain additional employment. There is a need to explore more flexible and inclusive approaches to strengthen the pipeline and support student success.

2024 ELECTION COMMITMENTS

- The Government's 2024 Election Commitments provide incentives and pathways to attract more staff in schools via:
 - A commitment to employ 25 new Maths/Science Teachers across Tasmania;
 - Providing \$500,000, over three years, to fund 20 additional scholarships for speech pathologists and psychologists;
 - A pilot incentive package to provide financial incentives to attract teachers for hard-to-staff schools, in place and operating in the 2025 school year; and
 - Providing \$750,000, over four years, to develop a package to expand the Vocational Education and Training workforce and attract industry experts and skilled tradespeople to deliver more VET in government schools.
- In 2024, the Government committed \$15 million to build or upgrade housing for 25 teachers in rural and remote areas, and this commitment is very close to being delivered already.
- Work is nearing completion on the refurbishment of 21 teacher residences in Queenstown. Work to finalise the program to build new residences at Smithton, Flinders Island, Scottsdale and Queenstown is also now well advanced.
- Through a combination of new builds and refurbishments, the program will deliver at a *minimum*, 37 quality residences for our hardworking teachers in rural and remote areas, and through value management of the new build program, there is potential to increase this number even further. In addition, the Department continues to undertake refurbishment of existing teacher residences through a recurrent Minor Works program. For 2025-26, this will see the refurbishment of three residences on King Island, with refurbishment of existing residences in

other areas of high need to be undertaken in the subsequent financial years.

INDUSTRIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- To support the attraction and retention of more teachers in schools, the 2023 industrial agreement and related commitments have provided additional resources directly in schools and has provided further support for beginning Teachers together with new or increased incentives in remote schools involving:
 - Additional staff resources of 170 FTE to provide direct support to teaching staff involving:
 - 25 FTE senior leadership roles in targeted areas of need in 2023/-24 (implemented);
 - An additional 25 FTE Education Support Specialists from 2023 (implemented);
 - The equivalent of 66 FTE Teacher Assistants to provide direct in-class support from 2023 (implemented), increasing to 100 FTE in 2025; and
 - An additional 20 FTE Social Workers, filled by 10 in 2023 and a further 10 in 2024 (both implemented).
 - Reduced instructional load, time release and professional development for new or early career teachers, which includes an intensive 4-day induction program in the week prior to Term 1; and
 - New or improved isolated school incentives including higher salary placement, settling in allowance, yearly incentive payments for the first five years and paid time to attend to urgent appointments.
 - Changes to the classification structure and pay points applying to VET Specialist Teachers to provide competitive wages and facilitate recruitment and retention of skilled, qualified vocational educators.

TEACHING POSITIONS – NON-SCHOOL AREAS

- Across the Department, there are teaching positions in non-school areas that require the expertise of a qualified teacher to support the educational provision for students and increase their educational outcomes, such as English as an Additional Language.
- The number of employees who are assigned a teaching classification but who are not assigned to, or undertaking duties in a school, at 31 March 2025 was 64.30 FTE.
- This number of teaching classified staff undertaking duties in an out of school area represents 1.15 per cent of the overall teaching workforce.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RELATED INITIATIVES

Teachers

- Since 31 March 2014, an additional 511.89 FTE teachers have been employed in Tasmania's public schools.
- There has been a 42.88 FTE increase in the number of teaching staff to 4,658.08 FTE from March 2024 to March 2025.
- Teaching staff includes those who hold a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT). Since 31 March 2025, there has been an increase of 7 (headcount (HC)) LAT holders: from 130 HC in 2024 to 137 HC.

Professional Support Staff

- Since 31 March 2014, an additional 107.01 FTE professional support staff have been employed to support schools.
- The Teachers Agreement 2023 included the employment of an additional 20 FTE social workers, with 10 being engaged across calendar years 2023 and 2024.
- In 2024, the Tasmanian Government provided funding for 10 speech pathology and 10 school psychology scholarships to eligible university students, creating pathways to permanent employment to provide support to schools for these early career professionals.
- 5 School Psychology scholarships and 13 (5 Election Commitment; 8 DECYP funded) Speech and Language Pathologist scholarships were awarded in 2024; 14 scholarship recipients have commenced with DECYP; the remaining 4 commence in July, 2025
- These 20 scholarships are in addition to 9 speech pathology scholarships awarded in 2023.

Teacher Assistants

- Since 2014, an additional 818.48 FTE Teacher Assistants (TA) have been employed in Tasmania's public schools.
- Comparing FTE figures on 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2025, there has been an increase of 134.72 FTE.

Education Support Specialists (ESS)

- Since 2020 (the year in which these roles were introduced in schools), 91.72 FTE have been employed.
- Comparing FTE figures from 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2025, there has been an increase of 14.76 FTE.
- Teacher Assistant Development Program include a qualification pathway for TAs to obtain a Certificate III and Diploma.
- The Certificate III is delivered in partnership with TasTAFE. It enables TAs working in DECYP schools to have their current knowledge and skills recognised as evidence in practice.
- The Diploma in Education Support is delivered in partnership with UTAS. This provides TAs with the essential qualification required for the Education Support Specialist role.
- Since the program's implementation in 2021, 69 TAs have completed the Certificate III and 84 the Diploma.
- In 2025 there are 21 new TAs enrolled in the Certificate III and 28 in the Diploma with a further 26 due for completion in 2025.

National Teacher Recruitment Campaigns

- Since 2018, the Department has permanently appointed 632 Teachers through the Assessment Centre Teacher Recruitment Campaigns.
- The 2024 Campaigns continued to emphasise attracting high-quality teachers into hard to staff and high priority locations and specialisations; they utilised contemporary recruitment methods to assess candidates and streamline processes.
- The 2024 Campaign targeted Tasmanian residents completing their graduate teaching studies at interstate universities, in addition to students attending UTAS.
- During 2024, direct liaison occurred with 5 universities on the mainland (Charles Sturt University, Curtin University, Deakin University, Swinburne University, University of New England) regarding graduates who are undertaking education studies in those tertiary institutions.
- In 2025, the latest Teacher Recruitment campaign launched in June, featuring nationwide advertising across all Australian states and territories, as well as in New Zealand, targeting applicants with reciprocal teacher registration and valid working rights.
- Targeted specialisation advertising was an addition to the 2025 campaign, with Maths/Science qualified Teachers identified and highlighted through external marketing campaigns.

BACKGROUND, DATA AND FACTS

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RELATED INITIATIVES

1. Teacher Recruitment Campaigns

31 March Data comparison retained for estimates due to campaign being run annually.

Table 1 – Teacher Recruitment Campaigns Summary 2018-2024 as at 31 March 2025

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Applications	634	308	402	295	187	275	298
Permanent Appointments	69	113	63	75	50	152	110

Table 2 – Teacher Recruitment Campaigns Details 2018-2024 as at 31 March 2025

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recruitment Process Information							
Applications received	627 ⁺	302	402	295	268	275	298
Applicants shortlisted	238	248	309	224	170	247	216
Successful applicants (on an order of merit)	91	111	152	89	110	182	169
Successful Applicant Information							
Existing DECYP fixed-term employees	48	45	38	43	53	63	46
Graduates	10	8	18	29	29	51	28
Tasmanian private or Catholic schools	10	20	28	8	12	10	21
Interstate	8	9	9	4	9	24	45
Overseas	2	2	0	8	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	4 ⁺⁺⁺	15
Placement Information							
Successful applicants who withdrew	15	28	27	13	31	30	59
Successful applicants placed	76	83	63 ⁺⁺	76	79	152	110

+Note: The high number of applications in 2018 was due to this being the department's inaugural campaign which included all schools, and high numbers of existing fixed-term staff applying. The process was changed in 2019 to be more targeted toward harder to fill schools, resulting in fewer applications overall and better alignment to operational needs.

