

TRANSCRIPT

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Inquiry into youth justice centres in Victoria

Melbourne — 27 June 2017

Members

Ms Margaret Fitzherbert — Chair

Ms Nina Springle — Deputy Chair

Mr Joshua Morris

Mr Daniel Mulino

Ms Fiona Patten

Mrs Inga Peulich

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Ms Jaclyn Symes

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Mr Greg Barber

Ms Georgie Crozier

Mr Nazih Elasmar

Ms Colleen Hartland

Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips

Witnesses

Ms Gill Callister, Secretary, and

Mr Matthew Hyde, Acting Executive Principal, Parkville College, Department of Education and Training.

The CHAIR — Thank you very much for joining us today, Ms Callister and Mr Hyde, and welcome to this public hearing of the legal and social issues committee. All evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege. Therefore you are protected against any action for what you say here today, but if you go outside and repeat the same things those comments may not be protected by this privilege. The proceedings today are being recorded and I believe they are also being filmed.

I note, Ms Callister, that you provided a number of documents just now, which look quite extensive. I am not going to attempt to speed-read them. We have been asking people, if they wish to do so, to provide a brief 5-minute statement to the committee before we open it up to questions. I imagine what you would like to do is explain the documents that you have put before us today.

Ms CALLISTER — Thank you, Chair. I do want to thank the committee for the opportunity to appear today with Mr Hyde. I will make a brief opening statement that reflects part of the more detailed statement that I have tendered to the committee, with a number of attachments, which is quite extensive.

Firstly, I want to take the opportunity to address the committee about one of the critical issues that is before it: the provision of education to Victoria's young offenders. Parkville College was established in 2013 as a specialist government school that provides education to children and young people who are or have been detained in custody. It represents a significant shift in the approach taken by the state to young people in custody. Specifically it reflects the legal and social reality that no matter how difficult the circumstances we must continue to provide school-age children with educational opportunities. There is significant evidence of success for those young people. We cannot and do not shy away from the recent challenges and volatility, but we must continue to maintain an appropriate level of education, not just because of our legal obligations but because we know that the relationship between a young offender and a teacher can in itself be an intervention. Education can help de-escalate behaviour, and the teachers who work with our young offenders are trained in trauma. They have the skills to work with those young people, in conjunction with youth justice staff, and keep them purposefully occupied. Young offenders can learn to use their brains rather than simply continuing a cycle of reactive emotion, and this can also create a healthier, more constructive detention environment.

Education is also about creating choices. While for some young offenders this may not immediately change their behaviour, their sense and capacity to achieve in other areas in life may represent a pathway out of the justice system. It is also about re-engagement with the education system, which for some young people may not have occurred for a long time and which can continue post their release.

Secondly, the committee will see in my statement, and based on the matters that I have just said, the steps that we therefore took to continue to provide education services for young people in Greenvale, notwithstanding the challenges that were presented. That is why we signed the MOU with the Department of Health and Human Services. It provided us with the framework for the provision of education to young people.

Thirdly, I wish to raise a number of matters in relation to Mr Murray's evidence to this committee. Mr Murray was a dedicated principal who made a real contribution to youth justice. However, after reviewing his evidence to this committee there are a number of matters of inaccuracy that I need to address. I deal directly with each of these matters in my statement, and I will refer just to several of them now.

Firstly, the inference to this committee that there was any connection between the actions taken by my department in relation to Parkville College's budget and the circumstances of Mr Murray's departure as executive principal is wrong. You will see in my statement from paragraphs 12 to 17 the background information in relation to actions taken to understand and remedy the Parkville College budget position and deficit, all of which involved Mr Murray. In September 2016 the 2017 indicative student resource package budget released to Mr Murray as the then executive principal of Parkville College included additional funding of \$4.1 million. On 9 January the past operating debt of \$7.5 million was formally removed and at the same time an additional \$5.7 million was to be provided to the school as additional program for students with a disability funding. Mr Murray had a full awareness of all these matters.

