

Former Carey students allege historical sex abuse and grooming by teachers



By [Cara Waters](#)

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Former students of the elite Carey Baptist Grammar School allege they were sexually abused and groomed by male teachers when they were enrolled at the co-educational private school in Melbourne's east decades ago.

The claims involve three male teachers, and the alleged offending was against two girls and one boy between the mid-1970s and the early 1990s.



Carey's website states that it has "zero tolerance to child abuse". *CREDIT: JOE ARMAO*
Julianne Brandon, director of community engagement at Carey, said the school was unaware of any specific details relating to the allegations and was awaiting further information.

"As they may be the subject of legal proceedings, the school cannot comment further at this time," she said.

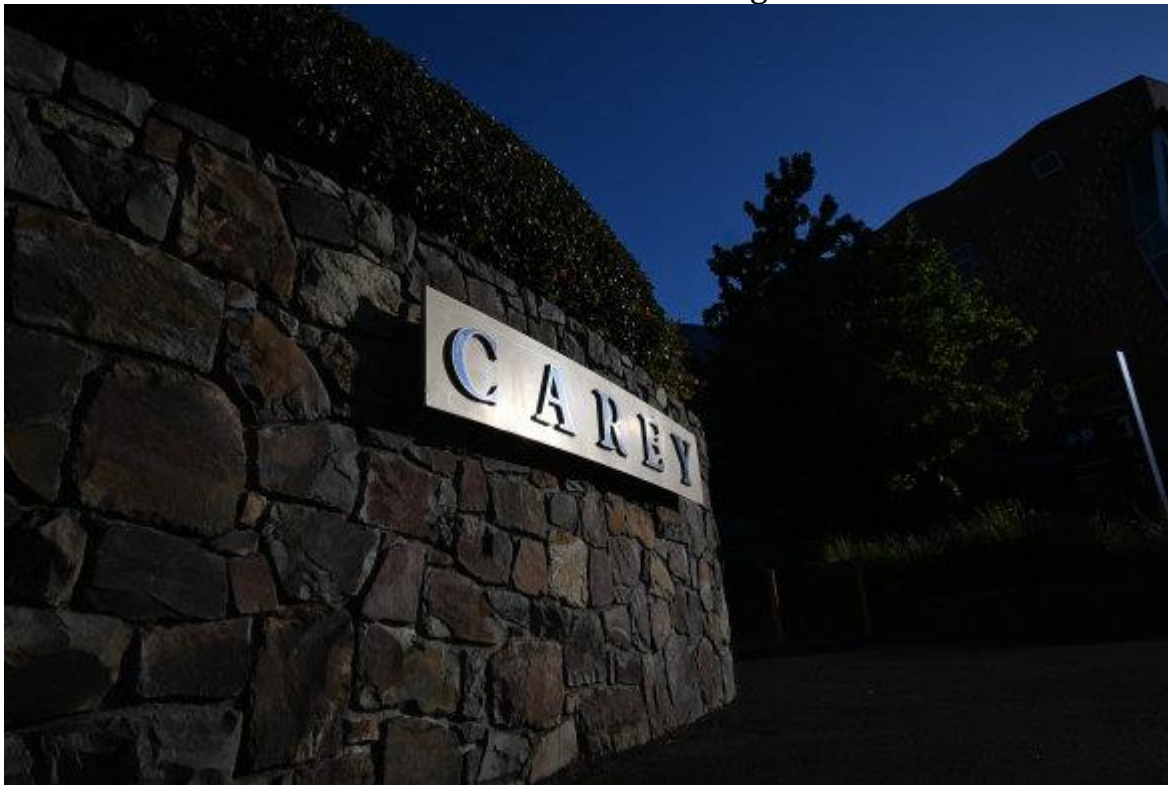
The Age is not aware of any police reports about the claims. Carey is one of the state's most expensive schools, with fees for years 11 and 12 next year set at \$37,976 for each year.

The exclusive school – which has campuses in Kew and Donvale and sports grounds in Bulleen – has over 2000 students and was founded in 1923.

In 2023, Carey was ranked 93rd for its VCE results, with 11.2 per cent of VCE students at the school recording study scores of 40 or over and a median VCE study score of 33.

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One of the victim-survivors, who spoke to *The Age* anonymously, said a culture of silence and shame surrounded the alleged abuse.



Carey is an exclusive private co-educational school in Kew. *CREDIT: JOE ARMAO*

"I feel that 'shame' is a huge driver of psychological injuries, and often pushes those who have been harmed into the shadows," she said.

"These types of crimes hinge upon power and shame, and propel a culture of silence that is harmful in itself as people struggle to heal when they cannot fully express what happened to them.

"I say this as someone who buried my extremely troubling experiences at Carey into the oblivion of a painful past; these disgusting behaviours did not

seem to matter to anyone then, almost as though nothing had ever happened, and my experience was rendered invisible.”

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Law firm Judy Courtin Legal is preparing to issue proceedings in relation to the allegations and placed advertisements in local publications calling for witnesses.

“Witnesses sought: alleged institutional sexual abuse,” the advertisements said. “We would like to speak to anyone who has information or recollections about male teachers alleged to have groomed and sexually abused student(s) at Carey Baptist Grammar School during the late 1980s.”

The survivor said it was not until she saw one of the advertisements that she felt “a profound sense of direct acknowledgment of my personal experience”.

“It was the first time in decades there was any external validation that something was wrong at Carey, and something very wrong happened to me,” she said. “It wasn’t invisible any more.”

Judy Courtin said she expected to issue the first proceeding early this year.

“What we’re finding, as with all institutions, of course, is the incredible difficulty people have in being able to speak up,” Courtin said. “The shame and

trauma are so deep. This is where paedophiles and institutions are very clever. They know how to silence the child. They know how to mess with their young minds. It's terribly, terribly difficult for someone to be able to talk about."

Courtin encouraged any other survivors to come forward.