



Sydney Catholic Schools

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MEDIA RELEASE

“Now is the time for compassion, not detention,” says Catholic school leader

Dr Dan White, Executive Director of Sydney Catholic Schools has, on behalf of Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS), formally endorsed has the ***Sydney Stands for Sanctuary - rally to #letthemstay*** being held across the country this evening, Monday 8 February.

The recent High Court decision upholding the legality of the Federal Government's off-shore detention centres on Nauru and Manus Island means that 267 displaced people, 50 of them children – 37 babies – can be sent to Nauru at any time.

Respected medical professionals who have spent time on Nauru, such as Professor David Isaacs, have reported that children who have spent time on Nauru are severely traumatised by their experiences. Some have suffered extreme physical, emotional and/or sexual violence.

“For some time now, our Sydney Catholic schools have campaigned strongly for a change in government policy that would see all children released immediately from immigration detention, Dr White said. The *Jump Up&Down 4 Kids* campaign has been at the centre of this advocacy.”

“Our students and staff are deeply committed to doing whatever they can to ensure that these people, already suffering as a result of what they have endured, are given hope for a better future. That means not going back into immigration detention. Now is the time for compassion, not detention.”

The ***Sydney Stands for Sanctuary - rally to #letthemstay*** rally will take place at Sydney Town Hall Square from 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Details of the event can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/events/761751123957211>.

“As a nation, and particularly for those of us who are educators, keeping children in places that clearly do them harm, is contrary to the values that sit at the heart of who we are,” Dr White said. “We can be better than this. It is time to jump up and down for these children. It is for these reasons that I am prepared to give my support to this important event.”

#ends

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