

+FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 2000

news.com.au THE COURIER-MAIL — 3+

Master 'ignored' sex abuse claim

David Murray and
Rory Callinan

ONE of Brisbane Grammar School's most senior masters has been accused of ignoring a plea for help from a student who told him in 1981 of being sexually assaulted by accused paedophile Kevin Lynch.

The allegations come as Brisbane Grammar and St Paul's at Bald Hills look set to face one of the state's biggest legal actions over sex abuse.

A total of 60 former students have sought legal action now as a

result of alleged abuse at the hands of Lynch at the two schools. **BQF** Grammar student **BQF** yesterday said he told the senior master that Lynch, a school counsellor, had forced him to masturbate in his office.

"I said, 'I don't think what happened to me was the right thing, he made me touch myself,'" Mr **BQF** said.

(The master) said to go back to my Papua New Guinea contingent."

Mr **BQF** whose father was working at the time, said he had previously approached a prefect and felt he had nowhere else to go.

The senior master last night strenuously denied the allegation. He confirmed he knew **BQF** claimed that at no stage approached him.

"I am totally shocked. I assure you I had no idea, if I did, I would have done something without hesitation," he said.

Mr **BQF** he was a boarder at Grammar from Grades 8 to 12, between 1980 and 1984. He had gone to see Lynch in 1981 because of bullying at the school. In the first two counselling sessions, Lynch had conducted "relaxation therapy" in which he would push on the grade nine student's pressure points on the head, throat

and stomach, but did not touch him sexually.

"It was definitely like hypnosis. I used to shake my head because I didn't like the feel **BQF** ing off completely," Mr **BQF** said.

In the third visit, Lynch followed the same procedure, but then gave him Vaseline and forced him to masturbate. "I never went back again. I freaked out, I just knew it wasn't right and asked for some tissues. I remember him saying, 'don't be scared', and basically saying **BQF** anyone," he said.

Mr **BQF** now 33 and working with **BQF** legal firm, said that night he told a prefect about the

abuse, who told him he would "look into it".

A week later, he approached the prefect again and was told the incident was "nothing to worry about".

Mr **BQF** he told his father about a "creepy teacher I was trying to do something about".

"I said it in a round-about way. I didn't want him to get concerned on the other side of the world. He thought I was homesick," he said.

About a week after **BQF** the prefect of the abuse, **BQF** said he spoke to the senior

Mr **BQF** father **REDA** on-firm **BQF** son had talked to him

about a staff member during a conversation in the early 1980s.

Brisbane law firm Shine Roche McGowan yesterday confirmed it had received almost as many complaints as in the Neerkol orphanage legal action, the state's largest action over sex abuse.

In the Neerkol case, 75 former orphans sued the Catholic Church and the state over their treatment at the orphanage, eventually reaching an out-of-court settlement with the church worth about \$1 million. It is understood other students from the two schools have hired separate lawyers and that many are yet to come forward.

Editorial, Page 20



BQF . 'I freaked out, I just knew it wasn't right'.