



Speech by

Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Thursday, 12 February 2009

ST ALBAN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

Mr HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (8.24 pm): Last Sunday I had the pleasure of joining parishioners of St Alban's Anglican Church, Wilston, when their early childhood centre was reopened by the Rt Reverend Dr Jonathan Holland, Bishop of the Brisbane Diocese Northern Region.

Ms Grace: Hear, hear!

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Also present was my colleague the member for Brisbane Central, Grace Grace; our council colleague, Councillor David Hinchliffe; and staff of the early childhood centre including Director Savita Kumar. St Alban's, Wilston, has a proud history of engagement in the provision of services to families in the inner northside and especially to children. This stretches back to its establishment as a parish in 1914, when the simple timber church served during the week as the local school room. This continued until the Wilston State School was built across the road in 1920. But that simple timber building was revived as a service to the community's children when, after the construction of today's St Alban's brick church, it became the church hall.

In 1947 Mrs Kernke, the wife of the then rector, Reverend TC Kernke, founded the St Alban's Day Kindergarten. Within 10 years, a purpose-built kindergarten was erected and was licensed to accommodate 45 children. In the 1960s, the kindergarten facility was operated by the Wilston-Grange C&K before it relocated to its own premises at Lanham Park, Grange, where it continues to provide a great service to that part of the northside as well.

Then in 1971 a private child-care provider leased the St Alban's facility and took over the licence. In 2007, under the leadership of the Reverend Robert Hay and Douglas Wilson, the then chair of the parish council's early education management committee—and, I note for the House, against the then trend toward privatised child-care services—St Alban's parish made the brave but community-minded decision to take back responsibility for the kindergarten.

With the necessary support in many ways of the Brisbane Anglican Diocese, two years later after closing the service and a total redevelopment and refurbishment, including a contribution of over \$27,000 from the Queensland government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund, the early childhood centre was reopened with a licence for 24 children in a pre prep program.

Ms Grace: And it looks fantastic.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: It does indeed. I take that interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. She saw it there with me on Sunday. It is a terrific facility.

I congratulate the St Alban's community on its ongoing commitment to services to children in those vital early years. I wish the Reverend Robert Hay and the early education management team, led now by chair Gayle Thomsett, every success in this laudable and clearly heartfelt endeavour.