



Monday 2 December 2019

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

In Term 3, I wrote to you regarding upcoming criminal proceedings against former Geelong Grammar School staff. I am writing now to update you and to provide clarity in response to recent media reporting of those cases.

Last week, Dr David Mackey pleaded guilty to three charges of indecent assault in the County Court of Victoria. Dr Mackey was sentenced to a Community Corrections Order and placed on the Sexual Offenders Register for life. The offences occurred between 1972 and 1975, whilst Dr Mackey was employed by the School as a consulting medical doctor, but the offences that were the subject of these charges did not occur at the School and did not relate to students of the School.

Dr Mackey also faced trial on separate indecent assault charges allegedly committed between 1968 and 1989. The alleged victims in those cases were past students of the School. Victorian County Court Judge Bill Stuart granted a permanent stay of these proceedings on the grounds of special prejudice and consequently Dr Mackey will not face prosecution for these charges.

Through meetings with survivors of abuse I have come to understand that the impact of criminal trials on the victims of such crimes can represent further torment and traumatisation. I feel a profound and deep sorrow for their suffering. I am also inspired by their strength and their courage to speak about their experiences at GGS. These recent Court cases have been complex and difficult to navigate for many members of our School family. Subsequent to these proceedings, through Victoria Police's SANO taskforce, I was able to correspond with those survivors whose complaints did not progress to trial and to those survivors whose complaints did proceed to trial, but the matters were ordered to be permanently stayed. The School was also able to facilitate the support of our survivor community during the time of the trial through the attendance at Court of a survivor of our School, who offered personal support and practical assistance throughout the trial.

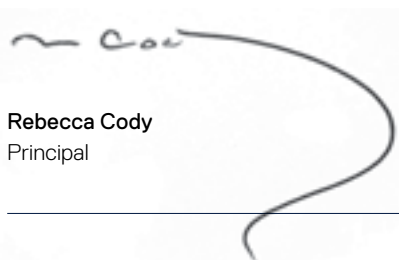
I remain steadfast that the School must acknowledge and learn from the hurt inflicted upon innocent children in the past. [Much has been achieved in the past 18 months](#), and there remains so much more to do to help our community heal. As I have said previously, a measure of the quality and maturity of a community is how it responds to its dark and difficult chapters – today and into the future.

We are endeavouring to instil a culture that will stand up for what is right. Our students have the gift of an education that enables their voice to be heard and we are actively encouraging them to use their voices to keep themselves and others safe. This will be reflected in the full suite of medical policies and procedures, currently the subject of a detailed review. I have complete confidence in our Health Care Centres overseen by our Senior Medical Officer and supported by a professional and dedicated team of nurses at Kennedy and Timbertop.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that it takes an average of 24 years for people to speak up about their abuse. Some never do. The School continues to provide the services of an independent counsellor, Pauline Ryan, for anyone in our community who may benefit from counselling or support about issues of childhood sexual abuse. Pauline can be contacted directly during business hours by calling 1800 799 139. The School's Survivor Liaison Coordinator, Renee Handsaker, continues to provide outreach and support to survivors of child sexual abuse, as well as former and current staff. Renee can be contacted directly on 0432 707 355 or via email: renee@sustainingconversations.com

Whilst we cannot undo the failures of the past, together we can acknowledge the harm, recognise the pain caused and together, we can support and enable a culture which fortifies against such devastating harms and places child safety at its core. Together, we can make a positive difference towards shaping a better world.

Yours purposefully and prayerfully,



Rebecca Cody
Principal

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