



St Andrew's College Media Statement:

Response to media allegations and graffiti incident

18 May 2020

St Andrew's College is extremely proud of its cultural renewal journey to date. Over a two-year period commencing in 2018, the College implemented all 23 recommendations contained within its Broderick Review Report, and continues to proactively identify and address cultural issues and instances of misconduct.

'I am confident that significant progress has already been made,' said Principal Wayne Erickson. 'We have taken decisive action to eliminate unacceptable practices, and have already seen signs of progress, including fewer reports of sexual misconduct since 2018 and no reports of sexual misconduct during Welcome Week in 2020.'

'We look forward to re-running the Broderick Review survey, which will help us assess progress and plan the next phase of cultural renewal. This survey was planned to take place in September, but will be pushed back to 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.'

The Principal believes that the Sydney Morning Herald's reports on cultural renewal and instances of misconduct were fair and balanced. 'Though we lament that the overwhelmingly positive elements of collegiate education are seldom included in media reports, there is nothing unfair about the view that there is more work to be done and new issues to be investigated,' he said.

However, the College's leaders are disappointed by the choice of some individuals to graffiti the College in response to reports of student misconduct.

'Defacing heritage-listed buildings is utterly unacceptable,' said the Principal. 'We wish to listen to and work with individuals who are, like College staff, distressed by reports of wrongdoing. Dialogue leads to progress. Vandalism does not.'

The College also has concerns about false allegations made by student journalists over the past 48 hours, including that the College had removed its Broderick Review report from its website and had not been in contact with Elizabeth Broderick since the report was handed down.

It has also criticised the conflation of instances of misconduct with systemic cultural problems. 'To allege that our cultural change journey is unsatisfactory because a handful of students have acted inappropriately



is simplistic and problematic,' said the Principal. 'The appalling decisions of a few individuals over a period of several years should not be used as the basis for broad – and damaging – claims about the College,' he said.

The Principal is also concerned about allegations that the College is resistant to change. 'As the Sydney Morning Herald made it clear, we are not afraid of change. We do not and will not use our history and the legacy of great alumni as a shield against accountability or a licence to ignore community standards.'

Further, St Andrew's College rejects suggestions that '[students] don't have parents who believe they have a problem'. The College has gratefully received feedback of concerned parents throughout its cultural renewal journey, and does not accept that its students or their parents think of staff as 'servants'.

The Principal also said the College would deal with all new allegations of misconduct decisively. 'As I said to Anna Patty of the Sydney Morning Herald yesterday, we cannot guarantee that issues will not arise in the future; preventing unacceptable Facebook innuendos or excessive intoxication is challenging in 24-hour communities. But what I can guarantee is that we react – and will continue to react – decisively and proportionately to all misconduct that we are made aware of through our rigorous reporting processes.'

The College encourages anyone with information regarding student misconduct or other issues to contact the College at principalassist@standrewscollege.edu.au and hopes to engage in dialogue with members of the wider community who are distressed by reports over the last 48 hours.

-ENDS-