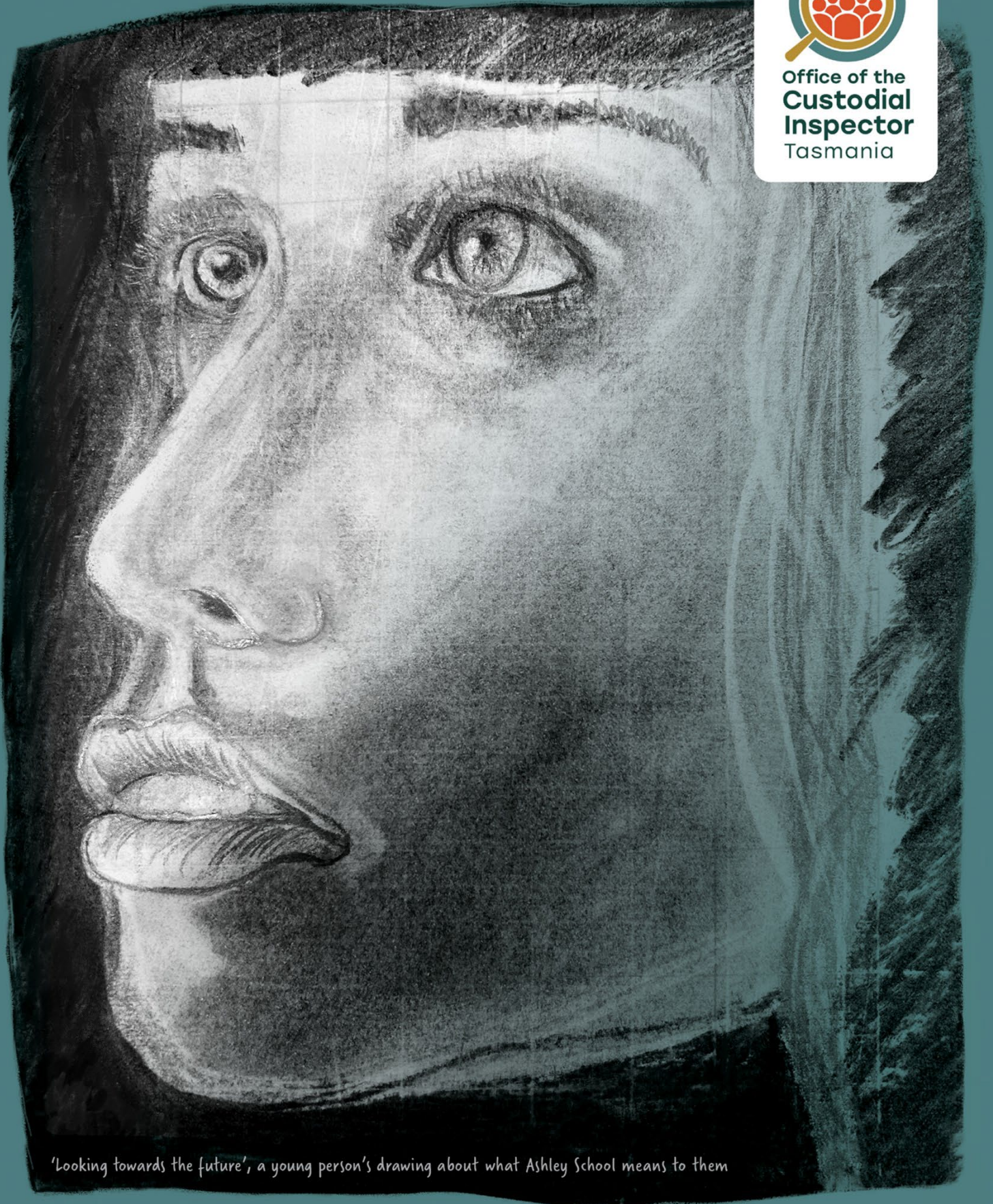




Office of the
**Custodial
Inspector**
Tasmania



'Looking towards the future', a young person's drawing about what Ashley School means to them

Looking towards the future:

Youth education inspection report 2026

The Office of the Custodial Inspector acknowledges Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of lutruwita/Tasmania. We recognise their continuing connection to Land, Sea, Waterways, Sky, and Culture and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

About this report

This report describes the findings and recommendations from the Custodial Inspector's inspection of educational programs and vocational training opportunities at Ashley Youth Detention Centre in Tasmania. Inspection visits occurred in May and August 2024. The report also comprises information from 2025 and 2026, including observations from regular monitoring visits and data obtained from Ashley School and the Department for Education, Children and Young People.

Cover art credit: 'Looking towards the future' by a student at Ashley School (2026). The artwork, a profile portrait of a person gazing thoughtfully at something out of frame, is based on a stock image.

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Telephone: 1800 001 170 (free call)

Email: ci@custodialinspector.tas.gov.au

Website: npm.tas.gov.au

For children and young people in custody

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From the Custodial Inspector

Teaching is a challenging profession and teaching children and young people in youth detention is particularly complex. Ashley School, the educational facility located within Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC), is tasked with educating students who may be disengaged from education, display challenging behaviours and have vastly different educational needs to their peers.¹ Our youth education inspection, conducted in May and August 2024, found Ashley School is performing to a very high standard, helping children and young people in detention make educational gains.

Children and young people attending Ashley School may enrol at any point during the school year. The school's student population is constantly changing, with children and young people often only staying in detention for a short time. New students not only experience the challenges of commencing at a new school, they are also adjusting to a custodial environment. For some children and young people, this will be their first experience of detention. They often have a history of negative experiences of schooling in the community, and this is frequently interrelated with trauma histories which can significantly affect students' ability to engage in education on social, emotional and cognitive levels.²

Adding to these complexities, over the past few years AYDC has experienced significant staffing challenges. Low numbers of youth workers, as well as behavioural and safety concerns, can result in 'lockdowns' or restrictive practices where children and young people are confined to their bedrooms or accommodation units. For Ashley School, this means students may not be able to attend some or all scheduled classes, and this changes from day to day without warning. The 2023 *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings* highlighted the impact of AYDC lockdowns on children and young people's participation in school and other activities.³ Ashley School told us that in 2025, school attendance was cancelled around a quarter of the time.⁴

Ashley School addresses these challenges wherever it can. It adapts to students' needs by creating highly individualised learning plans and lessons for each child or young person. In response to its transient population, it focuses on preparing children and young

¹ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Ashley School External School Review Report 2024* (Report, October 2024) ('External School Review Report') 5.

² Jessica B. Koslouski, Kristabel Stark and Sandra M. Chafouleas, 'Understanding and responding to the effects of trauma in the classroom: A primer for educators', *Social and Emotional Learning: Research, Practice and Policy* 1 (June 2023).

³ Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, *Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children* (Report, August 2023) vol 5(3) ch 12, 212.

⁴ Data supplied by Ashley School.

people to return to school in the community. When students cannot attend classes due to operational staff shortages, teachers provide flexible learning opportunities. Ashley School's teaching approach is grounded in trauma-informed, restorative principles and understanding not only of each student's learning needs, but also their social and emotional needs.⁵ For an observer, this translates to small class sizes, high teacher-to-student ratios, differentiated and flexible learning (including practical, skills-based workshops), clear expectations and positive behavioural support and engaging student-teacher interactions. Children and young people in detention have shared that they like Ashley School, with some saying it is 'better than school on the outside' and they prefer school days compared to the school holiday period.⁶

While the inspection that formed the basis of this report was conducted in 2024, Ashley School's core challenges have not changed. These include students' access to digital resources, AYDC's impending closure, transitioning students to community schooling and capacity to offer vocational education and skills-based programs. Notably, frequent lockdowns limit Ashley School's ability to deliver consistent educational content, and therefore also limit children and young people's access to learning. These challenges are largely outside of the school's control. This inspection report highlights these issues as well as Ashley School's strengths, which are many. I have made four recommendations with the view to improving education for children and young people at AYDC.

It is worth noting that AYDC, together with the broader Department for Education, Children and Young People, is actively working to increase operational staff numbers and thereby facilitate children and young people's full participation in school and other programs. However, staffing issues have been ongoing for several years. The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* enshrines children's right to education.⁷ The Tasmanian Government should take all measures necessary to ensure children and young people in youth detention have full and uninterrupted access to this fundamental right.

Dr Grant Davies
Custodial Inspector

September 2026

⁵ External School Review Report (n 1) 5, 15, 17.

⁶ Conversations with children and young people in detention (Custodial Inspector staff, 2024–2026).

⁷ *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, opened for signature 20 November 1989, 1577 UNTS 3 (entered into force 2 September 1990) pt 1 art 28.

Thank you

We thank the children and young people in custody who shared their views and who regularly allow us to join their classes and programs. We greatly value their perspectives. We particularly thank the two young people who generously contributed their artwork for publication in this report.

We thank staff from the Department for Children, Education and Young People and Ashley Youth Detention Centre who provided information and assistance. Their cooperation with the process was very positive.

We particularly thank the staff at Ashley School, who always welcome us to the school, facilitate our inclusion in classes, encourage questions, and openly provide us with any information requested. Children and young people in detention benefit greatly from their warmth, consideration and expertise.

We extend our appreciation to Irene Morgan, our consultant, for lending us her knowledge. Ms Morgan's preliminary findings and recommendations form the basis of this report.

List of recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure children and young people in detention have equitable access to digital learning.

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Recommendation 2

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should facilitate increased and equitable access to relevant vocational education, training and work experience (both onsite and offsite) for children and young people in detention.

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Recommendation 3

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should investigate alternative methods of education provision and delivery to ensure children and young people in detention have full and uninterrupted access to education and programs.

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Recommendation 4

In collaboration with Ashley School, the Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop a tailored, well-resourced program to support Year 11 and 12 students transitioning from youth detention into community schooling.

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1. About the inspection

1.1 Methods

Use of Expectations

This was the first inspection conducted using our *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Expectations), which replaced our *Inspection standards for youth custodial centres in Tasmania* in 2024. Our Expectations set out best practice in youth detention according to national and international standards and human rights instruments.⁸ The specific Expectations guiding this inspection are included at Appendix 3.

Scope

The inspection examined the availability and delivery of education and vocational education and training programs to children and young people in custody at Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC). It is not a review of Ashley School's curriculum or an in-depth examination of its teaching methods.

Inspection visits

We conducted an initial inspection with Irene Morgan (consultant) on 31 May 2024. On that day, AYDC was in lockdown, resulting in the cancellation of Ashley School programs. We returned to AYDC on 13 and 14 August 2024 to observe classes and other activities at Ashley School. This report captures the findings and observations from both inspection visits, as well as more recent information supplied by Ashley School and observations from our regular monitoring visits. Since December 2024, these monitoring visits have occurred at least twice a month.

Inspection activities

We performed the following activities during this inspection:

- multiple onsite visits to AYDC and Ashley School involving:
 - conversations with children and young people in custody
 - interviews with AYDC and Ashley School staff and leaders
 - observations of educational programs and activities
- review of documents and data supplied by the Department for Education, Children

⁸ Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism and Office of the Custodial Inspector, *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Version 1.2, September 2025).

and Young People (DECYP) and Ashley School

- research and review of other relevant literature.

