

SCHOOLS — ISOLATION ROOMS

906. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the placement of students in isolation rooms in Western Australian schools, and I ask, with respect to the past 12 months:

- (a) how many students have been placed in isolation rooms;
- (b) how many times have isolation rooms been used;
- (c) how are the impacts from the use of isolation rooms on students from assessed;
- (d) are students assessed and monitored for trauma, psychological distress and harm while they are placed in an isolation room and afterwards;
- (e) is the Department of Education aware of any instances where a student has (or has been reasonably suspected to have) experienced, or reasonably suspected of, having experienced trauma, psychological distress or harm as a result of being placed in an isolation room; and
- (f) if yes to (e):
 - (i) how many instances is the Department aware of; and
 - (ii) what proportion of students placed in an isolation room have been identified or reasonably suspected as having experienced trauma, psychological distress or harm as a result of being placed in an isolation room?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(f) Protective isolation is not a routine measure and, apart from emergencies, is used only as a last resort as part of an established and agreed behaviour plan. If de-escalation is not achieved or there are unintended negative consequences, then that student's plan will be modified and the student supported as outlined in their behaviour plan.

Principals must gain approval to include protective isolation as a strategy within a student's personal behaviour support plan every term. This includes the approval of:

the parent/carer

the Principal of the School of Special Educational Needs: Disability for a student with a disability

the Principal of the School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement for a student without a disability

the Director of Education

a regional Lead School Psychologist.

In an emergency situation, a principal may use protective isolation for a student who does not have a documented behaviour support plan containing a protective isolation strategy. The principal will only make such use when it is:

necessary

reasonable

proportionate

implemented with the minimum force necessary to prevent injury and maintain safety for all concerned.

Schools are required to record any use of protective isolation. When used, schools monitor the student at all times and if physical or emotional harm is considered likely, the school responds by initiating action to prevent harm.