INQUIRY INTO EDUCATION AMENDMENT (ETHICS CLASSES REPEAL) BILL 2011

Organisation: Primary Ethics Ltd

Date received: 17/02/2012

SUBMISSION TO
NSW PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO
THE EDUCATION AMENDMENT (ETHICS) ACT 2010

DATE: 17 February 2012

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2010 the Department of Education completed a trial of ethics in schools. This trial involved ten schools, Australian academics and community consultation. Out of 750 submissions made, 730 (97%) were in support of the introduction of ethics. As a result of this, on 1 December 2010 the NSW Education Act 1990 was amended to give students the legal right to attend philosophical ethics classes.

Primary Ethics was established by St James Ethics Centre as the organisation tasked with delivering ethics classes to public primary schools across NSW.

The goal of Primary Ethics is to provide children with a lifelong capacity to make ethical judgements and to act reasonably and responsibly.

In our first year of operations and with extremely limited resources, Primary Ethics has recruited, accredited and trained 470 skilled and highly motivated volunteers who are serving in 166 schools. The level of community engagement and the 4400 students that have elected to join our classes in this timeframe is indicative of the growing community interest for this program.

Primary Ethics respects the right of Parliament to conduct inquiries on behalf of the people of NSW. We have confidence in the quality of our curriculum and our training resources, our processes and in the high calibre of our volunteer teachers.

In the end, it is our capacity to responsibly meet the needs of children and their parents that remains the single most important test of our program's value.

2. **ABOUT PRIMARY ETHICS**

Background to Primary Ethics

Primary Ethics was founded by St James Ethics Centre on 4 November 2010 as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. We are registered with an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have Tax Concession Charity (TCC) status. An application for special listing as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) is currently before the Commonwealth Government.

Primary Ethics is not affiliated with the New South Wales Government or with the Department of Education and Communities. Primary Ethics operates under very clearly defined list of objects which are reflected in the organisation's constitution. These are:

Primary Ethics Objects

(a) provide philosophical ethics education to children in New South Wales public schools who do not attend special religious education classes;
(b) develop an engaging ethics curriculum and learning/teaching materials that are age appropriate and deliverable to urban, regional and rural schools;
(c) provide a developed curriculum and learning/teaching materials for use by faith groups, to use 'as is' or to amend in accordance with the frameworks of their particular religions;
(d) manage quality control over the ethics curriculum content and its delivery;
(e) attract, select, recruit and train suitable volunteer ethics teachers;
(f) coordinate the curriculum delivery via volunteer ethics teachers;
(g) provide a mechanism for receiving and reacting to complaints relating to the provision of ethics education; and
(h) to carry out such other functions and purposes which are necessary or incidental to the other objects of the company, on the basis that the company operates as a not-for-profit company.

Organisational Mission

Primary Ethics will support and encourage students to develop their moral reasoning and critical thinking skills, providing them with a lifelong capacity to make ethical judgements, and to act reasonably and responsibly. In the process we will enhance the ethical thinking and decision-making abilities of more than 4300 volunteers each year.

3. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Organisational leadership

The directors of Primary Ethics are: Mr Bruce Hogan AM (Chairman), Dr Simon Longstaff, Ms Teresa Russell, Ms Dianne Giblin, Ms Robin Low and Mr Michael Pain, who have a wide range of skills in business, ethics, education, government relations and volunteerism. The executive team consists of Ms Leith Brooke - Executive General Manager, and Ms Teresa Russell – General Manager of Schools. The skill-sets of both the board members and paid staff are regularly reviewed in line with our organisation's goals.

A brief CV for the board and executive can be found as an appendix to this document.

Governance

Primary Ethics Limited (ABN: 28147194349) is a public company limited by guarantee and is a not-for profit entity. It was founded by St James Ethics Centre and incorporated on 4 November 2010. Primary Ethics has a constitution which provides the framework for the orderly governance of the company. St James Ethics Centre is our sole member.

The board is responsible for the decision making of the organisation and executive management operate within the strategy, risk management framework and delegations approved by the board.

The board composition reflects the key skills identified as being needed by the organisation, including ethics, education, community engagement, strategy, finance, fund raising and risk management.

While in its early stages as an organisation, a need has been indentified for three committees of the board: Audit and Risk, Curriculum and Fundraising, and these are currently being formed.

The board meets regularly and has a company secretary who facilitates the agenda, provides supporting papers and records the business of the meetings.

Key areas of organisational focus to date have been, in line with the strategy and having regard to the key risks to the organisation and the delivery of ethics training:

- Recruitment of appropriately skilled and credentialed volunteers

- Training volunteers

- Development of a curriculum which meets the high educational standards of Primary Ethics and has been subject to appropriate review, including for age appropriateness by the NSW Department of Education and Training

- Fundraising with a view to sustaining the long term viability of the organisation.

- Establishing appropriate policies and infrastructure to support the operations of the organisation, having regard to its size, nature and stage of development.

4. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Organisational goals

Based on 2010 figures, in NSW there are 432,060 students attending 1629 public primary schools. Of these students, it is estimated that approximately 25% opt out of SRE.

50% of NSW schools enrol 83% of the state's students and have more than 60 students per school year. These are the schools where delivering face-to-face ethics classes will be most feasible. Minimum class sizes will be 8 students, with the average class size being 17-20 students.

The remaining 17% of students will have access to ethics classes in an e-learning environment.

