

Notes relating to a conversation with Mrs REDA CTED which were held about 1 o'clock on 20 November 2003.

The background of the conversation is that Phil Cummins, our Director of Curriculum came to see me at home where I was working to tell me that there was an issue relating to ASA who left the School last year. From Mr Cummins I learned that I was likely to be contacted by Mrs REDA relating to an issue about an issue to which he was a little unspecific. Evidently, our Director of Staffing, Martin Gooding had become aware of some sort of issue relating to Mrs REDA and that he (Martin Gooding) had come down to see my Secretary to let her know that I should contact Martin as soon as possible and in particular, prior to speaking with Mrs REDA if she made contact. The information that Phil Cummins gave me indicated that it related to our Director of Students, Mr Adrian Nisbett, and he suggested that I immediately come across to the School and engage in a conversation with Mrs REDA as soon as possible. I did this.

Conversation with Mrs REDACT ED

Mrs REDA CTED was initially a little upset although she calmed down relatively quickly. She told me the story about this particular incident from the beginning relating how she found out about the incident in the first instance. She started with information about her son ASA

(The following is the conversation held with Mrs REDA CTED in order of that conversation)

Mrs REDA CTED became aware of an unfortunate incident that had taken place last year just prior to her son ASA leaving Knox. She heard about this incident from her separated husband, REDAC. She told me that AS had gone to live with REDAC in REDACTED.

Mrs REDA CTED indicated to me that AS had become difficult to control in his final period of living with here. Prior to this she indicated to me that they were close. She indicated that he had been a very loving boy and also very trusting. An outburst occurred between her son ASA and her separated husband REDAC some months ago in which ASA indicated a matter of considerable concern to his father. At this early part of the conversation she did not indicate the nature of this concern.

She described her son as being very angry. As a result of the information passed on to her by REDAC Mrs REDA CTED called the Child Protection Authorities (unspecified in the conversation). She indicated to me that they suggested she call her family doctor. She did so and was told that the boy was OK and that he should improve with time.

The incident related to a teacher at Knox, Mr Adrian Nisbett. She told me that Adrian had been a very encouraging teacher for her son ASA. Adrian seemed to have the ability to say the right word that made him feel better. Evidently ASA was a young boy who lacked self-confidence and that Adrian had an ability to improve his image of himself. Some time last year ASA suffered a significant knee injury and this depressed the boy in terms of his overall happiness at the School. ASA decided to leave Knox, although he was not at any stage absolutely certain about his decision. His mother told me that his decision to leave Knox was his and that she was

supporting it rather than encouraging that position. Mrs REDA told me that ASA loved the library at Knox and was very worried about the State School system that he was about to move into. I believe her reasons for telling me about this part of the story was to indicate that he was emotionally uncertain about his decision to leave the School.

The incident of concern occurred just after the end of Business Week in 2002. The date of this week was the equivalent week to the one we are presently in (Week 5). ASA was about to leave Knox; indeed it was his last day when he went to find his school bag. His bag was missing. He was very concerned about the loss of this bag as it contained his wallet and other valuable items. Adrian Nisbett arrived on the scene and was friendly to ASA. He asked ASA to return back to his office where he ordered lunch and began talking to ASA about why he was leaving Knox. ASA has told his mother that during this conversation he was not completely honest with Adrian Nisbett about why he was leaving. He did not indicate, for example that he was awkward about the School because he felt he had fewer possessions than other boys at the School. Adrian indicated to ASA that he would keep a position open at the School if ASA changed his mind.

Mr Nisbett called Mrs REDA and indicated to her that he would keep a position open in case ASA changed his mind. Mrs REDA relayed this to ASA and this provided some relief to them both, as they were uncertain about the position they were taking at that stage with regard to leaving Knox.

Mrs REDA told me that Mr Nisbett told her that he thought he could help ASA. He asked permission from Mrs REDA to spend some time with the boy. He suggested to her that he had a proposition to put to ASA. She tells me that she thought that this was unusual but in the circumstances of her confusion she thought that this might be of great assistance to the family and to ASA in particular.