Secondly, the purpose of my telephone conversation with Mr Murray on 9 December 2016 was to consult about the proposed memorandum of understanding. Any suggestion that this conversation was only a guise, as he said in his evidence to this committee, is completely wrong, and it is also completely wrong to suggest that he was pressured in any way. You will see in my statement that from paragraphs 24 to 40 I set out the background and the events leading up to me signing a memorandum of understanding with DHHS about the provision of

educational services at Grevillea, including a detailed description of my telephone call with Mr Murray. The reason I rang Mr Murray was to consult with him about the educational services that could be delivered at Grevillea. While it was clear that it was a challenging environment, Mr Murray said that they — the Parkville providers — would be there at Grevillea and that I could have confidence in the services that could be delivered. Following the assurances from Mr Murray on Friday, 9 December 2016, that DET could deliver educational services at the Grevillea unit, I signed the MOU on Monday, 12 December 2016. To be perfectly clear, I did not direct, instruct or give anything that was close enough to a direction to Mr Murray with respect to any evidence he was to give to the Supreme Court.

Further, Mr Murray has maintained to the committee a position that recognition of prior learning was not possible for the students who attended Grevillea, and you will see in my statement at paragraphs 37 and 39 that I set out my understanding of the situation concerning RPL for those students. As at 9 December the situation regarding RPL was unclear, but importantly during my conversation with Mr Murray we also discussed whether Parkville College's registration could be extended to Grevillea for the purposes of RPL. At this time none of us had the immediate answer, and Mr Stephen Fraser undertook to explore this further during the weekend. This issue of RPL was subsequently resolved. On 3 March 2017 I wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services identifying that RPL could be provided in relation to some educational services provided at Grevillea. Accordingly, Mr Murray's position that RPL could not be provided under the Education, Training and Reform Act is factually incorrect. My statement addresses a number of other issues, and I welcome the committee's questions.

The CHAIR — Can I say that you have just provided a very large document to the committee, which we have just seen for the first time, and we have less than 45 minutes to go into this. I appreciate the detail that has been provided, but in terms of scrutiny and our capacity to respond to it, we are quite limited by having seen it just now.

I fully understand that the issues that have been raised are very serious and that you have every right to respond to them and should feel free to do so, but we have a role to play in assessing what is put to us by parties about these events, and this is fundamental to the inquiry we are conducting. Can I suggest that we move to questions, and I am sure there will be many, but would you be prepared to come back on another occasion if we cannot sufficiently delve into these documents, some of which I have got to say I am not even sure at this stage what they are? You have referred to your statement, which I have just been skimming through, but there are other documents — there are emails and so on. I am sure you will appreciate the position the committee finds itself in.

Ms CALLISTER — I have provided all the detail to assist the committee with its inquiry and to make sure that this committee has information on the record to enable it to make its deliberations.

The CHAIR — Absolutely, and I appreciate that. But it is simply the timing of our receipt of it that is the issue. What I might do now is go to —

Ms CALLISTER — I think Mr Hyde has a short statement, if that is possible?

The CHAIR — Absolutely.

Mr HYDE — I just want to say, and some of it reiterates some of Gill's points, good morning and thank you for inviting me to speak at the inquiry today. I would like to recognise the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting and pay my respects to their elders, past and present. My name is Matthew Hyde, and I am currently acting executive principal at Parkville College. My role is to provide students with the highest quality of education possible in the hope of enhancing growth, development and most of all a successful transition to another educational provider or work placement post custody.

In accordance with the Education, Training and Reform Act 2006 the college attempts to deliver above and beyond legislative requirements to help further enhance the educational experience children receive whilst in custody. To clearly define the role that I and the college play within youth justice I have broken this statement into three parts: an overview of the college, educational achievements made by students in 2016 in comparison with 2015, and the roles that I have held within the school.

Firstly, Parkville College is a registered specialist Victorian government school that provides education to students who are or who have been detained in custody. Working in unison with the Department of Health and

Human Services and the Department of Justice Regulation the college delivers education at seven diverse campuses across Victoria. The unique nature of the school requires it to operate 52 weeks a year and six days a week and across weekends to support the transient student population and the varying lengths of stay.

