

# Statements from Education Queensland

## Andrew Peach, former Principal of Marsden State High

*5 September 2025*

I am appalled and horrified by the predatory and abusive actions of Kellie Whiteside.

I only learnt of Whiteside's evil actions last year through the media, following the victim's brave decision to report the abuse to police.

I did not make any inquiries with the victim regarding their relationship with Whiteside. I only learnt of Whiteside's evil actions last year.

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## Alan Bunce, former Principal of Logan Village State School

*10 September 2025*

While I can't comment on specific conversations, actions or interactions with either Ms Whiteside or the victim for legal reasons, I reject the premise of the questions about my conduct in this matter.

I also commend the victim's bravery and courage in coming forward, and extend my thoughts to her and her family.

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## Queensland Department of Education – statement 1

*6 August 2025*

The Department of Education's highest priority is the safety and wellbeing of every student, and we understand these charges are extremely distressing for those involved.

Student protection concerns are taken incredibly seriously and responded to quickly, sensitively and in line with legal processes.

The person referred to is not employed by the department and has not been since March 2020.

We encourage students, families and staff to speak up if they have any concerns. We are committed to creating safe, inclusive learning environments and this includes continuous training for our staff, strong accountability measures, and open communication with families and communities.

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## Queensland Department of Education – statement 2

*8 August 2025*

The Department of Education has an uncompromising expectation that all of its more than 96,000 employees conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner, and the overwhelming majority fulfil this expectation each and every day.

All student protection concerns are treated with the highest importance and the department has processes in place so allegations against employees can be reported, investigated and resolved as quickly and sensitively as possible.

Matters pending commencement of a workplace investigation are reviewed, prioritised and managed in accordance with public sector employment guidelines including the [Workplace Investigations Directive 01/24](#), the Crime and Corruption Commission's [Corruption in focus guide](#) and the department's [Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure](#), which outlines actions based on the level of reported referral.

Matters reported as low-level interactions are managed at a local level.

A risk assessment of allegations received identifies those that require immediate mitigation while a workplace investigation is conducted. Risk mitigation strategies can include placing an employee on appropriate alternative duties or a period of

suspension. Suspension is considered when the department cannot manage an identified or potential risk that arises from the employee remaining in their substantive employment while a workplace investigation is conducted.

In all circumstances where a suspension is imposed, the department must first consider the availability and appropriateness of alternative duties as a risk mitigation control. This is in line with the requirements of the [Suspension Directive 06/23](#).

The length of time taken to conduct an investigation varies depending on a range of factors such as police or other agency involvement, court proceedings, operational reasons (such as school holidays), the complexity and sensitivity of the matter, and access to witnesses.

Due processes around any disciplinary action and a subsequent appeal process may also take place, depending on the complexity of the matter.

All staff with allegations made against them are afforded natural justice and treated fairly and professionally, irrespective of the seriousness of allegations.

The department has a responsibility to maintain confidentiality of employee information

and cannot comment on investigations or outcomes of claims for privacy reasons.

The department is committed to preventing incidents of harm to students, acting quickly when an employee reasonably suspects harm or the risk of harm to a student, and continuously working to improve its systems and case management practices.

It is also important to note that aspects of the Allegations against employees in the area of student protection procedure have been strengthened since July 2021.

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## Queensland Department of Education – statement 3

*10 September 2025*

The department recognises that these incidents are deeply distressing for those involved and is committed to proactively and continually improving the way the department and schools work to prevent and respond to issues of harm against students.

The department continually strengthens its protocols and has a range of mechanisms to oversee systemic issues impacting the areas of highest risk for the department (student safety and ethical behaviour).

These mechanisms monitor and review risks, issues and processes, identify student protection trends, improve systems and processes, address non-compliance and promote a culture of integrity and upholding the safety and wellbeing of students.

The response provided on 8 August 2025 includes details on departmental procedures which are underpinned by a number of legislative acts.

The safety and wellbeing of students is the department's highest priority and its [ethics and integrity framework](#) is designed to ensure the highest standards of ethical behaviour and accountability are upheld.

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These documents include strong guidance, and staff can get advice from the Intake Referrals and Partnerships team on identifying types of conduct by an employee towards a student.

However, every complaint or allegation needs to be assessed individually, based on the facts at hand. It is difficult to apply a generalised or rigid approach to managing often complex situations and contexts.

Staff are required to undertake mandatory training and comply with the department's social media policy, Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service and Standard of Practice.