A draft of this report was provided to DECYP for comment and fact-checking. The DECYP Secretary's response to the report and its recommendations is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Background

2.1 Facility summary

**Name**
Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC)

**Location**
AYDC is located outside Deloraine, around 50 km west of Launceston.

**Purpose**
To rehabilitate and provide secure care to children and young people who have been detained or remanded by the courts as per the *Youth Justice Act 1997*.

**Governance**
The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) is responsible for AYDC.



Capacity	Average number of children and young people ⁹	
40	2020-21	8
	2021-22	8
AYDC can house up to 40 children and young people from 10 to 18 years old of all genders. Some young people remain in custody at AYDC after they turn 18.	2022-23	13
	2023-24	16

⁹ Australian Government (Productivity Commission), *Report on Government Services 2026* Part F, Section 17, 'Youth justice services' (29 January 2026) Table 17A.3.

2.2 About Ashley School

Ashley School provides education to children and young people detained at AYDC. It is located within the detention centre. DECYP is responsible for the operation of Ashley School, like all other public schools in Tasmania.

The staff at Ashley School are fully qualified and consisted of the following full-time equivalents (FTE) at the time of the 2024 inspection:

Administration	• Principal – 1.0 FTE • Assistant Principal – 1.0 FTE • School Business Manager – 1.0 FTE
Teaching staff	• Advanced Skills Teacher – 1.0 FTE • Teachers – 4.0 FTE • Teacher Assistants – 2.0 FTE

Strategies, policies, and plans influencing Ashley School

Various state and national strategies, policies and plans influence Ashley School. We reviewed some of these for the inspection, including:

- *Department for Education, Children and Families Strategic Plan 2024–2030*
- *Youth Justice Model of Care Implementation Plan*
- *Youth Justice Blueprint 2024–2034*
- *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*
- *Closing the Gap: Commonwealth 2024 Annual Report and 2025 Implementation Plan*
- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015*
- *Ashley School Improvement Plan 2024*.¹⁰

¹⁰ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Families), *Strategic Plan 2024–2034* (2023); Tasmanian Government (Department of Premier and Cabinet), *Youth Justice Model of Care Implementation Plan* (2024); Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Youth Justice Blueprint 2024–2034* (2023); Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations and Australian Governments, *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (July 2020); Australian Government (National Indigenous Australians Agency), *Closing the Gap: Commonwealth 2024 Annual Report and Commonwealth 2025 Implementation Plan* (Report, 2025); Australian Government (Department of Education), *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015* (November 2015); Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Ashley School Improvement Plan 2024* (2024).

2.3 Other reviews of Ashley School

In recent years, other reviews have considered Ashley School or elements of education at AYDC. We acknowledge Ashley School's continuous improvement work, which is informed in part by these reviews and exceeds the scope of this report. Our inspection did not cover all the areas addressed in previous reviews. This report notes their pertinent findings and, in some instances, supports rather than duplicates their recommendations. We have briefly outlined the two reports most relevant to our inspection.

Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children

The *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings* (Commission of Inquiry) investigated the treatment of children and young people at AYDC. Its final report, published in August 2023, highlighted several significant issues regarding education including the impact of lockdowns on access to schooling and insufficient vocational education and training programs.¹¹ To address these and other issues, it recommended:

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should:

- a) ensure the *Youth Justice Model of Care* emphasises the central importance for children and young people in detention of access to high-quality education and vocational training that is tailored to their individual learning needs and that includes learning life skills
- b) make education programs and other structured activities accessible to all children and young people in detention (including on remand)
- c) ensure a child or young person's access to educational programs or physical exercise in detention is not linked to, or limited by, their ranking in behaviour management programs
- d) develop and establish partnerships with community organisations to create employment and training opportunities for children and young people leaving detention.¹²

The Commission of Inquiry's final report emphasised that a structured day of activities in detention, with a strong focus on education, is crucial for ensuring the safety and success of children and young people by reducing boredom and preventing negative behaviours.¹³

¹¹ Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, *Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children* (Report, August 2023) vol 5(3) ch 12, 137–143.

¹² Ibid vol 5(3) ch 12, recommendation 12.22, 143.

¹³ Ibid vol 5(3) ch 12, 137–143.

Ashley School External School Review Report 2024

In October 2024, external reviewers from DECYP conducted a review of Ashley School. External reviews are a standard process undertaken every few years at Tasmanian government schools.

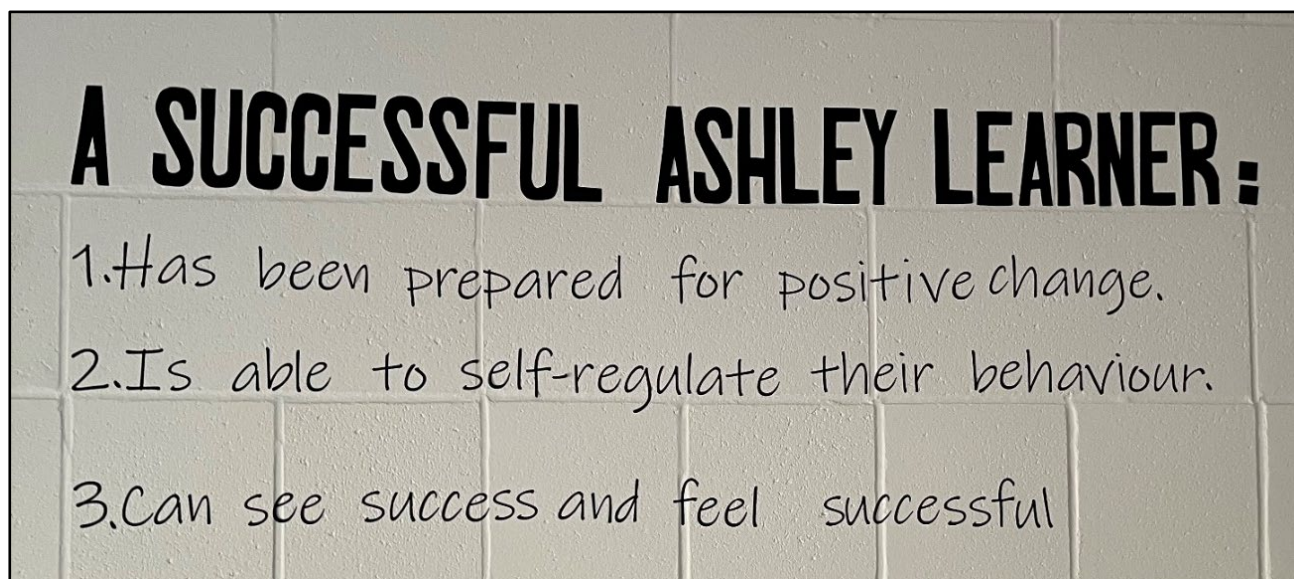
The *Ashley School External School Review Report 2024* highlighted that Ashley School's practices were supportive, data-driven, and focused on students, helping the school continuously improve. It made three recommendations for further improvement, to be included in the school's 2025 *School Improvement Plan*:

- a) Build collaborative inquiry processes to support staff in analysing and interpreting data, monitoring student growth, adjusting teaching, and evaluating the impact of evidence-informed strategies to differentiate and engage students in their learning.
- b) Implement non-negotiable, evidence-informed pedagogical and instructional practices, informed by the DECYP Pedagogical Framework and trauma-informed practice, that would be visible in every classroom to ensure maximum impact on student achievement and engagement.
- c) Align and expand the current observation and feedback processes with the pedagogical framework, to ensure consistency and effectiveness of practice across all classrooms.¹⁴

¹⁴ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Ashley School External School Review Report 2024* (Report, October 2024).

3. Individual learning needs

Figure 1. Writing on a hallway wall outside an Ashley School classroom (August 2026)



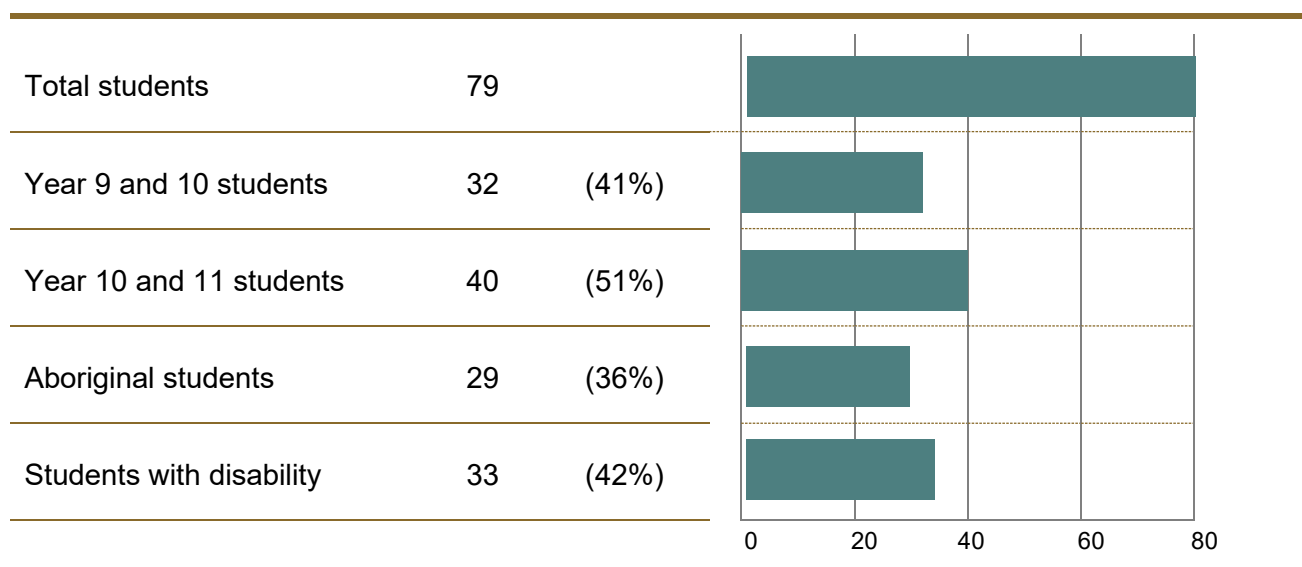
3.1 The student population is diverse and continually changing

Children and young people in custody at Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC)—the students who attend Ashley School—are a diverse and transient population. Preliminary 2025 data indicate that students were enrolled at Ashley School for an average of only 18 days.¹⁵ Many face some form of learning difficulty and are disengaged from community education settings.¹⁶ Often, students' literacy and numeracy skills are 'many years behind their peers in the community'.¹⁷ Data on the 2024 Ashley School student population is displayed in Figure 2.

¹⁵ Data supplied by Ashley School.

¹⁶ Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, *Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children* (Report, August 2023) ('Commission of Inquiry') vol 5(3) ch 12, 138–139.

¹⁷ Ibid vol 5(1) ch 10, 22.

Figure 2. Ashley School student population data for 2024¹⁸

3.2 Staff conduct comprehensive assessments

All students are assessed by Ashley School staff upon entry to AYDC using a variety of assessments. This allows staff to identify academic strengths, develop personalised educational support plans and track progress. Staff can then tailor classes to the needs of individual students, regardless of educational ability, disability (diagnosed or undiagnosed), or behavioural concerns.

