

TEACHERS, DISMISSALS FOR IMPROPER CONDUCT

100. Hon CHRISTINE SHARP to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Can the parliamentary secretary confirm that the sentencing of a manual arts teacher from a northern suburbs school on sex charges involving a 13-year-old girl last month and the dismissal of another northern suburbs teacher for improper conduct involved teachers from private schools?
- (2) Are private schools required to conduct mandatory police checks of their staff?
- (3) Can the parliamentary secretary confirm that the minister has written to the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia seeking written assurances that private schools are conducting police checks of all teachers?
- (4) Can he confirm that a teacher from the Kingsway Christian College, who had been sent for counselling after being caught using a pornographic web site at the school, had not been sacked when the police arrested him after parents of victims of paedophilia reported matters to them?
- (5) Is it the policy of the Department of Education Services that teachers and administrators owe each of their students under their control a duty of care for their safety?

Hon BARRY HOUSE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) I am advised that the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia and the Office of Non-government Education are unable to confirm this.
- (2) No. However, all schools are required to adopt procedures consistent with the national strategy to combat paedophilia, which was endorsed by all Ministers for Education.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No; the arrest was made after the school dismissed the teacher.
- (5) Such a policy is not required, as duty of care is an overarching requirement in common law. Teachers and administrators in schools are aware of their duty of care responsibilities to students.