



04 APR, 2024

Teacher quits over knife attack

Northern Territory News, Darwin



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Teacher quits over knife attack

Alex Treacy

A senior teacher is expected to resign his post after two youth offenders broke into his Katherine home and placed knives to his and his friends' throats at the start of the Easter long weekend.

NT Police previously revealed that two armed youth offenders broke into a Katherine residence late last week, making off with a white Toyota Corolla that was used in a ram raid on R&M Motorcycles on Giles St, among other offending.

A 15-year-old boy was arrested, while police were still looking for the second offender

when Assistant Commissioner Travis Wurst spoke about social unrest in the Big Rivers township on Tuesday afternoon.

The NT News has obtained a statement from the victim of the initial home invasion who can be revealed as a senior teacher who held a leadership role at a Katherine school.

"I have been traumatised by the incident. I was shaken to the core," the teacher said.

"I left Katherine on Easter Friday and am currently staying at friend's place in Darwin.

"I will be accessing ... therapy to overcome the deep trauma that has affected me."

The teacher said he would not be returning to the town he called home.

"I can't go back to Katherine. This scene is haunting me," he said.

"I only had third-party insurance and cannot repair my car. I can't go back to work because of the trauma, and have no car."

The teacher revealed he had friends over when two youths

broke into his residence about last Friday.

"The offenders put knives on our throats - me and my friends who came to visit me - and threatened to stab us, and stole our vehicles," he said.

"The offenders abandoned one vehicle at the location and

further threatened us before fleeing in the remaining vehicle, which happened to be mine.

"Police attended the site more than one hour later, after calling threetimes. The offenders came back with a motor bike and my car to tease the police and bonked at them.

"I asked the police ... to chase them and recover the car.

"Police replied that since the youths are driving the car, they cannot do the high-speed chase as it puts their life at risk if they smash the car somewhere."

A spokeswoman for the teacher's employer said they did not expect the teacher to

return "in the short term, but they are more than welcome to return should they want to".

The teacher had been offered counselling through the employer's provider, she added.

Country Liberal Party MLA Jo Hershey, who represents the division of Katherine, said she was contacted by fearful constituents "almost daily" after they had fallen victim to violence.

"(This teacher is) so traumatised and terrified that he's fearful to even come back to Katherine to collect his belongings," she said.

"He's told the principal he's not returning, which is a shame

because he is in a leadership position."

She said the return of seven

Police Auxiliary Liquor Inspectors to Katherine less than a month after they were pulled to train as constables - training that was then interrupted due to the unrest in Alice Springs - showed the Labor government was making "policy on the run".

In a statement, Chief Minister Eva Lawler said she was "fed up with the level of crime on our streets - particularly youth crime". "That's why, today (Wednesday), I announced 200 extra police will be added to our front line over the next four years," she said.



06 APR, 2024

Cops called to protect teachers

Adelaide Advertiser, Adelaide



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Cops called to protect teachers

EXCLUSIVE

Lauren Novak

Violent attacks by students against teachers have drawn police to at least 115 schools across the state.

Primary schools from Burnside to Berri are among those affected and the most troubled school recorded 37 visits. The data, released under Freedom of Information (FOI) laws, does not give details of the incidents but educators say they would include cases in which a school staff member was injured.

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Cops called to 115 schools for violence

Lauren Novak

Violent attacks by students against teachers have resulted in police being called to at least 115 schools across the state over the past decade.

Among them are many primary schools, from Burnside to Berri, with the most troubled schools recording 37 visits by officers.

The data, released by the Education Department under Freedom of Information (FOI) laws, does not give details of the incidents but educators say they would include the most serious cases where a school staff member was injured.

Responding to the revelations, Education Minister Blair Boyer has flagged a new partnership with SA Police to make students more "aware of the consequences" of violence and bullying at school. It will also give educators clearer guidance on when to call in police.

"Violence against anyone – a staff member or a student – will not be tolerated," Mr Boyer said.

Documents released by the department show there were 256 incidents at South Australian public schools between 2014 and 2022 where police responded after violent attacks by

students against teachers.