Primary Ethics' goal is that by 2017:
- Over 80% of students from years K-6 will have the opportunity to participate in face-to-face ethics classes
- 100% access to e-learning ethics classes for all students (starting from 2013)

From a standing start in December 2010 and with no funding, in 12 months Primary Ethics has 470 trained and accredited volunteers in place, and is teaching Ethics to around 4400 students. Our ambition is to attract a volunteer workforce of over 4300 people and to provide classes to approximately 65,000 students each week. The work that will be provided by this volunteer workforce is valued at over $25 million with annual outgoings of just $1.3m.

Primary Ethics growth projections
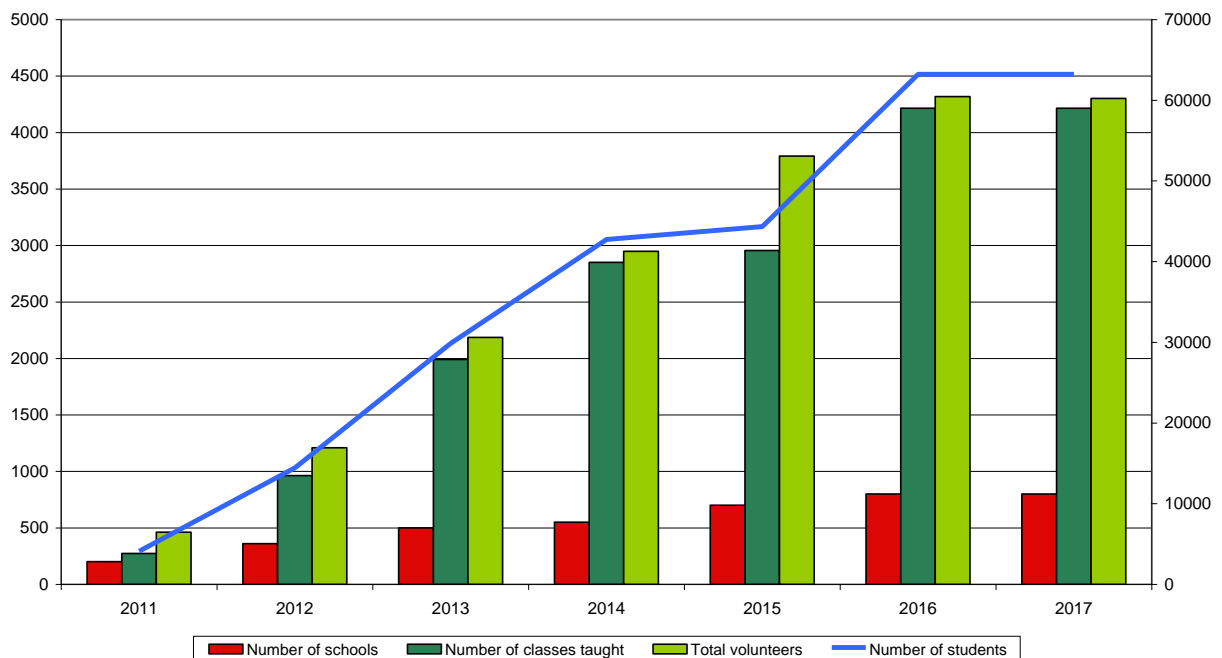
Organisational structure

Primary Ethics relies on local communities to deliver ethics classes to primary school students. Ethics classes are locally managed by volunteers with a lean central office responsible for curriculum and program development, quality control and support.

When fully operational (estimated to be 2017), we will be managing a paid workforce of eight staff, who will manage and support over 4300 volunteers. There are currently two paid staff members – the Executive General Manager and the General Manager, Schools. The positions in blue are the paid positions at Primary Ethics. Those in light blue are the volunteer positions.
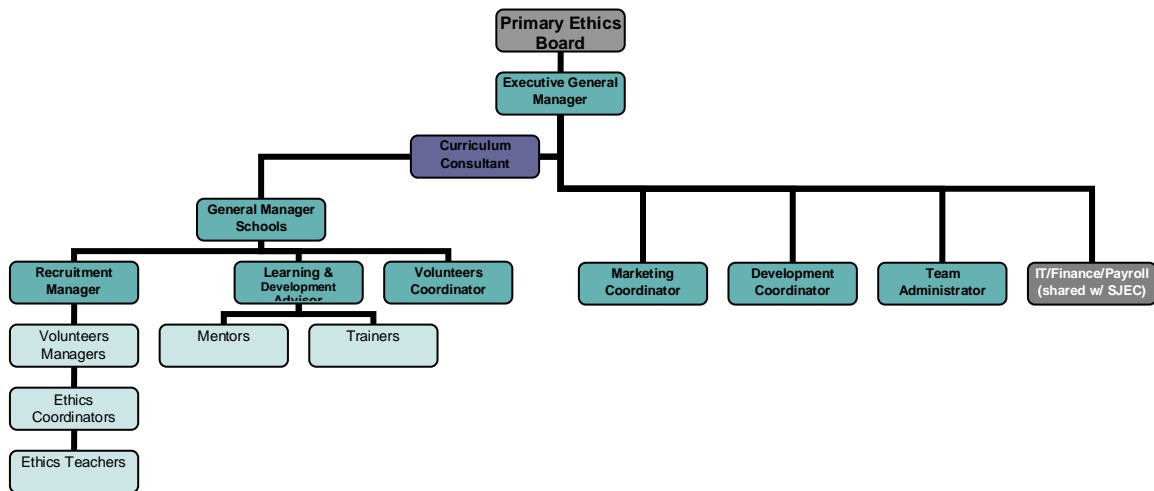
Volunteer Structure

As a community based, locally driven organisation, Primary Ethics is built on, and owes its success to, its volunteers. In summary, the key volunteer roles are:

Volunteers Managers have responsibility for recruiting and managing Ethics Coordinators and schools in one or more large geographical area across NSW. The Department of Education and Communities has defined 43 educational regions in NSW. Primary Ethics will ensure that there are sufficient Volunteers Managers to cover each of these 43 regions. There are currently 12 Volunteers Managers, each managing approximately 15 Ethics Coordinators.