Our students represent some of the most disadvantaged in the state, with most being victims of abuse, trauma and neglect. This is the reason for Parkville College's registration as a specialist school, meaning that there is a specific intent to cater to students with intellectual disabilities and social, emotional, learning and behaviour difficulties. At Parkville College students are supported by a team of dedicated teaching and support staff who create learning programs that are directed towards their full development. The overarching goal of the school is to enhance development and increase the opportunity for a successful reintegration into society.

To cater to the needs of the diverse array of abilities at the school we have attempted to use a large proportion of the curriculum available in Victoria to help meet varying needs. The Victorian curriculum, the Victorian certificate of education and the Victorian certificate of applied learning are all core frameworks delivered. Recently the college has increased its cultural education program in an effort to create classrooms and a curriculum that best meets the needs of the diverse student population we support.

Really quickly, just a breakdown of some educational developments from last year: to communicate the educational achievements of students at Parkville College, I would like to share some of our annual data. I hope this can articulate the curriculum delivered and the developments being made while children are in custody. In 2016 students at Parkville College completed 436 VCAL units. Units take approximately 100 nominal hours to complete, and these units were accredited across foundation, intermediate and senior levels. Four hundred and thirty-six VCAL units is a 153 per cent increase from student achievement in 2015. Parkville College students also completed 291 VET in schools units of competency, which equates to 6611 hours of nationally accredited training.

A key focus of the school is changing the perception of education for young people that we enrol, and I will now share a small comparison summary of colleges' Attitudes to School Survey from 2015–16. The Attitudes to School Survey is used universally across the state to depict student safety, attachment to school, and their self-confidence. Around areas like morale, distress, effectiveness, empathy, learning, connectedness to school, student motivation and learning confidence, all elements have increased significantly, putting us in one of the top tiers in the state in terms of response to their connectedness and how they feel.

Lastly, I want to share a comparison summary of literacy and numeracy growth of students. This data is collected on entry and prior to exit in an effort to measure the effectiveness of our classrooms and the average growth by students whilst enrolled at the school. It is based on an assessment tool produced by ACER, the Australian Council for Educational Research. Last year there was a 10-point scale growth at Parkville in reading data and a 21-point scale growth at Malmsbury. In numeracy there was a 10-point scale growth at Parkville and a 10-point scale growth at Malmsbury. So it is just saying that our kids, whilst they are there for a limited time, are making some sort of substantial gain in their educational development.

My roles within the school: I have been with the college since it began operation in 2012. To ensure the committee have a clear understanding of both the positions I have held and the domains I have managed, I have included a brief summary. In 2012, when the school first opened up as a subcampus of Kensington community school, I was the campus coordinator at Parkville. In 2013, 2014 and 2015 I was the Parkville campus principal, overseeing all educational delivery at the Parkville campus, leading planning, professional development and supervising our lead teachers. In 2016 I took up the position of principal of schools, overseeing all educational delivery at all campuses, again leading planning, professional development and supervising the campus principals. Since 2017, 10 January, I have been the acting executive principal at Parkville College, overseeing both the educational elements but also business, strategy and the wellbeing of our staff. Again I just wanted to say thank you for inviting me to speak at the inquiry today.

The CHAIR — Thank you. You are very welcome. We are very keen to get an ongoing understanding of the really valuable work that is done by Parkville College, so thank you very much. We have 25 minutes to go into a lot of information that you have just put before us, and can I just reiterate that that is absolutely your right and I truly understand that you would want to be able to put your position very clearly. My issue is with the timing of us receiving this. I think we would like to see you on another occasion to go through this in more detail, and I hope that you would agree to that.

Ms CALLISTER — If that will assist the committee in its deliberations, then, yes.

The CHAIR — Thank you. The other thing is I have just got to check the status of these documents. Are you submitting these as a formal submission to the inquiry?

Ms CALLISTER — They are my statement to the inquiry.

The CHAIR — So that is to be admitted to Hansard and made public in that case?

Ms CALLISTER — I imagine so. It is my statement to the inquiry.

