



This week's stories from the media

- Minister orders all schools review bullying policies
- School under fire after teenage student has teeth knocked out
- Principal shaping Swallowcliffe Primary
- Teacher understanding of ADHD patchy
- Emotionally intelligent students have a leg up on peers
- Specialist roles for expert teachers
- Closing the Gap report

School Under Fire After Assault

SA's Premier has announced an investigation into how an Adelaide school handled alleged bullying in the lead-up to a 13-year-old student being bashed.

On Thursday afternoon, the Education Minister said he found footage of the incident - which had been posted on social media - "extraordinarily distressing" and "harrowing".

"When I saw that footage, my heart broke for that family," Mr Gardner said.

The student's mother said she did not understand how the school's "zero-tolerance" to bullying was applied in this situation.

She said she was wrong to put her trust in the advice of the school and allow her daughter to walk home alone.

However, Department of Education executive Anne Millard defended how the situation was handled.

She would not be drawn on if the situation should have been handled differently.

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SA Education Minister Orders All Schools To Review Bullying Policies

Education Minister John Gardner has ordered all South Australian public schools to review their anti-bullying policy after a vicious assault of a 13-year-old student.

Mr Gardner said it was timely that 500 public schools were audited to ensure they delivered policies in the correct manner, after the victim was punched, kicked and had her teeth knocked out allegedly by two students, 14 and 15, outside the Gilles Plains Shopping Centre on Tuesday.

"It's one thing to have those policies in place but it's now very timely that we audit to ensure they are delivering those policies in the way that they're meant to be applied," Mr Gardner said.

"(On Thursday), we had an external reviewer at Avenues College to work with the schools leadership and, indeed, their anti-bullying policy is one of the key elements to the review that's taking place."

Mr Gardner said he was concerned with allegations about how Avenues College had handled previous claims of bullying made by the victim's parents. "Our responsibility ... is to ensure no child is placed in that situation," he said.

It was yesterday confirmed that the alleged offenders would be expelled from the school.

The 14-year-old accused of assaulting the schoolgirl over social media by allegedly threatening to "cave in" her victim's replacement dental work, was yesterday refused bail.

Magistrate David White said the girl's renewed aggression on Instagram was considered, by prosecutors, to be a second assault.

"Here, we have allegations of a serious assault and then a further allegation of a further assault against the same victim," he said.

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“...Our responsibility is to ensure no child is placed in that situation....”

Principal Shaping Swallowcliffe Primary

Tonia Noble, principal at Swallowcliffe P-7 school, shares her thoughts on education, how important it is for students to persist, and what's in her lunch box.

What made you decide to work in education? It's something of a family tradition – members of my family have chosen careers in either education, nursing or another caring role, so it must be genetic.

What's been your proudest moment as an educator? Working with the staff at Swallowcliffe over the past six years, to turn our school around. Not only is our school newly refurbished, we have increased the academic achievement of learners across the school, and our enrolments have continued to grow.

If you could give students one piece of advice, what would it be? Be brave, ask for help, listen and take good advice from your teachers. Persist in believing that you can do it.

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Teacher Understanding Of ADHD Patchy

Evidence shows that ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disability and its symptoms shouldn't be simply put down as bad behaviour.

That's something Associate Professor Helen Boon wants cleared up in schools. Boon said there was still some resistance among teachers to recognise the condition, and some still believed ADHD symptoms were simply children being naughty.

While it's not just teachers who have an inconsistent understanding of ADHD, with some people doubting that it exists, Boon said Australian parents in particular have reported that teachers have inadequate understanding of ADHD.

She added teachers' knowledge of the condition can be founded on inaccurate knowledge and represent deep cultural values associated with family discipline and upbringing.

“It's therefore imperative that teachers, education departments and local jurisdictions provide up-to-date education and professional learning for teachers about ADHD.”

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Emotionally Intelligent Students

The smart, dedicated student might be not get the high marks of the smart, dedicated and emotionally intelligent student, new research suggests.

The study showed that school and university students with higher emotional intelligence tend to fair better in grades and standardised tests than those with lower scores.

UNSW looked at data from more than 160 studies, representing more than 42,000 school and university students in 27 countries.

“Students with higher emotional intelligence may be better able to manage negative emotions, such as anxiety, boredom and disappointment, that can negatively affect academic performance.”

[Full Story](#)

Specialist Roles For Expert Teachers

The Grattan Institute has revealed a 12-year blueprint to improve student results by creating attractive new roles for teachers.

The institute claims the new career trajectory for expert teachers could “boost student learning by 18 months by the time they turn 15”.

The institute's findings are based on a survey of 700 principals and teachers, which highlighted that top or high-performing teachers are often saddled with “add-on coaching roles, with inadequate time, training, or support to do the job properly”.

The report also found some nepotism in the system, with leadership roles often given to a “mate” of the principal rather than the best person for the job.

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Closing The Gap Report

Over a decade ago, state, territory, commonwealth and local governments committed to closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage in a number of key areas.

The goal for school attendance was to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by 2018.

This goal has not been met, with most Indigenous students attending school for an average of four days a week in 2019. Students with these attendance levels generally lived in major cities and regional areas.

Attendance rates for Indigenous students have not improved over the past five years.

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