At 58 schools, there was more than one incident during that time. Annually, there were between 21 and 34 incidents.

The school police attended most frequently was Bowden Brompton Community School where across its three campuses – at Brompton, Salisbury North and Christie Downs – there were 37 incidents.

The school's website says it enrolls students aged 11 to 18 who "are unable to effectively en-

gage" at other schools and often arrive with "gaps in learning,



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displaying emotionally charged behaviours or significant mental health issues”.

The school offers trauma-aware teaching and positive behaviour support, it says.

Coorara Primary School, at Morphett Vale, reported nine police visits. Principal Steph Tulloch, who took on the role in 2022, said there had been no need to call police since then.

At Paralowie R-12 School, there were seven visits by police between 2014 and 2022 but none last year, principal Julie Wilson said.

She said the school had introduced a new approach in 2022 in which staff were trained to better help students manage their emotions, and there were dedicated time-out rooms.

At Roma Mitchell Secondary College, where there were six police visits, principal Toni Carrellas said there were students “with complex needs”.

However, the school had “not had cause to call police to attend” this year.

SA Primary Principals Association president Tobias O'Connor said he had been involved in cases where schools had to impose lockdowns, close classrooms or call police to “de-escalate” or remove children.

“There can be things thrown at staff or they are being kicked or bitten or punched,” he said.

“Sometimes, I suspect, when staff have been injured is when they’ve tried to intervene ... or protect other students.”

Mr Boyer said it was “always concerning when police are called to incidents at schools”.

“We have banned mobile phones in schools to help reduce

incidents of violence, we’ve put in place security guards when needed, we are introducing legislation to ban abusive parents from school sites, and we have worked closely with stakeholders to introduce a violence in schools action plan,” he said.

Mr Boyer said a trial of extra

support at 12 large, complex secondary schools early last year resulted in a 22 per cent drop in violent incidents.

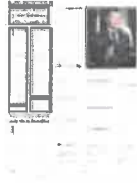
Opposition spokesman John Gardner, a former education minister, said calling the police “is necessary from time to time”.

“Even primary school-aged children can sometimes be responsible for really troubling and difficult behaviours,” he said. “We should never take for granted the challenging work that sometimes confronts teachers in complex classrooms.”

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800



Bowden Brompton Community School had the highest number of police attendances.



06 APR. 2024

Teachers need protection from violent students

Adelaide Advertiser, Adelaide



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EDITORIAL

The Advertiser

Teachers need protection from violent students

The list of duties and challenges teachers grapple with in today's classrooms is

ever-growing.

They are responsible for teaching basic literacy and numeracy, arranging sport and extra-curricular activities, communicating with parents, and keeping children safe.

Increasingly, educators must also manage complex behaviour from children, which can range from being disruptive or rude to violent outbursts, threats and physical attacks.

These behaviours can be driven by mental health concerns, disability or trauma experienced by a child, and require a skilled and compassionate response. In the most difficult or dangerous cases, teachers need to call in police for support.

Figures published by The Advertiser today reveal the campuses that police have attended in response to violent attacks by students against teachers.

The school most frequently visited was Bowden Brompton Community School where, across its three campuses, there were 37 incidents.

In total, police visited 115

schools between 2014 and 2022, including 58 sites where there was more than one such incident.

Police also attend schools for other concerns, such as intruders, weapons or sexual behaviour. The Advertiser has previously revealed total officer call-outs are on the rise, passing 1000 in 2022.

These figures only give an insight into the public education system as comparable data is not publicly available for private schools. There are 190,000-plus students enrolled at hundreds of government schools, with the vast majority well-behaved and respectful. Some who act out have, sadly, not been taught the skills needed to manage intense emotions.

Others lash out in disrespect and without an understanding of the consequences.

Education Minister Blair Boyer has had a strong focus on improving behaviour in schools since taking on the role two years ago. The government has funded security guards and mental health workers in schools and banned mobile phones to stamp out videos of violent brawls. A planned new partnership with SA Police will bolster these

measures.

Teachers deserve to be safe in their workplace.

