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AUDITOR GENERAL FINDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NEEDS BETTER INFORMATION AND MORE TARGETED RESOURCES FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

In the Auditor General's latest report tabled in Parliament today, Auditor General Colin Murphy found that schools have adopted the Department of Education's approach to managing behaviour, but that the department did not have a good understanding of the extent of problem behaviour in schools or which strategies were working.

Mr Murphy said the findings on behaviour management in schools were mixed, but echoed his past comments that a collaborative approach to the issue was needed which included the cooperation of parents, government and the broader community.

"The good news is that some of the strategies the Department of Education has in place for managing student behaviour are working."

"All 19 schools we reviewed were generally managing student behaviour in line with the department's approach, but there were some inconsistencies in implementations and outcomes."

"However, the department's view of how behaviour is being managed across the system is not comprehensive. It does not have a clear view of what strategies schools are using to address problems and to promote positive behaviour."

The audit also found that resources were not being effectively targeted to consistently meet school and student needs.

"Student behaviour is a really serious issue, and bad behaviour in the classroom has consequences for teachers and other students."

"The Department of Education needs to determine if its behaviour management approach is being effectively implemented in schools, and if resources are being efficiently allocated and used."

"I am encouraged that the Department of Education has acknowledged the report's findings and recommendations, and has already commenced work on several of the recommendations."

The Auditor General's report 'Behaviour Management in Schools' (Report 4 – March 2014) can be downloaded from the Office of the Auditor General website at www.audit.wa.gov.au

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