



Dear Parents and Carers

Re: *Sexuality and Gender Identity Conversion Practices Bill 2020*

I am writing to you on behalf of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (Catholic Education) in relation to the proposed Sexuality and Gender Identity Conversion Practices Bill 2020 (the Bill) currently being considered by the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Catholic Education is committed to ensuring our schools are faith-filled Catholic learning communities of hope, joy and wonder, where all are welcome and inspired to grow to their potential. Catholic schools in the ACT are inclusive of all students regardless of their faith background, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexuality. Catholic schools have a variety of pastoral care and welfare programs that ensure all students are included and supported during their schooling.

The ACT Government has stated that the proposed Bill does not intend to impact on faith, identity and teaching in Catholic schools, or impact on staff and parents and carers in their relationship with children. However, Catholic Education has been concerned about language within the initial draft of the Bill which is potentially open to wide interpretation for students, their families and teachers and may have unintended consequences.

Working as part of the Archdiocese, under the leadership of Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Catholic Education has expressed concerns directly to Chief Minister's Office regarding the broad nature of the Bill as first proposed. The Government has listened to our concerns. We anticipate that the Government will consider further amendments such that the relationships between students and teachers and parents and carers and children are unaffected. We will continue to monitor this process and provide advice to the Government.

I encourage you to contact your local members of the ACT Assembly if you have any concerns.

Please contact me at ross.fox@cg.catholic.edu.au if you wish to discuss further.

Good wishes

Ross Fox
DIRECTOR
26 August 2020