TO: ALL PRINCIPALS, PRESCHOOL DIRECTORS AND GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS

RE: IMPLEMENTATION OF COSSEY REVIEW REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

I am pleased to be able to advise you of the many changes and initiatives that have been implemented by the department following the release of the Cossey Review Report. Nearly all of the review recommendations will have been implemented by the end of this term with the remaining recommendations to be fully implemented during term 1 2012. For site leaders and regional directors there are some new requirements to be aware of in relation to school anti-bullying policy and practices and critical incident reporting, along with a number of updated and new resource materials.

Anti-bullying policy and practices

As you would be aware all schools are required to have a stand alone anti-bullying policy or a section on anti-bullying included within their Student Behaviour Management policy or Student Code of Conduct. There are a number of new requirements as an outcome of the Cossey Review that I would like to bring to your attention, these are as follows:

- All schools are now required to have an easily locatable and well publicised link on their website to the relevant anti-bullying policy or anti-bullying section within an existing policy.
- Regional directors are required to verify anti-bullying policies and report on compliance levels. A desktop audit of school anti-bullying policy compliance will be undertaken by Central Office next year.
- Principals are required to provide to the governing council updates each term in relation to school bullying related data and trends and any anti-bullying programs/initiatives in place or being considered. This report is to be made available to the general school community via the newsletter and be placed on the schools website for easy access by parents.
- All school enrolment processes are to include a requirement for parent(s)/caregiver(s) and/or students to annually acknowledge/agree to the school’s Student Code of Conduct. All school leaders are to review their anti-bullying policy annually, and to involve parents/caregivers and students in this process.
I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you of your obligations under the 2008 ‘Information Sharing Guidelines for Promoting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children, Young People and Families’. It has been brought to my attention that there has been some inconsistency in the sharing of information between schools and TAFESA in relation to known bullying activities involving senior secondary students. Please remember to advise TAFESA providers of any known bullying activities involving senior secondary students who are studying at TAFESA as part of their senior secondary schooling so that appropriate action can be taken.

Updated Making Our Sites Safer Guidelines for Site Leaders
Two of the Making Our Sites Safer Guidelines for Site Leaders have been updated - Critical Incident reporting and SAPOL response to school related incidents. The key changes to the former Critical Incident related guideline are:

- inclusion of documented protocols in relation to who site leaders must notify following a serious and significant critical incident (regional director, parent, school care).
- nomination of the Head of Schools (or delegate) as the departmental media spokesperson in relation to these types of incidents.
- The role of DECD Corporate Office in responding to such incidents.

The SAPOL response guideline outlines the process that schools and preschools should take when making requests for police attendance and/or advice. The updated guidelines are available at [http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/11643/](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/11643/).

Coalition to Decrease Bullying, Harassment and Violence in South Australian Schools
The Coalition to Decrease Bullying, Harassment and Violence in South Australian Schools provides advice to the Minister for Education and Child Development, the DECD Chief Executive and the heads of the Independent and Catholic schooling sectors regarding the development, implementation and evaluation of site based anti-bullying policies and procedures through the development and promotion of evidence informed resources. The Coalition draws upon the expertise of leading academics in the bullying field, including Adjunct Professor Ken Rigby, Professor Phillip Slee, Dr Barbara Spears and Dr Shoko Yoneyama. The role of the Coalition has been further strengthened following the Cossey review as academic members will support the department’s training and development initiatives, provide high level consultation and advice on matters relating to bullying and harassment and represent the department and its relevant initiatives at state, national and international levels.

Review of current cyber safety support resources
A review of current cyber safety support resources has been completed. A range of options for effective implementation of the updated ‘Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum’ content is now being considered.

Cyber Safety Summit
A student cyber safety summit held on 14 November 2011 provided students with access to research experts in the field and the opportunity to contribute their views on the development of recommendations for further action on cyber safety. Nine DECD secondary schools attended this event at the Education Development Centre with other sites invited to participate through video conferencing technologies. Resources and keynote presentations from the summit will be available to all sites in 2012 via the online database iTunes University.

Memorandum of Administrative Agreement (MoAA) between DCED and SAPOL
A MoAA has been developed in consultation with SAPOL that details the policy and practices that are in place in relation to site contact with SAPOL. It will form the basis for the general orders issued to officers in the field and will provide site leaders with clear guidelines. The MoAA will be released to regional directors who will make it available to site leaders.

Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion
Many of the recommendations from the review undertaken by the Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion (SEE) group have now been implemented. Amendments have been made to the SEE guidelines to enable student participation in re-entry meetings without a parent/guardian present. EDSAS behaviour descriptors have been updated to include greater data analysis of behaviours influencing suspension and exclusion. Professional learning for site leaders in the SEE procedures will be provided in term one 2012. Site leaders are also reminded that immediate notice of intention to exclude is to be given to students for incidents of violence involving a weapon. The updated SEE guideline is available at via SSONet: https://ssonet.central.sa.edu.au/pages/bm

Review of Teacher Performance Development
A discussion paper has been prepared to initiate the Professional Development Review, and will include consideration of teacher knowledge and skills regarding students with a disability. Regional directors are currently being consulted and will work collaboratively to engage relevant stakeholder groups, including those related to students with disabilities. This consultation process will also include an opportunity for feedback to be received via the DECD website, which will be utilised to guide the development of the Review recommendations around improving the provision of Professional Development.

Updated and new resource materials
The Safer DECD Schools – A resource to make DECD schools safer through the reduction of bullying, harassment and violence and the provision of child protection initiatives will be distributed in January 2012. The purpose of the Safer DECD Schools document is to connect current research in bullying and harassment with effective, whole school practice. This resource has been endorsed by the Coalition and includes nationally agreed definitions of bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence and cyber bullying. It also provides schools and regions with an anti-bullying checklist, to assist schools to review their anti-bullying policy, and student and teacher surveys for gauging the level of bullying in a school. Additional resources to support schools is available at http://www.DECD.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/bullying/saferschools/
The ‘Bullying and Harassment at School: Advice for parents and caregivers’ brochure has been revised and copies have been provided to schools for distribution to parents and caregivers. The Cyber-Safety – Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World a resource that assists schools to develop a safe online environment is being updated. The updated document will be made available in 2012 and will be accessible at http://www.DECD.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/cybersafety/. A reference guide to resources available to schools for students with a disability whose behaviour is problematic has been developed and is available at http://www.DECD.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/behaviour/

**Work underway**

There is still some work to be done to implement all of the Cossey Review recommendations in full. Work is continuing on improving the functionality of the Incident and Response Management System (IRMS), which will be completed by the beginning of the 2012 school year. An audit of SAPOL Community Policing initiatives is being finalised in consultation with SAPOL, media training for leaders is being planned and the DECD Duty of Care policy is currently being amended in line with the Cossey Review and the new National Child Care Standards.

As you can see much has been done but there is still a long way to go to ensure that bullying and violence in schools is reduced. Therefore, I thank you for your ongoing support and assistance in this key initiative.

![Signature]

Garry Costello  
**Head of Schools**

Date: 29 November 2011