

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL
ABUSE

STATEMENT OF JEREMY KIRKWOOD

I, **JEREMY DAVID KIRKWOOD** of Geelong Grammar School, 50 Biddlecombe Avenue, Corio, Victoria, 3214, Investment Banker, state as follows:

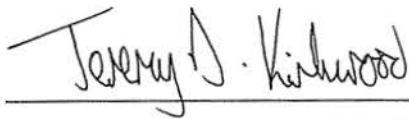
1. I am a director of Geelong Grammar School (ACN 004 971 500), an Australian Public Company Limited by Guarantee.
2. I am a member and the Chairman of the Geelong Grammar School Council.
3. I am a member of the Geelong Grammar School Foundation Board.
4. I am an investment banker and corporate adviser by vocation, and have been the principal and director of my own corporate advisory firm since 2006 where I offer investment banking and corporate advisory services to clients.
5. I attended Geelong Grammar as a student between 1975 and 1980. In 1980, I was School Captain and completed my Higher School Certificate.
6. I joined the School Council in 1996.
7. Around 1999 I was appointed Chair of Finance.
8. I was appointed Chairman of the School Council at the end of 2004 and have been Chairman since that time.
9. The School Council has three sub-committees being the audit, finance and risk committee; the assets management committee and the nominations committee. I am a member of all three sub-committees.
10. As required by the School's Constitution for all School Council members, I have been a director of the School since 1996.
11. The School Council is responsible for appointing the Principal and setting the strategic direction of the School; the management of the business and affairs of the

School; and acts as the custodian and controller of the funds and property of the School.

12. The School Council is responsible for appointing the Principal. As Chairman, I, together with the Principal, appoint the Commercial Director of the School. Otherwise, the School Council is not generally involved in the recruitment or appointment of other staff.
13. The Principal would also discuss with me his proposed appointments for the positions of Vice Principal and Director of Community Relations.
14. Andrew Moore was appointed Business Manager / Commercial Director in 2000. Stephen Meek was appointed Principal of the School in 2004, replacing Nicholas Sampson who was Principal from 2001 to 2004.
15. My role as Chairman is to manage and provide leadership to the Geelong School Council. I am accountable to the School Council and act as a direct liaison between the School Council and the Principal.
16. The School Council meets formally four times a year (once per school term) and as required. We also have three teleconferences over the year between each meeting. No agenda is prepared for these teleconferences which provide an opportunity for the Principal to update members of Council on matters he wishes to discuss. The Principal and I will also communicate, mostly by telephone, on an ad hoc basis regarding matters that he needs to inform me about or to discuss follow-up matters from Council meetings. I will also have ad hoc discussions with the Commercial Director, mainly by phone, on financial matters of the School and other matters the Principal asked be followed up.
17. School policies are formulated by relevant staff with the benefit of input from third parties where appropriate.
18. All policies (including those relating to sexual abuse, bullying and other inappropriate behaviours) are approved by the Principal.

19. Beyond ensuring that policies concerning the welfare of students are in place, the School Council is not involved in the formulation or content of those policies and procedures.
20. I am aware that the School has policies dealing with:
 - a. mandatory reporting of sexual harassment, child abuse and other criminal offences;
 - b. prevention of sexual harassment and abuse and how the School responds to such complaints.
21. To the best of my knowledge there has only been one incident of child sexual abuse occurring at Geelong Grammar during my period of service as Chairman of the School Council. That incident involved Mr Stefan van Vuuren, a teacher who took inappropriate photographs during a Year 10 excursion to the Queenscliff Marine Biology Centre in 2007. Whilst I do not recall being made aware of the name of the teacher at the time, the Principal informed me that one of the senior staff members had received a complaint from girls in Year 10 about a teacher taking inappropriate photographs during the excursion. He told me that the matter was investigated and reported to police and that the teacher was dismissed.
22. The Royal Commission has requested my knowledge of the response by Geelong Grammar to a complaint made about BKD. Since being asked by the Commission, I have established that BKD was the person who was the subject of an allegation of inappropriate conduct with a student at Timbertop. He resigned before the School could hold a disciplinary hearing held. The School reported the allegation to the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
23. There was also one further instance involving Charles Stitt. Mr Stitt was a staff member working in the Toorak Early Learning Centre and had been arrested and charged with possession of child pornography. I recall that the Principal had called me to tell me what happened, that the police confirmed that the images did not involve students at the School, that he was not being charged with any sexual abuse involving students at the School and that Mr Stitt would be suspended with pay pending an investigation.

24. During my period as Chairman of the School Council, Geelong Grammar has settled a number of claims brought by past students in respect of sexual abuse. I believe the events giving rise to these claims occurred prior to me becoming Chairman of the School Council.
25. When these claims arose the School Council was kept informed of the receipt and progress of claims and settlements as, or after, they occurred. Specific details (such as the names of the victim, the particulars of the abuse or specific settlement amounts) generally were not discussed. When the identity of a particular offender was known after their having been charged (such as Trutmann or Harvey), the Council was told it was a claim relating to that offender. The victims' names would not be discussed to protect their identity. Beyond being advised of the progress of these claims, the Council left the matters of settlement and resolution to the School and its lawyers. In particular, the settlement amounts paid to victims were made by reference to legal advice received from the School's lawyers and were not limited by reference to any budgetary allocation made by the School.



JEREMY DAVID KIRKWOOD

Dated: 20 August 2015