



## Connecting and creating in concrete

The youngsters in Devonport can thank National Precast Master Precaster Hudson Civil for a new addition to the playground at their local primary school, Nixon Street Primary.

As a locally owned family company, the precaster is proud of its heritage and heavily invested in its community. With a goal of excellence in service and product, the company has proudly been supplying precast and civil products all over Tasmania for many years.

But this project is different to most others. A precast pipe – typically used underground in civil applications – features in Nixon Street's new playground and serves to reinforce the school's core values of 'Respect, Connect, Create and Learn'.

Just over 400 students attend the school. For them, a stimulating and imaginative play environment that encourages physical activity, social interaction and creativity, is vital.

So when Nixon Street set about to redevelop the playground, the design intent was to provide an enriched play experience for children. A precast concrete pipe was chosen as the focus for a new section of the playground for its versatility, durability and cost-effectiveness.

Once a bare space, there is now a series of versatile play elements – including one pipe that is 1200 high and 2.5 metres long - where children can crawl, hide, shelter, slide and climb.

**Master Precaster**  
Hudson Civil

**Architect**  
Design Intent Architecture

**Project**  
Nixon Street Primary School

**Location**  
Devonport, Tasmania

[www.nationalprecast.com.au](http://www.nationalprecast.com.au)



The simplicity of the precast concrete pipe is serving a multitude of purposes. While primarily it is a tunnel for children to run through, its robustness and cylindrical shape encourages physical skills of co-ordination, balance and motor skills, plus the development of an active imagination. More than that, this concrete pipe is fostering adaption to environment amid the surrounding structures and awareness of the contrasting natural environment.

Hudson Civil was able to supply the pipe to meet Benson's Landscaping tight schedule with the pipe already in stock. Clearly, it wasn't something that could be poured on site. Being manufactured by a reputable precaster in their factory controlled environment was essential to ensure a high quality and durable outcome.

Pipes are just one of the many products manufactured in the company's Launceston factory. Many other precast elements including culverts, pits, manholes, lids, retaining walls and bridge beams, are manufactured and supplied daily to the Tasmanian community. Building elements are also able to be manufactured. It's a protected environment where worker safety is paramount and quality is tightly controlled, ensuring a durable and robust quality result.

With a more than one hundred year design life and being manufactured to Australian Standard 4058, this particular pipe will serve generations of children. While functioning as a perfectly dimensioned blank canvas for the children, that is only constrained by their imagination. And in today's digital world where it is difficult to pry young people away from screens, this pipe helps encourage outdoor activity.

According to National Precast's CEO Sarah Bachmann, "Nixon Street Primary, its architects and landscapers, have clearly thought outside the box on this project. Going back to basics, this is a wonderful example of the versatility of a concrete pipe and how it can be transformed to enrich the play environment of the Nixon Street students."



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