



AUSTRALIAN  
ASSOCIATION  
OF CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS



Associated Christian Schools  
*Christian education for the common good*



25 February 2023 – For Immediate Release

## Divisive Bullying Has No Place in Education Debate

The major Christian school associations are very disappointed to read the comments of the Australian Education Union president reported in *The Australian* earlier today, [\*Australian Education Union leader's private school 'grooming' slur.\*](#)

For her to suggest that “grooming scandals continue to erupt” in private schools is demeaning, defamatory and disrespectful of the thousands of teachers that choose to work in our schools. There is no evidence to support this baseless accusation. Our member schools take their child protection obligations seriously, and ensure that our schools continue to be a safe place for all students.

Christian schools have been a valuable part of the educational fabric in our communities for many years. Parents that choose to send their children to our schools are generally not wealthy and pay their fair share of taxes. They choose to send their children to a school that aligns with their values and ethos. They should not be discriminated against because of this choice.

Correna Haythorpe may not be aware, but the ‘values of the public’ include over 40% of Australians who identified Christianity as their religious affiliation in the 2021 Census and many others who identified a different faith basis..

Calls to strip religious schools of their funding risks re-igniting a disruptive funding debate when all schools should be focussing on student learning. The current student focussed, needs based and sector blind Commonwealth funding model ensures a fair go for all students. It is simply time for State Governments to ensure they properly fund public schools.

We will continue to advocate for our schools to have the right to employ staff who share their faith, values and ethos, just as Unions and Political Parties do in respect of their own employees.

ENDS

Comments attributed to Vanessa Cheng, Executive Officer, Australian Association of Christian Schools –

*“The comments made by the leader of the Australian Education Union are highly inflammatory and divisive, we reject them absolutely.”*

Comments attributed to Alistair Macpherson, Executive Director, Public Policy and Advocacy Associated Christian Schools –

*“Perhaps the AEU should take the time to speak to the teachers in our Christian schools, to hear of the valuable work they do in educating and caring for our students, instead of making baseless accusations to support their political interests.”*

Comments attributed to Mark Spencer, Director of Public Policy, Christian Schools Australia –

*“Christian schools have long advocated for well-funded public schools, the mean-spirited comments from the AEU do nothing to improve education in Australia.”*



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