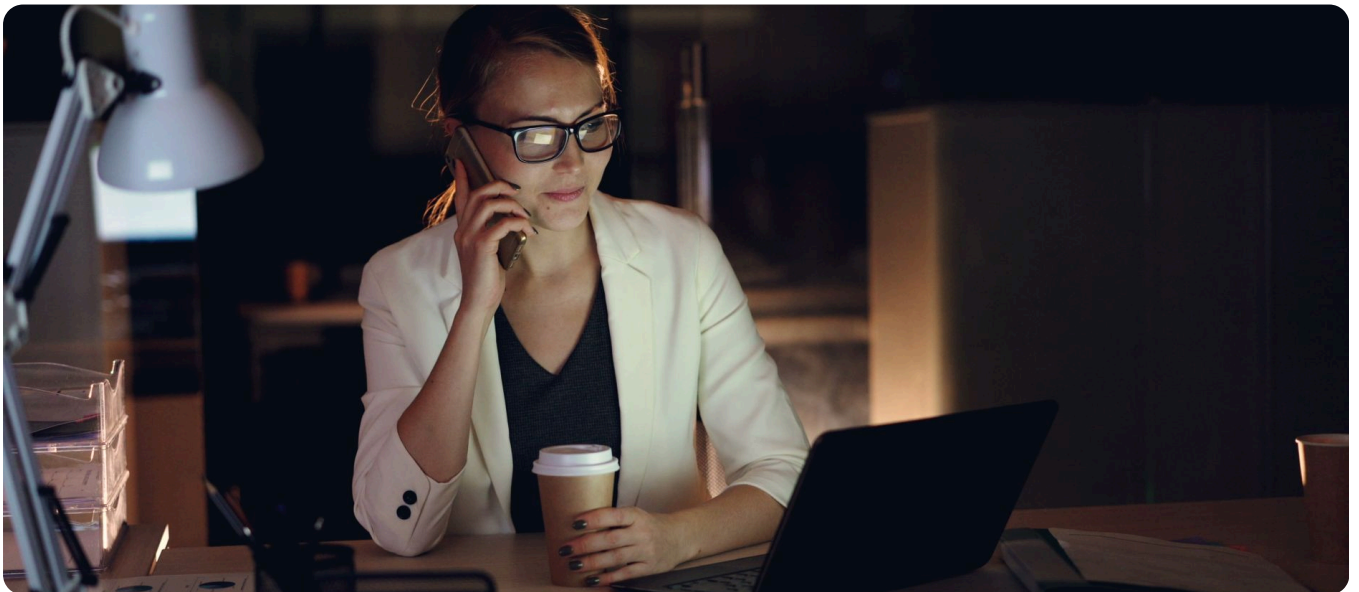


Why we can't remove teacher admin work

For school leaders. Why the admin around behaviour and NCCD evidence can't simply be removed, what it costs teachers, and where AI actually helps.

Janet Moeller former principal, founder of Teacharo · Published 25 September 2026



Teachers log behaviour incidents into platforms because they are told to, not because it helps students.

This type of admin benefits the bureaucratic system, run by administrators who balance their true care for teachers with the registration-related, financial, political and legal obligations they juggle.

Two pieces of Australian research published in the last five weeks illuminated what I've watched over the past 15 years: a continual increase in teacher workload, compounded by the siloed platforms they are required to navigate. The expectations put onto schools lead to the purchase of additional platforms that hold additional data that the schools use to defend their decisions. And the documentation ultimately falls on the teachers.

KEY FACTS

- In a study of 1,623 Queensland teachers, managing and responding to student needs and behaviour was the most common reason teachers felt rushed (Thompson et al., 2026).
- Teachers reported an average of 71 minutes of tasks in each 30-minute slot of the school day (Thompson et al., 2026).
- One 70-minute lesson with behaviour incidents became an hour to an hour and a half of afternoon admin (Thompson et al., 2026).
- School leaders document everything so decisions can be defended (Wade and Thackwell, 2026).
- Reducing what must be logged leaves schools without the pattern, including NCCD evidence.
- Insisting on more logging pushes teachers to work longer, skip entries, or use unapproved AI tools.
- Behaviour incidents don't belong in chatbots outside a secure, tenanted school environment, and chatbots don't make logging faster.

Why do school leaders need behaviour incidents logged?

When I came to Australia, I saw straight away the need to log student behaviour incidents in the school's system. When parents called the office insisting that meetings about student issues be escalated to me, I needed to know the background.

If the background wasn't in the system, I spent the day interrupting teacher's classrooms or planning time to find out what I might expect from the parent.

In the years that I was carrying an instructional load, I had even less time to catch up with teachers about the stories behind incidents. Rather than judge them for the missing information, I quietly knew that I didn't always log the behaviour incidents I asked others to log.

Like me, the teachers responded to what we sometimes referred to as, 'the tyranny of the urgent.'

The stakes for missing documentation are high. Carolyn Wade and Natalie Thackwell of Griffith University interviewed 14 primary school leaders in Queensland and New South Wales (Wade and Thackwell, 2026). One leader explained: "if something happens, you document it, or it didn't happen." Another: "I try to send a follow-up email straight after a phone call, just to have it in writing, even if we sorted it out verbally."

How much time does behaviour logging take teachers?

A recess incident often cost me 90 precious after-school minutes, the same 90 minutes I had for planning and marking. I drafted where the incident happened, what happened prior, the triggers, what I saw and heard, what

each person said, and how I followed up. I then opened up the many tabs, clicked the dropdowns and found one of the students who needed the behaviour logged. Repeat for others. I turned the story into a draft email for the parents and others in the school who might need to know more urgently. Those were entered into a separate messaging system after looking up the necessary contact details.