At the same time as catering to student abilities, we have observed that Ashley School strives to identify students' interests and adapt schoolwork accordingly. School leaders told external reviewers in 2024 that part of their intake process is to 'ascertain students' interests and passions'.¹⁹

3.3 Data collection is complicated

While Ashley School staff conduct comprehensive assessments and other means of gathering data to inform teaching, the transience of the school's population makes it difficult to maintain continuous academic data. During our inspection, we heard there is insufficient data on students at Ashley School, which disrupts longitudinal progress-tracking. Accurate data collection is one element of improving educational outcomes and was a focus of the 2024 *Ashley School External School Review Report*. The report

¹⁸ Note: number of Aboriginal students and number of students with disability are estimates, based on percentages of students enrolled in Ashley School from 1 January 2024 to early November 2024. Data provided by the Department for Education, Children and Young People.

¹⁹ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Ashley School External School Review Report 2024* (Report, October 2024) ('External School Review Report') 15.

recommended Ashley School:

Build collaborative inquiry processes to support staff in analysing and interpreting data, monitoring student growth, adjusting teaching, and evaluating the impact of evidence-informed strategies to differentiate and engage students in their learning.²⁰

The reviewers heard Ashley School already had numerous processes in place to gather and analyse data, which were still in development, stating ‘there has been a much greater focus on the use of data in the last two years’.²¹ We have discussed this focus with school staff during recent monitoring visits. For example, staff told us they observed standard tests were not always suitable for their students and responded by developing tailored means of gathering data and tracking progress.²²

It is unnecessary for us to duplicate the external review’s recommendation. We support its implementation at Ashley School and the work leaders have undertaken and are continuing to strengthen data collection and use.

3.4 Small classes allow for more support

Ashley School utilises the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework, which provides evidence-based, differentiated teaching to meet the diverse needs of students and support their academic and social success. The MTSS framework has four tiers of support:

Tier 1	Whole-class, evidence-based reading instruction for all students
Tier 2	Small-group sessions for those needing extra help in specific areas
Tier 3	One-on-one sessions for those facing significant challenges
Tier 4	Extensive support for disengaged students

Many students at Ashley School require Tier 3 or Tier 4 support. Each class in Ashley School consists of a maximum of five students who are supported by a teacher and at least one youth worker. When necessary, an assistant teacher is also provided. This

²⁰ Ibid recommendation 1, 19.

²¹ Ibid 9.

²² Conversation with Ashley School staff (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026).

ensures students receive any individualised assistance they require.

Figure 3. Writing on a hallway wall outside an Ashley School classroom (August 2026)



3.5 Each student has a tailored learning plan

Ashley School creates a learning plan for each student, developed by teachers in collaboration with families and professionals and based on student assessment results and the MTSS framework. Learning plans cater to the needs of students, including those with disability or who have experienced trauma. They focus on academic and social and emotional growth, positive behaviour support, student engagement and restorative practices. Learning plans also support post-release transitions by maintaining continuity across schools. The 2024 external review found:

Student learning is personalised and differentiated based on each student's learning needs, interests and personal goals. Each student has an individualised learning plan that the students themselves negotiate with staff.²³

This approach supports effective learning. We have seen children and young people make significant progress in critical areas such as literacy while at Ashley School. These observations are supported by 2025 data indicating significant literacy gains across the school's population, including strong improvements in reading fluency.²⁴ These practices align with our Expectation 5.9, which requires identifying and meeting disability needs. They also meet a core indicator of Expectation 7.12, that each student will have a 'detailed education and learning plan' based on 'thorough assessment of their needs and abilities' (refer to Appendix 3).²⁵

²³ External School Review Report (n 20) 5.

²⁴ Data supplied by Ashley School.

²⁵ Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism and Office of the Custodial Inspector, *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Version 1.2, September 2025).

Figure 4. Literacy classroom at Ashley School (August 2026)



3.6 Student behaviour can be challenging

Children and young people in detention have often experienced complex and intersecting social and environmental issues, including adverse childhood experiences, intergenerational trauma, systemic racism and economic disadvantage.²⁶ These experiences may be associated with difficulty regulating emotions and behaviours. Therefore, successfully managing student behaviour is a complex and important aspect of the safe and meaningful delivery of education at Ashley School. In this context, staff must ‘apply a therapeutic education model that incorporates positive behaviour support’ at the same time as needing ‘to be hypervigilant, flexible, adaptable and resilient’.²⁷

In 2024, children and young people at Ashley School reported to external reviewers that other students’ behaviour sometimes disrupts their learning.²⁸ However, the review also identified that Ashley School employs evidence-informed strategies to promote an ‘orderly learning environment’ and strong school culture, ‘including the use of trauma-informed practice and their explicit and consistent extrinsic rewards program’.²⁹ Ashley School introduced the *Token Economy* system in 2024, which aims to reinforce positive behaviour and boost engagement by rewarding students for positive conduct and self-regulation. It

²⁶ Refer, for example: Australian Human Rights Commission, ‘*Help way earlier!*’ *How Australia can transform child justice to improve safety and wellbeing* (Report, 2024) 16–18.

²⁷ Commission of Inquiry (n 16) vol 5(1) ch 10, 31.

²⁸ External School Review Report (n 20) 12.

²⁹ Ibid 11.

creates a supportive, flexible environment that encourages constructive participation and promotes self-discipline and wellbeing.

During monitoring visits, we have observed mostly positive student behaviour at Ashley School, which is in the context of strong student-teacher relationships and trauma-informed care. School staff have told us serious behavioural incidents are rare. Given challenging behaviours can be common in youth detention settings, this suggests Ashley School's approach to managing behaviour is effective.

3.7 Cultural support has improved

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are overrepresented at AYDC. In 2024–25 the average daily percentage of children and young people in detention identifying as Aboriginal was 35.7 per cent.³⁰ In comparison, the 2021 census reported that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represented 5.4 per cent of Tasmania's population.³¹ This overrepresentation requires Ashley School to provide culturally appropriate education and support to its students.

In 2024, a 45-minute Aboriginal Education program was delivered weekly by an Aboriginal teacher from the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP). While this program is no longer operating, Ashley School has continued to facilitate regular Aboriginal education programs such as weekly cultural education and wellbeing sessions offered by Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation. In addition, as of mid-2026, workers from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre have commenced weekly visits. These programs align with our Expectation 5.8 regarding cultural support (refer to Appendix 3).

We encourage Ashley School to continue developing such partnerships and programs, acknowledging Tasmanian Aboriginal communities' diversity and differing cultural needs. Previously, we recommended the Aboriginal Education Program be further expanded to strengthen children and young people's connections to country and culture.³² We acknowledge Ashley School's ongoing efforts in this area, which remains an important area for further development.

³⁰ Australian Government (Productivity Commission), 'Young people aged 10–17 years in detention, by Indigenous status (a)', *Report on Government Services 2026* Table 17A.5, Pt F, s17 (Online, 29 January 2026) <<https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/community-services/youth-justice/>>.

³¹ Australian Government (Australian Bureau of Statistics), 'Tasmania: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population summary', *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Census, 2021* (Online, released 1 July 2022) <<https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/tasmania-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-population-summary>>.

³² Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Youth Wellbeing Inspection Report* (Report, 2024) 20–21.

4. Group learning

Figure 5. A classroom at Ashley School (August 2026)



4.1 Timetables provide consistency

Children and young people at Ashley School are placed in class groups of up to five students. Each group is allocated a timetable created in collaboration between the school and Ashley Youth Detention Centre's (AYDC) Case Management Team (which provides support and case management services to children and young people in detention). The timetables ensure students attend subjects and activities with the same teacher each week. This promotes routine and stability, and thereby a sense of predictability and safety—a core principle of trauma-informed care in education.³³

Between 9:30am and 2:45pm students attend a range of educational, therapeutic,

³³ Lise Newton, Carol A. Keane and Mitchell K. Byrne, 'Trauma-informed programs in Australian schools: A systematic review of design, implementation and efficacy', *Children and Youth Services Review* (January 2024) 156; Emily Berger (Monash University), 'Five approaches for creating trauma-informed classrooms', *Education* (Online, 14 October 2019) <<https://www.monash.edu/education/teachspace/articles/five-approaches-for-creating-trauma-informed-classrooms>>.

recreational and support programs delivered by school staff, youth workers and external providers. Students return to their accommodation units for lunch and 'quiet time' overseen by youth workers.³⁴ At present, children and young people at Ashley School are divided into five class groups. Figure 6 depicts a recent example of a timetable for one of these groups. Figure 7 depicts the total number of hours each class group spends in the different program areas per week when the timetable is fully delivered. It also details how many individual sessions or classes are timetabled for each program area.

Figure 6. Example of an Ashley School timetable (July 2026).

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:30–10:10	Numeracy	Personal training	54 Reasons ³⁵	Art	Personal training
10:10–10:50	Art	Physical education	Health	Literacy	Literacy
10:50–11:30	Physical education	Literacy	Woodwork	Numeracy	Numeracy
11:30–12:00	RAMP ³⁶	RAMP	RAMP	RAMP	RAMP
12:00–12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30–1:15	Quiet time	Quiet time	Quiet time	Quiet time	Quiet time
1:25–2:05	Personal training	Numeracy	Personal training	Physical education	Physical education
2:05–2:45	WRM ³⁷	Art	Literacy	Woodwork	Woodwork

³⁴ 'Quiet time' is a period of isolation when children and young people are returned to their individual rooms after lunch to give youth workers a lunch break.

³⁵ 54 Reasons is a community organisation that operates several services across Tasmania. In this program, staff work with children and young people to support vocational education and future pathway planning. For more information, refer: <<https://www.54reasons.org.au/services>>.

³⁶ Reading and Maths Program.

³⁷ Weekly Review Meeting. During this time AYDC staff inform children and young people of their colour rating for the following week in the centre's behaviour management program. For more information about this program, refer: Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, *Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children* (Report, August 2023) vol 5(1) ch 10, 36–38.

Figure 7. Total hours per program area per week and number of sessions per week for each student group (July 2026)

Program area	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Creative	4 (6 sessions)	4 (6 sessions)	3.33 (5 sessions)	4 (6 sessions)	4 (6 sessions)
Foundation	8.5 (14 sessions)	9.17 (15 sessions)	9.17 (15 sessions)	8.5 (14 sessions)	9.17 (15 sessions)
Mentoring	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)
Physical activity	5.33 (8 sessions)	4.66 (7 sessions)	5.33 (8 sessions)	5.33 (8 sessions)	4.66 (7 sessions)
WRM	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)	0.66 (1 session)
Time in units	6.25 (5 sessions)	6.25 (5 sessions)	6.25 (5 sessions)	6.25 (5 sessions)	6.25 (5 sessions)

The timetables we analysed in 2024 differed from the 2026 timetable in Figure 6 and the totals in Figure 7. In particular, time spent in Foundation programs (which are principally literacy and numeracy) has increased from an average of 5.6 to 8.9 hours per week over a greater number of sessions. Time spent in creative programs and physical activities has also increased, while mentoring programs have reduced. School staff advised us they increased personal training and numeracy sessions in response to feedback from young people.³⁸ This demonstrates Ashley School's commitment to tailoring educational content to student needs and interests at the same time as meeting broader departmental requirements.

