

9 September 2010

Private and Confidential

Name and address of parent

For attention of addressee only
Not for further publication

Dear Parent & Staff

As you are aware from my letter dated 1 July 2010, the Director of Public Prosecutions recently completed the prosecution of a past member of the [THE SCHOOL] Preparatory School academic staff who had previously been reported in my letter of 8 September 2009 to parents as Mr [YJ]. A guilty verdict was returned on 13 of 17 charges of indecent dealing with five children under the age of 13. Last week the District Court sentenced Mr [YJ] to several jail terms, aggregating 18 years, to be served as a concurrent five year sentence of imprisonment with no parole eligibility before three years.

It has been reported to me that some concern has been raised within our School community that the School has not done enough during the period of the prosecution to support the students who were complainants, and their parents. I fully understand the basis of the concerns. However, the School has been limited in the extent to which it could and wished to intervene during this time so as not to prejudice the successful conduct of the prosecution.

Based on the evidence given in Court and the convictions, the actions of Mr [YJ] were totally inappropriate and abhorrent. We sincerely regret that this occurred at the School and all its associated consequences. Whilst recognising that it will take the families involved time to heal, we hope that the sentence handed down by the District Court brings them some measure of closure. Throughout the period of police investigations, with which the School has fully cooperated, and over the course of the trial, we have made every effort to protect the privacy of the families and the boys involved in the prosecution. It is extremely unfortunate therefore that some members of the School community have recently demonstrated a lack of respect and sensitivity for those affected by Mr [YJ]'s actions. It still remains an imperative that the privacy of the families and boys be maintained not only for the welfare of the students concerned, but also for the other students in the School community generally. Particularly, as a Christian community, we must respect the privacy of those affected and I ask you all please for your ongoing cooperation in this regard.

Our primary focus throughout the prosecution process has been to see that justice was done for the students concerned. Whilst maintaining the good name of the School is manifestly a part of my duty as Headmaster, never once have we put the welfare of the School ahead of the welfare of the boys involved, and we continue to take this stance. We wish to acknowledge the extraordinary courage and resilience of each of the boys throughout this difficult period and over the duration of a court case which was stressful and taxing in the extreme. We have conveyed this sentiment personally to the boys and/or their parents, and have again offered counselling support to the families involved. Our communication and cooperation with the parents and/or their boys will be ongoing.

I wish to acknowledge the support that the School has received from many quarters of our community over what has been a trying time. We remain committed to providing a high quality and safe education for the children who are part of this learning community. All staff employed at the School, academic and non-academic, have undertaken Working With Children checks which adds another layer of security for us all. The School also has robust Child Protection policies in place and all staff are required to undertake regular professional development in these important areas. Irrespective of this, as a result of this trial the School is undertaking a comprehensive review of its processes and procedures whether they have come under scrutiny in relation to the prosecution or not. Associated communication to, and within, the School community will also be reviewed.

Should you wish to discuss this or any matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me on

REDACTE

Yours sincerely

WD

HEADMASTER