



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 3

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION
MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA (CHAIR), JOHNATHON DAVIS MLA, PETER CAIN MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
1 March 2021

Asked by Mr Pettersson MLA:

In relation to:

In regard to the Bullying and Violence Inquiry – provide an update on how many schools still require sensory spaces since the inquiry came out?

Minister Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

All ACT public schools have sensory spaces, made up of a combination of formal and informal/as-needed spaces. The characteristics of these spaces differ across schools and classrooms and can change on a regular basis as they are highly dependent on the needs of students at any given time.

As such, schools may be making modifications to their sensory spaces every day to provide adjustments that best support students to feel safe, calm and relaxed in their environment. This could include for example having beanbags, blankets, and pillows available to create temporary quiet spaces on the periphery of a classroom or it could involve providing dedicated withdrawal spaces in areas separate to the classroom with low lighting and noise. It could also include allocating specific areas of the playground for quiet and sensory seeking activities.

Schools work with the Education Directorate and families to ensure spaces are appropriate and students may be invited to personalise these spaces with their own items, decorations and activities that may assist them to feel calm.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:

Date:

18/03/21

By the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Yvette Berry MLA