Trainers have strong experience in adult learning/and or philosophy and facilitation skills. They create our training materials and deliver initial face-to-face training to all of our Ethics Teachers as well as assist with online training and support.

Ethics Coordinators are responsible for liaison between the parents in a school community, ethics teachers, the principal of a primary school and Primary Ethics. Each Ethics Coordinator is allocated to one school. The Ethics Coordinator recruits Ethics Teachers for their schools. In terms of effective class size – the average number of students is 15-17, with 22 as maximum. In most cases, classes will be combined as follows: K, Years 1-2, Years 3-4, Years 5-6. Separate classes will be held wherever possible where numbers of students, volunteers and classroom availability allow.

Ethics Teachers are selected and trained to teach Ethics classes to children for 30-45 minutes each week during school term. Volunteer Teachers undertake an online introductory course and then attend face-to-face training for 2 x days. Ongoing education is managed both online and face-to-face.

Mentors have strong experience in adult learning, facilitation and mentoring skills and provide in-classroom support to Ethics Teachers, ensuring we provide high quality delivery of our curriculum to children across the state.

Through its commitment to volunteer training, mentoring and support, Primary Ethics is creating an organisation highly regarded by volunteers, business and academic communities.

Volunteer Teacher recruitment, accreditation and training

Primary Ethics puts a great deal of effort into training and supporting our volunteer teachers. It is essential that our volunteer teachers:
- are comfortable working with and be able to engage with children
- have an interest in helping young people to think about ethics
- have an open-minded, inquiring outlook and that they are good listeners.

We look for the following experience in potential ethics teachers:
- a degree in some relevant field (e.g. arts or humanities)
- a teaching qualification
- group facilitation experience and/or classroom experience
- previous work with young people.

Alternative life experience and professional skills are also considered.

We require that volunteer teachers complete:
- an online police check at his/her own expense (note this is above government requirements)
- a "Working with Children Check – Student/Volunteer Declaration"
- NSW Government's "Shining the Light on Child Protection" online training course

Volunteer teachers need to be able to dedicate significant time for the role, which includes:
- successfully completing our workshop, which involves 2 x 8 hour days of face-to-face training
- Completing several hours of a pre-training online course.
- attending class each week for 30-45 minute class, plus not less than the equivalent time in preparation. School years comprise of 40 weeks.
- revising three new topics per term taking approximately 1 hour each.
- Completing other training programs as provided by Primary Ethics.

Primary Ethics expects that its volunteer teachers:
- Diligently participate in any training or support activities provided by Primary Ethics.
- Diligently teach the approved course in philosophical ethics, using the materials and following the processes given by Primary Ethics.
- Cooperate with the school Principal and staff.
- Consistently and punctually attend classes for which he/she is responsible.

The face-to-face volunteer teacher workshop run by Primary Ethics is comparable to "train the trainer" courses offered by organisations such as Australian Institute of Management. If commercially offered, this course would be valued at approximately $1200 per participant. This workshop, the online training program, chat rooms and in-classroom mentor support are all provided by Primary Ethics free of charge by volunteers, for our volunteers.

Although the above commitment is demanding, our ethics teachers report great personal satisfaction from teaching the classes, and a sense of their own personal growth and development that has occurred as a direct result of attending training, studying our curriculum and facilitating classes for their students.

Measurement systems

Primary Ethics has identified its outcomes sought and key performance indicators as follows:

Outcomes sought	Key performance indicators
Positive impact on children's moral reasoning and critical thinking skills and their capacity to make ethical judgement, to act reasonably and responsibly.	Primary Ethics will be collaborating with experts in fields of educational research to develop tools to understand the impact we are having.
Curriculum developed for years K-6, approved by our board and for age appropriateness by the Department of Education and Communities.	Meets curriculum development timetable milestones
Face-to-face classes established for 83% of students (800 schools)	Progressively increase number of schools and classes until we reach 800 largest schools.
100% of students able to access online classrooms	Online strategy and implementation plan to be developed in 2013.
High level of volunteer satisfaction.	Volunteer surveys, measure of volunteer attrition rates, exit interviews conducted.
High level of parent and child satisfaction	Surveys to be conducted to measure parent and children levels of engagement and satisfaction.

2013: online classroom option available
2015: curriculum developed and rolled out to Kindergarten to Year 6 classes
2017: 800 schools reached (representing 83% of student population).

5. CURRICULUM

Curriculum Development

Primary Ethics was created in December 2010, and tasked with delivering classes in schools in February 2011. To enable this within the short timeframe, for terms 1 and 2, an adaptation was made of the pilot ethics program developed by Associate Professor Philip Cam. This material is no longer in use.