4.2 Physical education is varied

Students are offered several physical activity sessions each week. These promote strength, discipline, teamwork and personal growth. They also allow children and young people to exert excess energy in pro-social ways. We were advised personal training sessions are further used as an opportunity to apply practical numeracy skills. We have observed Ashley School's physical education teachers endeavour to provide varied and engaging classes despite the limits of the detention environment, for example by teaching kayaking in the swimming pool. These physical activity programs align with our

³⁸ Data supplied by Ashley School.

Expectation 7.9 (refer to Appendix 3).³⁹

4.3 There are barriers to digital learning

In custodial settings, providing access to digital resources is complex. During the 2024 inspection, we noted children and young people did not appear to have access to computers or tablets at Ashley School. As of mid-2026, students sometimes have supervised access to computers in classrooms, but restrictions applied to content make computer use difficult and therefore infrequent.⁴⁰ These restrictions are decided by the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP).

In the community, digital literacy skills are increasingly essential. It is critical for children and young people in detention to learn the skills needed for successful reintegration. DECYP holds a strong position on digital literacy and inclusion, detailed in its 2025 *Digital Inclusion* blueprint and 2022 *Digital Inclusion for 21st Century Learners* strategy.⁴¹ The latter emphasises equitable access to digital learning and outlines DECYP's vision:

We will aspire to ensure every learner has the opportunity to be connected and engaged in learning, supported through access to and use of technology. Our goal is to ensure all learners have the technological skills, with equitable access to safe online environments to pursue life opportunities in the 21st century... Having access to the online world is increasingly seen as a material basic that every individual has a right to.⁴²

Despite this vision, most digital learning opportunities available to children and young people at DECYP schools are not available to students at Ashley School.

Our Expectations 7.8 and 7.12 highlight the importance of developing digital literacy in education settings through supervised internet use and access to up-to-date technology (refer to Appendix 3). One option—used in custodial settings in other Australian jurisdictions—is to provide each student with a device equipped with suitable software but without internet access. For example, the University of Southern Queensland offers higher education courses to people in custody across Australia. Students are provided with pre-loaded devices which allow them to engage in simulated 'online research' tied to their

³⁹ We highlighted the indoor exercise options, outdoor equipment upgrades and various active programs offered at AYDC in our *Youth Wellbeing Report 2024*. Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania (Report, 2024) 32–37.

⁴⁰ Conversation with Ashley School staff (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026).

⁴¹ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Digital Inclusion: Blueprint for Virtual Learning Services for Tasmanian Government Schools* (Blueprint, 2025); Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Digital Inclusion for 21st Century Learners* (Strategy, 2022).

⁴² Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Digital Inclusion for 21st Century Learners* (Strategy, 2022) 6.

studies.⁴³ Ashley School advised us students previously had greater access to computers, and this generally worked well. They considered giving students tablets would support digital literacy and access to educational content outside of school hours.⁴⁴

4.4 Library services could be expanded

Library services are another area where greater digital access could benefit children and young people in detention and provide equity with students in the community. At other DECYP schools, students can access Libraries Tasmania resources (including eBooks, audiobooks, comics and digital magazines) via the *Sora* app. This initiative aims to enhance literacy by providing easy access to a wide range of digital resources both in and out of the classroom.⁴⁵ Ashley School could allow students to access this app as one means of improving access to library resources as well as supporting digital literacy skills.

Figure 8. Ashley School library (August 2026)



Figure 9. Ashley School library, located in the literacy classroom (August 2026)



⁴³ University of Southern Queensland, 'Incarcerated Students Education Initiative transforming lives', *Newsroom* (Online, 23 August 2023) <<https://www.unisq.edu.au/news/2023/08/incarcerated-students-education-initiatives>>; University of Southern Queensland, 'Incarcerated students', *Student services and support* (Web Page, 2026) <<https://www.unisq.edu.au/current-students/services-and-support/incarcerated-students>>.

⁴⁴ Conversation with Ashley School staff (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026).

⁴⁵ Tasmanian Government (Libraries Tasmania), 'Sora in Schools', *Sora* (Web Page, accessed 14 May 2026) <<https://libraries.tas.gov.au/educationtasmaniasora/>>.

During our May 2024 inspection, the library in Ashley School was located next to the classrooms. The small library appeared to be well-stocked (though we did not formally audit its resources). We were told children and young people can access the library and borrow books, but it was unclear how often this occurs. During the inspection, students could not access the library because AYDC was in lockdown. At the time of writing in 2026, the library had been moved to the literacy classroom to promote access and better integrate its resources into the literacy program.

Plans for the education space in the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility (intended to replace AYDC) are still being developed. It is unclear whether it will include an onsite library. DECYP will need to consider how the facility, which is designed to have a population of up to 16 children and young people, will meet best practice standards relating to library access. The *Australian Library and Information Association Minimum Standard Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners*, which apply to juvenile detention facilities, expect that:

2.2 Every prison or similar institution with an average prisoner population of 25 or more shall have its own library for the exclusive use of prisoners, similar to a local public library.

2.3 In the case of smaller institutions, prisoners shall be guaranteed an alternative that will equally serve their needs. Alternatives might include access to a local public library, scheduled visits by a mobile library, or periodic rotation of a collection of books and other materials supplied by a library.⁴⁶

Libraries can support children and young people's education and growth via resources that promote educational outcomes in literacy, numeracy and independent learning while fostering curiosity and wellbeing. Our Expectation 7.8 relates to library access (refer to Appendix 3).

Recommendation 1

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure children and young people in detention have equitable access to digital learning.

⁴⁶ Australian Library and Information Association, *Australian Library and Information Association Minimum Standard Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners* (December 2015) 5.

4.5 Programs build confidence and life skills

Programs at Ashley School aim to foster personal growth and creativity and build life skills. Programs offered by external providers during our inspection consisted of:

Hoops 4 Life ⁴⁷	Uses basketball to boost confidence and teach life skills like teamwork, resilience, and personal growth.
Sexting program ⁴⁸	Educates children and young people on the risks of sharing explicit content. It covers topics like consent, privacy, and emotional and legal consequences. It promotes responsible online choices and open communication.
DJ program ⁴⁹	Led by a DJ, it helps children and young people develop skills, gain confidence, and connect with others.

While these particular programs are no longer offered, a variety of programs are currently delivered by Ashley School, AYDC staff and external providers (including yoga, dance, cooking, personal training, sports and art). We have observed several arts programs during monitoring visits, ranging from dance and music to painting and tie-dying. These initiatives align with our Expectation 7.11 regarding Creative Arts (refer to Appendix 3). In addition, Ashley School staff currently work alongside community organisation 54 Reasons one day per week to support vocational education and future pathways planning. A similar program was delivered during our 2024 inspection.

Observation: cooking classes

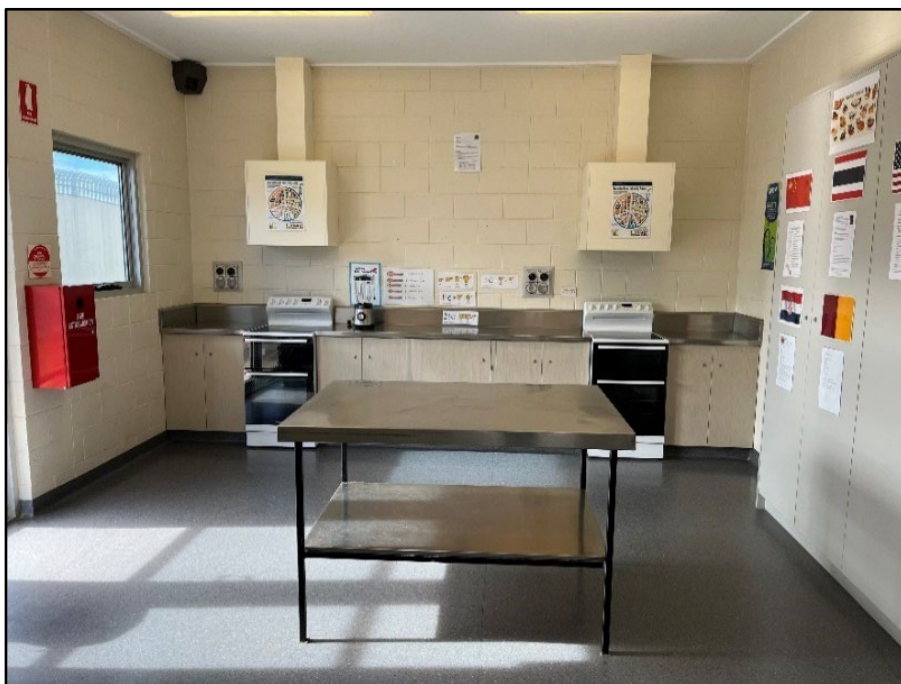
During our inspection in August 2024, we observed cooking classes led by youth workers. Children and young people prepared recipes they could use after release such as crunchy popcorn chicken, sausage rolls and Big Mac flavoured tacos. The youth workers provided valuable cooking tips and demonstrated cooking techniques. We observed positive and engaged interactions with children and young people. More recently, we have observed cooking classes led by external services such as the Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation. Ashley School staff also undertake individual cooking activities with students as part of their positive behaviour support processes.

⁴⁷ Australian Sports Foundation, *Hoops 4 Life* (Web Page, 2026) <<https://asf.org.au/campaigns/hoops-4-life>>.

⁴⁸ Program facilitated by Youth, Family and Community Connections, a not-for-profit organisation which provides services on Tasmania's North West and West Coasts. Youth, Family and Community Connections, *About Us* (Web Page, 2026) <<https://yfcc.com.au/>>.

⁴⁹ Program facilitated by DJ Ragz from Urban Movement, an organisation that provides mentoring and other programs to young people. Urban Movement, *Home* (Web Page, 2021) <<https://yfcc.com.au/>>.

Figure 10. Facilities used for cooking classes at Ashley School (August 2026)



4.6 Consistent programming can be challenging

Programs offered at Ashley School can be challenging to organise and maintain. They are subject to factors such as:

- availability of external providers
- ability of providers to travel to the centre
- changing programs offered by providers
- student numbers and ages
- interests and qualifications of current teaching staff
- operational staffing levels at AYDC
- student interests, strengths, and needs
- workplace health and safety requirements
- risk assessments for different students.

For example, during our 2024 inspection, Ashley School was delivering a café workshop with Barista Certification to some students, which has since become infeasible.

Woodworking classes were also part of the 2024 timetable but were rarely delivered due to operational staff shortages.

Figure 11. Woodwork facilities at Ashley School (August 2026)



School staff (alongside AYDC staff) nonetheless do their best to address these factors and offer varied programs. For example, since 2024 they have met the many challenges of providing woodworking classes—which some students value highly—via several creative measures. During a visit in 2025 we observed a woodworking class and saw children and young people actively engaging in projects with a range of equipment. In the woodworking program, children and young people are taught to make progressively more difficult pieces depending on their interest and skills. This includes small pieces of furniture they may sell or take with them when they leave AYDC. As of May 2026, woodworking classes were still being held when operational staff numbers allowed.