++Note: Permanent appointments were down in 2020 due to a need to match school operational needs with a higher number of fixed term placements and the impact of COVID19 Pandemic disrupting the sector^[1], leading to uncertainties and budget constraints, challenges in planning and committing to long-term appointments. The overall number of suitable applicants remains high.

+++Note: Other has been added for those applicants who do not fit into the other categories. An example is someone returning to teaching from being a full-time Career.

2. Vacancy advertising

- During 2024-25, 771 advertisements for teachers and related classifications were progressed.
- Advertisements were both inside and outside the department.

Table 3 – Advertised In School and Out of School Staff Vacancies 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025*

Number of advertisements	Permanent	Fixed-term	Total
Base grade Teacher	80	47	127
Advanced Skills Teacher	61	169	230
Assistant Principal	18	87	105
Principal	18	34	52
Education Support Specialists	31	19	50
Other school-based roles (e.g. Quality Teaching Coach) requiring teacher registration	0	167	167
Out of School Teaching classified roles	6	34	40
Totals	214	557	771

* Table 3 excludes any National Teacher Campaign, Graduate Teacher Campaigns or Early Progressions to Permanency Teacher Recruitment

3. Change of Employment Status from Fixed-Term to a Permanent Employee through Employment Direction No.9 (ED9)

- Teachers who complete eight whole, continuous and satisfactory (school) terms of teaching, are eligible for conversion to permanency and assigned duties to the Flexible Teaching Pool (FTP).
- An FTP assignment is not to exceed 16 school terms, the equivalent of 4 school years.
- An employee can be assigned substantive duties (i.e., to a permanent vacancy) at any time as at or after FTP status.

Table 4 – Employees who converted to permanency during 2023 and 2024

School Term	South	North	Total
Term 1 2023	11	11	23
Term 2 2023	13	7	22
Term 3 2023	4	7	11
Term 4 2023	39	19	58
TOTALS	67	44	111

Table 5 – Employees who converted to permanency in 2024 as at 31 March 2025

School Term	South	North	Total
Term 1 2024	13	7	20
Term 2 2024	14	8	22
Term 3 2024	8	6	14
Term 4 2024	37	20	57
TOTALS	72	41	113

4. Early Progression to Permanency

- Upon completion of four whole, continuous and satisfactory terms of teaching (12 months), employees are eligible to apply for conversion to permanency through the annual Early Progression to Permanency process.
- From 2025 fixed-term Teachers converting to permanency after 12 months will be processed on a Term-by-Term basis, alongside all other DECYP fixed-term employees.

Table 6 – Early Progression to Permanency of Teachers 2022-2024 as at 31 March 2025

	2022	2023	2024
Applications	125	103	57
Permanent Appointments	97	91	50

5. Change of Employment Status from Fixed-Term to a Permanent Employee through Employment Direction No.1(ED1)

- Eligibility for a change of employment status through ED1 is now undertaken on a term-by-term basis.
- Eligibility is subject to a number of conditions including:
 - Completion of 12 months’ continuous service undertaking the same or similar duties.
 - The duties and hours of the position are required on an ongoing basis.
 - The conduct and performance of the employee has been assessed as satisfactory.
 - At the discretion of the Head of Agency, there is no other reason why the employee should not have their employment status changed.

Table 7 – Change in Employment Status to Permanent through ED1 2024 as at 31 March 2025*

Term	Employees	South	FTE	North	FTE	Total	FTE
Term 1 2024	School Support Staff	15	NA	15	NA	30	NA
Term 3 2024	School Support Staff	178	90.01	161	83.23	339	173.24
Term 4 2024	School Support Staff	31	17.94	16	10.14	47	28.08
Total		224	108	192	93.4	422	206.1

*Note: The recruitment process was not undertaken in Term 2 2024

Table 8 – Change in Employment Status to Permanent through ED1 2025 as at 31 March 2025

Term	Employees	South	FTE	North		FTE	Total	FTE
Term 1 2025	School Support Staff	91	53.83	107		58.39	198	112.22
Term 1 2025	Teachers	68	54.11	55		39.59	123	93.70
Total		159	107.94	162		97.98	321	205.92

6. Teach for Australia

- Commencing in 2017 the department has partnered with Teach for Australia, providing \$1.3 million to recruit graduate secondary teachers with specialist qualifications as part of the Department’s Extending Years 11 and 12 Program.
- The participants are engaged for two years on a fixed-term employment contract while undertaking studies to complete a Master of Teaching – the employment is on a full-time basis undertaking teaching duties at 0.8FTE and study commitments at 0.2FTE.
- Upon completion of the program, employees are eligible for a change of employment status to permanent under Employment Direction No. 1.
- A new agreement has been negotiated with Teach For Australia to place up to 40 teachers in rural and regional schools across Tasmania in the 2025 and 2026 school years, allowing for up to 20 placements in each year.

Recruitment and Retention 2017-2025

Table 9 – Cohort Summary as at 31 March 2025

	C1	C 2	C 3	C 4	C5	C 6	C 7	C 8	C 9
	201	201	201	202	202	202	202	202	202
	7-	8-	9-	0-	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-
	201	201	202	202	202	202	202	202	202
	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
No. of Associates (at sign up)	13	12	16	19	21	19	19	20	12
Completed two years	9	10	12	18	17	13	12		
Assigned permanently	5	5	10	10	14	13	11		
Transition to Permanency Rate	38%	42%	63%	53%	67%	68%	58%		

s36, Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



s36, Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



Contact Officer:	Ben Evans, Manager Talent Acquisition phone: s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director FABS	6/10/2025
Approved by:	Alayne Baker Director Recruitment Payroll Systems and Data	Date: 12/09/2025
Approved by:	Sue McKerracher Deputy Secretary People and Culture	6/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	15/10/2025

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BRIEF 34 - Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) – Sector Challenges

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

As part of implementing the *2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future*, the Tasmanian Government has:

- Provided funding for Early Childhood Australia's Tasmanian Branch to assist with strategic issues, including workforce development (led by State Growth)
- Released an EOI process for ECEC services to expand services in areas of need following the audit of available government land undertaken in 2024
- Undertaken a school community survey process which has identified schools that wish to establish new or expand existing Outside School Hours Care services, with additional support and capital upgrades to be provided to identified schools.

TALKING POINTS

- The Tasmanian Government understands that access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is important for all children and families in Tasmania and that the ECEC sector is facing a range of challenges, particularly in relation to workforce availability and infrastructure capacity.
- ECEC services are primarily funded via Australian Government subsidies, with the State Government playing a vital role as regulator of ECEC services.
- The Tasmanian Government is also implementing key commitments to support ECEC sector growth and service availability and is actively engaging in work at the state and national level to address workforce and infrastructure challenges.

