



## **Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst**

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### **Statement by Bishop of Sandhurst Les Tomlinson**

THE Bishop of Sandhurst Leslie Tomlinson said today the Church remains humbled by its past failures in the handling of Child Sex Abuse, and remains committed to working in an open, transparent and compassionate manner to right past wrongs and to ensure these crimes are never committed again.

“The role Cardinal Pell played in establishing the Melbourne Response in 1996 was ground breaking.

“The Melbourne Response, the first of its kind anywhere in the world, provides a free counselling and support service, as well as a panel to provide ex-gratia compensation payments,” Bishop Tomlinson said.

“Cardinal Pell’s initiative has been of such extensive assistance to many who have been victims of sexual abuse,” he said.

Bishop Tomlinson encourages any victims of abuse to contact the police.

“In the first instance, victims should contact the police and we stand ready to assist further through our Towards Healing program,” he said.

“I and the Sandhurst Diocese remain committed to assisting victims of this terrible crime, through the path of Towards Healing.”

To contact Towards Healing phone: 1800 816 030

For media enquiries contact Damian Griffin (03) 5442 8531 or 0418 162 536