



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Windsor praises Minimbah Aboriginal School in Parliament**

In Federal Parliament this week, Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has taken the opportunity to praise the Minimbah Aboriginal Pre-school and Primary School.

The following is an extract from a speech given by Mr Windsor to Parliament during the debate on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission Amendment Bill.

“There are other things I want to raise with reference to my electorate which have achieved outstanding results in terms of delivery of services to Indigenous people.

In Armidale in my electorate, the Minimbah Pre-school and Primary School was set up some years ago by a very well-recognised Aboriginal woman called Diane Roberts. She has subsequently been awarded the OAM for her contribution to the education of Aboriginal people. The school is an independent school that recognises the particular needs of Aboriginal people, although it is not only for Aboriginal people—other cultures are free to attend.

But the school does have some unique features in terms of its status as an independent school. Those features relate in some way to the differences between Aboriginal people and others—white people particularly.

One of the problems that Minimbah primary school is experiencing is that its enrolment rate varies because some of the Aboriginal families only live in Armidale for part of the year; they may go back to the coast for part of the year, as they have done for thousands of years. Consequently, enrolment is not the same as at other independent schools.

Minimbah primary school is asking for a hearing from Minister Amanda Vanstone in relation to their particular problems—and for some administrative assistance, if at all possible.

The school has recognised that education is not only about reading, writing and arithmetic but also the broader educational experience within the community—family life and all those sorts of things. The school has produced some outstanding results and is run by some very caring people, and so I hope the government will look favourably at that sort of example when providing assistance in the future.”