ECEC Workforce Challenges

- Tasmania, like other states and territories, continues to face workforce shortages across the early childhood education and care sector.

- The shortage of qualified educators and teachers is impacting childcare availability and care for children, both nationally and within the State.
- Current workforce pressures are driven by strong demand for care, a limited pipeline of qualified educators, and challenges in both attracting and retaining staff. The issue is particularly acute in regional and rural areas.
- The Tasmanian Government recognises that the workforce challenges, particularly in the early years sector are complex and will take time to resolve. However we are committed to investing in practical initiatives and continue to collaborate with the Australian Government to deliver long-term sustainable solutions.

If Asked: What is the Government doing to address the workforce shortage in early childhood education and care?

- The Tasmanian Government is committed to building a strong early childhood education and care workforce pipeline that ensures Tasmanian children and families can access the care they need.
- The Tasmanian Government is working to address workforce shortages in the early years sector, through our Early Years Workforce Development Fund, managed and led through the Skills Portfolio.
- The 2024/25 Budget included \$4.5 million to deliver:
 - 200 scholarships of \$15,000 (Diploma and Certificate III) and \$30,000 (Bachelors and Masters).
 - Incentives of \$2,500 for educators who relocate to work in hard-to-staff locations, including Flinders and King Islands and the West Coast.
 - Retention incentives of \$2,500 for staff who remain at the same service for more than three years in a rural, isolated or hard-to-staff location for every year of service between four to six years.
- Through the Skills portfolio, the Tasmanian Government is also providing \$890 000 over three years to Early Childhood Australia's Tasmania branch to employ two project officers to assist with strategic issues including workforce development

and the establishment of an ECEC Workforce Roundtable (funded and managed by Skills Tasmania within the Department of State Growth).

- With the exception of scholarships for school based speech pathologists and psychologists, which are being managed by the Department of Education, Children and Young People, the Early Years Workforce initiatives are being coordinated by Skills Tasmania, within the Department of State Growth, to ensure alignment with broader workforce strategies and to leverage existing training and industry engagement mechanisms.

If Asked: How is the Government supporting the development and upskilling of the workforce?

- A Grants Program, administered through the ECU, provides targeted support for professional learning and development across the sector:
 - The program offers one-off grants to services and organisations to deliver training, mentoring, and workforce development activities that respond to current challenges and build capacity in the sector.
 - This includes initiatives that promote high-quality practice, leadership and educator wellbeing. Projects supported in 2024-25 include sponsorship of two travel scholarships for Tasmanian educators to attend the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Reconciliations Symposium and sponsorship of four fully funded places to the ECA National Conference 2025.
- As part of DECYP's Lifting Literacy Implementation Plan, we have developed evidence-based professional development focused on improving literacy:
 - New online training modules available for all early childhood educators across the sector were launched in April 2025.

If Asked: How is the Government working with the national agenda on workforce?

- Tasmania is working closely with other states and territories to support implementation of the National Workforce Strategy, *Shaping Our Future*.
- A key milestone for Tasmania is the work underway to enable Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) registration for early childhood education and care services:
 - In November 2024, the terms of reference for the Teachers Registration Act Review were approved and in December 2024, a roadmap toward early childhood registration was endorsed, demonstrating this Government's commitment to uplifting the professional recognition of early childhood teachers, in line with Focus Action 1.2 of the Strategy.
 - Consultation on the Review of the Teachers Registration Act is now closed and work is underway to analyse the submissions from the consultation and to develop a Final Report with recommendations.

If Asked: What is Tasmania doing specifically for its own workforce strategy?

- The *Early Years and School Age Care and Workforce (EYSAC) Strategy: Tasmania 2021 & Beyond* is sector-led and facilitated by Early Childhood Australia Tasmania.
- EYSAC aims to support the development of a proficient, professional and activated Tasmanian ECEC workforce now and into the future.
- This Tasmanian strategy is able to identify and address the specific needs of the Tasmanian sector, while also aligning with the National Workforce Strategy.
- The Government has provided funding and project support through both the Department for Education, Children and Young People and the Department of State Growth. Ongoing funding support for the Strategy is through Skills Tasmania.

If Asked: How is the Government maintaining quality and safety during workforce shortages?

- While workforce shortages can impact services, the Education and Care Unit plays a critical role in maintaining quality and safety by monitoring services.
- The Education and Care Unit continues to engage proactively with services through announced and unannounced visits to monitor compliance and support services to meet their obligations under the relevant legislative framework.
- ECEC services can request a temporary waiver from staffing qualification requirements:
 - A waiver allows a service to operate without being in breach of the National Law and/or National Regulations while addressing short-term compliance challenges where no impact to the health, safety or wellbeing of children can be demonstrated.
 - A waiver from staffing qualification requirements is typically sought when workforce shortages make it impossible to meet qualification requirements.
 - For example, regulation 126, which requires at least 50 per cent of educators to hold or be working towards a diploma and regulations 132-135, which set early childhood teacher attendance requirements.
 - Services must show they've made genuine efforts to comply, such as advertising and recruitment, before a waiver is granted.
 - As at 30 June 2025, 21 staffing waivers were in place across Tasmanian services, comprising 16 Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) waivers and 5 diploma-level waivers.
 - This figure reflects the number of waivers, not the number of services, as multiple waivers can be associated with a single service.
 - Waiver requests are always assessed to ensure that approving the waiver does not create a risk to children's safety, health or wellbeing.

- The Government acknowledges the adaptability and resilience of the sector, which continues to provide safe, quality care under pressure.

If Asked: What is the Government doing to support the ECEC sector to overcome infrastructure challenges?

Access to Government Land for ECEC

- The Tasmanian Government has committed to audit government land and release surplus land for the provision and expansion of new ECEC services.
- In 2024, the Department for Education, Children, and Young People (DECYP) undertook an audit of all government school sites to identify those that may be suitable for co-located ECEC services.
- The audit provided information on potentially suitable and available land based on land size and regulatory requirements for ECEC facilities.
- Based on this audit and further feedback from across DECYP, a shortlist of school sites was identified as potentially suitable for the development of new ECEC facilities.
- On 9 May 2025, the Tasmanian Government released an Expression of Interest to determine the interest of ECEC providers, in Tasmania and nationally, in utilising suitable land on government school sites to develop new ECEC facilities.
- We are currently considering the information from the Expression of Interest responses to inform the design and development of future opportunities for ECEC providers to utilise government land for the provision and expansion of ECEC services.
- The Tasmanian Government will also continue to work with the Australian Government to address critical supply gaps in the ECEC sector, including through the Building Early Education Fund.

Education and Care Minor Infrastructure Grants Program

- The Education and Care Unit's Grants Program includes an annual Minor Infrastructure Grant round, providing one-off funding to help eligible education and care services complete minor upgrades to their premises.
- The program is designed to be responsive to the sector's needs, supporting initiatives that improve facilities, address current challenges, and enable Tasmanian services to deliver safe, inclusive, and high-quality education and care — particularly for children disadvantaged by geographic or socio-economic circumstances.

More Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

- The Tasmanian Government has committed \$10 million to support primary and district schools to establish new onsite OSHC services, in partnership with local ECEC providers.
- Consultation with government schools has shown that there is a clear demand for OSHC services and many schools are ready to engage an ECEC provider to deliver OSHC.
- DECYP is supporting schools to navigate the process to engage ECEC providers through an Expression of Interest process and will commence capital upgrades from 2026-27 to support select schools to establish or expand OSHC, including Howrah Primary School.
- Work is also underway to establish an OSHC service in combination with early years services in the Early Learning for Three Year Old Trial Sites at East Devonport Primary School, based on feedback regarding need in this community.

New Partnerships Framework to support co-location of ECEC on government school sites

- Partnerships and co-location arrangements between DECYP schools and services and education and care (EC) providers have to date been guided by the Strong Partnerships Framework (Framework) and Provisional Co-location Policy and Guidelines (Guidelines).
- In 2025 DECYP undertook a significant review of the Framework and Guidelines, including in consultation with a Working Group comprising Principal, School Business

Managers, CFLC Centre Leader, DECYP business units and EC representatives who are co-located on DECYP sites.

- The collaborative work undertaken resulted in a revised partnership framework, additional resources and updated existing resources alongside the co-located partnership policy and procedure, all available on the DECYP website.

Building Early Education Fund

- The Building Early Education Fund is an Australian Government initiative to invest \$1 billion to establish the Fund, to build ECEC centres, including in the regions and outer suburbs. The aim is to give more families access to quality early childhood education and care in areas where it is needed most.
- DECYP is engaging with the Australian Department of Education on implementation of the BEEF initiative in Tasmania, including the following federal election commitments:
 - \$5 million towards building a new ECEC service at Westbury Primary School
 - \$5 million towards a new council run ECEC centre located on the site adjacent to Huonville Primary School.
- The Tasmanian Government will continue to advocate for the ECEC sector and children and families in Tasmania, to ensure that the state can benefit from federal government initiatives to increase access to ECEC.

Background, data and facts:

Responsibilities of governments

- The Australian Government takes primary responsibility for supporting access to education and care services through financial support for families, for example through the Child Care Subsidy.
- States and Territories are responsible for regulating education and care services through national and, where relevant, jurisdictional legislation. They may also fund services that do not receive funding through the Australian Government.
- Governments, largely do not view that they have responsibility for ensuring appropriate pay and conditions, including subsidising wages.
- Many in the early childhood education and care sector look to governments to provide this assistance, as any increase in wage costs is likely to result in increases in fees charged to families.
- The State Government through the Education and Care Unit's Grants Program provides recurrent operational grant funding to support 10 occasional child care services in Tasmania. The Education and Care Unit's Grants Program does not provide funding for ECEC services operating under the National Quality Framework that can access financial support under the Family Assistance Law including enabling families of children attending to access Child Care Subsidy.
- The Education and Care Unit's Grants Program provides recurrent operational funding to support occasional child care services in Tasmania. These services, regulated under the *Child Care Act 2001* and not eligible for Australian Government funding, cater to children aged 0–12 years and aim to meet diverse community needs—such as supporting transitions to school, offering care during school holidays, and ensuring access to affordable child care in remote or isolated areas. The funding contributes to operational costs like staffing, rent, and resources, but is not intended to cover capital expenses. Services are expected to supplement this funding through fees and other income to remain viable.
- The services receiving recurrent operational grant funding from the Education and Care Unit's Grants Program in 2024/25 are
 - *Beehive Playcentre*
 - *Brighton Play Centre*
 - *Devonport Playcentre Inc.*
 - *Fingal Valley Neighbourhood House Play Centre*
 - *Kingston Child Care Centre (Maranoa Child Care)*
 - *Legana Early Learning Centre*
 - *Little Penguin Playcentre*
 - *Possums Playcentre*
 - *West Moonah Community Centre Preschool*
 - *Wombats Child Care Centre*
- The Department does not directly provide services nor employ staff within the services.
- Current workforce snapshot (based on 2024 National Workforce Census data):
 - Analysis of the initially available data identified some concerning information about the Tasmanian workforce however, is limited in that

detailed service-type or regional comparisons are not available. Additionally, definitions have changed between 2021 and 2024, impacting the consistency and comparability of data across the two reporting periods.

- The initial analysis showed that while the national early childhood education and care workforce has grown by 11 per cent since 2021, Tasmania has experienced a 6.8 per cent decline in workforce numbers over the same period. This suggests our current strategies may not be having the same impact on attraction and retention as other jurisdictions.
- Of particular concern is a 47.7 per cent drop in the number of Early Childhood Teachers (ECTs) in Tasmania since 2021. This indicates a breakdown in the pipeline from study to employment or a potential gap in data capture, particularly for those still completing qualifications.
- Tasmania also saw a 15 percent decline in VET-qualified educators (Certificate III and Diploma holders) in centre-based care and out of school hours care, from 2 006 in 2021 to 1 706 in 2024, raising concerns about retention and qualification pathways.
- These figures highlight ongoing challenges in workforce stability, particularly in ensuring educators progress through training into qualified roles and stay in the sector.
- Limitations in the current Census data, including a lack of visibility over educators in training and workforce data for Family Day Care and In Home Care, mean the full picture of Tasmania's workforce pipeline is not yet clear.
- The department is undertaking further analysis of jurisdictional data tables to explore whether deeper insights can be drawn despite these limitations.

Availability and affordability of early childhood education and care qualifications in Tasmania

- A number of Recognised Training Organisations (RTOs) in Tasmania offer Certificate III and Diploma courses in Early Childhood Education and Care, with costs for the Certificate III around \$14,000 and the Diploma ranging from \$17,000 to \$23,000. However, due to challenges in availability and affordability, many students opt for more accessible online courses.
- TasTAFE currently offers a fee-free Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, funded jointly by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments. However, a fee-free option for the Diploma is not available.
- UTAS does not currently offer a 3-year teaching degree in Early Childhood Education and Care, the minimum qualification required for early childhood teachers. This creates an additional barrier for students willing to work in early childhood education and care settings, as those studying with UTAS are required to complete a 4-year regular teaching degree with an additional one-year specialisation. Many opt for online courses delivered by interstate-based universities due to the absence of a suitable local option.

Building Early Education Fund

Section 27 Internal Briefing Information of Minister



More Outside of School Hours Care (OSHC) initiative funding

- The commencement of the More Outside of School Hours Care capital project has been pushed out one year and will commence in 2026-27. Funding totalling \$10 million is provided over four years.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
More Outside of School Hours Care-	2,000	3,000	3,000	2,000

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Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Secretary Finance and Budget Services	7/10/2025
Approved by:	Ruth Davidson Director, Whole of Agency Reform	Date: Click or tap to enter a date.
Approved by:	Jenny Burgess Deputy Secretary Strategy and Performance	Date: 8/10/2025
Approved by:	Trudy Pearce Deputy Secretary Schools and Early Years	Date: 07/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 15 October 2025

Budget Estimates 2025

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BRIEF 37 - Universal Access to Early Learning – Working Together, EL3

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

TALKING POINTS

- We know that quality early learning gives children the best possible start in life and the Tasmanian Government is proud to support our youngest learners on this lifelong journey.
- The Government has made a commitment that all children in Tasmania should have access to early learning in the year before Kindergarten, and we continue to support this through a number of initiatives.
- The Early Learning for Three Year Old's (EL3) initiative is one of a number of Tasmanian Government initiatives that aim to increase access to early learning for young children in Tasmania.
- EL3 complements the Working Together – supporting early learning program (Working Together) that supports children and families who may experience additional barriers to access and participation in early childhood education and care services.

