

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING — SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE OPENINGS

129. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Minister for Education and Training:

- (1) Since Parliament last sat some two weeks ago, how many visits has the minister made to schools to open infrastructure?
- (2) Has Doubleview Primary School been part of those visits?
- (3) Given that whenever the minister opens school infrastructure she issues a media release that includes comments from local members, will she include any remarks from the local member when she opens Doubleview Primary School or are those media releases reserved for Labor Party propaganda?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(3) I ask the member to put the first bit about how many schools I have visited on notice because there are so many that I cannot remember.

Hon Michael Mischin: What, in the last two weeks?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. Put that on notice. The second bit was whether I have —

Hon Michael Mischin: Was Doubleview amongst them?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, it was not.

The third bit about media releases and who gets a local comment, the member would be aware—if not, he should make himself aware and perhaps talk to the shadow Minister for Education and Training because she is aware of this—that local members from whatever party are invited to the openings. Indeed, I did one in Geraldton and the local member was there.

Several members interjected.

Hon Martin Aldridge: There's seven members representing Geraldton.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is one person on their feet and that minister is trying to provide a response.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think that members will find —

Hon Martin Aldridge interjected.

Withdrawal of Remark

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not misleading the house and I ask you to withdraw. Madam President, I ask him to withdraw.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Leader of the House, because of the amount of noise that was going on in the chamber, I did not actually hear what you thought that member said. I will listen more carefully. I am sure that he will not make any further comment while you are on your feet providing a response.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, Madam President.

The point I was trying to make was in response to the language used by the questioner. He, I assume, was talking about Hon Liza Harvey, who is a lower house member.

Hon Peter Collier: You don't invite upper house members.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, I am trying to answer the question. That is who I assume he was talking about—lower house members. The lower house member for Geraldton was certainly at the opening that I did in Geraldton and other members were invited. In respect of Geraldton —

Hon Peter Collier: You never invited me once.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Madam President, I am trying to —

Hon Peter Collier: You just don't like it, do you?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Leader of the Opposition, I did ask that people listen quietly, and that includes you, too. Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: The more interjections that occur, the longer it will take for people to get a question and some people may actually miss out. If members want to get a question, they might listen actively, let the speaker finish their response and then we will move on.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In addition to Geraldton, I went to Dongara and the lower house member for Dongara—that is not the name of the seat, but that is the town—was not invited. That was a mistake by my office. As soon as it was brought to my attention, my appointment secretary contacted his office. My chief of staff rang his office to apologise for that mistake because it was unreasonable and should not have happened. I make this point as well: the shadow Minister for Education and Training is invited to all school openings. The other point I want to make is that with respect to upper house members, nothing has changed.

Hon Peter Collier: Yes, it has.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Madam President, I am trying to answer the question that was asked without notice so I am trying my best to remember the exact words of the question and provide an answer.

With respect to upper house members, nothing has changed in the policy of invitations. I have not changed a single thing and neither has the department. The responsibility of inviting members other than the Assembly members rests with the school. If members have a good relationship with their schools, I am sure they will be invited. I have seen upper house members invited to those sorts of events. I have changed nothing in the policy.

Hon Peter Collier: So you're blaming schools now.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not blaming schools!

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am finding it really difficult to hear the Leader of the House finish what she has to say when other people are raising their voices.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, Madam President. I am trying to provide as concise an answer as I can. This is the opposition's time to ask questions, so the more members opposite interrupt me, the longer it will take for me to give the answer. There has been no change by me or anyone in the department to the policies in respect to invitations to those sorts of events at schools.

Point of Order

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I accept that the Leader of the House in her capacity as Minister for Education and Training was answering a question amongst interjections, but my actual question was also regarding media releases, and she did not seem to get to that point. Maybe she was put off, so I will give her the opportunity —
Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Member, I assume you are trying to make a point of order. You know from your own experience that although you might ask a question, the member responding will provide the answer they choose to provide. If you are asking a detailed question without notice, from time to time people miss the response.