Mr Nisbett asked Mrs REDA if he could take ASA out. ASA was unhappy about going however Mrs REDA encouraged him strongly to go with Mr Nisbett. There was some confusion about where they would be going at the time of initially agreeing to this arrangement. Mrs REDA told me that Adrian Nisbett turned up at her front door at 7.30 pm. There was evidently some sort of conversation to the effect of asking whether ASA liked eating Chinese meal. As the conversation progressed Adrian told Mrs REDA that he was going to whip up something at home.

Mrs REDA indicated to me that she was concerned about this and thought it a little unusual but she hoped that Adrian may become a Mentor for her son and therefore she agreed.

On returning home the boy was very quiet, perhaps sullen as he stood at the door with Mr Nisbett. On entry to the house he slammed the door very loudly. She made comment to him that this action was very rude. She then proceeded to question him about how the evening had gone. His answer was that it was "weird". Soon after this Mr Nisbett contacted her again where he indicated that he wanted to be the English Coach for ASA even if he left Knox.

In the outburst that took place between [REDACTED] and [ASA] Mrs [REDACTED] tells me that the key accusation was that "Mum made me go to a homosexual's place". I asked Mrs [REDACTED] whether Mr Nisbett propositioned her son during this visit. She is unclear about this. The boy will not say. The boy does not wish to talk about the event in any way shape or form. Mrs [REDACTED] made me promise that her son would not be dragged into this incident. She was very concerned that there would be any conversation or discovery by her son of this incident.

Mrs [REDACTED] agrees that the only information about what has taken place comes from the conversations she has held with her ex husband [REDACTED]. He has indicated that during the course of the evening her son was offered alcohol, cigarettes and a hug. She indicated to me that her son does not consume alcohol or cigarettes and does not hug men. I asked her whether her son was crying at the time of the offer of a hug. She indicated to me that he was. There is no accusation of molestation or any other form of sexual abuse.

I suggested to Mrs [REDACTED] that the situation appeared to be in three parts.

First that her son was angry that his trusted teacher presented to him in such a way. The second breach of trust appears to be directed towards his mother where [ASA] feels that she let him down by instructing him to go with Mr Nisbett. The third area of concern appears to be that [ASA] feels some guilt associated with his involvement with Mr Nisbett. Mrs [REDACTED] agreed that these three areas were likely to be the three areas of concern to her son. She thought that it was a fair summary. We agreed to meet again to continue our discussion after a chance to think through the issues discussed that day. The conversation was very amicable. Mr [REDACTED] was open, polite and very prepared to see other perspectives. She came across as a very reasonable person.

I indicated to Mrs [REDACTED] that I wished to find a good solution to her son that assisted him with his ability to move on from the situation that had impacted on him. I indicated to her that I was not certain what the appropriate course of action would be. I indicated to her that I was very keen to listen to their son's needs and those of the family. I also indicated to her that I wanted to avoid the development of a repressed memory situation emerging some time down the track.

After concluding this telephone conversation with Mrs [REDACTED] I spoke with my Assistant, Mr Eric Bernard and contacted my Deputy Headmaster, Mr Kim Walton. I also contacted AIS. Their advice to me was that the issue should be investigated externally. They also advised that I should contact the Ombudsman's Office. They also indicated that I should report the CCYP and that I should engage an external investigator to look into the matter. I had a subsequent conversation with AIS about when I should speak with Mr Nisbett. They indicated to me that I should speak with the Investigator prior to speaking with Mr Nisbett.

I have contacted AIS on a number of occasions to seek advice about what to say to Mr Nisbett. In one of my final conversations they indicated that I should make an assessment relating to his continuation in his present position. I have done this and decided to allow him to continue. However, in the light of my discussion with the AIS I have indicated to Mr Nisbett, in the presence of the Deputy Headmaster, Mr Walton that he should not have any contact with boys in a private setting, either at School or in the home setting. I have indicated to him that he has been the subject of an allegation. I have not given him details of that allegation. I have indicated to him that I have contacted an external investigator who will be attending the School on Monday. He has accepted these conditions. He is naturally concerned about the allegations made against him and the fact that they are presently unspecified. We have agreed that we will continue as normal although we will not discuss the case until the arrival of the investigator. He appears understand the situation and is reconciled to the process. I am impressed by his professionalism.

I do not assess there is a risk to any student in the School and I have not decided to suspend Mr Nisbett until after I speak to the Investigator. To this end it is my understanding that I am following the advice of the AIS. It is my intention to continue to follow the advice of the advising professionals.