



Call for submissions: Board of Inquiry into historical child sexual abuse in Beaumaris Primary School and certain other government schools

Last updated: 1 November 2023

Open invitation to all individuals who wish to contribute

Invitation to make a submission

- The Board of Inquiry into historical child sexual abuse in Beaumaris Primary School and certain other government schools (the **Inquiry**) is inviting interested members of the public to make a submission relevant to its terms of reference.
- The Inquiry would like to hear from victim-survivors of child sexual abuse who were abused by staff or contractors at Beaumaris Primary School during the 1960s and 1970s.
- We also want to hear from victim-survivors who were abused by these same staff or contractors in other Victorian government schools, where the abuse occurred between 1960 and the end of the 1990s.
- The Inquiry would also like to hear from the families, friends, loved ones and other supporters of those who experienced such abuse.
- If you are uncertain about whether to share your experience with the Inquiry, please contact the Inquiry via telephone (03) 8301 0102 or via email contact@beaumarisinquiry.vic.gov.au.
- The Inquiry recognises that child sexual abuse is a devastating crime that can have profound and life-long effects on victim-survivors and their families, friends, loved ones and communities. Although it may be challenging to do so, sharing these experiences will inform the Inquiry's findings and recommendations to create change for the future.

The submissions process remains open to victim-survivors and other individuals until the private hearings timeline concludes in December 2023.

Submissions have closed for groups and organisations. If you need more time to make your submission, please get in contact with us to discuss your circumstances and options.

Purpose of submissions

- The submission process is an opportunity for any interested members of the public to engage with the Inquiry.
- The process offers an opportunity to come forward, share your experiences, have a say and inform the Inquiry's work.
- Information provided to the Inquiry through its submission process will be used to inform the Inquiry's findings and recommendations.

How to participate

- If you would like to make a submission to the Inquiry you can submit it online via the link on our website or by post to Beaumaris Board of Inquiry; PO Box 18092, Collins Street East, VIC, 8003.
- The Inquiry will accept submissions in a range of mediums, including online or written submissions, or audio or audio-visual formats. If you would like to make a submission but are not comfortable with any of these formats, please contact the Inquiry and we will discuss this with you.
- In preparing your submission, please refer to the questions below as a guide.

Information use

- If submitting a submission by post, submitters must include a completed submission cover sheet. If making a submission online, submitters will be asked to answer certain questions. This will assist the Inquiry to treat your information in accordance with your preferences.
- You can choose to make a submission on the basis that it is:
 - Public: The entire submission may be published, including the name of the individual, group or organisation.
 - Anonymous: The submission may be published, but all identifying information will be removed.
 - Confidential: The submission will not be published and will be used to inform the Inquiry's considerations only.

Questions to guide submissions

- The questions below are intended as a guide only. Submissions do not have to address all or any of the questions. Submissions can be of any length or format.

1. What is your experience of child sexual abuse between the 1960s and 1970s by a teacher, employee or contractor of Beaumaris Primary School, or by a teacher, employee or contractor connected to Beaumaris Primary School (for example, because they previously worked at Beaumaris Primary School)?

If you are uncertain about whether to share your experience with the Inquiry, please contact the Inquiry via telephone (03) 8301 0182 or via email contact@beaumarisinquiry.vic.gov.au.

2. Was the abuse reported to the school, the Department of Education, an officer of the Department, or any other authority, at the time, or in subsequent years? If the abuse was reported, what was the response and what did you think or feel about the response?
3. How has the abuse affected your life and the life of your family, friends, loved ones and other supporters?
4. Do you have any experience with, or ideas about, appropriate ways to support healing (in particular, ways to support those who disclose child sexual abuse as an adult)?
5. Do you think support services for adult victim-survivors of child sexual abuse in government schools are effective? Please explain your response.
6. Please share anything else about your experience you would like the Inquiry to know and that is relevant to the Inquiry's terms of reference.

You may wish to comment on findings and recommendations relevant to this Inquiry's terms of reference; the implementation of relevant recommendations; what impact previous related inquiries have had on child safety in Victoria; or what impact they have had on you.

Background

Establishment

- On 28 June 2023, the Lieutenant-Governor, on the recommendation of the Premier, established the Inquiry under section 53(1) of the *Inquiries Act 2014* (Vic).
- The Victorian Government has acknowledged that there was child sexual abuse involving a number of teachers at Beaumaris Primary School during the 1960s and 1970s, and that these employees worked and allegedly perpetrated abuse in other government schools.
- The Inquiry gives victim-survivors the opportunity to put their experiences on the public record. In doing so we seek to support the process of healing for everyone affected by this abuse, and to develop a shared understanding of the impact of the abuse among Victorians.

- We will also make findings and recommendations in accordance with our terms of reference. This includes the response of the Department of Education at the time, appropriate ways to support healing, and effective support services.
- As we undertake our work, our priority is the ongoing safety and wellbeing of victim-survivors. We acknowledge the impact of the abuse that was committed, the resulting trauma that has endured, and the profound bravery of victim-survivors, including those no longer with us, regardless of their level of engagement with this Inquiry.