Greg Thompson and colleagues studied time use among Queensland state school teachers, who record behaviour incidents in the OneSchool system (Thompson et al., 2026):

- 1,623 teachers logged 4,386 randomly allocated half-hour slots of their working day.
- In each 30 minutes, teachers reported an average of 71 minutes of tasks.
- "Managing and responding to student needs/behaviour" was the most common reason teachers gave for feeling rushed.
- It was named on 78 per cent of the days teachers said their workload was not manageable.

In the school case studies, teachers described where the time goes. One early career teacher described a 70-minute lesson in period four becoming "probably an hour to an hour and a half of admin in the afternoon": short reports, ticked boxes, phone calls home, then recording the phone calls. Another described copying each email she sent a parent and pasting it into a separate section of OneSchool, then doing it again when the parent replied. Double-handling.

Experience doesn't fix it. The researchers found experienced teachers were just as caught as beginners, because the same data entry comes back with every incident.

Why don't we just record less?

Because missing behaviour and learning data is a legal risk and a financial cost to the school.

The Thompson study records what happened when Queensland's Education Minister ruled that minor incidents no longer needed to be recorded. Teachers weren't sure what counted as minor. And a deputy principal explained why her school still wanted them: "If you don't have the minors, you don't have the pattern." Without the pattern, she said, the school doesn't have enough evidence for the NCCD, which its funding is based on.

Behaviour incidents are often evidence for the NCCD's social/emotional category.

What happens when schools insist teachers log more?

Often our best intentions have unintended consequences. By insisting that teachers log large amounts of evidence, they are unintentionally incentivising teachers to do one of three things:

1. Work longer hours
2. Quietly not do the entries
3. 'Shadow use' tools that will get it done faster

Teachers don't want to do the wrong thing. They are simply responding to choices between staying late and getting their *own* children to sport training. Choosing between a weekend with the family or hours of catching up with the planning and marking that were set aside to do incident reports.

Doesn't AI speed things up?

Behaviour incidents shouldn't go through traditional LLMs like ChatGPT unless they are through a secure, tenanted school environment or through a tool with a school data privacy agreement. An incident report names children and may also constitute a health record.

Even with an LLM, typing up an incident saves little time. The teacher still sits at a desk, still types the account, still copies the result into the school's system. The chatbot makes the transition from report to draft email a bit quicker. The teacher is still opening multiple parts of a schools system to find the relevant tabs, buttons and parent information.

Is it hopeless?

Using the technology schools currently use, yes. But schools must think beyond traditional platforms and chatbots.

Most people think of AI as a chatbot. We're moving into the age of personal AI assistants. Like a human PA, AI personal assistants can take direction, know where to find the information they need, and draft personal responses. When the responses are approved by the human, the personal assistant can file them in the correct area of a platform.

The direction can be given as a quick, spoken note between classes or on the walk back from yard duty.

We built Teacharo as a solution to the problem of teacher admin. It can't be removed without an entire overhaul of the Australian government and legal expectations of schools.

But we can control who (or what) carries that admin load.

Which of the three is your school quietly relying on?

Frequently asked questions

Why does logging behaviour incidents take teachers so long?

Each incident creates a cycle: a report, contact with parents, then recording that contact. In Thompson et al. (2026), one teacher described a 70-minute lesson generating an hour to an hour and a half of afternoon admin.

Did Queensland stop teachers recording minor behaviour incidents?

Queensland's Education Minister ruled that minor incidents no longer needed to be recorded. Teachers in the Thompson et al. (2026) case studies were unsure what counted as minor, and one deputy principal said the school still needed minors to see patterns.

Why do school leaders need minor incidents recorded?

Minor incidents show the pattern. Leaders need the background when an issue escalates, and behaviour incidents are often evidence for the NCCD's social/emotional category.

Is it safe to put student behaviour incidents into ChatGPT or Copilot?

Not outside a secure, tenanted school environment with appropriate data privacy agreements. Incident reports name children and families. Typing them into a chatbot also doesn't make logging faster.

What is shadow AI use in schools?

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Teachers using AI tools the school hasn't approved, often to get admin done faster. It is one of three ways teachers respond when logging expectations outgrow their time, alongside working longer hours and quietly skipping entries.

What is a personal AI assistant for teachers?

An assistant that knows the teacher's work, sits in the school's secure environment, and turns a quick note between classes into a draft the teacher checks and approves.

How we check this guide

Sources read in full on 25 September 2026: Thompson, McKay, Hogan, Stacey and Mockler, "Teachers' time: behaviour, school management systems and 'Blockages'", *Educational Review*, published 15 September 2026 (doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2026.2723496); Wade and Thackwell, "From call-out to complaint: the care work of school leaders in asymmetrical educational relations", *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, published 24 August 2026 (doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2026.2722641). NCCD category wording from the NCCD Guidelines, Section C.3. Reviewed by Janet Moeller.

See what lost evidence might be costing your school in dollars

This guide focuses on the human cost of collecting, collating and moderating NCCD evidence. The financial cost is real too. The calculator estimates what lost evidence might be costing your school.

We're looking for partners who envision a world where students get the full support they deserve and teachers get their weekends back. Partners who know that commercial chatbots, a new Learning Management System and offshore tools are not the answer to the problem.

[Open the cost calculator](#)

[Book a time to chat with me](#)

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