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NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

INC.

memorandum

C O N F I D E N T I A L

TO: DVS
 FROM: KWI
 DATE: 6/4/87
 SUBJECT: Re: Ken Sandilands situation.

Following the alleged incident as reported by Mr Neil Rookes and Mrs Brown as relayed to them by 3 grade 5/6 girls from the Art class alleging that Mr Sandilands had one of the female students sitting on his knee and touching her in the lower abdominal area and her legs plus some supposed things that Mr Sandilands had been saying to the child/children.

Upon investigation the facts that I can ascertain appear to be:

- 1) That the incident spoken of was largely embellished by the girls concerned and certain connotations put upon it that were constructed more on their imaginations than fact.
- 2) The incident took place in the No 2 classroom in front of a class of 20 children who were at the time studying Maths. Mr Sandilands was at a chair beside his desk instructing a girl [AGB] with 3 or 4 other children standing beside him waiting for his attention.
- 3) Mr Sandilands either had the child on his knee or beside him as he was sitting on the chair. There seems to be some discrepancy here, one girl says the child was beside him, the girl herself [AGB] says she was sitting on his knee, another girl said she was sitting on his knee, the third girl did not see the situation and Mr Sandilands could not recall the incident specifically but did admit that occasionally he did allow children to sit on his knee.
- 4) Mr Sandilands was not touching the child in any untoward way, certainly not stroking abdomen, thighs etc. the 5/6 girls who started this have since recided their stroy, [AGB] says he was not, Mr Sandilands says he never has and in the context of an open class situation with other children standing alongside it is highly unlikely.
- 5) Upon talking with Mr Rookes and Mr Parker the scenario that actually took place would be quite normal in a teaching situation although there is some question whether a child be allowed to sit on a teacher's knee. Although at that level grade 1/2 more contact with a child is expected than at higher grades.
- 6) Mr Sandilands has specifically and categorically denied any untoward action, he cannot even remember having the lass on his knee and in his own words alluding to a previous incident and incurring the wrath of [REDACTE] he says, "She is the last child in the school I would take any chances of touching in an untoward or misconstruable way."

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- 7) It must also be remembered that Mr Sandilands' sight limitations would make him prone to use touch as a means of location of children and probably of expression of approval (my supposition only.)

On cheking with Mr Sandilands with regard to instructions given to him by Ken Ellery last year over a previous incident (unproven) it appears that the instructions given were rather nebulous and not specific and in his words (Ken Sandilands) Ken had advised him of the dangers of the situation and that he should take precautions in handling children particularly female students as an "Insurance Policy" against any further accusations or innuendos. No specific instructions such as not to have children on his knee, not to touch etc. were issued according to Mr Sandilands.

This probably agrees with the Memo of the 31/12/86 from Mr Ellery to yourself where he states that he lovingly but firmly requested that he (Ken Sandilands) avoid studiously any situation where anybody could possible impute "evil" or put an unfavourable construction on it. You may have other documentation on the previous incident, I do not have them available nor was I involved in the interview between Ken Ellery or Ken Sandilands on that issue.

Recommendations: There appears to be "no case" against Mr Sandilands, certainly nothing that could be construde as improper behaviour for a normal teacher. The only questionable part is whether he was following instructions as handed down from the previous incident.

Our recommendation is:

- (1) No disciplinary action
- (2) Mr Sandilands be given specific guidelines as layed down on the attached "Guidelines for K.S. teaching" to avoid any misinterpretation with regard to children.
- (3) That a meeting between Mr Rookes, myself and the **REDAC** to put the facts to the parents so that they know what actually transpired, be organised.
- (4) The 3 grade 5/6 girls concerned be given a firm lecture as to the dangers and implications of their stories. (I have already taken the liberty of doing this.)
- (5) Close the incident.

All interviews were done in the presence of myself, Mr Rookes, Mrs Brown and in some instances Mr Parker and each of the children were interviewed individually