The CHAIR — Thank you.

Ms CROZIER — Thank you both very much for coming before the committee this morning and for providing the additional information. I have got the transcript from Mr Murray, who came before the committee a few weeks ago in relation to this issue, that you, Ms Callister, are now clearly, in your statement, refuting. I am just wondering whether you will now refer this issue to the Ombudsman for an independent investigation.

Ms CALLISTER — I have come before the committee, Ms Crozier, in order to respond, to make submissions about the importance of Parkville College and to explain how we came to be providing educational services at Grevillea, and then to respond to some of the issues in Mr Murray's statement that are not accurate. So it is to respond to the committee on those issues.

Ms CROZIER — I think that is the point, because in Mr Murray's evidence to the committee, Ms Callister, he has clearly said that he was under investigation, and I want to understand the process of that. He gave a detailed explanation of that phone call on 9 December between yourself and then Mr Fraser. He spoke about: 'The conversation opened under the guise of discussing a memorandum of understanding', which you have referred to, but you have said to us now that you are refuting what he has said in this in relation to some of those issues. So I am asking you: will you refer this matter to the Ombudsman for independent investigation?

Ms CALLISTER — I do not see any need to refer the matter to the Ombudsman for independent investigation, Ms Crozier. I simply want to correct the record. Perhaps if I answer that question by way of saying I had made a written undertaking to the secretary of the department of human services to provide a signed memorandum of understanding about the nature of the educational services that would be delivered at Grevillea by 9 December. As you will see when you have a chance to read the statement, I chaired a meeting that afternoon with the department's lawyers and a number of program people and went over the final draft of that memorandum of understanding. At the end of that meeting I said that I would approve the MOU in principle but only once I had consulted with Mr Murray in order to get his advice that what I was signing could actually be delivered on the ground. So I then left that meeting and made the phone call to Mr Murray and made it very clear in that phone call that I wanted his advice. I was calling him as the principal delivering those services on the ground as to whether what I was signing was actually able to be delivered. We talked about what could be delivered and what may not be able to be delivered because of the constraints of the site. So what I am doing is rejecting that it was the 'guise'; in fact the MOU needed to be signed, and it was signed subsequent to that phone call on the Monday.

Ms CROZIER — So you are rejecting what he said — 'the guise' of discussing an MOU? He has been on national television talking about this issue in relation to issues regarding the Supreme Court hearings. And as he said in evidence to us, he was not instructed:

I was told what would be important to be said and certainly what the department would like me to say.

Now I take that as coercion — a degree of coercion, in his words or his understanding. You are refuting what he had to say in relation to his interpretation of those phone calls between yourself and Mr Fraser. He had a subsequent phone call, I understand, from Mr Fraser later. So should it be investigated independently?

Ms CALLISTER — That would be a matter for someone else to determine. What I am saying — what I clearly want to have on the record in the committee — is that he is completely wrong. It is inaccurate to describe that phone call as anything other than to understand from Mr Murray — as, I might add, the person with the best knowledge of what was occurring on the ground — whether it was reasonable for me to sign the memorandum of understanding. It was important to understand in some detail what services were being

provided in terms of education in the Grevillea setting. That was the purpose of the phone call. I took contemporaneous notes of the phone call. I have consulted those notes.

Ms CROZIER — Would you be able to provide those notes to the committee?

Ms CALLISTER — Yes, I can provide those notes to the committee.

Ms CROZIER — Are they in this?

Ms CALLISTER — No, they are not in that document.

Ms CROZIER — Okay. That would be most helpful. Thank you.

Ms CALLISTER — But I did take contemporaneous notes, and it was important to have that phone call prior to signing the memorandum of understanding on the Monday.

Ms CROZIER — One last thing, Chair. Mr Murray also said in his evidence to us that he did not decide to resign. He said, when he was asked in committee:

I told my superior, I suppose, that I could not do this anymore and that when I got back I would need to submit a resignation and look at succession planning for the school. But I did not have that opportunity because I was stood down pending an investigation.

