GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

STATEMENT

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Statement From The Ministry Of Eduction Youth Affairs And Sports

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Ministry Reaffirms Commitment to Student Safety and Safeguarding

The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports recognises the concerns expressed within our community regarding the safety and well-being of our children and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to protecting every student.

Whenever the Ministry becomes aware of allegations or concerns involving the safety or welfare of a student, established safeguarding and mandatory reporting protocols are immediately activated, including referrals to the Social Development Department and the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force (RVIPF).

The Ministry works closely with school administrations, families and relevant agencies to ensure that affected students receive the necessary care and support, including access to counselling and other services. We remain committed to supporting the relevant authorities as they carry out their respective responsibilities.

We strongly urge the public and media to refrain from circulating screenshots, private communications or identifying information that could compromise a child’s privacy and well-being or interfere with an investigation. Even when intended to

hold individuals accountable, such actions can inadvertently harm the very children we seek to protect. How we respond as a Territory matters. Children and families must have confidence that reporting safeguarding concerns brings immediate protection and support, not public exposure that may discourage others from coming forward.

Protecting our children is a shared responsibility across the Territory. If you know a student who needs support, or if you see or hear something concerning, please report it confidentially to the proper authorities. Contact the Social Development Department at 468 3650, or call the 24 hour emergency line at 468 9371. Reports can also be made directly to the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force by calling 311 or contacting your nearest police station.

The Ministry continues to strengthen safeguarding measures across our schools through training, established reporting procedures and the reinforcement of appropriate boundaries and standards.

The Ministry remains committed to working with families, educators and relevant agencies to maintain safe and supportive learning environments where every child is protected, every concern is taken seriously and the best interests of our students remain paramount.