The focus then was on developing a comprehensive curriculum framework to span Kindergarten to Year 6. This was written by Dr Sue Knight and Dr Carol Collins, both academics who specialise in philosophy and education. As of December 2011, Dr Knight has been contracted by Primary Ethics as the lead author of the Primary Ethics curriculum for 2012-2014 to complete the lessons to populate this framework. A CV for Dr Knight has been included as an appendix to this submission.

The curriculum framework was developed sequentially on a stage-by-stage level. Each topic will be supported by a set of teaching materials consisting of stimulus materials (including purpose written scenarios and case studies); student-centred activities; exercises and discussion plans (logically designed to help students make progress in answering the key ethical questions); and a set of explanatory teaching notes.

The first lessons of this framework were rolled out in July 2011 to combined Years 5 and 6 classes. Each school year consists of 40 weeks of classes, so we are developing lessons to cover 280 classes over the seven years of primary school.

The milestones in curriculum development are:

July 2012:   ethics classes rolled out to Years 3 and 4 students
July 2013:   ethics classes rolled out to Years 1 and 2 students
July 2014:   ethics classes rolled out to Kindergarten students

As each lesson in the curriculum is developed, it is approved using the following process:
- Board Curriculum Committee (Chaired by Dr Simon Longstaff of St James Ethics Centre) reviews lesson and provides feedback to curriculum author.
- Curriculum Author (Dr Sue Knight) updates lessons to incorporate this feedback.
- Lessons submitted to Department of Education and Communities for age appropriateness approval.
- DEC recommendations are incorporated into lessons.
- Revised lessons submitted for approval to the Primary Ethics board.
- Instructional design reviewed and classroom resources prepared in consultation with Curriculum Author.
- Curriculum Author runs train-the-trainer sessions.
- Ongoing process of facilitated feedback from teachers and trainers and periodical review of curriculum content.

Curriculum Objectives

The objectives of ethics classes are to equip students with:

a) The skills to recognise, and the disposition to engage widely with, ethical issues.

b) An understanding of the shortcomings of blind appeal to authority and relativist approaches to justification, and a readiness to employ the processes of reasoned ethical decision making; more particularly, a readiness to:

- recognise common capacities for suffering and well being
- show equal consideration for the interests of others
- consider the common good
- consider relevant empirical knowledge, including the limits of individual responsibility
- consider the source and application of duties, rights and responsibilities
- consider consequences
- take circumstances into account
- apply logical reasoning
- consider the universalisability of moral principles
- consider what makes for moral character and the nature of virtues and vices

c) A readiness to take the views of others seriously and to assess conflicting views on the basis of reason and evidence;

d) An appreciation of the importance of engaging in dialogue with others in situations of moral conflict;

e) A recognition of the role reasoned ethical decision-making plays in the formation and maintenance of a just democratic society.

The approach taken by Primary Ethics is that ethical exploration in the classroom is best done through dialogue and discussion - a tradition of philosophical inquiry that goes right back to Socrates and which is tied to the substantive idea of living an 'examined life'. This approach has significant social benefits. By learning to think about ethical matters together and through the give-and-take of reasoned argument, students will learn properly to consider other people's points of view and to be sincere, reasonable and respectful in dealing with their differences and disagreements.

Curriculum Background

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that examines ethical concepts and issues. It inquires into such things as goodness, right action, and moral responsibility. From an educational point of view, philosophical ethical reflection gives students a deeper understanding of the ethical domain, preventing them from forming unthinking moral opinions. It develops their capacity for considered moral judgment, which will enable them to respond more thoughtfully to many of the problems and issues they will face in their lives.

Moral reasoning is an important aspect of ethical consideration. Moral reasoning means thinking for ourselves on the basis of both reason and evidence. There is still much debate among philosophers about morality, and plausible theories of ethical decision-making, however there are two areas of thought that Primary Ethics rules out as being valid ethical theories.

The first is blindly accepting a moral authority. That authority could be a peer group, a government, an ideology, a corporation, a culture or religion – that dictates what is right and wrong. From Socrates onward, philosophers have wanted human beings to be able to provide reasons for their thinking and their actions. Considered moral reasoning might lead you to either accept or reject the dictates of a moral authority. Even if you come to the same conclusion as the moral authority, the difference is that you thought it through for yourself on the basis of evidence and reasoning, rather than blindly following without question.

Secondly, moral relativism is not considered a valid ethical theory by most philosophers and is not advocated by Primary Ethics. Relativism is the view that there is no absolute or universal moral truth – that morality is relative to each culture, social group or individual. While relativism can seem consistent with tolerance, it also contains both logical and conceptual flaws. The theory is also problematic in teaching and studying ethics, because of the way that it can block moral reasoning. When considering bullying, honour killings, slavery and other practices, it becomes clear that there is a need for individuals to make reasoned ethical judgements. That is, it is not enough simply to be told that bullying, honour killings and slavery are wrong – the greater achievement is to understand why this is so and to have the capacity to apply this understanding to other situations.

While there are many different approaches in ethical theory about the notions of objective and universal moral truths, philosophical ethics encourages students to use their reasoning skills to try to find out for themselves what these truths may be, and to make moral judgements based on this reasoning. It is certainly important for us to consider how different circumstances involved in ethical situations can lead to the necessity to make subtle distinctions in moral judgements.

