

St Kevin's College position on the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

There has been continuing publicity surrounding the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Sexual Abuse.

St Kevin's appreciates the suffering experienced by families and individuals who have borne the pain of sexual abuse in schools, churches and community groups, and how the publicity surrounding the Royal Commission is a reminder to those families, individuals and the broader community of the hurt suffered.

St Kevin's would like you to be aware of the way the College would respond to any instance of sexual abuse and welcomes any member of the College community to make contact if they have been subjected to sexual abuse while at St Kevin's, or involved in College-sponsored and run activities.

On receiving any such contact, we would respond in a pastoral way, offering respect, care and support. In instances that occurred prior to 2008, Oceania Province of the Christian Brothers are responsible for the support and advice to the person concerned. Contact should be made with the Executive Officer for Professional Standards, Mr Shane Wall (swall@edmundrice.org, 03 8359 0109) who will offer support, care and advice to the person who comes forward. Any cases of sexual abuse that occurred after 2008 would be managed by St Kevin's in conjunction with the College's governing body, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA).

While we would always respect confidentiality and the courage of any person who comes forward, St Kevin's would naturally also fulfil its Mandatory Reporting obligations, and co-operate fully with any police investigations and court proceedings.

All community members should be aware and reassured that St Kevin's has extremely clear and strongly-defined student protection measures in place, as well as rigorous standards in the selection, coaching, mentoring and management of all staff. As per the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) requirements, all staff undertake regular police checks. Non-Teaching staff undertake Working With Children Checks as per the Department of Justice and Regulations legislation. Consequently, all staff maintain impeccable police check records. The College regularly reviews its training, policies and procedures to ensure it provides the very highest standards in student wellbeing and safety.

As a school in the Edmund Rice tradition, our responsibility is always for the care of our students and staff. St Kevin's remains committed to ensuring it affords an open and friendly environment where students feel safe, happy and cared for.

If you would like to discuss this issue further please do not hesitate to contact me or our Director of Students, Ms Janet Canny through the College on 9822 0911.

Stephen F Russell
Headmaster