Figure 12. Woodwork facilities at Ashley School (August 2026)



At present, DECYP and the wider staff group at AYDC are actively addressing operational staff shortages as well as increasing programs after school, on weekends and during school holidays—times when children and young people report higher levels of boredom and are more likely to display challenging behaviours. In addition, some Ashley School staff recently gained certification to deliver social, emotional, health and wellbeing programs during school holiday periods. We support these initiatives and any additional opportunities to engage children and young people in meaningful activities (including leisure activities) that can support wellbeing, growth and rehabilitation.

4.7 Vocational education is important

Hands-on programs offer valuable skill-building opportunities for children and young people. In addition to the programs detailed in sections 4.5 and 4.6, Ashley School endeavours to offer Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses. These are designed to improve employability by equipping young people with workplace-related practical and interpersonal skills.⁵⁰ As displayed in Figure 2, at the time of our inspection many Ashley School students were in Year 10 or 11. As such, a focus on vocational training, employability skills and tertiary education is critical for successful reintegration into the community. Notably, we have observed Ashley School staff supporting students to identify their interests, then sourcing relevant programs and other opportunities to enhance learning and practical skills.

Case Study: career pathway

Around the time of our 2024 inspection, we learned about a young person detained at AYDC who was interested in becoming a mechanic. Ashley School took proactive steps to foster this interest, initially by organising for the young person to engage in one-on-one teaching sessions with a youth worker who was a qualified mechanic. Ashley School and AYDC staff later organised for the young person to regularly travel offsite to undertake relevant study as well as work experience.

The tailored study and career pathway outlined in this case study is an example of how young people in detention can be prepared for successful reintegration. Similarly, one young person was recently supported to undertake a tattoo course and another has been encouraged to explore and extend his interest in art. The *2024 Ashley School External School Review Report* noted:

⁵⁰ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), 'Department for Education, Children and Young People RTO', *Policies, legislation and data* (Web Page, 20 September 2023) <<https://decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/policies-legislation-data/decyp-rto/>>.

When asked how their teacher supports them to monitor their own learning and set goals for the future, most students said teachers help them, and that they get to set goals to get a white card, get a job, and set pathways for themselves.⁵¹

4.8 It can be difficult to provide vocational education

Despite Ashley School's efforts, AYDC's isolated location and small population make vocational education and training largely impractical and unviable. During a recent monitoring visit, several older young people told us they are attending school but would prefer to be enrolled in vocational education. They said if that is not possible, they would like to work around the centre to learn practical skills, suggesting tasks such as starting a vegetable garden, painting and learning how to do odd jobs.⁵²

In a letter dated 15 May 2024, TasTAFE advised us they were not delivering VET programs at AYDC. No reasons were provided.⁵³ However, Ashley School has been actively collaborating with local private Registered Training Organisations to facilitate shorter VET courses onsite such as the *Work Safely at Heights* course. Ashley School has also offered 'white card' training to young people interested in construction work, and is developing plans to utilise Ashley farm in school vocational programs.⁵⁴

Ideally, children and young people in detention can regularly travel offsite to access suitable education and training in the community. During the 2024 inspection, we heard this practice had previously been in place but had largely ceased due to ongoing operational staff shortages. We understand DECYP is actively considering how the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility can form partnerships with local schools and trade training centres to facilitate greater access to vocational education and training offsite.

⁵¹ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Ashley School External School Review Report 2024* (Report, October 2024) 18.

⁵² Conversation with young people in detention (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026).

⁵³ Letter from Grant Dreher, Chief Executive Officer, TasTAFE, to Richard Connock, Custodial Inspector, 15 May 2024.

⁵⁴ Conversation with Ashley School staff (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026). A white card is required 'to work in the construction industry at any level' in Tasmania. Tasmanian Government (WorkSafe Tasmania), 'White cards (construction induction)', *Licensing permits and registration* (Web Page, 15 April 2025) <<https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/licensing-permits-and-registration/white-cards-construction-induction>>.

Recommendation 2

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should facilitate increased and equitable access to relevant vocational education, training and work experience (both onsite and offsite) for children and young people in detention.

This recommendation is designed to complement rather than duplicate Recommendation 12.22 of the 2023 *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings*, which states:

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should:

- a. ensure the Youth Justice Model of Care emphasises the central importance for children and young people in detention of access to high-quality education and vocational training that is tailored to their individual learning needs and that includes learning life skills
- b. make education programs and other structured activities accessible to all children and young people in detention (including on remand)
- c. ensure a child or young person's access to educational programs or physical exercise in detention is not linked to, or limited by, their ranking in behaviour management programs
- d. develop and establish partnerships with community organisations to create employment and training opportunities for children and young people leaving detention.⁵⁵

We support this recommendation and consider opportunities for vocational education and training should be increased however possible in the transition phase from AYDC to the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility.

⁵⁵ Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, *Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children* (Report, August 2023) vol 5(3) ch 12, 143.

5. Access, transition and change

5.1 School is often cancelled due to lockdowns

The 2023 *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings* (Commission of Inquiry) highlighted the severe impact of operational staffing shortages and resulting lockdowns on children and young people's access to education at Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC).⁵⁶ It stressed that education 'is a right, not a privilege' and 'should be the central feature of a young person's experience in detention'.⁵⁷

Over the past few years, the use of restrictive practices at AYDC, in this case isolation in bedrooms as well as restriction to accommodation units, has been publicly and regularly highlighted by the Commissioner for Children and Young People as well as by our office.⁵⁸ The Office of the Independent Regulator also noted in a 2025 report that operational staff shortages at AYDC 'were cited as a rationale for the use of isolation for extended periods'.⁵⁹

These practices continue to affect children and young people's ability to attend Ashley School and travel offsite for educational or vocational activities. In 2025, operational staff shortages at AYDC resulted in students being unable to attend school approximately a quarter of the time.⁶⁰ School cancellations disrupt routine and stability, which (as noted in section 4.1) are important contributors to students' sense of safety.

5.2 Attendance is also delayed or interrupted

In 2024, the overall attendance rate at Ashley School was 67 per cent. This figure does not include frequent delays to class start times, caused by a variety of operational factors such

⁵⁶ Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, *Who was looking after me? Prioritising the safety of Tasmanian children* (Report, August 2023) ('Commission of Inquiry') vol 5(3) ch 12, 64–74, 137–143, 209–225; vol 5(1) ch 10, 30–31.

⁵⁷ Ibid vol 5(3) ch 12, 142.

⁵⁸ Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania, 'Reforming Youth Justice in Tasmania' (Media Release, 5 October 2022) <<https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/reforming-youth-justice-in-tasmania/>>; Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania, 'Call for urgent action on Ashley Youth Detention Centre' (Media Release, 22 May 2024) <<https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/call-for-urgent-action-on-ashley-youth-detention-centre/>>; Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians, 'ANZCCGA Joint Statement on Isolation in Youth Detention' (Joint Statement, 21 February 2024); Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Youth Wellbeing Inspection Report 2024* (Report, 2024) 32–38; Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Annual Report 2022–2023* (2023) 25–27; Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Annual Report 2024–2025* (2025) 27–28.

⁵⁹ Office of the Independent Regulator (Tasmania), *Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC) Child and Youth Safe Standards Assessment* (Summary Report, 2025) 4.

⁶⁰ Data supplied by Ashley School.

as low youth worker numbers (resulting in students being escorted to class one or two at a time) and disruptive behaviours. Delays reduce the time students can participate in the already short classes, which reduces time spent actively learning and can be frustrating for students and teachers alike. Attendance at Ashley School is also interrupted by court appearances and other necessary appointments.

The Commission of Inquiry noted some children and young people were restricted by AYDC from attending school (or particular programs) due to behavioural concerns. It recommended access to education should not be limited by 'ranking' in AYDC's behaviour management program.⁶¹ Children and young people's access to education is no longer affected by their ranking in this system, but individual students' school attendance or participation in specific programs may be restricted under AYDC risk assessment processes. This is generally a short-term response to significant behavioural incidents.

5.3 Most students attend school when they can

Despite the factors affecting attendance at Ashley School, the 2024 truancy rate was low. This suggests students were engaged and wanted to attend school.⁶² The 2024 attendance rates are shown in Figure 13.⁶³

Figure 13. Attendance rates at Ashley School in 2024

Attendance status	Attendance rate (%)
Present – total	67.2
In class	40.9
At alternate learning activity	14.2
At weekly review meeting	1.8
Class delivered in unit	10.3
Absent – total	32.7
Sickness or incapacity	3.6
Attending court/other appointment, or AYDC in lockdown	23.6
Suspension or exclusion	0.2
Truancy (refusal to attend school)	4.7
Behavioural issues ⁶⁴	0.5
Other	0.1

⁶¹ Commission of Inquiry (n 72) vol 5(3) ch 12, 142–143.

⁶² Truancy is defined in this context as a student refusing to attend a class.

⁶³ Data supplied by Ashley School. Note: attendance rate does not total to 100%, presumably due to rounding errors.

⁶⁴ Occurs when a student misbehaving during class requires all students to be returned to their units.

Ashley School advised us the 2025 attendance rate was similar at approximately 64 per cent. However, when the figure is adjusted for school cancellations, attendance on days when school was in session was approximately 86.5 per cent.⁶⁵ By comparison, Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) statistics for 2025 show that across the state, Years 9, 10, 11, and 12 had average daily attendance rates of 76.5, 75.4, 70.1, and 69.6 per cent respectively.⁶⁶ This indicates strong student engagement at Ashley School.

5.4 Staff and students are positive about Ashley School

The Commission of Inquiry heard evidence that children and young people were consistently positive about Ashley School and generally made educational gains while enrolled.⁶⁷ Similarly, during our monitoring visits children and young people have frequently told us how much they enjoy attending Ashley School, often despite disengagement from community schooling. Several students have shared that Ashley School is ‘better than school on the outside’ and they prefer school days compared to the school holiday period.⁶⁸

During monitoring visits, our inspection officers have participated in classes in which most children and young people greet educators enthusiastically and appear happy to engage in lessons. During art classes, for example, we have observed Ashley School staff interacting positively with students, who in turn engage calmly in learning new skills and expressing themselves via different media. This calm, positive learning environment relates to our Expectation 7.15, which states: ‘Children feel safe in education and activities and develop behaviours that help them to minimise reoffending’ (refer to Appendix 3).⁶⁹ One young person told us that ‘the teachers here actually give you a chance’. Another said that although they ‘love learning’ they no longer attend school in the community. They described busy classrooms where they could not regulate their behaviour and were therefore excluded, with little support to reintegrate.⁷⁰

A 2024 review of Ashley School undertaken by DECYP’s external reviewers noted that:

⁶⁵ Data supplied by Ashley School.

⁶⁶ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), ‘Student engagement and participation data’, *Data and statistics* (Web Page, 12 March 2026) <<https://decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/policies-legislation-data/data-and-statistics/student-engagement-participation-data/>>.

⁶⁷ Commission of Inquiry (n 72) vol 5(3) ch 12, 139.

⁶⁸ Conversations with children and young people in detention (Custodial Inspector staff, 2024–2026).

