

Parliamentary Apology and reports on historical abuse in government schools

Content warning: This communication contains information of a highly sensitive nature that may be distressing for some people.

Dear Principal,

I am writing to let you know about the publication today of two important reports on historical (pre-2000) child sexual abuse in Victorian government schools and an upcoming Parliamentary Apology to victims and survivors.

Because your school is named as a school with a past legal claim/s, I am also providing you with a draft communication for you to send to your school community. On 30 July, there will also be a Parliamentary apology to former students who experienced child sexual abuse in a government school – there is more information about this below.

Background

The Department of Education has published the Systemic Review Report into historical (pre-2000) child sexual abuse in Victorian government schools. This report, which is based on records from legal claims, outlines confronting patterns of abuse and past failures to detect, prevent or respond to abuse.

Braybrook Primary School, which later merged to become Sunshine Harvester Primary School, has been named in that report as a school where there has been a past legal claim, or claims, of abuse by a former staff member against a former student (or more than one staff member or student). You can read the full report here: [Systemic Review into Historical Child Sexual Abuse in Victorian Government Schools](#). No victim or perpetrator names are included in the report, with the exception of three perpetrators named in case studies unrelated to your school (who are deceased). The report provides a comprehensive view of known legal claims in Victorian government schools to highlight the extent of offending that we are aware of.

The publication of this report may be triggering for some in your community and may also prompt other survivors to come forward to report abuse from the past. Our team will support you with any contact you may have with former students. More information is available on this PAL topic: [Historical Child Sexual Abuse in Victorian Government Schools: Policy](#). You can also provide the contact details of our Restorative Engagement and School Support team to any former students who approach you: rest@education.vic.gov.au or (03) 9057 4500.

David Howes
Deputy Secretary,
Schools and Regional Services