
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS COMMITTED TO CARE OF ALL STUDENTS

National Catholic Education Commission executive director Ross Fox has underlined the national commitment to eliminating bullying in Catholic schools and to providing support and pastoral care for students who are bullied for any reason.

Mr Fox said despite a new journal article's claims about how same-sex attracted and gender-diverse students are supported in Catholic schools, the human dignity of each student and the emphasis on pastoral care are part of Catholic education's holistic approach to student welfare.

"The new article, which draws on 10-year-old information that relied on education policies dating back to 2001, makes assertions about how Catholic schools are currently responding to issues around bullying," he explained.

"The reality is that, like all Australian schools, Catholic schools are constantly considering how they can create safe and supportive learning environments for all students."

Mr Fox pointed out that the research paper also lists strengths within Catholic schools in their work supporting students who encounter bullying and in attending to pastoral care.

Catholic Education Melbourne executive director Stephen Elder said reports in local media failed to acknowledge those strengths, as well as the responsiveness of Catholic schools.

"All Catholic schools are acutely aware of supporting vulnerable cohorts of students of all types, and avoiding self-harm across all students by adopting practices that focus on prevention and early intervention," he said.

Mr Fox said Catholic schools use a range of resources to combat bullying in all its forms.

"The work of ensuring schools are free from bullying requires ongoing vigilance and care for all students," he said.

"National, state, territory and diocesan programs are available to schools and systems to combat bullying, including through the National Safe Schools Framework and Safe Schools Hub."

CONTACT: Gavin Abraham • NCEC Communications Manager • 02 8229 0802 • 0408 825 788

Authorised by Ross Fox, National Catholic Education Commission, Level 3, 156 Gloucester St, Sydney