



Speech By  
**Corrine McMillan**

**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2026

**JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.09 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's Queensland Ombudsman report. The position of the Queensland Ombudsman is a vital part of the state's Public Service, performing critical administrative duties. Part of these duties is the Ombudsman's role as the Inspector of Detention Services. This role investigates the standards of our detention centres. In fact, there were some interesting observations as a result of the committee's inquiries into youth detention centres in Queensland.

It is relevant to note that there has been a high turnover rate of staff at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and staff shortages experienced by detention centres generally. In the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre inspection report it was noted that these staff shortages mean that children often need to be separated for significant periods. The most notable periods are when the centre goes into 'night mode'—a phrase used for when children are separated into their individual cells from 7.30 am to 7.30 pm. This is similar to the overnight lockdown.

During the committee hearings it was found that children in the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre do not have proper access to education and other programs due to staff shortages. This lack of access means that these children are not able to access critical programs—namely, education—important for when they leave detention. I understand the importance of educating our children to ensure their future, whether they are in school or in a detention centre. We cannot expect children in these centres to make something of themselves if we do not ensure they have the tools to do so.

The government must ensure these children have a chance to better themselves. That starts with access to a quality education. Education is one of the most influential transformative measures to assist all young people to make change. It means that, no matter what dream our children decide to pursue, they are afforded this opportunity. The children in these centres are facing the consequences of their actions, but they are no less worthy of an education than any other child. I call on this government to take the necessary steps to give the children in the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre the same chance as their peers to become something more.

The inspector has the ability to investigate such matters as staff shortages and adequate remuneration for staff. If staff shortages are the barrier between these children and an education, the government needs to do everything it can to remove this barrier. As many detainees are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the government must also adhere to the Closing the Gap commitments. No child—no matter who they are, what their culture, race, gender or religion, or if they are incarcerated—should be without an opportunity to better themselves. There are a number of issues identified in this report which requires a significant and timely government response.