Could you outline to the committee what the process of that investigation was, please?

Ms CALLISTER — Mr Murray's resignation is dealt with starting at paragraph 48 of my statement, and the issues outlining the misconduct investigation start at point 44.

Ms CROZIER — Could you speak to those just to explain the process to us, if you would not mind? About the investigation — he was stood down pending an investigation. Point 48 refers to Mr Murray's resignation, but I am asking about the investigation.

Mr CALLISTER — Okay. Mr Murray's evidence in the Supreme Court starts at point 43 of my statement. If we go to 43(d):

On 21 December, Mr Murray was on leave.

On that day he had received an email, which was forwarded from one of his staff from a DHHS staff member, entitled 'Client Movement Panel — meeting'. That email contained the names and details of 19 children in detention. It is important to note that the client movement panel document is a DHHS document, and we do not prepare in DET or have any role in determining client movements.

If you go to (g), at 12.00 p.m. Mr Murray forwarded that email to Ms Barson, a solicitor at the human rights legal centre. He did not speak to anyone in DET about forwarding that email, and he later deleted it.

The CHAIR — I have a question on that. He gave evidence that he attached that email to an affidavit by way of evidence of the contents of his affidavit. Is that the case?

Ms CALLISTER — I do not believe any affidavit was filed.

Ms CROZIER — What was the process for the investigation? These are parts that were occurring, but I want to know what DET did in relation to the investigation.

Ms CALLISTER — That email was then in evidence at the Supreme Court. Mr Murray was then called and spoke to the email, although it was not our email. It clearly had been provided — it had been leaked in some way.

Ms CROZIER — From who? Who leaked it?

Mr CALLISTER — Mr Murray forwarded it and then deleted it. That is what we subsequently found in the investigation.

Ms CROZIER — So you found that Mr Murray leaked the email, forwarded the email, and that was part of your investigation. Who was involved in — —

Ms CALLISTER — That was the reason for the investigation.

Ms CROZIER — Sure. I understand that, but who was involved in the investigation? Who were the personnel and what was the process?

Ms CALLISTER — Once it was discovered who the email had gone to and what they had done with it — in this case Mr Murray — we then notified Mr Murray of the alleged grounds of misconduct, and he was directed not to attend for work.

Ms CROZIER — Sorry. Who is ‘we’, Ms Callister?

Ms CALLISTER — It was Ms Giannakakis, if you look at point 45.

Ms CROZIER — You have just given us 50 pages, or more than that. I am just trying to understand who was involved in the process and how the process was undertaken.

Ms CALLISTER — Once we had serious concerns about Mr Murray’s conduct, which — —

Ms CROZIER — Who is ‘we’?

Ms CALLISTER — The Department of Education and Training.

Ms CROZIER — That is you, and what about the minister responsible?

Ms CALLISTER — The minister is not involved in HR matters.

Ms CROZIER — Okay. He was not informed at all?

Ms CALLISTER — At the point at which Mr Murray was stood down, I verbally advised the ministers, as would be the case with anything where it might go into the public realm. Let me go back, Ms Crozier. In matters like this there is a series of processes that are in place through human resources. There is an investigator, there is a person nominated as the decision-maker — in this case it was the deputy secretary of the regional services group who was the decision-maker in relation to the actions taken against Mr Murray.

Ms PATTEN — It is about the college, but — —

The CHAIR — I want to come back to that. I do have one question on the issues that you have put up, but I think Mr Hyde has come here today to talk about Parkville College, and I thought that was really the main thing we would talk about. Ms Patten has a question on that. I think we have agreed that you are going to come back on another occasion when we have had a chance to look at this. But I do have one question I want to raise with you today, based on what you have said. You said you were speaking to Mr Murray on Friday, 9 December —

Ms CALLISTER — That is right.

The CHAIR — because you needed to sign the MOU on the Monday. There is a memorandum of understanding that you have given to us in here, which I think is marked GC-6. Is that the right document?

Ms CALLISTER — That is, yes.

