

ANGLICAN
CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA



The Archbishop of Brisbane
The Most Reverend Peter Hollingworth

PRESS RELEASE

BY THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

ST PAUL'S SCHOOL

The allegations of improper conduct at St Paul's School by a counsellor who is now dead are deeply troubling to us all. The conduct as reported is contrary to everything the Church stands for, based on caring and compassion and the love of God.

A worrying aspect is that the children who were subjected to the misconduct did not complain to those in authority or question the actions of the perpetrator even within their own families. I am advised that the School knew nothing about the misconduct before the counsellor committed suicide, even though by all reports he acted improperly for years in this and another school.

It is of the utmost importance to encourage children who are subjected to misconduct of this kind to speak up or at least to query whether such conduct ought to be tolerated. At the same time we must be careful to ensure that the rights of the staff of our institutions are within reason preserved.

The Diocese has developed a protocol to deal with complaints of sexual abuse from the least intrusive forms of sexual harassment to the most severe kinds of abuse. We believe that a great deal of hurt can be avoided if people are encouraged to bring their complaints forward and the complaints are then dealt with in a fair and responsible manner. Our telephone number to initiate this procedure is 1800 252 202. The number is available for use by anybody affected by people at any level in any of the institutions run by the Diocese. It also covers schools associated with the Diocese.

If any students of St Paul's approach the Diocese with concerns about the manner in which they were treated by Mr Lynch, we will work with them to resolve their concerns in a fair and compassionate manner.

I sincerely hope that the hurt caused to some students at St Paul's can be eased and that we can use the lessons from the past to avoid any recurrence in future.

Archbishop Peter Hollingworth

16 June 2000

