



Minister for Education and
Minister for Tourism, Major Events
and the Commonwealth Games

26 JUN 2017

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Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition 2665-16 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 25 May 2017 regarding bullying in schools.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising this matter and allowing me the opportunity to provide detail about the approach to bullying prevention in Queensland state schools.

On 25 June 2016, the Department of Education and Training briefed the Education, Tourism Innovation and Small Business Committee on the comprehensive approach to bullying prevention and management in our schools. The Committee was satisfied with the Department's response and determined an inquiry was not necessary.

When it comes to preventing and responding to bullying, the Department understands the need to take an evidence-based approach. Through policy, procedures and programs every school is expected to tackle this serious issue in an informed way and make use of what is known from research to be best practice.

As the lead jurisdiction for the national work of the Safe and Supportive School Communities (SSSC) project, Queensland led research that produced a review of the national and international literature on student bullying. The review concluded that, for an approach to bullying to be effective, there are a number of critical elements that need to be present. Specifically, effective approaches to bullying will be:

- well-managed;
- comprehensive;
- whole-school;
- multi-pronged; and
- integrated.

An approach that adopts these core elements is the most likely to result in sustained, positive change in the school and wider community. One such approach that meets these core criteria is Positive Behaviour for Learning, which is used in approximately 500 Queensland state schools.

The understanding about the most effective approach to bullying and behaviour management is embedded in the Department's comprehensive policy framework to assist schools in creating safe and supportive school environments. The Department's *Statement of Expectations for a Disciplined School Environment* clearly outlines the expectations for schools to develop a whole-school evidence-based approach to behaviour, learning and discipline.

The *Code of School Behaviour* defines the responsibilities all members of the school community are expected to uphold and recognises the significance of appropriate and meaningful relationships.

The *Safe, supportive and disciplined school environment* procedure provides information to principals about their responsibility to create and maintain a safe and supportive environment and provides information about using a range of disciplinary options.

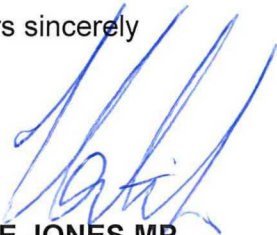
The SSSC working group has also developed high quality tools such as the *Bullying. No Way!* website for use in school communities. The website, for which Queensland is responsible on behalf of all other Australian education jurisdictions and sectors, is acknowledged as a trusted one-stop portal that provides information, resources and advice for teachers, parents and students.

Bullying is a complex issue that requires a response from the whole community. State schools determine behaviour support practices and strategies to meet the individual needs of students, based on research and identified need in their school community. Decisions about the use of specific strategies and technologies are the responsibility of each school principal in consultation with their school community, being guided by the Department's policy framework.

Again, I thank the petitioners for raising this matter to me.

In accordance with Standing Order 32, it would be appreciated if you could table this response on the next sitting day.

Yours sincerely



KATE JONES MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for Tourism, Major Events
and the Commonwealth Games

Ref: 17/265619