- We know that Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services are best placed to provide quality early learning, and DECYP is working closely with the ECEC sector to build the capacity and availability of services.
- The State Government plays a vital role as the regulator of early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Tasmania and also works on the ground with the ECEC sector and communities, to co-design initiatives that help families overcome barriers to access and participate in early learning.

WORKING TOGETHER – SUPPORTING EARLY LEARNING

- Working Together continues to play an important role in supporting vulnerable and at-risk children and families to access and participate in early learning through ECEC services.
- Working Together provides **free access to two days per week (up to 20 hours)** of early learning, delivered by ECEC services, for **up to 50 weeks in the year before starting Kindergarten.**
- Working Together also provides tailored, holistic support for children and their families to address barriers to access and participation. Supports may include referrals to other service supports, providing transport assistance or funding for additional educators to support the inclusion of children in early learning settings.
- Working Together also provides access to a range of professional learning and quality practice supports for ECEC service partners.
- Working Together currently provides **220 fully funded placements annually across Tasmania** in partnership with 46 ECEC services across the North-West, Northern, Midlands, East Coast and South of Tasmania. To be eligible to become a Working Together service partner, ECEC services must evidence that they are 'meeting' in

Quality Areas 1, 2, 5 and 7 of the National Quality Standards (NQS).

- Approximately 912 children and their families have been supported through Working Together since its trial in 2019.
- The Tasmanian Government fully funds the children accessing Working Together, at rates consistent with funding provided through the Australian Government's Child Care Subsidy.

COMMITMENT TO UNIVERSAL ACCESS

- The Tasmanian Government has a longstanding commitment to improving outcomes for children and their families.
- In August 2022, the Premier of Tasmania made a commitment that all children in Tasmania will have access to early learning in the year before kindergarten.
- The Department is working towards this goal in partnership with the ECEC sector and in the context of national reforms to improve the quality and availability of ECEC services.
- The Universal Access to Early Learning Advisory Group, co-chaired by Ros Cornish, former CEO of Lady Gowrie Tasmania, and Jenny Burgess, Deputy Secretary, Department for Education Children and Young People, provide advice and guidance to inform the design and implementation of initiatives to increase access to early learning, towards the goal of Universal Access for three year olds.
- Membership of the group includes Early Childhood Australia (Tasmania Branch), Catholic Education Tasmania, Family Day Care Tasmania, Australian Childcare Alliance, Independent Schools Tasmania, the Education and Care Unit, Department subject matter experts and the Department Project Team.
- The Government is supportive of any efforts to improve Tasmanian families' access to high-quality learning

environments for all children, regardless of where they live or their family background.

EARLY LEARNING FOR THREE YEAR OLDS

- The EL3 initiative aims to increase access to early learning for three years olds in partnership with the ECEC sector, families and communities.
- Under the EL3 initiative, Trial Sites are being established in communities across Tasmania to test different models of early learning service delivery to meet local community needs.
- The Tasmanian Government has partnered with the ECEC sector and the Catholic and Independent education sectors since 2023 to co-design and deliver the EL3 trial to ensure that services meet community needs and build on community strengths.
- The EL3 initiative is being evaluated by Deloitte Access Economics, and the findings will provide important information on the effectiveness of different models.
- The Trial Sites are a key step in strengthening early learning opportunities for Tasmanian children, ensuring more families have access to quality early learning in their local communities.

EL3 Trial Sites

- Under the EL3 initiative, Trial Sites are being established in areas where there is low or no capacity of existing ECEC services. This means that through the process of establishing the Trial Site, ECEC services (as the preferred provider), the Department, families and communities can work together to increase access to early learning in their area.
- This could include innovative approaches and partnerships aligned to the key principles, between ECEC services and Tasmanian Government schools or Child and Family Learning Centres.

- Local Enabling Groups (LEG) have been established in each Trial Site community where parents and carers, community members and early learning services meet regularly, and are working together to ensure EL3 services are tailored to their specific need.
- Community Inclusion Workers (CIW) have been employed by the Department in each of the trial site communities and are providing invaluable support on the ground.
- Four Trial Sites have commenced operation in 2025 - East Devonport, Bruny Island, Fingal (Break O'Day) and Cape Barren Island.

East Devonport

- The East Devonport Trial Site commenced on 26 February 2025 as a regulated ECEC service under a partnership model between Uniting Vic/Tas Early Learning, the East Devonport Primary School and Child and Family Learning Centre. The service is co-located with the school and CFLC.
- The service operates for three days per week and has had a strong uptake of enrolments since commencement with two out of three days at full capacity of 15 children.

Bruny Island

- The Bruny Island Trial Site commenced on Thursday 13 February 2025 at Bruny Island District School. The Trial Site is an outreach service from the Saltbush Child and Family Learning Centre and includes a range of early learning opportunities and supports for children from birth to four years with priority for three year olds.
- This service is a result of an option proposed by the Local Enabling Group (LEG) and the Bruny Island District School to deliver a service that would maximise benefits for the school community, young children and their families.

- Supports include drop-in and play sessions led by a qualified teacher, and Adjunct Care while parents or carers engage in a range of activities on-site during term time.
- In term one the service had 20 enrolled children. Adjunct care was utilised 138 times and drop in and play, on 46 occasions with continual growth across Term 2.
- Families have reported a range of positive impacts including increased social and emotional wellbeing for both them and their children

If asked: Is the Bruny Island EL 3 Trial Site delivering on the Government's commitment:

- This model was developed through direct input from the Local Enabling Group and community representatives.
- It's also important to note that the name of the initiative itself points to the fact that this is a trial – and as with other trial sites, the model continues to undergo review and evaluation including through the Community Inclusion Worker on the ground and through the LEG each term.
- Deloitte Access Economics have also been appointed to conduct an independent evaluation of all EL3 trial sites, including Bruny Island, from April 2025 – October 2026 (18 months).
- This evaluation will focus on the implementation of the initiative; impact of the trials on children, families, communities and ECEC services; successful elements at trial sites; and transferability of elements to other communities across Tasmania.
- There has been strong advocacy from the school and broader community for a purpose-built ECEC facility, co-located on the school site
- The Tasmanian Government continues to advocate for this need through the Australian Government's Building Early Education Fund (BEEF) initiative.

Break O'Day (Fingal)

- The Local Enabling Group (LEG) has investigated various venues across the Break O'Day region. An existing site in Fingal was identified by the LEG for expansion to offer EL3 in 2025.
- The Fingal (Break O'Day) EL3 Trial Site commenced on 18 February 2025 as an expansion of the existing service at the Fingal Valley Neighbourhood House which currently offers one day of Occasional Care.
- The Trial Site service offers an additional day to the existing service for three year old children, regulated under the Tasmanian Child Care Act and delivered by qualified ECEC educators.
- The service has had a strong uptake of enrolments, reaching its capacity of 9 children per day, including some children and families who are accessing an early childhood service for the first time.