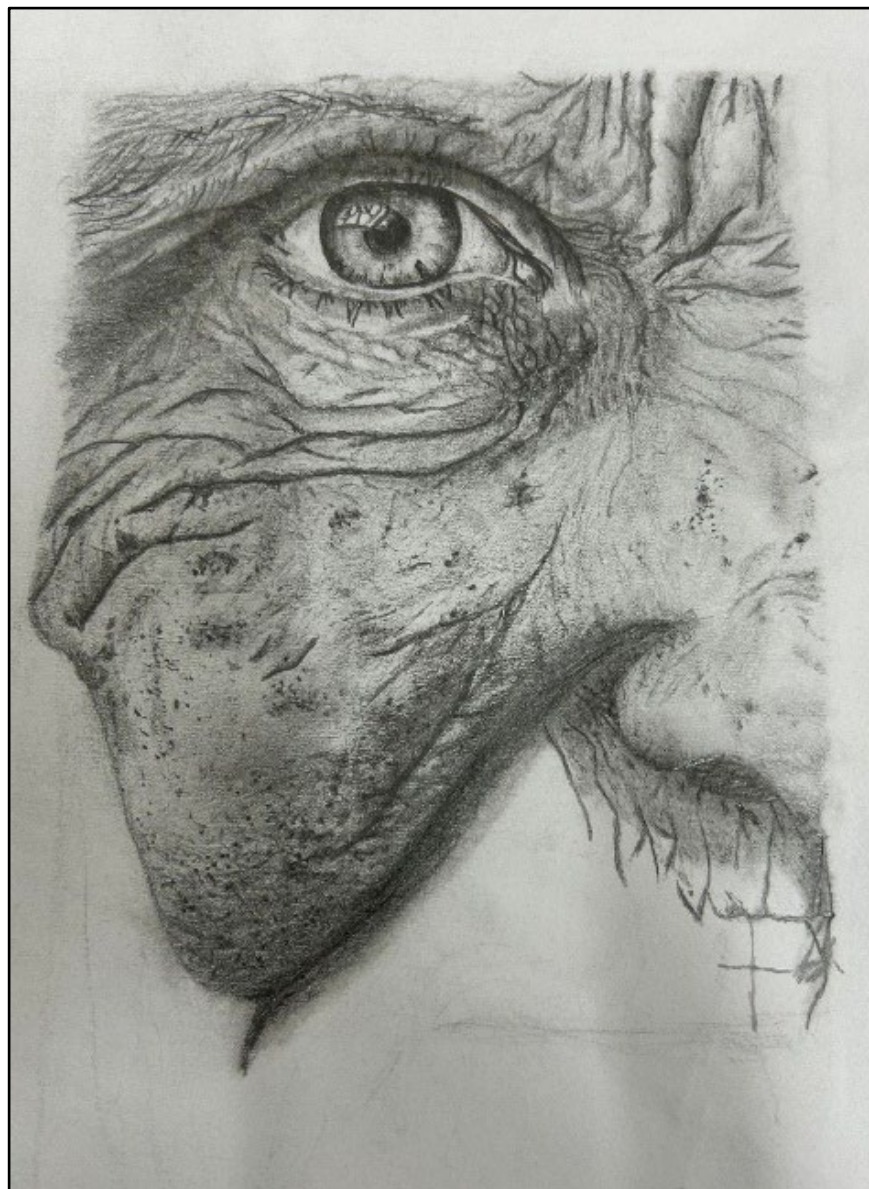
⁶⁹ Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism and Office of the Custodial Inspector, *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Version 1.2, September 2025).

⁷⁰ Conversations with children and young people in detention (Custodial Inspector staff, 2024–2026).

In response to what advice they might give their teacher to make the school an even better place to come to, and learn in, most students replied “nothing”.⁷¹

This is consistent with our findings. One young person recently told us: ‘if the school was any better it would be too good’.⁷² The external review further found students reported positive relationship with school staff, and the review panel observed ‘consistently caring and respectful’ interactions between them.⁷³

Figure 14. Artwork by a student at Ashley School (2026).



⁷¹ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Ashley School External School Review Report 2024* (Report, October 2024) ('External School Review Report') 16.

⁷² Conversations with children and young people (Custodial Inspector staff, 2025–2026).

⁷³ External School Review Report (n 71) 11–12.

5.5 Teachers deliver alternative content during lockdowns

At the time of our 2024 inspection, we observed Ashley School teachers delivering classes in accommodation units on days when operational factors prevented attendance. If children were isolated in their bedrooms, teachers provided self-directed educational materials. In 2024, on average only 40.9 per cent of students were physically in class and approximately 10 per cent of classes were delivered in accommodation units.

Students have told us learning in units is difficult due to noise and distractions created by children and young people who are not participating.⁷⁴ While the Ashley School environment is specifically designed to facilitate positive behaviour and effective learning, accommodation units are noisy and designed for recreation.⁷⁵ These issues were mostly confirmed by our observations, although we have seen instances of students engaging calmly in unit lessons.

In early 2026, teaching in units largely ceased due to safety concerns and other operational challenges. We acknowledge the considerable efforts and flexibility of Ashley School staff in providing and continuing to explore different means of education delivery in these circumstances. This practice is in alignment with an indicator of our Expectation 7.12: that children who are unable to attend education activities 'are provided with the next best alternative' (refer to Appendix 3).⁷⁶

5.6 School attendance must be prioritised

Our Expectation 7.14 includes the indicator that attendance at education and activities should occur 'regularly and frequently' (refer to Appendix 3).⁷⁷ This aligns with DECYP's core focus on improving attendance across Tasmanian schools, which includes school-driven initiatives as well as public messaging such as the *Every school day matters* campaign.⁷⁸ DECYP's attendance policy states:

Regular attendance at school is essential for students to achieve quality life outcomes. Every day a student does not attend school can have a negative

⁷⁴ Conversations with children and young people in detention (Custodial Inspector staff, 2024–2026).

⁷⁵ We noted the acoustic issue and related building design in a 2023 report. In 2025, renovations included installation of sound baffling in some locations. Refer: Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Youth Health Care Inspection Report 2023* (Report, 2023) 21–22.

⁷⁶ Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism and Office of the Custodial Inspector, *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Version 1.2, September 2025).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), 'Every school day matters', *Anything is possible* (Web Page, 2023) <<https://www.anything.tas.gov.au/>>.

impact on their learning.⁷⁹

Section 5 of this report has shown that children and young people at AYDC are not always able to ‘regularly and frequently’ access education. While this is largely outside of Ashley School’s control, we encourage both the school and DECYP to consider any other means of maximising children and young people’s participation. For example, students could be provided with devices (as discussed in sections 4.3 and 4.4) that contain pre-loaded educational content and allow them to communicate with school staff. These could also be used during recreation time to alleviate boredom and continually provide children and young people with educational content. Another approach, used in some Australian jurisdictions, is to employ staff specifically to escort children and young people to school, which mitigates the impact of low operational staff numbers.

More broadly, we support DECYP’s commitment to building relational security in youth detention, which can enhance safety and minimise restrictive practices.⁸⁰ In this context, children and young people’s access to education and programs would not necessarily depend upon high numbers of operational staff.

Recommendation 3

The Department for Education, Children and Young People should investigate alternative methods of education provision and delivery to ensure children and young people in detention have full and uninterrupted access to education and programs.

5.7 Transition is difficult and must be supported

Children and young people are frequently detained at AYDC for short periods (though with high recidivism) and the majority are on remand rather than serving defined sentences. It is therefore rare for Ashley School to know exactly, or even approximately, how long each student will be enrolled. This transience makes it difficult to maintain student engagement, provide consistent educational support, develop long-term plans and track progress over time.

The Commission of Inquiry heard evidence that Ashley School provided high-quality education and positive experiences to children and young people but that gains were often lost when students left the school and were not supported to stay in community

⁷⁹ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), ‘Attendance Policy’ (November 2023) 3.

⁸⁰ Tasmanian Government (Department for Education, Children and Young People), *Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility Model of Care* (Consultation Draft, February 2026) 55.

education.⁸¹ This is still the case. Ashley School undertook preliminary analysis of 2024–2025 data which showed most departing students either could not be tracked in DECYP systems or were not engaged in community schooling. The few students who did enrol in mainstream schooling had a combined attendance rate of less than one per cent.⁸² This is despite students reporting strong desire to continue education upon release.

In this context, transition plans to and from community-based education are critical and must be created in collaboration with local schools and support organisations. Plans should ensure students can access effective support programs that help them stay engaged in education and reduce reoffending.

5.8 The Education Transition Group is a positive initiative

The Education Transition Group (ETG) was formed following Commission of Inquiry recommendations, one of which emphasised throughcare services for children and young people leaving detention, including enhanced ‘community-based schooling options’.⁸³ The ETG meets weekly and aims to support children and young people’s reintegration into education in the community. We attended a meeting during our inspection and observed shared efforts to ensure children and young people’s smooth transition and continued educational engagement after release. This initiative reflects our Expectation 7.13, which includes a focus on educational transition (refer to Appendix 3).

Ashley School recently told us that since our 2024 inspection, the ETG has been further refined and is working well. We have heard recent examples of successful transition planning, including Ashley School staff and AYDC case management staff accompanying young people to visit and enrol in schools in the community.

5.9 More support is needed for successful transition

Despite the support provided, successful transitions from Ashley School to community education are not the norm. Ashley School staff told us that while every effort is made by Ashley School, the ETG, other professionals and relevant schools in the community, transition is often unsuccessful because these schools are simply not resourced to provide

⁸¹ Commission of Inquiry (n 72) vol 5(3) ch 12, 138–139.

⁸² Data supplied by Ashley School.

⁸³ Commission of Inquiry (n 72) vol 5(3) ch 12, recommendation 12.24, 152.

the individualised support often required by children and young people leaving detention.⁸⁴ We recently heard from children and young people that while they 'love' Ashley School, they no longer attend school in the community due to challenges such as difficulty concentrating, or exclusion from local schools and limited alternatives.⁸⁵

Staff we spoke to considered that, as a minimum, Tier 4 support should be extended beyond Years 7 to 10 to include Years 11 and 12 for young people—such as those exiting detention—who have been long-term disengaged from schooling. They told us these young people require individualised, multidisciplinary support and targeted programs to successfully transition and continue engaging in education over time. Members of the ETG also discussed this challenge during the meeting we attended. They believed extending Tier 4 to older students could support disengaged students as well as those experiencing additional challenges transitioning (such as those from remote areas).

Ashley School staff reported that anecdotally, eligible students who access Tier 4 support upon release are more likely to engage with community schooling. However, they also noted that even with this support, engagement rates are low; children and young people exiting detention have complex social and cognitive needs and often lack home support to continue their education.⁸⁶ They reasoned that a more targeted Tier 4 model is required. Ashley School staff have used their data and knowledge to consider alternative support models, such as:

- funding Indie Schools to create targeted support programs⁸⁷
- extending Tier 3 support to some mainstream colleges and creating Tier 4 support programs for older students (requiring increased resourcing, including purpose-built spaces and dedicated, appropriately trained staff)
- creating a flexible, collaborative program and network, similar to the community of schools model, for various schools and programs delivering tailored support to these students.⁸⁸

Supporting children and young people to engage with education or training upon release from detention may reduce reoffending. Research findings indicate that investment in rehabilitation measures is 'vital to prevent or interrupt the criminal trajectories' they may

⁸⁴ Conversations with Ashley School staff (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026).

⁸⁵ Conversations with children and young people in detention (Custodial Inspector staff, 2026).

