

Downing Centre Court Lifts Suppression Order

By Sonia Hickey and Ugur Nedim

A Magistrate at Downing Centre Local Court recently made the decision to lift a [suppression](#) order on the Sydney school at the centre of allegations that a female teacher had a sexual relationship with a male student.

Magistrate Jacqueline Milledge [declined to extend an interim suppression order](#) over the name of the school, saying it is important for the community to be aware “this matter is afoot”.

Her Honour did, however, suppress the identity of the teacher in order to protect students, considering more students may come forward as victims or witnesses.

No plea against charges

The teacher, who worked at [Sydney Grammar School](#) – one of Australia’s most prestigious boys’ schools where school fees cost \$30,000 per year – did not attend court for the hearing.

As the charges are ‘strictly indictable’ – which means they will need to be finalised in a higher court – the defendant’s lawyers were not required to enter a plea, and they refrained from doing so.

The teacher has been charged six counts of having ‘[sexual intercourse with a person aged between 17 and 18 years under special care](#)’ in contravention of [section 73 of the Crimes Act](#), which carries a maximum penalty of four years’ in prison, and one count of indecent assault.

The court heard that the teacher and the boy were involved in extra-curricular school activities that required them to spend

time alone together.

It is alleged a sexual relationship developed in that context, which lasted two to three months.

The student allegedly reported the relationship to a school counsellor last month.

Sydney Grammar 'supports parents and students'

Court documents claim some of the offences took place at the woman's home, where she is alleged to have kissed and had sex with the boy twice.

It is further alleged the teacher had sex with the student four times at the school between February 1 and March 31 this year.

Sydney Grammar School has released a statement confirming NSW Police charged a member of its staff "with serious misconduct of a sexual nature".

The statement said that as soon as the school became aware of the allegations, the teacher was suspended and banned from contact with students, pending an outcome on the matter.

"Parents at the school were written to about the situation, and support has been provided."

Sexual abuse in private schools

The case raises further concerns about the misconduct of teachers in elite schools, several private Sydney schools having been named in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Those schools include [Knox Grammar](#), [Trinity Grammar School](#), [The King's School and St Ignatius College](#), with allegations going back as far as the 1980s.

The Sydney Grammar school teacher was granted bail last week,

and Ms Milledge adjourned the proceedings until December 8th.