Flinders Island and Cape Barren Island

- DECYP have been working alongside the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) to provide early childhood programs and support to Cape Barren Island.
- This service commenced in August 2025 and includes fortnightly visits by Connected Beginnings staff to deliver the service - building on the strengths and knowledge of parents, caregivers, and the community.
- The community have embraced the service with opportunities for home visits, play group and access to resources that support the development of children on Cape Barren Island.
- DECYP will continue to work alongside the Flinders Island LEG, support strong partnerships between the school and ECEC service in Whitemark and explore opportunities for increasing access to ECEC for the Flinders Island community.

West Coast

- Zeehan Primary School has been identified by the West Coast Local Enabling group as the preferred site for the EL3 Trial.
- Capital upgrades will be undertaken to allow for a co-located education and care (EC) service to commence.
- An open tender process for the delivery of early learning will be released to the EC sector later this year with the service to commence following the completion of works and regulatory approvals in 2026.

EL3 Evaluation

- Deloitte Access Economics have been appointed to conduct an independent evaluation of the EL3 trial sites from April 2025 – October 2026 (18 months).
- This evaluation will focus on the implementation of the initiative; impact of the trials on children, families, communities and ECEC services; successful elements at trial sites; and transferability of elements to other communities across Tasmania.

EL3 Research and Development Project

- On 10 August 2023 the then Tasmanian Minister for Education Roger Jaensch announced stakeholder engagement to be undertaken in Hobart and Launceston to better understand the supports and action needed for further expansion of early learning for three year olds in these areas.
- DECYP engaged Ernst and Young to undertake stakeholder engagement with the ECEC sector and economic modelling to better understand issues, barriers to service expansion and opportunities to overcome these, with consideration of ECEC initiatives underway in other states and territories.
- In June 2025 DECYP released a summary report developed by Ernst & Young, with key findings regarding the current challenges in Tasmania in the areas of

workforce shortages, infrastructure gaps and accessibility issues.

- The Tasmanian Government is actively working to address these challenges through a number of areas including investment in the Early Years Workforce Development Fund, undertaking an audit of government land for the provision of new early childhood and education service and continuing to advocate to secure funding for additional ECEC sites through the Commonwealth's Building Early Education Fund.
- These findings, alongside the EL3 Trial Site Evaluations and federal government initiatives, will inform further actions toward the long-term goal of universal access to early learning for three-year-olds, in partnership with the ECEC sector.

Background, data and facts:

- The 2025-26 State Budget provides \$7.6 million over four years, commencing in 2025-26, to progress the EL3 Initiative. This initiative provides a pathway for universal access to Early Learning for Three Year Olds, beginning with establishing trials across the state to test different models of service delivery that are responsive to local community needs.
- The Trial Sites were selected following extensive community engagement in 2023, including 32 community workshops in 26 towns and cities across Tasmania, and strong uptake on an online survey.
- In 2025, Four EL3 Trial Sites commenced operation - East Devonport, Bruny Island Fingal (Break O'Day) and Cape Barren Island

Roles and responsibilities for ECEC

- ECEC is delivered by approved ECEC providers and services, and the Australian Government subsidises the cost of care to families via the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). The Australian Government is responsible for the legislation that underpins the CCS and the National Law and Regulations for approved ECEC providers.
- The Tasmanian Government is the regulator of ECEC services under the National Law through the National Quality Framework.

Working Together: Child eligibility

- Working Together is available for three-year-old children who are:
 - in their year before Kindergarten
 - not currently accessing ECEC services.
- Children must also meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - have parents/primary carers who hold a Health Care Card
 - identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - receive support or interventions from the Child Safety Service; and/or
 - have two or more concerns identified through the Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS).

Working Together: Program Evaluation

- To date, a variety of processes and data sources have been used to evaluate Working Together, including:
 - ECEC service data and educator surveys
 - data from Working Together Engagement Workers and Inclusion Workers
 - collection and evaluation of qualitative data assessing families' experience of Working Together (undertaken by the Tasmanian Council of Social Services)
 - an independent evaluation of the pilot undertaken by Clear Horizons in 2019.

- These evaluations have found that Working Together supports improved outcomes for children and families, including:
 - increased confidence, skills and independence
 - reduced separation anxiety
 - enhanced communication and self-regulation
 - help to build friendships
 - facilitated skills building.

Evidence of the benefits of early learning

- Preschool attendance has shown consistent positive short and long-term effects across the world[1], including in the US, Europe, Canada and New Zealand.
- Play-based programs delivered by qualified early childhood educators improve children's learning and developmental outcomes[2] and are particularly important for children experiencing disadvantage.
- A 2017 national report[3] shows that children who participate in quality early childhood education have improved school results, are less likely to need additional support in school and are more likely to complete Year 12. Attendance in early learning programs is also linked to better health and employment prospects and the benefits are even greater for children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.
- A 2019 report[4] has shown quality preschool delivers a two-for-one return on investment for Australia: that is, for every dollar governments invest in preschool, two dollars will be returned to the economy.

Earnst & Young Summary Report

- The summary report regarding current challenges also includes insights based on economic modelling, including that:
 - Tasmania has fewer early learning places per child than needed — currently averaging only 0.35 places (1.75 days per week) per child aged 0–4.
 - To meet universal access standards (3 days/week), Tasmania must increase childcare places by 79% (an additional 7,381 places).
 - Workforce shortages and uneven distribution of services outside Hobart worsen access in regional and remote areas.

National Reform

- The Tasmanian Government is engaging with the Australian Government on a range of national reform work in the early years, including
 - National Early Childhood Education and Care Vision
 - Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Childcare Inquiry
 - National Early Years Strategy
 - National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy

- Preschool Reform Agreement 2022-2025.
- Building Early Education Fund

^[1] Preschool Matters, Melhuish <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/333/6040/299>

^[2] Effective pre-school, primary and secondary education project, DET

https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/23344/1/RB455_Effective_pre-school_primary_and_secondary_education_project.pdf

^[3] Lifting our Game, Pascoe and Brennan <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-612290923/view>

^[4] A Smart Investment for a Smarter Australia, The Front Project

<https://www.thefrontproject.org.au/impact-foundry/research/economic-analysis>

Working Together

- In August 2017, the Tasmanian Government committed to providing access to ‘free pre-school for disadvantaged or vulnerable three-year-olds in partnership with the ECEC sector through Working Together (WT).
- In December 2017, Cabinet agreed to fund scoping the delivery of WT to support the Education and Care Sector and improve outcomes for vulnerable three-year-olds.
- In August 2022, Premier Rockliff confirmed the next implementation phase for WT would occur from 2024 onwards, aiming to expand the program to more children, families, and regions across Tasmania.
- Although initial project modelling provided scope for further expansion of WT to 360 places in 2025, responses from the sector indicated limited capacity to reach this target within this timeframe.
- WT placements were not expanded for the 2025 service year, and it is anticipated there will not be an expansion for the 2026 service year.
- WT are continuing to seek feedback from current service partners to understand their capacity to support further placements and expansion into the future.
- Any further expansion of WT will be planned in parallel with implementation of Universal Access for Three Year Olds (EL3) as trial sites are piloted, and analysis and strategic planning is undertaken to support the alignment between WT and EL3 going forward.
- In December 2017, Cabinet agreed to \$10.5 million per annum (annually adjusted) to support the delivery of Working Together.
- Current WT budget supporting the next phase of the initiative is provided in the table below.