⁸⁶ Ashley School staff, 'Draft proposal: Tier 4 Provision for Years 11/12 in Tasmania and increased resourcing for Tier 3 programs in colleges' (Draft, 2025). Supplied by Ashley School.

⁸⁷ Indie Schools are alternative schools designed for students who cannot complete education in mainstream schools. There are six Indie School campuses across Tasmania. Indie School, 'About Indie School', *About Us* (Web Page, 2025) <<https://indieschool.edu.au/about/>>.

⁸⁸ Ashley School staff, 'Draft proposal: Tier 4 Provision for Years 11/12 in Tasmania and increased resourcing for Tier 3 programs in colleges' (Draft, 2025). Supplied by Ashley School.

otherwise follow.⁸⁹

Recommendation 4

In collaboration with Ashley School, the Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop a tailored, well-resourced program to support Year 11 and 12 students transitioning from youth detention into community schooling.

5.10 AYDC's uncertain future complicates planning

In 2021, the Tasmanian Government announced plans to close AYDC by 2024 and replace it with a new facility, currently known as the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility. However, these plans have been delayed; at the time of writing in 2026, the new facility is expected to open in late 2027 or early 2028.

To date, a clear transition plan has not been developed with or communicated to Ashley School staff. This has complicated long-term planning, including affecting the school's ability to maintain consistent staffing. Compounding this challenge, some staff hold contract positions which they must regularly reapply for. This includes the Assistant Principal position, a key role within Ashley School, which is no longer funded by DECYP. Such uncertainty can be detrimental to wellbeing. However, we understand DECYP has recently communicated a plan for how Ashley School staff can transfer to other schools when AYDC closes.

DECYP must formulate, communicate and implement a clear transition plan to address not just job security but also retraining and psychological support for staff, as well as providing uninterrupted educational services during the transition. We made a recommendation regarding change management in our 2023 *Youth Health Care Inspection Report*:

Develop and implement change management processes to support staff and residents until the proposed closure/redevelopment of Ashley Youth Detention Centre.⁹⁰

The report also stated that this process must support staff from the pre-change phase, through the transition and beyond to the post-change phase.⁹¹ DECYP supported this

⁸⁹ State Government of Victoria (Sentencing Advisory Council), *Reoffending by children and young people in Victoria* (Report, December 2016) 53.

⁹⁰ Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Youth Health Care Inspection Report* (Report, 2023) 64–66.

⁹¹ Ibid 64–66.

recommendation and at the time was considering means of implementation.⁹² We are aware this is an ongoing discussion and some change management processes have occurred, but these have been limited.

In addition, we consider Ashley School staff, who hold considerable expertise in delivering education in a youth justice facility, should be actively involved in planning for the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility. DECYP recently informed us that some Ashley School staff have been included in this process. We encourage DECYP to involve Ashley School leaders in the ongoing development of new facilities and planning for the transition.

⁹² Ibid Appendix 4, 145.

6. Conclusion

Our 2024 inspection found Ashley School provided individualised, trauma-informed and high-quality education to children and young people in detention. Despite the challenges outlined in this report, Ashley School has created an engaging and supportive learning environment that is valued by children and young people and facilitates significant educational gains. The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) must formulate a comprehensive transition plan to any new educational facilities to ensure this rich learning environment is not lost.

Participation in education and other programs in youth detention is a core contributor to children and young people's ability to reintegrate upon release. This report has made recommendations that may help Ashley School and DECYP further enhance education in youth detention. This includes support for previous recommendations and those made in other reviews, such as improved cultural support and education for Aboriginal children and young people.

DECYP should work to maximise children and young people's opportunities for successful transition to education, training and employment in the community. The progress students make at Ashley School must be maintained post-release via enhanced, targeted programs that support continued engagement and reduce reoffending.

Finally, operational factors within Ashley Youth Detention Centre remain the greatest barrier to children and young people's regular and uninterrupted access to education. We emphasise the importance of DECYP continuing its considerable efforts to address these issues, at the same time as considering all alternative means of ensuring children and young people can participate fully in education. It is no longer tenable to accept the status quo of children and young people in detention missing school for operational reasons.

Appendix 1 – Department for Education, Children and Young People Response

Department for Education, Children and Young People

Office of the Secretary

GPO Box 169, Hobart, TAS 7001 Australia

P (03) 6165 5757

E Officeofthesecretary@decyp.tas.gov.au



File no: DOC/26/112512/6

29 July 2026

Dr Grant Davies
Custodial Inspector
ci@custodialinspector.tas.gov.au

Dear Dr Davies

EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING: YOUTH DETENTION INSPECTION REPORT 2026

Thank you for providing the draft *Education and vocational training: youth detention inspection report 2026*. I appreciate the significant work undertaken by your office in preparing this report and overseeing the wellbeing and educational experiences of children and young people in detention.

I would like to acknowledge the children and young people in custody who shared their experiences of attending Ashley School. I would also like to acknowledge the staff of Ashley School who, within a complex operational environment, work committedly to provide a positive and supportive learning environment for children and young people, and help them to achieve meaningful personal and educational gains.

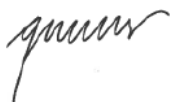
The Department welcomes this report and notes the broadly positive findings regarding Ashley School's educational environment, teaching practices and commitment to supporting children and young people in detention. We are pleased that the report recognises the expertise and dedication of school staff, acknowledges the positive relationships developed between educators and children and young people, and reflects the positive experiences and feedback shared by many young people about their time at Ashley School.

The Department also acknowledges the challenges affecting education delivery within youth detention outlined in the report. These include interrupted access to education, limited vocational opportunities, digital inclusion, and transition pathways back into community education and training. The Department remains committed to continuing efforts to address these issues and to further strengthen educational opportunities and outcomes for children and young people in detention.

The Department appreciates the constructive nature of the recommendations outlined in this report and supports their intent. The Department's response to each recommendation is provided in the attached *Response to Recommendations*.

We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with your office to improve outcomes for children and young people in detention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ginna Webster', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ginna Webster
SECRETARY

Response to recommendations

- 1** The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure children and young people in detention have equitable access to digital learning.

Response

In 2025, the *Digital Inclusion Blueprint for Virtual Learning Services for Tasmanian Government Schools* (the Blueprint) was endorsed, marking a significant milestone in shaping inclusive and flexible online learning models. The Blueprint was developed through extensive stakeholder input, research and a commitment to equity. Implementation of the Blueprint will include consideration for equitable provision to children and young people in detention.

Implementation of the Blueprint will occur in two phases:

- **Phase 1** will consolidate and increase access to existing virtual learning services from across the Department whilst piloting initiatives aligned to identified priorities.
- **Phase 2** will enhance and further increase access to virtual learning services whilst building workforce capability to deliver quality best practice online learning any time, any place. Opportunities to expand virtual learning services may also be explored, if enhancement initiatives prove successful.

Level of acceptance	Supported
Responsible agency(ies)	Department for Education, Children and Young People
Responsible business area	Digital Inclusion
Proposed completion date	2029

- 2** The Department for Education, Children and Young People should facilitate increased and equitable access to relevant vocational education, training and work experience (both onsite and offsite) for children and young people in detention.

Response

The Department recognises the importance of vocational education, training and work experience in supporting engagement, skill development and improved post-release outcomes for young people in detention.

The Department acknowledges that access to vocational education and training opportunities for young people in detention is currently limited and that delivery of these opportunities can present additional operational, resource and capability challenges within a youth detention environment.

In collaboration with Ashley School, the Department will identify opportunities to increase access to relevant and accredited vocational education, training and work experience opportunities for young people in detention. This will include consideration of partnerships with external training providers and industry, opportunities to expand access to onsite and offsite learning experiences where appropriate, and the resourcing, specialist expertise and partnership arrangements required to support equitable access to vocational learning opportunities.

The Department recognises the value of work undertaken by Ashley School and Ashley Youth Detention Centre to explore vocational education and training opportunities with TasTAFE for young people in detention. The Department will consider opportunities to strengthen and support this work to improve access to vocational learning and training opportunities while young people are in detention and to support continuity of engagement following release.

Level of acceptance	Supported
Responsible agency(ies)	Department for Education, Children and Young People
Responsible business area	Learning Pathways, Ashley School
Proposed completion date	2027

-
- 3** The Department for Education, Children and Young People should investigate alternative methods of education provision and delivery to ensure children and young people in detention have full and uninterrupted access to education and programs.

Response

The Department recognises the importance of ensuring children and young people in detention have ongoing access to education and programs, including during periods where attendance at Ashley School is disrupted by operational requirements.

Recent targeted recruitment initiatives have been successful in strengthening operational staffing and reducing the impact of staffing shortages on access to education. Notwithstanding these improvements, the Department acknowledges the need to explore additional approaches that may support continuity of learning when young people are unable to attend school.

Learning Pathways, in partnership with Ashley School and Ashley Youth Detention Centre, will consider alternative education delivery options and opportunities arising from broader departmental initiatives, including the *Digital Inclusion Blueprint for Virtual Learning Services for Tasmanian Government Schools*, to determine whether there are safe, practical and effective mechanisms to support access to educational content during periods of disruption.

Any alternative approaches will need to be consistent with the safety, security and operational requirements of the youth detention environment and be assessed for their feasibility, resource implications and educational benefit.

Level of acceptance	Supported
Responsible agency(ies)	Department for Education, Children and Young People
Responsible business area	Learning Pathways, Ashley School, Ashley Youth Detention Centre
Proposed completion date	2029

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- 4** In collaboration with Ashley School, the Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop a tailored, well-resourced program to support Year 11 and 12 students transitioning from youth detention into community schooling.

Response

The Department recognises that young people in Years 11 and 12 leaving detention often require intensive and individualised support to successfully transition into education, training and employment pathways in the community. The Department also acknowledges the challenges associated with maintaining engagement in education following release and the need for strengthened transition arrangements for this cohort.

In collaboration with Ashley School, the Department will review the educational pathways and supports currently available to senior secondary-aged young people leaving detention and identify opportunities to strengthen engagement and continuity of learning following release. This work will consider pathways into senior secondary education, vocational learning and training, transition support models, and the level and type of support required for young people with complex educational needs.

The outcomes of the review will inform options for a more coordinated and targeted departmental approach to supporting Year 11 and 12 students transitioning from detention into community-based education, training and employment pathways.

Level of acceptance	Supported
Responsible agency(ies)	Department for Education, Children and Young People
Responsible business area	Learning Pathways, Ashley School
Proposed completion date	2028

Appendix 2 – Progress towards previous recommendations

In our *Education and Programs Inspection Report 2018* we made two recommendations to the then Department of Communities Tasmania (DoC) and the Department of Education (DoE) that are relevant to this inspection.⁹³ We made another relevant recommendation to DoC in our *Families, Community and Partnership Inspection Report 2019*.⁹⁴ Since this time, DoC and DoE have been dissolved and these recommendations now fall within the remit of the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP), which is responsible for both Ashley School and Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC).

Prior to the May 2024 inspection, DECYP provided updates on progress towards our previous recommendations. The initial recommendations, DECYP's update, and our analysis of progress are outlined in the following table. Initial responses to the recommendations can be accessed in the original reports.