Beyond introducing students to core concepts, the main role of an Ethics Teacher is to facilitate class discussion to help children develop their capacity for considered moral judgment. This will enable them to respond more thoughtfully to many of the problems and issues they will face in their lives. Teachers use their questioning and facilitation skills to help children explore a range of scenarios from the curriculum, in order to explore the broader questions - what is right and wrong, how do we decide what is right and wrong?

Curriculum Summary

Primary Ethics' curriculum spans all seven years of primary school, teaching children how to approach ethical issues while developing their capacity for moral reasoning. By considering a wide range of ethical issues appropriate to their particular level of development, children will learn skills such as collaborative inquiry, logical reasoning, critical thinking and the capacity to evaluate good and bad moral reasoning. The curriculum topics, scenarios and questions have been selected because they are not ethically simple. They often include complexities and unknowns, and because of this, they provide a vehicle for children to practise moral reasoning by considering:

- common capacities for suffering and well being
- the interests of others (incl. discussion of rights and duties)
- the common good
- the extent and limits of individual responsibility
- consequences
- circumstances
- the universalisation of moral principles, and
- virtues and vices.

The topics in the curriculum provide students with the opportunity to develop increasingly sophisticated knowledge and skills in moral reasoning. Children in the younger primary years examine topics such as being left out, sharing and bullying, while older children reflect on issues such as homelessness and child labour to help them consider the feelings and interests of others – one important aspect of moral reasoning. Other aspects include understanding consequences, having empathy, appreciating difference, recognising common capacities recognising and acting on duties and giving equal consideration. These are tackled through a range of topics as diverse as How Important is it to Look Good? Are Rules Always Fair? Pride, Teasing and Animal Rights.

The idea of moral character is introduced in Kindergarten in Being a Good Friend and is then extended over the next few years in topics focussing on courage, pride, boasting and greed. Students will learn to recognise good and bad moral reasoning very early on, by introducing notions such as relevance, the difference between relevance and truth and the idea of weighing reasons against each other. Throughout the curriculum, children are asked to provide reasons to support their arguments/positions and Ethics Teachers are trained to test the validity of given reasons. Blind appeal to authority and moral relativism are exposed as bad moral reasoning. Later lessons progressively introduce logical concepts and processes, including conditionals, assumptions, induction and validity.

Evidence shows that well-reasoned moral judgement does not come automatically as young people mature and that these skills are best developed by engaging children in collaborative dialogue about a wide range of issues that matter to them. That's what the Primary Ethics' curriculum does. Once acquired, these skills accompany individuals into adulthood.

The complete curriculum framework is included as an appendix to this submission. This framework outlines the topics that will be taught at each of the stages of the ethics course.

6. FUNDING

Funding Sources

It is only through the tremendous contributions of our volunteers, individuals and organisations that Primary Ethics exists. We have not yet established a secure regular income stream, yet have managed to source funds from a number of avenues.

If we want to develop the K-6 Curriculum by the end of 2014 and be in 800 schools by 2017 then we will need to be fully operational by mid 2014. Our operational costs have been estimated as:

- 2012 $745,000
- 2013 $840,000
- 2014 $945,000

In 2012, Primary Ethics has secured $304,000 from the following sources:

- Remaining seed funding from St James Ethics Centre
- Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation funding
- Contra support
- Individual donations.

Primary Ethics receives no government funding at either state or federal level.

We are still in the process of seeking financial support to cover vital operational funds required for 2012 and beyond.

7. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Primary Ethics collaborates with a number of organisations working in complementary areas:

- St James Ethics Centre: Dr Simon Longstaff and Michael Pain are both SJEC directors who also sit on our board.

- Churches: Faith based groups delivering SRE classes in NSW public primary schools may request a copy of the lessons used by Primary Ethics for their use in SRE classes. These are provided free of charge. To date Anglican, Baptist, Buddhist and Uniting Churches have requested and received lessons.

- Department of Education and Communities: each stage of our curriculum is assessed and approved for age-appropriateness.

- Universities: we have initiated relationships with Sydney, Macquarie, Newcastle, UNSW, Western Sydney and Southern Cross Universities. These are providing training facilities and/or volunteers for Primary Ethics. In addition, we hope to gain access to volunteers and the expertise of faculty and research staff.

Appendix to submission:

Board and Executive of Primary Ethics

Mr Bruce Hogan AM – Chairman.
Bruce Hogan is Chairman of Snowy Hydro Ltd and a director of the Stolen Generations Testimonies Foundation and the Rita Hogan Foundation. Bruce has had an extensive non-executive director career following his executive career in investment banking, primarily with Bankers Trust Australia. Past directorships include Coles Myer, Metcash, GIO, Funds SA and Energy Australia and Chairmanship of NSW Treasury Corporation, State Super Financial Services, Adelaide Casino and the Coles Myer Superannuation Fund. Bruce is a former director of The Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club and a former director of St Vincent's Public and Private Hospitals and the St Vincent's Clinic. He has an Economics Degree (First Class Honours) from the University of Sydney and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In June 2001 Bruce was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for services to business and commerce and to the community through support of biotechnology research.

Ms Dianne Giblin - Director
Dianne Giblin was the President of the Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations of New South Wales during the extensive lobbying and resultant trial of ethics classes. Her term of office finished coincidently at the conclusion of the trial. Dianne is currently employed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Council of State School Organisations (National public school parent organisation). Dianne has a Bachelors Degree in Education (Adult) and a Diploma of Management. She is also a Director of The Public Education Foundation in NSW Ltd and a proud ambassador for the One Million Women campaign.

