

Mr Simon Harrison
Nicol Robinson Halletts
GPO Box 380
Brisbane 4001

Dear Mr Harrison

I refer to your letter of 5 December 2006 regarding the North Coast Children's Home at Lismore.

I understand that you met with Mr Rod McLary on 1 December.

First, I must advise you that each diocese in the Anglican Church of Australia is autonomous and as Primate I do not have the authority to intervene in matters which are the proper responsibility of another diocese.

However, in matters such as this, I would want to encourage dioceses to act in ways which are consistent with the principles which I have publicly espoused and continue to stand by.

These principles are -

- the timely provision of counselling and pastoral support to the victims;
- an offer of an opportunity to share their experiences with the bishop or senior clergy;
- an assurance that the victims will be heard;
- an assurance that they have recourse to legal advice and court processes at any time, and that the Diocese would do nothing to stand in their way;
- while they have a right to take unhindered legal action, the Church is open and willing to mediation and reconciliation processes; and
- when appropriate to do so, an offer of a formal apology for the harm done to them.

I have spoken informally with Bishop Keith Slater and I understand the Diocese is willing to meet with you to discuss a way forward.

I would encourage you to communicate directly with the Church authorities in the Diocese of Grafton.

I assure you of my prayers for all concerned.

Yours faithfully



The Most Revd Dr Phillip Aspinall
Primate

8 December 2006