



BISHOP'S HOUSE

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2 October 2009

Emeritus Professor Roy Webb AO
Chairperson
Non-State Schools Accreditation Board
PO Box 15347
BRISBANE CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Professor Webb

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2009.

I write to inform you of the actions currently being implemented by the Director of the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Toowoomba:

1. arrangements are underway for the appointment as soon as practicable of an expert in the field of student protection to coordinate and oversee all matters in relation to student protection within the Diocese;
2. a thorough review and update of the Diocese's student protection documentation (including its written processes pursuant to the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001* (to be completed by 18 October);
3. thorough re-training of all relevant school and Catholic Education Office staff in the use of the revised student protection documentation and what is expected of them;
4. close collaboration with State bodies to share learnings and consider improvements to the current regulatory framework.

Since becoming aware of the abuse allegations after the defendant teacher's arrest in November 2008, the following steps have also been taken under the leadership of the Director of the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office:

1. Childwise Student Protection sessions were presented to parents on 13 April and 14 July in Toowoomba (both sessions) Warwick, Dalby, Roma and Charleville.
2. Childwise Student Protection sessions were presented to all school staff on 14 April and 14 July in Toowoomba (both sessions) Warwick, Dalby, Roma and Charleville and to Catholic Education Office staff in Toowoomba on 24 July 2009.

3. All staff received a letter from the Director of the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office reminding them of their duties in relation to the well being and safety of the students in their care with particular reference to student protection.
4. All relief teachers are now required to have completed the Childwise Student Protection Inservice or a school-based training session before being offered relief teaching duties.
5. A visibility audit and follow up with Diocesan schools with identified needs has been completed.
6. The planning and management for the provision of a parent information resource aligned to each Diocesan school library is under development and should be completed shortly.

With respect to the disciplinary action which has been taken (and which is to be taken) I note:

1. I have removed the two Toowoomba Catholic Education Office employees specifically involved in the handling of the information received about the defendant teacher in September 2007 from working in any roles within the organisation directly related to student protection issues which include allegations against an employee of the Diocese.
2. The principal remains suspended on full pay.
3. Further disciplinary action is to be taken against staff involved in the matter (including staff from the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office) following the determination of the principal's proceedings. It is not appropriate for me to comment publicly on this intended process at this time.
4. The staff involved are senior, long standing employees of the Diocese who have never been the subject of any disciplinary action or performance management issue. The taking of disciplinary action is a sensitive issue on which I have taken advice. I have exercised great care in my recent public statement so as not to prejudice the proceedings involving the principal or the disciplinary action which will follow the determination of those proceedings against staff from the school and the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office.

I believe the actions noted above reflect the sincerity and commitment of myself, as director of the school's governing body and of the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office to not only respond to the compliance notice given by the Board, but also to leave no stone unturned to help prevent the recurrence in the Diocese of such an incident again.

I thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours in Christ

In the absence

of

William M Morris, DD
Bishop of Toowoomba



Peter Michael Dorfield
Vicar General