




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BONNEY

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ADJOURNMENT

Labrador State School, Vandalism

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (7.19 pm): Over the weekend Labrador State School was targeted by some disgusting vandalism. The racist and homophobic slurs have shocked our school. Tonight I want to call out this disgraceful behaviour and stand up for the proud community I represent.

Most school buildings were defaced with offensive language and other graphic images. The thugs attacked the positive messages and anti-bullying stance that Labrador has worked hard to promote through artwork around the school. They even got up on the roofs and attacked some of the second-level classrooms. It would be easy to put this down to bored teenagers—young people who may not have known the significance of what they were doing—but I think there is more to it. The messages they wrote and the places they put it has a sinister element. I was also sickened to see comments that showed they are likely ex-students. There were some inaccurate reviews of the tuckshop menu.

Labrador State School actively celebrates its multiculturalism. Well over 40 per cent of this suburb was born overseas. Most of the graffiti was targeted at artwork promoting that. The mural with 'Respect', 'Unity', 'Pride', 'Diversity' and 'Learning for Life—Together' had swastikas and homophobic slurs written over it. Another beautiful mosaic wall for Peace Day, representing unity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, had a derogatory term beginning with the letter 'N' sprayed over it. Artwork promoting active travel was defaced and another with the school motto 'I am respectful', 'I am a learner', 'I am safe' had 'I am eshay' added to it.

These walls sum up the spirit of Labrador and their vandalism is a direct attack on it. One piece of graffiti made me angrier than the others. It was the crossing out of two kids on a 'Bullying has no place here' poster. I want to call it out for the disgraceful act that it is, and I table that.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting vandalism of 'Bullying has no place here' sign at Labrador State School [1494](#).

This shows the vandalism of a great anti-bullying campaign. It shows a defacing of diversity. These kids are proud Australians of African origin and they were specifically targeted. This was only one of many anti-bullying posters across the school that was defaced.

The community's reaction has been overwhelming. Labrador has some unfortunate and unjustified nicknames, but to the people who live there—Labradorians, if you like—they are proud of their area and especially proud of this fantastic school. The anger displayed on social media showed this. It showed the willingness of people to help in any way they could.

I went in on Sunday afternoon with P&C president and teacher Bernie Lucht and her son to get rid of the worst of it. There was a big effort early the next morning by the cleaners and the groundskeeper Trev that meant none of the kids had to see it. I sincerely thank them. I condemn the low-lifes who carried out this attack. I am sure that today I stand with all members of this House against racism, against bigotry and against attacks like this.