



SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR FOR MINIMBAH SCHOOL

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today placed the Minimbah Pre-school, Primary School Aboriginal Corporation under special administration for six months.

The corporation, which is in Armidale on the Northern Tablelands in New South Wales, was established in 1987 to offer quality pre-school and primary school education. Its aim is to provide a safe and culturally appropriate environment for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children to learn together. The school has 165 students and employs 31 staff.

In response to complaints from members the Registrar conducted an examination of the corporation's books in August 2014.

The examination revealed a number of serious concerns about the corporation's standards of corporate governance and financial management which, if not addressed, would impact on the corporation's long-term viability. Those concerns included financial deficits for at least the last three years, inadequate internal controls and procedures for payments, lack of a quorum at many directors' meetings, payments to directors and some senior staff that were either excessive or not approved by the directors, and poor corporate record keeping.

'Minimbah has a proven track record in achieving strong educational outcomes for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children from the Armidale region,' said Mr Beven. 'To make sure this work can continue it is important that the corporation's finances and administrative systems are put back in order as soon as possible.'

The Registrar has appointed Mr Brian Woods from the accounting firm of DFK Kidsons in Cairns, Queensland, as the special administrator until 27 May 2015.

'Over the course of the special administration Mr Woods will work closely with the members, parents and citizens committee, and other stakeholders, to re-establish sound governance and financial management practices at the corporation,' Mr Beven said.

Background

Special administration is a special measure under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*. For more information see the fact sheet *Special administrations: what members and directors should know* available at www.oric.gov.au.

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24 November 2014

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