The CHAIR — Is that the memorandum of understanding that you had to sign? There is what I believe is your signature, but it is dated 30 December, which is — —

Ms CALLISTER — That is the amended one, Chair. It had to be amended when various changes happened to the orders. It is still the memorandum of understanding; it just had to be updated. You will see in the statement when you get a chance to look at it in detail that that is explained.

The CHAIR — Okay. So given that it had to be amended, why did it need to be signed originally on the 12th? What was the rush for that date?

Ms CALLISTER — There had been an exchange of letters between the secretary of the department of human services and myself when Grevillea was first opened and young people were placed there. As a result of that exchange of letters, I had agreed to provide a formal MOU by the 9th, which ended up being the 12th. There was considerable work to do to understand how we would put that memorandum of understanding together. We have done these before but not under these circumstances. Because of our legal obligations, to continue to provide education services and to have a signed agreement between the two departments about what was being provided it was important to do that by the given date.

The CHAIR — Understood. It was due on the 9th originally, and you were speaking to Mr Murray that day. Had you spoken to him earlier about the issues to do with the MOU?

Ms CALLISTER — I had a brief conversation with him a few days, maybe a week, earlier when he attended an Education State in Schools forum that he was invited to. Over coffee we had an exchange about how things were going, how Grevillea was going — we had a brief discussion about that.

The CHAIR — If the MOU had to be signed by Friday the 9th, why were you only really speaking to him at 5.30 p.m. that night?

Ms CALLISTER — It was by that stage that I had had a full briefing about the final MOU and had a full discussion with the lawyers about what it was actually committing the department to.

Ms PATTEN — Thank you, Mr Hyde, for coming today. I do not know if it is a highlight but what I thought was very important was hearing from your students as part of this process, and I think that has been really informative. Most of them spoke very positively about their opportunity for education. I have two quick questions. One is: in an ideal world, what do you think we could take away about how we could improve Parkville College, or delivering education to some really significantly disadvantaged kids — how we could make that better?

Mr HYDE — Thank you, Ms Patten. Do you mean just in terms of where we currently deliver right now or overarching across the state?

Ms PATTEN — Let us just narrow it down to where you are delivering now.

Mr HYDE — At the moment the opportunity to offer subject choice to our kids is — and this is just in my opinion — the penultimate bargaining chip, because it is kids actively engaging in areas of education that they direct and that they have got real interest in that lead to purposeful either education or employment post custody. At the moment we are bound by the constraints of the custodial facility in terms of when we can mix and merge children. For example, an idea would be there are time frames when we can only offer a child construction or fitness training. Students can do their certificate II in building and construction or their certificate II in fitness. To be able to group kids together that just wanted to do the certificate IIs and IIIs in building and construction and have them leave with meaningful accreditations faster would be ideal.

The school is definitely not perfect, so in terms of harnessing our approach in how we support all children in the classroom has always been a goal that we have set. I think we do it really well now, but to increase that so that kids have a really clear understanding of where they are at educationally, what they want to do post custody and how they can do that successfully is always at the forefront.

Ms SYMES — Thank you for your evidence, Mr Hyde. One of the things that I was after some clarification on is the number of campuses. How many are there?

Mr HYDE — Seven.

Ms SYMES — Seven. So how does it work? I think you said the eligibility is for those that are detained or have been detained. I am not quite sure how post release works.

Mr HYDE — I think it was in 2014 we received funding to open a flexible learning centre that operates at the front of the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct. It is a centre for any child that leaves custody that does not have a meaningful place of education or employment to attend. We have a team of teachers down there that hold onto any kid within the space so that they are never left stranded. The definite hope is that it is a transitional facility — at the moment our numbers are about 22 students — where kids that are either really close

to finishing accreditations or, as I said before, are yet to find any meaningful place of education or employment can come and feel safe and still have that opportunity to complete their education.

Ms SYMES — Where are the seven campuses?

Mr HYDE — We also operate in the two secure welfare sites; there is one in Maribyrnong and one in Ascot Vale. We have a team that operates at the educational justice initiative, it is called. It operates out of the Children's Court, so it is the transitional team that is out picking up kids that do not get remanded or sentenced.

