

**Submission
No 59**

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

Name: Ms Carla Grossetti

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Carla Grossetti

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To whom it may concern

I am writing to you in regard to the news regarding Fred Nile's proposal for a formal investigation into ethics classes.

As someone who was raised in the Catholic education system, I am vehemently opposed to the indoctrination of children into religious education in our public school system. Why don't we investigate, instead, the introduction of religious classes in schools in the 19th century and the Department of Education agreement that states non-SRE kids are forbidden from doing anything meaningful during that time? The act of eliminating ethics classes would be a breach of human rights.

As a proud atheist, I encourage my children to ask questions, be tolerant, think critically and independently and to show fairness. Surely, an investigation into ethics classes should run in tandem with an investigation into SRE? I also, it has to be said, encourage my children to respect the fact that some members of their own family have faith and we need to honour that.

Giving my intelligent children instruction that they are not allowed to 'learn' anything while SRE classes are being conducted undermines the culture of tolerance and fairness espoused by most school codes of conduct. It's also an insult to our children's intelligence. What is so threatening to Fred Nile about encouraging children to demonstrate independent thought? The fact that children in SRE are also given lollies is abhorrent. Some of these children opt into SRE because of such 'rewards'; they also tell the non-SRE kids they will 'burn in hell for not believing in God'. Outrageous.

There also seems to be an unfair promotion of SRE in the public education school system. This is not balanced with the same level of support and promotion of ethics classes, and is often in accordance with the beliefs of the admin staff or school principal who outwardly encourage parents to 'tick a box' or 'they will be in the minority'.

As a parent, as a journalist, as an independent thinker, I urge you to continue the ethics classes, which should not be seen as a threat to the dominant religions; rather as a complementary introduction to the very tenets that Christianity is meant to nurture.

Regards

Carla Grossetti