




Speech By
Corrine McMillan

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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ADJOURNMENT

Citipointe Christian College

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.21 pm): As everyone in this place knows, I am deeply passionate about education, having spent almost 25 years as a teacher and a principal. I am very much aware that one of the biggest decisions a parent will ever make is deciding where to send their child to school. There is an enormous level of trust placed on teachers and principals to ensure children not only receive a high-quality education but are cared for, nurtured and, above all, kept safe. I have felt that burden—the burden of that trust—deeply and strive to honour it. This is why I was so disturbed when parents from Citipointe Christian College, a school in my electorate, contacted me with deep concerns about a new contract that it was asking parents to sign. The document included a statement of faith that not only describes homosexuality as a sin but puts it alongside bestiality, incest and paedophilia. It also includes a lengthy paragraph on why the school expects children to identify with the gender God bestowed on them. The message here was clear: LGBTIQ+ students are to be seen by the school community as an abomination in the eyes of God.

Families seeking a Christian education should not have to contend with discrimination based on their child's gender or sexuality. Citipointe's actions were a violation of the trust that our community and, in particular, parents place in our schools. Imagine how it must feel for those gay or transgender students at this school dealing with the consequences of these statements from the school leadership. As the local elected member and a practising Christian, I continue to worry deeply about these students, many of whom may not have come out to their parents and peers. We know the rates of self-harm among gay and transgender young people are already too high and I hate to think of the long-term consequences of this school's actions. Thankfully the school has now withdrawn that contract and I have reached out to the leadership team in the past couple of weeks and will continue to make myself available as an experienced educator and leader to support any efforts to heal the divide that this has created in the school community.

I trust that this unfortunate episode has made it clear to all that Queenslanders overwhelmingly reject any attempt to discriminate against children—any children, including LGBTIQ+ children. Further, a majority of parents who are unaware of their child's sexuality—perhaps because they are only prep age or younger—or of any gender confusion that their young person or young child may have under no circumstances want their children exposed to such bigotry. A school's job is to educate, not to discriminate.