	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000
Working Together	7,618	9,465	9,980	10,208

Early Learning for Three Year Olds

- In 2023-24 DECYP committed ongoing funding to support the delivery of the Early Learning for Three Year Olds commitment and establish trials across Tasmania. These trials are each designed alongside communities to test models of early learning service delivery that best respond to local community need.
- Detail on the commitment for 2025-26 and the Forward Estimates is as follows:

	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000
Universal Access to Early Learning for 3 Year Old's ¹	2,758	2,701	1,600	1,634	1,668

Notes:

- The 2024-25 allocation of \$2.758 million includes a Treasury approved s.23 roll over of \$1.370 million from 2023-24.
- The 2025-26 allocation of \$2.701 million includes an internal roll forward of \$1.221 million.
- The 2025-26 allocation of \$2.742 million includes a Treasury approved s.23 roll over of \$1.243 million. A saving of \$740,950 was returned to Treasury. A request has been submitted to Treasury to have this funding reappropriated.

Attachments:

1. Working Together – List of Contracted Services May 2025

Contact Officer:	Suzanne Purdon	Phone: s36
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services	7/10/2025
Approved by:	Ruth Davidson Director, Whole of Agency Reform M'Lynda Stubbs Director, Early Years Partnerships	Date:
Approved by:	Jenny Burgess Deputy Secretary Strategy and Performance	Date: 8/10/2025
Approved by:	Trudy Pearce Deputy Secretary Schools and Early Years	Date: 07/10/2025

Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 15/10/2025
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Budget Estimates 2025

Minister for Education

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BRIEF 45 - Healthy School Lunch Program

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS

- The 2024-25 budget included \$14.6 million across two years to expand the School Lunch Program to 60 government primary schools by 2026.
- An additional \$4.0 million of funding is proposed in 2026-27 to extend the Healthy School Lunch Program to the end of the 2026 school year.
- The commitment included staffing for all schools participating in the program and \$600 000 in infrastructure to support delivery in the new participating schools.
- Funding for staff covers the full 40 weeks of the school year in 2025.

TALKING POINTS

- The Healthy School Lunch program started as a pilot in three schools in 2020.
- Approximately 13,000 healthy hot lunches are now being served each week across 45 Tasmanian Government schools.
- When compared to delivery in 2024, this provides an additional 6,000 lunches per week to students in our schools.
- The next 15 schools to join the program in 2026, have been selected through an Expression of Interest process.
- This will deliver on the Tasmanian Government's commitment to expand the program to 60 schools by 2026.
- This initiative brings together school communities, students, families and local business.
- Schools report the positive impact the program has on students, their behaviour and wellbeing.

If Asked: HOW WERE SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR THE PROGRAM IN 2026?

- All interested Tasmanian Government primary schools and District Schools had an opportunity to apply between 21 May and 13 June 2025.
- Applications were received from 34 schools.
- A panel comprising representatives from the Department, School Food Matters, and Loaves and Fishes Tasmania assessed the applications.
- The panel weighted ICSEA as the highest criterion (50%) reflecting the election commitment to address the cost of living.
- The remaining 50 per cent weighting was split across three criteria including school leadership group (e.g. canteen manager, wellbeing lead, senior teachers, principal, school business manager), current food programs and links to curriculum, and school readiness (e.g. engagement with school community). The panel recognised that these factors are crucial for the successful delivery of the program in each school.

If Asked: WHAT STAFFING AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT IS PROVIDED FOR THE PROGRAM?

- Kitchen Supervisors run the program on the days it is delivered at a school.
- Schools can hire their own Kitchen Supervisor or have someone from School Food Matters support them.
- Funding for staff will cover the full 40 weeks of the school year in 2025.
- The Kitchen Supervisor must complete mandatory training including the Food Safety Supervisor training and All About Allergens for Schools.
- New participating schools for 2026 will receive the required equipment in Term 4, 2025.

If Asked: WHAT IF A STUDENT HAS AN ALLERGY OR DIETARY REQUIREMENT? CAN THEY STILL PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

- School Food Matters has introduced a process to collect an Allergy Consent Form from parents if required, to check what meals they can have. This has enabled more students to enjoy some of the hot lunches at their school.

If Asked: THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT MADE ANY COMMITMENTS TO FUND THE HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM BEYOND 2026 – WHAT WILL HAPPEN THEN?

- Every program should be evaluated to ensure that it aligns with priorities, is producing the outcomes it was designed to deliver, and is providing value for money. A review of the Healthy School Lunches program is underway.
- Implementation of the Healthy School Lunches election commitment is helping understand the best approach to delivery of the school lunch program in our schools.
- We will continue to engage with key stakeholders to understand the impact, benefits and implementation requirements of the program following the current expansion.
- Plans beyond 2026 will be informed by evaluation findings and the views of schools, children and young people, families and community stakeholders.

Background, data and facts:

Expression of Interest 2026

- The Expression of Interest process for the next 15 government schools to start the program in 2026 has now been finalised. The next schools selected to join the Healthy School Lunches program in 2026 are:
 - Cape Barren Island School and Flinders Island District School
 - Sassafras Primary School
 - King Island District High School
 - Legana Primary School
 - Cressy District High School
 - St Mary's District High School
 - Glenorchy Primary School
 - Westerway Primary School
 - Orford Primary School
 - Brighton Primary School
 - Kempton Primary School
 - Bothwell District School
 - Invermay Primary School
 - Windermere Primary School
 - Collinsvale Primary School

Current Participating Schools

- Below is the complete list of schools involved in the program since the start of the pilot in 2022:

School Name	Year the school commenced
Bagdad Primary School	2025
Campania District School	2025
Dover District School	2025
Goodwood Primary School	2025
Hillcrest Primary School	2025
Kingston Primary School	2025
Moonah Primary School	2025
Port Dalrymple Primary School	2025
Ravenswood Heights Primary School	2025
Risdon Vale Primary School	2025
Romaine Park Primary School	2025
Springfield Gardens Primary School	2025
Tasman District School	2025
West Ulverstone Primary School	2025
Zeehan Primary School	2025
Mole Creek Primary School	2023
JRLF Senior School	2023
Waverley Primary School	2023
Clarendon Vale Primary School	2023
Huonville Primary School	2023
Campbell Town District High School	2023
JRLF East Derwent Primary School	2023

Dodges Ferry Primary School	2023
Montello Primary School	2023
Swansea Primary School	2023
Fairview Primary School	2023
Bridport Primary School	2023
Cosgrove High School	2023
Winnaleah District High School	2023
Havenview Primary School	2023
JRLF Gagebrook Primary School	2022
JRLF Herdsmans Cove Primary School	2022
Rokeby Primary School	2022
East Devonport Primary School	2022
Smithton High School	2022

Independent Review

- SFM has sub-contracted Menzies Institute to conduct an independent review of the Healthy School Lunch Program.
- The review will assess the program implementation; the impact on student’s eating habits, social connectedness, emotional wellbeing and energy level; alongside the impact on school attendance and engagement.

