

John Borserio

From: Margaret Hendriks
Sent: Wednesday, 18 February 2009 5:39 PM
To: John Borserio
Subject: Confidential - conversation with CF

I met with Chris Fry this afternoon approx 4.00pm.

I asked how he was coping with the matters at the primary school. He said that there were times when the issues were difficult for him and then other times they were not.

I asked about the report of 2007: He said he had no knowledge of the typed record of meeting that came from C Long. He and Ian had heard the information conveyed by the Principal over the phone. They had gone through the Stu Pro Manual carefully to develop a response. Chris had composed the letter for the Principal (with Ian?) to send to GB.

I asked if he could see that matters listed in the letter might be classified as more serious than he had first thought at the time. He said that he often asked the question, "If only..." since GB had been charged. At the time he was dealing with the matter he thought that issues fitted within other levels of the Stu Pro Manual. He wondered if the pastoral approach which the system often extends had confused the issue. He commented on how Suzanne Brookes often had a more black and white approach which sometimes surprised us but may have been better in this case.

I asked why the matter had not been brought to me as it concerned a staff member. He said that he had thought that it had but could find no record of it. He had no explanation for why this had happened as he acknowledged that it was our protocol and been our practice in many other cases involving staff.

I asked Chris if other issues in relation to GB had given him cause for concern since 2007. Had anything turned red lights on in his mind? He said that he did not think so. He knew that GB was popular with students and parents – with later knowledge this could have been the 'grooming' that occurs with this type of crime.

I suggested that with the matter coming up to court at the end of next week, we needed to prepare for any possible backlash that could eventuate. I asked if he had thought to obtain legal advice to prepare if necessary. He had said he had not. I suggested that he should prepare his materials, without altering or manipulating anything. It was good practice to be prepared and to have considered his role in the advice that had been given – often hindsight influences what we might think now but we need to be clear about the information we had at the time. He acknowledged that in future we will need to have better processes of gathering information. It might be needed to speak with school staff or parents to ensure that information is accurate.

We also discussed the resourcing of this area of our work and the administrative support that might need reviewing in the future. One person to assist 3 SEO's covering this significant area, all other management matters in schools, including staffing is insufficient.

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