Families must remember that educators show up to do their best for students, and they should receive the same respect in return.



21 APR, 2024

Teacher assaults soar 20pc

Sunday Times, Perth



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REVEALED

Teacher assaults soar 20pc

JOSH ZIMMERMAN

Assaults and physical threats against public school teachers and principals have soared 20 per cent in 12 months, with more than 1000 incidents in 2023 involving a "weapon or physical object".

Of the 2756 incidents reported to the Department of Education last year, staff required medical assistance on 730 occasions, while police were called to schools 240 times. The shocking figures come as teachers prepare to walk off the job for half a day on Tuesday.

Full report Page 7

Teachers cop 14 threats each day

Brazen violence by students up 20 per cent

EXCLUSIVE JOSH ZIMMERMAN

Public school teachers and principals were the targets of 14 assaults or physical threats each day they were in the classroom in 2023 — a 20 per cent jump on the previous year.

Shockingly, about 40 per cent of the 2756 incidents reported to the Department of Education — 1175 in total — involved "a

weapon or physical object".

Staff required medical assistance following an altercation on 730 occasions, while police were called to schools in the aftermath of 240 of the incidents.

The soaring prevalence of school violence comes despite Education Minister

Tony Buti announcing a crackdown last July that included automatic suspensions for kids that start fights or film and post video on social media. Parents were also urged to model respectful behaviour to their children.

Growing safety concerns are a key rea-



21 APR, 2024

Teacher assaults soar 20pc

Sunday Times, Perth

son teachers are preparing to walk off the job for half a day next Tuesday in WA's first public school strike in more than a decade.

State School Teachers Union WA president Matt Jarman said the "terrible" figures — revealed following questions in Parliament from Liberal MP Donna Faragher — underscored the Cook Government's "appeal to the community to simply behave better is not working".

"Violence, physical assaults and verbal abuse is absolutely one of the reasons we find ourselves in this position with the stop work," Mr Jarman said. "Many members have either been part of or witnessed an assault or abuse and it is a moment that makes many consider leaving teaching careers behind."

Alongside a 12 per cent pay bump over two years, Mr Jarman said another of the union's key demands from the current round of bargaining was slashing maximum class sizes from 32 to 28.

He said smaller classes allowed teachers to build better rapport with their students and improved discipline. Mr Jarman said big growth in the number of students with "neurodiverse challenges" — including

autism and ADHD — was another driving force of increasing violence.

"Many of those kids are undiagnosed because there are just no paediatrician appointments available," he said.

While the Government had so far resisted changes to class sizes, Mr Jarman said there were encouraging signs more resources would be dedicated to helping schools better support students with developmental disabilities.

"But so far that hasn't happened and the problem is just getting worse," he said.

Just last month a 13-year-old Shenton College student allegedly stole a cash register before threatening students with a knife, resulting in charges of aggravated armed robbery and armed assault. A few weeks earlier, a knife was confiscated from a Year 2 student in a southern suburbs school.

Shadow Education Minister Peter Rundle said no educator should "fear for their health and safety".

"It's no wonder WA teachers are contemplating strike action when they are forced to deal with increasing violent behaviour and are among the lowest-paid educators in Australia under the watch of Premier Cook and the Minister for Education Tony Butt," Mr Rundle said.

More than 80 public schools will either

close — or be partially closed — when teachers go on strike on Tuesday.



How The Sunday Times highlighted school violence on our front pages last month.



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10 MAY, 2024

Teacher hurt in knife incident

Daily Telegraph, Sydney



Teacher hurt in knife incident

Josh Hanrahan, Elidh Sproul-Mellis and Nicholas Finch

A teacher was injured and a western Sydney school sent into lockdown after a student pulled out a knife yesterday.

Chifley College's Dunheved campus at St Marys was locked down and the police called about 1.30pm after reports a student had a knife.

The high school, which covers students from Year 7 to 10, later said in a statement "all students and staff are safe".

A staff member sustained a cut as they tried to confiscate the knife and was treated by paramedics, while the student was taken to hospital for assessment under police guard. No students were injured and all were allowed to leave the campus once the lockdown ended.

