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Attachment 9

WD

From: REDACTED
Sent: Thursday, 10 September 2009 3:04 PM
To: WD
Subject: FW: Professional Standards Matter

Dear WD

I am sending this through to you to read so that you can decide whether you would like to forward it to others and to act upon it.

I think that most of the advice is consistent with what we have done except one point. That is the issue of teachers in the Prep who have been instructed to not speak with their students about the matter but to refer them on to the School Counsellor, YH or REDACTED. I think that the Schools' position on this is fine.

Interestingly, the Professional Standards Committee also suggest that we have got it right with the Years 1-3 by not formally telling them but instead by writing to the parents.

Kind Regards

REDACTED School Counsellor | Psychologist

THE SCHOOL

From: Bernard Hill [mailto:REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 10 September 2009 2:21 PM
To: REDACTED
Subject: Professional Standards Matter

Dear RED

I have had a couple of responses from members of the Professional Standards Committee to the questions that you sought advice on. As they are consistent, and are from the members who have the greatest expertise in this area, I thought that I would summarise them for you.

The paramount message that the school should be sending is that this is a police and justice matter and the school must allow these systems to take their course, unhindered. The school can only directly comment on its actions and responsibilities – which have been to stand down the teacher until the external processes have been exhausted.

Should there be a formal announcement to the Years 1 to 3?

No. However letters should be sent to the parents outlining the situation.

What should parents say to their children?

It is paramount that the school not imply any opinion on the merits or otherwise of the allegations in any 'advice' that it gives to parents. With this underlying principle in mind, the following messages in any conversation between the parents and their children would be good:

Children who don't feel safe for any reason should tell a teacher or parent
 We don't always know the whole story about something. Sometimes we have to leave it up to other people like the police to find out what really happened and then work out what to do. In the meantime, we should feel safe to ask our parents and teachers if we have any questions.

Not sure if that's telling you to suck eggs **RED** - however I think that ultimately the responsibility must be with the parents to help their children learn some of life's lessons! (Which half an hour listening to talk back radio will tell us that most adults haven't learned!)

Again – bottom line is that the school should not do anything that would either imply guilt of the accused, or solicit or influence complaints from other children. All while remaining open to children who have concerns.

A tough balance – but one that I'm confident you can walk.

Let me know if I've missed the mark, or if there is any clarification that you need - or assistance.

Take care

Bernard

Bernard Hill

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