



Media Statement: Data Breach

The following comments can be attributed to Philip Morison, Principal, Mount Lilydale Mercy College

The protection of data and personal information is of paramount importance to us at Mount Lilydale Mercy College and, on behalf of the College, I wholeheartedly apologise that this has happened.

I want to reassure our College and the wider community that we are committed to a best-practice approach in dealing with this kind of incident. Since becoming aware of the suspected data breach on 11 January 2023, we have engaged specialist cyber incident response experts, including cybersecurity analysts and forensic IT investigators, to guide our actions without delay.

This has ensured we have taken all initial necessary steps as quickly as possible, aligned to cybercrime incidents such as these. We are confident our IT environment has now been safeguarded and the perpetrators locked out.

Our cyber consultants, together with members of our College Leadership team, have been working together to learn how the breach occurred, ascertain precisely who is impacted, and specifically what information in relation to each person, has been accessed. Unfortunately, it was recently confirmed that the credit card information, but importantly excluding CCV numbers, of around 400 parents appears to have been illegally accessed. Those impacted individuals have already been notified in order for them take personal mitigative action with their financial institutions, such as cancelling cards.

While I am told that even the most secure IT environments can potentially be hacked by something as innocent as one person clicking on a link in a phishing email, we will take learnings from the ongoing investigation and if there are ways to tighten our cyber security practices, we won't hesitate to make changes.

I emphasise that our investigations are ongoing and under the guidance of our cyber incident response experts, we will continue to work closely with the authorities - we have commenced the process of reporting the incident to all affected individuals and institutions including the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, Australian Cyber Security Centre, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Taxation Office. We are taking all measures and precautions possible to mitigate any potential risks to individuals as a result of this breach.

Again, we unreservedly apologise and are committed to keeping our College community informed and supported as investigations continue.

Philip Morison
Principal