Police are investigating but it's understood no charges are expected to be laid and the incident is mental health-related.

Year 10 student Jakayla Clegg was moving between classes when she saw the younger student, believed to be in Year 7, holding a knife.

"(The student) was coming in my direction, and I just ran up the stairs and hid in a classroom," she said. "We got locked inside of a classroom, and a few teachers came in to make sure we didn't leave."

Ms Clegg's mother Lesley Ellingsworth was out when she got a text from her daughter.

"I got a message that just said 'Mum, I'm scared,'" Ms Ellingsworth said.

"That's when she said, 'there's someone with a knife.'"

"Nothing's ever happened like that up at that school. I was panicking, worried."

Education Minister Pru Goward said she was "deeply concerned" a staff member had been injured in the incident.

"No one should be taking knives to school, and if they do then the police will be called," she said.

"Our schools should be safe for all staff and students and my thoughts go to the school community and anyone affected."



Jakayla Clegg



18 MAY, 2024

School on a knife edge over boy, 8

Adelaide Advertiser, Adelaide



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School on a knife edge over boy, 8

Jessica Dempster

Feed-up parents say Mount Gambier needs better resources to support children with complex needs after an eight-year-old boy brought a kitchen knife to school and threatened to kill classmates. Parents have come forward to say the boy has a history of violence and children have been left too scared to attend school.

REPORT PAGE 3

Plea for help after school knife threat

Jessica Dempster,
Kathryn Bermingham

Feed-up parents say their school needs "better resources" to support children with complex needs, after a boy with a history of bullying brought a kitchen knife to school and threatened to kill classmates.

The parents of a seven-year-old girl said their daughter was too scared to go back to school after the boy in her class brought a knife to Mount Gambier North Primary

School on Monday.

Asking to be anonymous, the parents said that hours before the knife incident, the eight-year-old boy pulled a bus seat-belt around their daughter so hard she burst into tears.

They praised the school for doing its best to manage the boy - who has complex needs - calling the teacher "amazing".

Police were called to the school about 1.30pm on Mon-

day when the knife was confiscated and the principal informed parents of an "incident" that led to a lockdown.

The girl told The Advertiser that on the bus on the way back from an excursion earlier that day the boy - who has a history of bullying her - asked to sit next to her.

"I didn't want him to and he got mad and went behind me and pulled on my seatbelt," the



18 MAY, 2024

School on a knife edge over boy, 8

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girl said.

"He pulled it hard and it hurt my tummy, it left a mark."

She said the SSO on the bus intervened.

The girl, whose mum said used to be "happy, fun and crazy", sobbed as she said she was "never going back" to school.

"All you want is your kids to go to school, get an education, have fun with their friends, and be in same state they were when you dropped them off in the morning in the afternoon," the mother said.

The mother and daughter said the boy had a history of bullying.

"He hurt me with a stick," the girl said, her mother clarifying he'd "cut" her.

"Last year (he) said to my daughter that she is a fat b---," the mother said.

The parents - who have children with complex needs themselves - said the school was "very open", listening to parents of bullied children.

"They do what they can," the mother said.

"(Our daughter's) teacher is amazing, she tries her best to manage the situation."

The parents say the teacher - who is again on stress leave - should not need to worry at work about her students' safety, and her own.

They called for more than a "generic response" from the Education Department and said the city needed better resources for children with complex needs.

"(He) needs help, maybe mainstream schooling isn't for him," the mother said. "There isn't a school in Mount Gambier for him."

The family said they were disappointed that the department's response to the incident was to offer "one psychological support session" for parents and students affected.

A department spokeswoman

said the student was suspended from school as a consequence of the incident on Monday.

"A safety plan will be put in place as the school continues to work to ensure the safety of the school community and provide this eight-year-old with an education," she said.

Education Minister Blair Boyer said the school had acted to ensure the safety of students.

"I have asked the department to ensure the school principal has the resources he needs to manage the current situation and that all students and their families feel safe and supported at school," he said.



Mount Gambier North Primary School, Picture: Facebook.