



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 March 2017

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**School Nurses**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (2.51 pm): Three weeks ago I was delighted to attend Loganholme State School, where I met with prep students Aalihay, Flynn and Catorina, who were very excited to introduce me to nurse Sarah, a nurse who was visiting their school as part of the Palaszczuk government's reintroduction of the school nurse program. I heard from nurse Sarah that all prep students at Loganholme State School would undergo vision testing so that they could pick up any conditions that may hinder the life and learning of our schoolchildren. I can report to the House that, after the testing at Loganholme State School, 10 children in prep were identified as having vision impairment, six being referred to an optometrist and four of them with impairment so significant that they were referred to Lady Cilento Children's Hospital for further specialised help.

The fact that after just one screening of prep students in a school in my electorate 10 children were flagged as having vision impairment shows how vital this program is and how it has the power to change children's lives for the better. Queensland kids should not be held back from learning because of conditions that, in many cases, can be fixed easily and quickly. Our school nurses can fix vision impairment in children when otherwise they would struggle to read because they are too shy to tell someone that they may have a problem. Early detection changes the course of a child's life. This \$14 million investment will change children's lives and learning for the better—not just in my local electorate but right across the state.

I know that parents in the Waterford electorate are relieved that we reintroduced this vital program, especially those parents of the 10 children at Loganholme State School, who now know that their children are learning on the same level as others, thanks to the quick, pain-free test that nurse Sarah conducted. Finally, I want to thank the health minister, Cameron Dick, and the education minister, Kate Jones, for delivering on this election commitment and making sure that schoolkids right across the state, no matter their postcode, have the best start in life. I am so proud of this wonderful Labor initiative.