

## Question on Notice

No. 1434

Asked on 15 November 2023

**MR J LANGBROEK** ASKED MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR RACING (HON G GRACE)

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise if the Department of Education has been provided with a protocol around Sorry Business and school attendance in Doomadgee, as recommended in the Family Responsibilities Commission Annual Report 2021-2022, by the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships?

ANSWER:

The Department of Education and Doomadgee State School have not been provided with a protocol around Sorry Business and school attendance in Doomadgee.

There are seven official recommendations in the Family Responsibilities Commission Annual Report; however, none relate to protocols around Sorry Business and school attendance at Doomadgee. In relation to Sorry Business absences at Doomadgee State School the report states:

### **Sorry business**

*Sorry business continues to affect our community. We believe that sorry business protocols must be established with the leadership of our local Council and negotiated with the community and the Doomadgee State School. Until the whole community agrees on a shared strategy to ensure our children, whilst respecting sorry business, do not miss out on too many school days, the school attendance in Doomadgee will continue to be affected.*

The department's *Roll marking in state schools procedure* provides a specific absence reason code that is used to record students who are absent from school because they are participating in Sorry Business.

Parents are encouraged to ensure their child misses as little school as possible. Schools work closely with families to encourage them to have the child attend school to maintain a sense of routine where culturally appropriate. These situations are handled with respect and sensitivity, and are underpinned by the interests of the child.

This absence reason code was introduced in 2014 and has allowed schools and communities to better monitor and manage school absences in relation to Sorry Business.