Ms SYMES — That was going to be my next question. Can you access Parkville College without having a charge?

Mr HYDE — No.

Ms SYMES — No?

Mr HYDE — It is select entry.

Ms CALLISTER — Except for secure welfare.

Mr HYDE — The secretary is more than right — except for secure welfare. Secure welfare is an extension of the child protection system.

Mr MULINO — Just a quick one. You obviously offer a wide range of programs and classes. I was just wondering if any in particular stand out as having been particularly effective, for example, from a rehabilitation perspective?

Mr HYDE — I think the mixture between classroom-based practice and the vocational trades has been really effective for all kids that come through the doors. There was an early perception about the idea of taking away the hands-on, tool-based programs for children, and that is the last thing I think the school wanted to do. It is a really healthy mixture between the idea of kids being able to read and write proficiently to be able to enter trades and different vocational education programs post custody but at the same time having the exposure to the elements to give them that trade tester experience to figure out whether or not they want to be a carpenter or a plumber or to work in a gym and do fitness. Of late we also deliver a number of VCE subjects internally. Philosophy has been a massive — I would say positive — sort of implementation across the school. Kids moving through their VCE units 1 and 2 of philosophy allows them to discuss the finer details of society and talk about really meaningful spaces and predicaments and social justice issues that encourage them to think a little bit deeper about themselves and their impact on society.

Ms SYMES — So philosophy is a subject from where?

Mr HYDE — From the VCE curriculum, so units 1 and 2 from the year 11 framework.

The CHAIR — I have a general question. I understand Parkville College is a relatively recent school, that things are going to change as you go along and there have been changes in terms of delivery at Grevillea and all that sort of thing. But what is coming up? What are the plans for how the college is going to operate?

Mr HYDE — In 2012 we started with six staff. In 2017, where we currently reside, it is about 190 staff that operate, because with the 52 weeks and across school holidays and weekends it just increases the number of staff that we need to employ. Not all those staff are full time. I think consolidation is a major component. To expand that quickly and not have the time to actually engrain really effective practices in our teaching team has been really difficult. We have got a large number of young, relatively inexperienced staff that are doing a wonderful job in classrooms, and it is just about how we can put more time and effort into them to make them expert practitioners so that our students leave with the best opportunity for success post-custody.

The CHAIR — I know that there is reporting on what Parkville College does through annual reporting, but what about reporting to parents? How does that work?

Mr HYDE — We have increased the number of report cycles that we run throughout a year. We now do monthly education reports, and it is just because of the transient nature of the population. We can update both

children and parents with a clear indication of where they are at in terms of progression towards their accreditation. It also has a number of their diagnostic assessments for schools and other vocational training centres so that people have a clear understanding of where a child is at and how they can best meet their developmental needs. Every single one of those reports goes to a parent or carer for a child. We tend to ask the kids about who they would feel the safest about receiving that report. We have had some odd sorts of cases, where a child actually asked if it could be sent to his girlfriend so that she could see how well he was doing and take him back on exit. At the same time we have made a conscious effort in the last 12 months to make sure that parents have that sort of information readily available.

The CHAIR — Would it be possible to provide us with a copy of the template that you use, not filled in for anybody?

Mr HYDE — I will make sure with our legal team, but I can de-identify a couple and send them across, absolutely.

The CHAIR — That would be great. Thank you very much.

Ms CROZIER — Just a point of clarification in relation to what we have been speaking about regarding Mr Murray's evidence. He also said that the executive director within the Department of Education and Training, who I also believe has had a function as an advisor to Minister Merlino, is Mr Stephen Fraser. Is that the correct title, and is he still an advisor to Minister Merlino?

Ms CALLISTER — Mr Fraser was an executive officer in the department. He is currently on a secondment overseas. He went into Minister Merlino's office when the government came into office for a period of time as a coordination and liaison-type position. It was not as an advisor as such. That was not unusual; that is pretty usual at the beginning of a term of government. After a period of time he then left and came back to the department.

