

**Submission
No 146**

**INQUIRY INTO EDUCATION AMENDMENT (ETHICS
CLASSES REPEAL) BILL 2011**

Organisation: Manly Village Public School Parents and Citizens Association
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Manly Village Public School

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The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Committee Members

Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011 - Inquiry Submission

We are writing on behalf of the Many Village Public School Parents and Citizens Association to express our opposition to the *Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011*.

Manly Village Public School is one of the oldest government schools in NSW, and has a long tradition of successfully adapting and evolving to accommodate changing community needs. This tradition was reflected in the harmonious introduction of philosophical ethics as a complement to scripture at Manly Village early last year. In 2011 our school had over 40 year 5 and 6 students enrolled in ethics classes, with many children and parents eagerly awaiting the introduction of philosophical ethics into the lower year levels. The majority of students enrolled in ethics came from non-scripture, and the P&C was delighted that the introduction of ethics classes had removed the discriminatory situation that had previously prevented these students from receiving any form of tuition during scripture periods.

As you will be aware, there are now 2,700 children involved in ethics classes at 128 primary schools across the state. Removal of ethics classes from scripture periods will have a grossly unfair impact not only on these children, but also on those children in years K-4 who have not yet had the opportunity to enrol in ethics. We believe that it is incumbent on the NSW Parliament to respect and promote the internationally protected right of parents to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions¹.

Philosophical ethics has the strong support of the Manly Village P&C, and we urge the Committee to acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of our state school community by supporting these classes. We speak on behalf of many parents when we say that we would be outraged to see them removed.

Yours Sincerely

Tony Bernard
President MVPS P&C Association

Zarli French Thompson
Secretary

¹ Article 18.4, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights