



3 March 2019

Statement from the Director of Catholic Education

Our Catholic education community has been shocked and deeply affected by the news of Cardinal Pell's conviction on historical child sexual abuse charges and the way that this has divided many communities. Whilst we note that the judicial process continues to unfold, the initial implications of this conviction are significant for our Church and for those schools where Cardinal Pell has been honoured in various ways over recent years.

Following the child protection summit in Rome last month, Pope Francis spoke of "issues of responsibility, accountability and transparency" that need to be addressed in our Church in order to protect children and vulnerable people. Every Catholic school in the Diocese of Ballarat holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility. Whenever that trust is breached or appears to be breached, we know that our response must be firm and unwavering on the side of what is best for the children and young people in our care. When others look to us for evidence of "responsibility, accountability and transparency" we will not be found wanting.

Our thoughts and prayers are very much with victims and survivors of abuse within our Church and our education community. Their courage and the commitment of those who support them continue to inspire us all.

Audrey Brown

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Audrey Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Director of Catholic Education