Ms CROZIER — Thank you for that clarification. Mr Murray also said that he received a phone call from Mr Fraser on the Sunday evening, following the Friday evening. Were you contacted by Mr Fraser or Mr Murray regarding that conversation that they had?

Ms CALLISTER — No.

Ms CROZIER — You were not aware that they had had the phone call on the Sunday night?

Ms CALLISTER — I was aware during the phone call on the ninth that Mr Fraser was going to do some follow-up on the issue of recognition of prior learning and that he would potentially discuss that with Mr Murray over the weekend.

Ms CROZIER — And how long is Mr Fraser away on secondment overseas?

Ms CALLISTER — Twelve months.

Ms CROZIER — When did he leave?

Ms CALLISTER — I think about March, but I would have to check. I am just going by my memory, sorry.

Ms CROZIER — That is all right. Thanks.

The CHAIR — Given the various contacts over the weekend and the evidence that Mr Murray gave, are you absolutely confident that nobody from the department pressured Mr Murray in relation to his evidence?

Ms CALLISTER — I am confident. That was not the purpose of talking to Mr Murray at all. The purpose of talking to Mr Murray, as I said, was to get his opinion of whether the memorandum of understanding for education services was an accurate reflection of what he could and was delivering on the ground in Grevillea as the executive principal. As I said, the recognition of prior learning issue was complicated. It did take some time to work out. None of us were clear about it during that phone call, and Mr Fraser undertook to do some follow-up to try and unpack that issue.

The CHAIR — Wasn't Mr Murray unsure? It appeared that he was unaware that Melbourne Polytechnic would recognise prior learning undertaken at Grevillea. So was he actually able to clarify that issue, because my understanding was that he did not actually know that himself?

Ms CALLISTER — No, he did not — not in that phone call. None of us knew that. Mr Fraser had to contact a number of people — I am not sure who — to try and work out how we could recognise the learning that the young people did in Grevillea.

Mr MORRIS — Ms Callister, I was hoping to follow up on paragraph 45, in which you detail the notice of allegation and the letter dated 10 January 2017. I was wondering: could you provide a copy of that letter to the committee?

Ms CALLISTER — Can I take that on notice, please?

Mr MORRIS — Thank you. I was hoping to then go on to paragraph 55, which you state in your statement:

For the avoidance of any doubt or misunderstanding: I did not 'direct', 'instruct' or give anything that was 'close enough' to a direction to Mr Murray with respect to the evidence that he was to give before the Supreme Court. Indeed, Mr Murray's sworn evidence makes no such allegation against me.

Then in the next paragraph, paragraph 56:

Mr Fraser, who is on secondment in the UK, is available to give evidence before this committee if it wishes to hear from him.

Are we to take by inference that it was not you but it was Mr Fraser who gave that instruction to Mr Murray?

Ms CALLISTER — I do not believe anybody gave any instruction to Mr Murray about his evidence.

Mr MORRIS — In terms of the date that Mr Fraser went on this secondment to the UK, could you take that on notice and provide that date to the committee?

Ms CALLISTER — Yes, sure.

Ms CROZIER — And what is he doing in the UK on secondment?

Ms CALLISTER — He is working for — and I hope I get this right — I believe a non-government organisation that provides a whole range of educational research services, so it is related to education.

Mr MORRIS — Could you provide the details surrounding that secondment occurring to the committee? As you can understand, the time frames that we are seeing here do raise some questions. If you could provide some documentation surrounding how it is that secondment came about, that might be able to alleviate some of those questions the committee has.

Ms CALLISTER — As I understand it, Mr Fraser quite separate to any of this made an application for a role in the UK and went through a process.

Mr MORRIS — That is why I am saying, if the committee was provided with that documentation, we can be assured of that too.

Ms CALLISTER — I will take that on notice.

The CHAIR — I think we have very much run out of time. Thank you both for your attendance today. You will be provided with a transcript of proceedings for review within a few weeks, and, Ms Callister, we will be in touch very shortly to arrange another mutually convenient time for you to see us again.

Ms CALLISTER — Thank you.

Witnesses withdrew.