Education and Programs Inspection Report 2018 recommendations

Recommendation	Communities Tasmania and the Department of Education formalise arrangements for the Ashley School, including the expectations of both agencies as to the School's performance and curriculum, and the incorporation of a whole of Centre approach toward education outcomes for young people at AYDC.
DECYP update	Ashley School is included in all significant management areas of AYDC that are applicable to them. Various Ashley School staff have active roles within management teams across AYDC weekly. This includes: • HSR – Health and Safety Representatives • IRC - Incident review Committee • MDT – Multi Disciplinary Team • RAPT – Risk Assessment Process Team

⁹³ Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Education and Programs Inspection Report 2018* (Report, 2020) 4, 16–22, 28–36.

⁹⁴ Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Families, Community and Partnership Inspection Report 2019* (Report, 2019) 5, 18–21, 31–35.

- WRM – Weekly Review Meeting
- AYDC Operational Support
- AYDC Management Team

The role of Ashley School in supporting young people to engage and grow is a consideration in all of these teams as AYDC teams look at holistic growth and improvement.

Ashley School staff are involved in staffing panels and internal professional learning and support.

Ashley School with negotiation supports Programs to provide onsite professional services including Aboriginal Education, Legal Rights Education, Personal Health, Drug and Alcohol Education etc.

Information from Case Management is used by Ashley School to target specific educational outcomes for young people.

Our analysis	It is positive to see increased collaboration between Ashley School and AYDC to provide more holistic care to children and young people both at school and within the centre. As DECYP is now responsible for both Ashley School and AYDC, formal agreements between departments are no longer necessary.
Status	Complete

Recommendation	The Department of Education determines policies and procedures relating to suspensions for the Ashley School, including arrangements for education to continue outside the classroom when young people are suspended and clearly communicates these to AYDC.
DECYP update	We did not ask DECYP to provide an update to this recommendation.
Our analysis	As DECYP is now responsible for both Ashley School and AYDC, staff are all employed by DECYP and follow DECYP policies.
Status	Completed

Recommendation	The Department of Education collates data relating to suspensions at the Ashley school and regularly shares this data
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	with AYDC.
DECYP update	We did not ask DECYP to provide an update to this recommendation.
Our analysis	As DECYP is now responsible for both Ashley School and AYDC, it now holds all data generated from both areas.
Status	Completed

Recommendation	Communities Tasmania establishes links with community employers, industries and apprenticeship schemes to increase employment opportunities for young people upon release.
DECYP update	AYDC has established strong relationships with Years 11-12 providers, comprising of two northern colleges and two southern colleges. Ashley School has been in contact with the college school Principals and psychologists to support transitions back into education, meeting on a weekly basis. This year TasTAFE has been the priority for young people exiting from AYDC. Off-site visits for young people have been challenging with staffing shortages. Ashley School has also been working with young people during exit planning to establish pathways into education and training opportunities.
Our analysis	Refer to section 4.8 of this report for discussion about vocational education and training. In summary, these opportunities are challenging to provide, but DECYP and Ashley School have made progress and continue to explore options. Further work is needed to create employment pathways for young people upon release.
Status	In progress

Families, Community and Partnership Inspection Report 2019 recommendations

Recommendation	7. Communities Tasmania considers ways to increase the participation of young people at AYDC in community activities outside of the Centre to strengthen their connections with community.
DECYP update	When AYDC operational staffing was adequate, Ashley School organised opportunities for young people to have transition visits to educational settings they would be attending on release. Ashley School has been part of initiatives for young people to attend work placements and vocational courses offsite. We will continue to prioritise increasing attraction and retention rates of operational staff to better enable these connections and opportunities for young people.
Our analysis	This recommendation has been partially implemented. Full implementation is dependent on adequate staffing levels to enable the movement of children and young people offsite. As noted in this report, DECYP has been actively addressing staff shortages. AYDC and Ashley School continue to arrange offsite activities where possible.
Status	In progress

Appendix 3 – Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived on their liberty

Relevant Expectations

Topic 5: Equity, diversity and non-discrimination⁹⁵

Expectations	Relevant Indicators
5.8 Needs of specific cultural groups: The specific needs of children from diverse cultural groups are identified and met.	• Children's cultural identity and connections are respected and facilitated. • The distinct needs of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are identified and addressed. • Aboriginal spirituality should be encouraged and strengthened through cultural programs, visits with Elders and other representatives of Aboriginal communities and through observance of customs, rites of passage and tribal traditions.
5.9 Children with disability: The specific needs of children are met. Children with disability are identified, treated with respect, and afforded reasonable adjustments to ensure access to all programs and activities	• Children with special educational needs, including those with education, health, and care plans, are given appropriate support. • Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that children with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities/difficulties, have access to the full suite of programs and facilities.

⁹⁵ Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism and Office of the Custodial Inspector, *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Version 1.2, September 2025).

5.15 Girls: The specific vulnerabilities of girls are recognised, and effective safeguards are applied that do not impede on their rights in comparison to boys.	Girls have equivalent access to work, education, sports and recreational activities as boys.
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Topic 7: Life in detention⁹⁶

Expectations	Relevant Indicators
7.8 Library and computer access: Children have good access to a well-equipped library which meets relevant Australian and Tasmanian standards and are encouraged to use it frequently, as well as access to appropriate computer resources.	- Children can use library facilities on request. - Children use the library resources for reading, social interaction and to support their educational programmes. - Library materials are age-appropriate and sufficient to meet the needs of children. - Library materials reflect the diverse needs and abilities of all children and are available in a range of formats and languages. - Children have access to additional learning resources, including IT and the internet, and are provided digital literacy education. - Children not on normal location, for example in segregation or health care units, can access library resources. - Children can request specific learning materials.
7.9 Physical fitness: Children benefit from physical education and fitness provision that	All children have good access to timetabled physical education each week (in addition to optional, physical recreation) that includes a range of indoor and outdoor activities.

⁹⁶ Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism and Office of the Custodial Inspector, *Expectations on the treatment of children and young people deprived of their liberty* (Version 1.2, September 2025).

meets their needs.	
7.11 Creative arts: Children can access creative activities which promote learning, wellbeing and support rehabilitation.	• Children are encouraged to engage in creative activities to promote more formal learning and employability. • Children have access to creative opportunities that improve health and wellbeing. • Children are encouraged to engage in creative activities to reflect on their lives and social responsibilities and to promote their rehabilitation/reintegration.
7.12 Education, skills and work activities: Children are fully engaged in a program of education, learning and skill development to meet their individual needs.	• A detailed education and learning plan is developed in conjunction with the child as part of their case management, following a thorough assessment of their needs and abilities. Children identified as having learning difficulties are provided with access to education services that suit their needs and abilities. • Learning plans contain clear goals and are used to record and review the child's progress. Regular follow-up assessments occur to ensure that learning plans reflect the child's needs and abilities. • Children can access vocational programs that will develop their potential for when they are released. Work-related activities are aimed at providing training and skilling towards employment in the community, rather than focussing on production. • Children are permitted and encouraged to continue their schooling whilst in custody or secure care. • Children who were studying towards educational or vocational qualifications prior to arriving are enabled to continue with their studies. • Education and training programs are equal to the standard available in the community and enable continuity and recognition of prior learning. • The range of educational and training programs can accommodate the disparate needs of children at the facility. • Sentence status or diagnosis does not prevent access to education and training. • A range of teaching methods and specialities are available and are not limited to the classroom environment. • High quality learning support is available for those who need it to make progress.

	• Those who do not progress are assessed further and supported accordingly. • Up to date technology and access to media are available as part of the education and training experience. • Children who are unable to attend education with their peers (e.g. due to their behaviour or mood) are provided with the next best alternative, such as attendance at a different time or educational materials they can complete in their bedroom. • Those who refuse to attend education activities are monitored closely. Case management plans address such difficulties and work toward them undertaking relevant education as soon as possible. • Children have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that includes education, pre vocational training and work-related learning, and the promotion of their personal and social development. • For children in custody, education is provided five days a week in classroom settings in normal school hours, including break and lunch times. • Children receive their statutory entitlement of education, skills and work and learning and related skills activities in line with the National and Tasmanian Curriculum. • Teaching staff have access to the necessary information to understand how broader issues, such as family, relationships, and wellbeing (including mental health) affect individual children and impact on their learning. • Children are involved in setting, reviewing, and monitoring their progress towards the achievement of a clear and well-defined curriculum. • Individual learning goals are underpinned by appropriate personal and social development targets. • Teaching staff have appropriate qualifications and expertise, and can access specialist support, such as speech and language therapy, dyslexia, and autistic spectrum services. • Teaching staff have an appropriate understanding of health and mental health issues and their impact on children's attitudes, ability, and readiness to learn. • Vocational teaching staff are well qualified and have good subject knowledge and experience relevant to their roles, to reflect best industry practice and to meet children's and employer needs.
7.13 Independent	• The contents of learning plans are coordinated with other

research and living skills: Children are encouraged to develop their research and independent learning skills, including the development of their digital skills through supervised use of the internet.	relevant plans for children. • Education staff attend relevant training, planning and case management meetings. • All children leave custody/care with arrangements for their education, work, or training. • Links with community-based youth workers and careers advice services enable children to continue to receive appropriate education, training and employment guidance on release. • Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported to become more independent in their everyday life.
7.14 Learning and skills outcomes: The leadership and management of education, skills and work activities effectively improves outcomes for children.	• Leaders and managers ensure that there is sufficient provision of appropriate education, skills, and activities to cater for the full range of children's capabilities. • Arrangements are in place to ensure that children are allocated to educational activities promptly, attend them regularly and arrive at sessions on time. • Children attend education and activities regularly and frequently. • Children make good, timely progress towards achieving appropriate qualifications and learning goals and develop the skills they need in order that they can progress effectively to the next stage of their education, employment, or training within or outside the facility. • Education, work, and other activities are designed so that children are kept fully occupied and busy during sessions. • Children with additional learning needs progress towards well-defined, individual targets that take account of their needs and abilities. • Children in custody meet the targets in their case plans to support a positive rehabilitation and minimise their chances of reoffending. • When transferred or released, an accurate record of the child's learning needs, progress and achievements is forwarded promptly to the receiving establishment or education, training and employment provider. • Leaders and managers monitor the progression into education, employment, and training of children.

	• Leaders and managers monitor and analyse children's progress, including the progress of specific or vulnerable groups.
7.15 Prosocial education: Children feel safe in education and activities and develop behaviours that help them to minimise reoffending.	• Children take interest and pride in their work, their ability to sustain concentration, avoid distractions and complete tasks. • Children are able to work in a range of ways, for example independently, in small groups and in whole-class settings. • Children's behaviour in education and activities complies with articulated behavioural guidelines.

Appendix 4 – List of acronyms

ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
AYDC	Ashley Youth Detention Centre
DECYP	Department for Education, Children and Young People
DoC	Department of Communities Tasmania
DoE	Department of Education
ETG	Education Transition Group
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
MSO	Multi-School Organisations
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework
VET	Vocational education and training
WRM	Weekly Review Meetings



**Office of the
Custodial Inspector**
Tasmania

Telephone: 1800 001 170 (Free call)
Email: ci@custodialinspector.tas.gov.au
Website: www.npm.tas.gov.au