

Statement

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Wednesday, 19 June 2024

STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER ON THE BEAUMARIS INQUIRY

Earlier this year, the Board of Inquiry handed down its report into historical child sexual abuse in Beaumaris Primary School and certain other government schools.

Today, the Victorian Government has accepted each of its recommendations.

In doing so, we make a clear and simple acknowledgement: we failed.

We failed to keep these children safe.

We failed to listen when they spoke out.

We failed to act to ensure that it did not happen again.

As the Board's report put so plainly – it was a failure that was both serious and systemic.

It was also a failure of morality.

What else can it possibly be – when the reputation of the education system was given higher regard than the safety of its children.

Young, bright, beautiful children for whom school should have been a place of joy. Instead, for many, it became a place of horror and fear.

Often, the impact was enduring.

The ripple effect of abuse – impacting people's health, mental health, life outcomes and relationships with loved ones. Impacting their belief in themselves and the world around them.

Despite it all – they've shown the most incredible courage. A determination to protect others in a way that they weren't.

I want to thank the men and women who brought us to this day.

As children you experienced a system that sought to silence you. Now as adults you have refused to be silent anymore.

I also want to make clear: justice requires acknowledgement – but it also demands action.

The work is not over – rather, this is just the next step towards healing.

Earlier this year, I met with a number of survivors.

They shared with me their experiences and the culture of silence that surrounded them.

I'll never forget what one of them said to me: "I just want to be believed."

You are.

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