

National Office

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**TO: Parents of students attending an
Adventist Schools Australia school**

Dear Parent

Re: Adventist Schools Australia's commitment to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Assault

I am writing today to affirm my full support for the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Assault. The Commission's work is absolutely essential to not only understanding institutional failures across the spectrum of Australian society, but even more importantly, to develop better systems to prevent abuse in the first place and to compassionately, professionally and thoroughly handle cases should they occur.

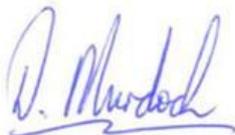
Our school system has been following the Royal Commission's work closely, particularly in relation to recommendations relating to schools. As a result of learnings from the public hearings and research papers thus far, Adventist Schools Australia is dedicated to continuous revision and improvement of its child protection systems and procedures across the country. One such initiative includes the development of an Adventist Schools Australia National Child Protection Framework, emphasising standardised responses, as much as possible, in all Australian Adventist schools, and ensuring that any investigations and adjudications of cases is independent and transparent. In addition, child protection policies are being revised to ensure they include the key components of recognising and responding to abuse as well as identifying grooming behaviours. To embed the learning, child protection training for all staff and administrators is being significantly remodelled using targeted, standardised content delivered consistently by experts. In turn, our staff will be trained further to ensure that our students learn appropriate protective behaviours.

Our child protection policy is available on our website (under the Leadership tab) or via the following link: <http://asa.adventist.edu.au/index.php/Leadership/Child-Protection>.

I encourage you to review the policy and to let me know if there is anything you believe we can do better or may have missed. I also encourage you to let me know immediately if you have any concern about sexual abuse, or behaviour likely to lead to sexual abuse, in our school community. And further, if you know of any sexual abuse, I encourage you to report the matter to the police. If you have suffered sexual abuse in an institutional context, you can also tell your story to the Royal Commission: www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au.

There is absolutely nothing more important to me than protecting our school students. Each child is a gift from God, and their childhood and their innocence is a sacred trust. Working together as a community, it is our aim to ensure our children have safe, happy, healthy and positive childhoods.

Yours sincerely



Dr Daryl K Murdoch, National Director
Adventist Schools Australia

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