Allocation of Equipment for 2025

- The total amount allocated to the new schools for 2025 was \$300 000, including \$50,000 to support schools with installation costs.
- A Request for Quotation process was undertaken to select the supplier for the kitchen equipment and items for schools in 2026.
- Medhurst Kitchen Equipment is the successful supplier to deliver required equipment to schools in 2026. Contract agreement will be for up to \$249,000
- \$51,000 will be allocated to support schools starting in 2026 with installations costs.
- Equipment is expected to be ordered by mid-September and delivered by the end of November 2025 to ensure schools are ready to start delivering the program at the start of Term 1, 2026.

Cost per Lunch

- The cost per lunch over the two-year funding period is estimated to be about \$17.65 (including food procurement, SFM staff, schools staff, and all other projects costs).
- This cost is based on a crude calculation of the expenditure of \$14 million (excluding equipment) and delivering 792,195 lunches over the two-year commitment.
- These costs are an estimate only and the final cost will be identified when SFM reports on the total lunches delivered during the two-year funding period.
- Cost breakdown as provided by SFM is
 - \$10.35 – Procurement of food
 - \$2.30 – School staff (Kitchen Supervisors)
 - \$5.00 – Other project costs (SFM staff, Insurance, Transport, and other admin costs)

- School Food Matters continues to evaluate the program to identify strategies that enable scaling up the program aiming to reduce this cost.

Program withdrawal - Rosebery District School – if Asked, Why has Rosebery District School withdrawn from the program in 2026?

- Rosebery has decided not to continue the program in 2026, due to exploring other ways the school can best support the needs of their students and families. For example, through their daily Breakfast Club.
- Schools are best placed to understand the needs of their students and families.
- DECYP is supporting Rosebery to end the program in Term 4 2025. Dunalley Primary School will replace Rosebery District.
- Dunalley was ranked next in the Eol process undertaken for the next 15 schools to join the program in 2026.

If Asked: why are schools asking for a gold coin donation?

- Schools have the option to collect voluntary donations to support delivery of the program.

Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson – Deputy Director FABS	02/10/2025
Approved by:	Ruth Davidson Director Whole of Agency Reform	Date: 16/09/2025
Approved by:	Jenny Burgess Deputy Secretary Strategy and Performance	Date: 8/10/2025
Approved by:	Ginna Webster Secretary	Date: 16/10/2025

Budget Estimates 2025

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BRIEF 50 - Universal Breakfast Club Program - Variety

BUDGET INITIATIVES AND ELECTION COMMITMENTS

- In June 2025, the Tasmanian Government announced a \$6.5 million partnership with Variety Tasmania to deliver a *Universal School Breakfast Program* across all government schools who wish to participate.
- This initiative is part of our commitment to reduce cost of living pressures for families and ensure every child starts the day ready to learn.
- When fully implemented, the program will be available to all government schools, providing free, nutritious breakfasts to up to 50,000 students statewide.

TALKING POINTS

- Every child in a Tasmanian Government school will have access to a free, nutritious breakfast through a new partnership between the Tasmanian Government and Variety Tasmania.
- We know that good nutrition is essential for learning. There is a clear link between a healthy start to the day and better educational outcomes.
- School breakfast programs contribute to better attendance, stronger concentration levels and positive learning outcomes, and I'm really excited to support our students with the Variety model.
- This partnership ensures every student can start the day ready to learn, with the energy and focus they need to succeed.
- Variety has already shown what's possible, through it's successful pilot in 40 schools.

- Building on that foundation, the *Universal School Breakfast Program* will commence in Term 1, 2026, with 30 new schools joining the 40 already participating in the pilot.
- Expressions of Interest are now open, and I encourage schools to contact Variety Tasmania to learn more and get involved.
- We're taking a phased and thoughtful approach to the rollout to ensure the program is sustainable and responsive to each school community.
- I am excited for 70 schools to participate in this program in 2026, and for more to join each year as we expand statewide over the next four years.
- This initiative is another important step in our work to ensure every child is known, safe, well and learning.

If Asked: How do schools join the program?

- Expressions of Interest are now open, closing on the 21st of November, for schools to apply to be involved in 2026.
- Through this process, Variety will select the next 30 schools to join the program, taking the total to 70 schools in 2026.
- This program reflects our government's commitment to student wellbeing, and we're focussing first on schools with the greatest level of need.
- I look forward to more schools joining the program, as it expands across the next four years.

If Asked: Will this create extra work for teachers? Will staff be funded to support the program?

- The Variety model is designed to minimise workload for schools. It uses a simple 'click and deliver' platform that connects schools with local producers and small businesses.
- This approach provides a low-administration, high-impact solution, reducing the burden on school staff and volunteers.

If Asked: What about schools that already have breakfast programs with local organisations?

- Many of our schools already run breakfast clubs, recognising the strong link between nutrition and learning.
- The 40 schools involved in the pilot have provided positive feedback about the benefits of the Variety model and support they receive.
- Schools that currently partner with local organisations can continue those arrangements or choose to transition to the Variety Breakfast Club.
- Variety's model is flexible and community focused. It can strengthen existing partnerships and enhance the great work already happening in our schools.

Background

- As of the August 2025 School Census, approximately 56,000 students were enrolled across Tasmanian Government schools (Kindergarten to Year 12).
- The Government’s commitment to provide breakfasts to up to 50,000 students takes into account average attendance patterns and expected levels of participation in the program.
- Variety Tasmania’s Breakfast Club was initially piloted in five schools in 2022. Since then, the program has expanded to 40 schools, providing access to a nutritious breakfast for up to 11,000 students each school day.
- The following table outlines the full list of schools that have participated in the pilot program since its commencement in 2022:

School Name	School Name
Beaconsfield Primary School	East Ulverstone Primary School
Campania District School	Goodwood Primary School
Forth Primary School	Riverside Primary School
Franklin Primary School	New Norfolk Primary School
Gagebrook Primary School	East Derwent Primary School
Glen Dhu Primary School	East Devonport Primary School
Glenora District School	West Ulverstone Primary School
Huonville High School	Hellyer College
New Norfolk High School	Latrobe High School
Scottsdale High School	Dover District School
Westerway Primary School	Risdon Vale Primary School
Oatlands District High School	Riverside High School
Rosebery District School	Romaine Park Primary School
Zeehan Primary School	Herdsmen’s Cove Primary School
Bagdad Primary School	Punchbowl Primary School
Elizabeth College	North West Support School
Kempton Primary School	Montrose Bay High School
Claremont College	Flinders Island District School
Montello Primary School	Cape Barren Island School
Lindisfarne Primary School	Springfield Gardens Primary

Contact Officer:	Ruth Davidson, Director Whole of Agency Reform Phone: s36	
Checked by Finance/HR/EPR	Jacqui Wilson Deputy Director Finance and Budget Services	5/10/2025
Approved by:	Ruth Davidson Director Whole of Agency Reform	Date: 16/09/2025
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