

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 08 February 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE16/155) - Children in detention - Wickham Point - Programme 1.3: Compliance and Detention

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA) written:

In an article dated 4 February 2016, The Age quotes Mr Garfield Prowse as informing the Prime Minister and the Minister for Immigration that the department “takes steps” to ensure all school-aged children in any form of detention were enrolled in school. Yet, in the report entitled The health and well-being of children in immigration detention – report to the Australian Human Rights Commission, Prof Elliot and Dr Gunasekera note that 4 year olds in Wickham Point are not attending pre-school, despite the NT Education Department allowing children of 4 years to attend.

Why is the Department not allowing 4 year olds at Wickham Point to attend pre-school?

Answer:

The department takes all steps necessary to ensure all children in any form of detention are enrolled in school.

Pre-school is voluntary in the Northern Territory. Children attend with parental approval.

As at 8 February 2016, there were two children aged 4 years old at Wickham Point. Both were enrolled and attending pre-school.