Dr Simon Longstaff – Director
Simon Longstaff is a philosopher whose focus is in the field of applied ethics encompassing the wider community beyond academe. Since 1991, he has been Executive Director of St James Ethics Centre, an independent not-for-profit organisation, which provides a non-judgemental forum for the promotion and exploration of ethics. Simon encourages and contributes to the active discussion of ethical issues amongst the widest possible audience. He played a major role in advocating for the provision of ethics classes for children who don't attend scripture in NSW primary schools. Simon has a Bachelor's Degree in Education and won scholarships to study at Cambridge, where he read for the degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy.

Ms Robin Low - Director
Robin Low is a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers, specialising in governance, risk, control and assurance. Her clients include many leading Australian financial institutions. Robin has considerable not-for-profit experience and is currently a director of the Public Education Foundation and a committee member of the Primary Club. She is a former president of YWCA Australia, former board member of YWCA NSW and former auditor of the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Robin brings to Primary Ethics risk, process, governance and financial skills. Robin has a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia.

Mr Michael Pain - Director
Michael Pain leads Accenture's management consulting activities in Australia, operating a business with around 350 professionals working across a range of industries. He oversees Accenture's work with clients in the strategy, human performance, CRM, finance and performance management space, as well as supply chain consulting. Michael works with strategic and technology implementation programs and projects predominantly in the financial services industry and has extensive consulting experience with numerous banking, insurance and wealth management organisations. Michael also co-leads Accenture's corporate giving activities in Australia. He also supports several philanthropic organisations in the area of medical research and the environment. Michael has a Bachelor of Science (Hons) from the University of Sydney and an MBA (Hons) from INSEAD in France.

Ms Teresa Russell – Director and General Manager Schools
Teresa Russell joined the Primary Ethics Board after spending 2010 as the Ethics Pilot Project Manager for St James Ethics Centre, managing a 10-week pilot at ten NSW primary schools, including recruitment, logistics, volunteer and school liaison, communications and social media. Once Primary Ethics was established, Teresa managed the growth of the organisation as its General Manager, Schools, responsible for all operational issues, recruitment of volunteers and policy development. Teresa is a freelance business writer and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business (Marketing). She has experience as an international marketing director in the health care industry, as a Coronary Care nurse and as an owner of a successful restaurant in Sydney.

Ms Leith Brooke - Executive General Manager
Leith Brooke has worked in the not-for-profit sector since 2001, at the Art Gallery of NSW and Belvoir St Theatre where she ran the business development units. Previous to this she worked in marketing and product management roles for Volvo Car Corporation in Australia, UK, Belgium and Sweden. Leith lectures in arts marketing at the College of Fine Arts (UNSW) and spent four years on the board of the physical theatre company Legs on the Wall. Leith has a Bachelor's Degree in Arts (Communication) from the University of Technology Sydney.

CV Dr Sue Knight

Academic Qualifications
- BA (Hons, first class) University of Adelaide, 1971
- PhD (Philos) University of Adelaide, 1978
- BEd University of Adelaide, 1981

Professional qualifications
Until the end of 2011, Sue Knight was Lecturer and Research Degrees Coordinator in the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences at the University of South Australia. Dr Knight has now been contracted as the lead author of the Primary Ethics curriculum for 2012-2014, and now holds the position of Adjunct lecturer at UniSA .

Teaching interests
- The teaching of all branches of philosophy in Primary and Secondary schools
- Embedding philosophical inquiry within all areas of the school curriculum
- Moral/values education
- The teaching of reasoning skills

Professional associations
Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP)
Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations (FAPSA)
South Australian Association for Philosophy in the Classroom (SAAPIC)

Research interests
- Chief evaluator of the NSW Ethics Course Trial 2010
- Co-researcher on project entitled 'Pre-service Teachers and Citizenship Education' (2008-2010) funded by the Ethics Centre of South Australia ECSA)
- Co-Editor of the ERA B-ranked scholarly publication: 'Critical & Creative Thinking: The Australasian Journal of Philosophy in Education' (2006-2010)
- Reviewer for the *International Journal of Educational Research, International Journal of the Humanities, Australian Association for Research in Education* (AARE) and *The Social Educator*
- Dr Knight's research and publication interests include: embedding philosophical inquiry across the curriculum in primary, secondary and tertiary educational settings; teaching for social justice; values/moral education; citizenship education; reasoning skill development

Invited Speaker
Young Minds 2012, 21/22 June, Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre

Recent Publications

Refereed Journal Articles

Knight, S & Collins, C (in press) 'Opening teachers' minds to Philosophy: the crucial role of teacher education', Educational Theory and Philosophy.

Knight, S & Collins, C (2010) 'Enlivening the curriculum: the power of philosophical enquiry' *Theory and Research in Education*, 8 (3) 305-318.

Bruce, V, Knight, S & Barnes, A (2008) 'Community of Ethical Inquiry, Concept Mapping and an Interactive Whiteboard', *Critical & Creative Thinking: The Australasian Journal of Philosophy in Education*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 59-91.

Knight, S (2007) 'Maggie and the Pirate: What role do cicrumstances play in judging moral rightness and wrongness?' *Critical & Creative Thinking: the Australasian Journal of Philosophy in Education*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 55-60.

Gallasch, J, Collins, C & **Knight, S** 'Effective Environmental Education: The Need for Ethical Inquiry' *The International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability*, vol 3. No 4, pp. 77-85.

