



**Cheder  
Levi Yitzchok**  
חינוך על טהרת הקודש

## **STATEMENT BY CHEDER LEVI YITZCHOK INC.**

The school is compelled to state, once again and unequivocally, that it decries child sexual abuse. We are vigilant in our child protection initiatives, and we always follow our ethical and mandatory reporting obligations.

In recent months, Cheder Levi Yitzchok has been subject to an unfair and unfounded campaign to damage the school's reputation and viability. The campaign has been conducted in the media, in the school's community at grass roots and institutional level, with the educational authority, with police and with child safety authorities.

The most deplorable characteristic of this campaign has been its use of alleged claims of sexual abuse as an ostensible cover for the spread of malicious inaccuracies with impunity.

The school's parents, its staff and its supporters have suffered greatly as a result of these unsubstantiated allegations. We have endured this campaign while carrying on our work as educators, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our entire school community and seeking to reduce the spread of alarm.

At the same time, we have been seeking a respectful and workable relationship with a family, some of whose children were alleged to have been abused almost 18 months ago. Regrettably, the family has been working in concert with the head of an advocacy group who is the instigator of the campaign and whose agenda is to see the school close.

The school has been baffled by this family's wish to have their children remain enrolled at the school, in view of its campaign of accusations and its manifest distrust of, and disrespect for, the school's decision making.

In the interest of addressing the unmanageable climate, an agreement was prepared by the school and this was negotiated between lawyers for both parties. The family has to date not signed the agreement.

We wish to be very clear that the agreement neither tried to limit the family's rights to report to authorities, nor to seek counsel and support from allied health services. **It was not a 'gag order'**. We don't have anything to hide from the media, the authorities, or our community. However, the trust between the school and the family has been broken and untenable and undermining behaviour has continued on their part. At the root of this: the school is adamant that it cannot abide the family's continued alliance



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with an advocacy group at the centre of the smear campaign, whose agenda is to see the school close.

The situation was not sustainable and the family has been asked to remove their children from the school. We hope that this situation will change to allow the children to return to the school in the future.

The school sincerely regrets the impact of this decision on the children of the family.

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## **Background**

- In June of 2021, a 12 year old student enrolled at the Cheder allegedly engaged in sexual misconduct with several of his school peers at a community centre (neither under the auspices nor the supervision of the Cheder).
- When the incident was notified to the school in late September 2021 months ago, the school immediately reported it to the police.
- Throughout 2021-22 the school has been receiving directions from SECASA who were advocating for the student's re-integration.
- Despite the matter not yet being resolved, and the school not having conceded to the reintegration (nor any of the community preparation that would be a prerequisite), media reports appeared imputing that the school was derelict in its duty of care to the young students affected by the original incident because it intended to reintegrate the student.
- This matter remains unresolved pending further engagement with SECASA.