Collins, C & **Knight, S** 'Where to S&E?' *The Social Educator*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 15-18, 2006

Knight, S & Collins, C 'The Australian Values Education Framework: no justification required?' *Critical and Creative Thinking*: *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy in Education,* vol.14, no. 2, pp. 32- 49, 2006

Knight, S & Collins, C 'The Cultivation of Reason Giving: The Primary Purpose of Education?', *International Journal of the Humanities,* vol. 3, issue 2, pp. 187-194, 2005

Collins, C & **Knight, S** 'Cultivating reason-giving: an alternative paradigm', *Critical and Creative Thinking*: *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy in Education,* vol.13, nos. 1&2, pp. 1-33, 2005

Knight, S & Collins, C 'The Curriculum Transformed: Philosophy Embedded in the Learning Areas', *Critical and Creative Thinking*, vol. 8, pp. 8-14, 2000

Research Report

'NSW Ethics Course Trial: Final Report', 2010. Prepared for the NSW Minister of Education, The Hon Verity Firth.

Refereed Conference Proceedings

Collins, C and **Knight, S** 'Fostering thoughtful engagement in the political process through teacher education: an   intervention study', Proceedings of the Annual ATEA conference, Brisbane, November2010, Proceedings published 2010

Knight, S and Collins, C (2010)' 'What must teacher education programmes do to open teachers' minds to philosophy?', Philosophy Of Education Society of Australasia Annual Conference, Freemantle WA, December 2010, proceedings published January 2011

Collins, C & **Knight, S** (2009) 'Enlivening the curriculum: the power of philosophical inquiry' The Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain: Annual International Conference, New College, Oxford, April, 2009.

Knight, S and Collins, C 'ETHIC: A procedure for ethical decision making in Society & Environment', Annual SEAA conference, Adelaide, 2009 (Abstract reviewed)

Knight, S & Collins, C 'Developing Ethical Responsibility: The Role of Values Education', *The Australian Association for Professional and Applied Ethics: Fourteenth Annual Conference,* RMIT University, Melbourne, June 2007, Proceedings published November 2007

Collins, C & **Knight, S** 'Moral Education: can a 'common values' approach halt the slide from tolerance to relativism?'   *Negotiating the Sacred IV: Tolerance, Education and the Curriculum,* Australian National University, Canberra, September 2007, Proceedings published 2007

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    Associations (FAPSA)
South Australian Association of Philosophy in the Classroom (SAAPIC)
Australasian Association of Philosophy
Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia

Professional Committees/ Service to the Profession
Australian Curriculum Advisory Group: General Capabilities
SACE Curriculum Leaders Group: Philosophy

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Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework

STRUCTURE OF THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Dr Sue Knight and Dr Carol Collins have developed our curriculum framework as a community service to Primary Ethics. We are deeply grateful to them for this contribution. The curriculum content is being developed on a stage-by-stage level (Stage E1: Kindergarten; Stage 1: Years 1&2; Stage 2: Years 3&4, Stage 3: Years 5&6). Individual topics are taught over a period of two or more Primary Ethics lessons. Each topic will be supported by a set of teaching materials consisting of stimulus materials (including purpose-written scenarios and case studies, along with suggestions for relevant picture books), student-centred activities, exercises and discussion plans, and a set of explanatory teaching notes.

The topics and a short summary of the content of each are listed below. This is a living document that will be refined and amended over time.

Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework

Kindergarten (Stage E1)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	**Thinking together** • Asking good questions • Time for thinking • Taking turns – speaking and listening	**Thinking together about questions that matter** Finding answers to different kinds of questions. Children will begin to distinguish ethical from other kinds of questions and learn how to disagree respectfully.	**Putting it all together: ethical inquiry** Discussion topic: *Being left out*
Term 2	**Giving and asking for reasons** When should/do we give reasons? Giving reasons to our teachers, parents, friends, brothers or sisters	**Needs of animals** What do animals need in order to live good lives?	**Distinguishing social conventions from morals** Examples: Pushing in, staring, table manners, please and thank you.
Term 3	**Friendship** Why do people have friends? How do we know if someone is our friend? What makes a good friend?	**Acting fairly** Discussing what is fair in a variety of situations familiar to Kindergarten students.	**Telling a secret** A discussion around what secrets are and when it's OK to share them and why.
Term 4	**Why do we have rules?** Do rules apply to everyone? What if there were no rules? Classroom/school-based examples.	**Should we tell on people who do the wrong thing?** A discussion of what 'doing the wrong thing' means and asking the questions: • Should we always tell? • Should we never tell? • Should we sometimes tell? • How can we work it out?	**Caring for the environment** Is it always OK to swing on the branches of a tree? Or to collect shells from the beach? Or catch tadpoles in the creek/small crabs/insects…? How do we decide what's OK to do?

Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework

Year 1 (Stage 1.1)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	**Stereotyping: Prejudice** Can we tell what people are like just by looking at them?	**Respectful disagreement:** What does 'disagreeing respectfully' involve? Listening carefully, not making fun, questioning and asking for reasons, understanding different views.	**Teasing: fun at the expense of others?** Students consider questions around what it feels like to be teased and whether moral rules apply to all
Term 2	**Evaluating Reasons** • Focus on the notions of relevance and truth, aiming at intuitive appreciation • Working out what is true	**Is it always wrong to…?** Exploring universal moral claims • Are some kinds of actions always wrong, no matter what, or should we take circumstances into account?	**Sharing: Why should we share? When should we share?** Classroom and friendship examples
Term 3	**Empathy** Putting ourselves in others' shoes – exercises and role play activities	**Different kinds of animals - different needs?** Differences between wild animals and pets. Is it Ok to keep wild animals as pets?	**Are rules fair?** Classroom and family examples: different bedtimes, being kept in at recess…
Term 4	**What does it mean to 'harm' the environment?** • Needs of plants • Can plants feel pain? • Can harming plants harm animals or people?	**Fairness** A focus on fairness being equal treatment and the limitations of that approach using classroom and family examples.	**Being different and being the same** • How are we different from one another? • What would it be like if we were all exactly the same? • How are we the same?

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Year 2 (Stage 1.2)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	*Pride: When do we have the right to be proud?* Using relevant examples, students will discuss the issue of what kinds of things we have a right to be proud of… and why.	*Reasoning with 'All'* Generalisations and over-generalisations - introduction to inductive reasoning.	*What makes you, you?* Is it the way we look, the way we act, the way we think? What part does personality/character play?
Term 2	*Beauty* • What makes someone beautiful? • Beauty on the inside vs. beauty on the outside – is one more important than the other?	*Evaluating Reasons/ content focussed* Practice in distinguishing good and bad reasons (relevance and truth)	*Fairness: focus on fairness as 'needs' and 'desert'* Children will discuss the issue of fairness using school, friendship and family examples.
Term 3	*Courage* Students will discuss the question of whether we have a moral responsibility to stand up for others who need our help (friends/not-friends), even though it may be hard/bad for us. Or whether we should put our views forward when we know others, including our friends, disagree with us.	*Understanding and forgiving* Discussion based on Ezra Jack Keat's picture book 'Maggie and the Pirate' (Four Winds Books, 1979)	*Reasoning with 'all' and 'only'* Using exercises, students will discuss the different meanings of 'only' and what that means when reasoning with 'all' and 'only'. Stereotyping examples
Term 4	*Ownership/ stewardship* • Does anyone own the forests, oceans, atmosphere etc? • Do they need looking after? • If no one owns them, who should care for them?	*Making moral choices* • Do you know when you've done something wrong? • How do you know?	*Happiness* • What makes us happy? • Can we be happy when everyone around us isn't happy? • Can we be happy if we only care about ourselves?

Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework

Year 3 (Stage 2.1)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	***Why be moral?*** Using school, sporting, societal and environmental examples, students will discuss what it means to 'do the right thing' in a variety of situations.	***Arguments*** Arguing with 'no' Discussion of ethical content is contained within exercises.	***Disagreeing respectfully about controversial issues*** Students will run through a series of exercises to help them think about the issues surrounding disagreeing with others in a respectful manner.
Term 2	***Is it right to keep animals in zoos?*** Empirical knowledge: purposes of zoos, nature and welfare of animals compared with humans.	***'Bragging' (boasting)*** An examination of bragging precedes a discussion about whether bragging is the same as lying and whether it is ever right to brag or boast. Examples from school/home/sport/media	***Children's rights: Child Labour*** Using a case study example of children working in cocoa plantations in western Africa, students will discuss issues around child labour and consider what their moral responsibility is in relation to this and similar issues?'
Term 3	***Diversity and tolerance*** Using cultural examples, students will identify the differences in underlying factual beliefs and circumstances. Are some actions, such as bullying, morally wrong, even if some people believe they are not?	***Breaking a promise*** Using personal and societal examples, students will discuss issues around the rights and wrongs of breaking promises.	***Identifying underlying assumptions*** Students learn what assumptions are and discuss the dangers of hidden assumptions through exercises.
Term 4	***Endangered species and extinction*** Does it matter if gorillas, elephants, polar bears etc. become extinct? What about rats or mosquitoes or some species of plants? Would it be right for scientists to bring back some extinct species?	***Being generous*** Why do we give? When you give, do you expect to receive something in return? Do we only give gifts to people we like? How do we decide who we should give to, and how much to give?	***Saying sorry*** Using personal and societal examples, students will discuss issues around saying sorry – why, when, what does it mean and does it have to be accompanied by action?

Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework

Year 4 (Stage 2.2)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	*Greed* Students will discover the difference between wants, preferences and needs and discuss the question, "What do Australians need in order to be happy?" Further discussion will centre on consumerism and ethical shopping.	*Lying and truth telling* Using examples, students will discuss what makes lying morally wrong and whether lying is wrong under all circumstances. Students will also examine the broader societal effects of lying.	*Cheating* What counts as cheating? Why do people cheat? Is it ok to cheat if the rules are unfair? What if everybody did it? Is cheating always wrong?
Term 2	*Advertising* Students will examine the difference between persuasion based on reason, emotion, desire, peer pressure and societal expectations. They will then discuss legal and moral issues around dishonest advertising and irrational persuasion.	*Being an ethical consumer: palm oil and orang-utans* Using a case study from Borneo, children will examine the issues around being an informed and ethical consumer.	*Reality TV* Through an examination of reality TV programs, students will discuss the question of whether it is ok to treat contestants unfairly for the sake of entertainment/TV ratings.
Term 3	*Whaling* Is whaling morally wrong, even though it is part of Japanese/Norwegian culture?	*Introduction to validity* Students will exercise their intuitive notions of validity and hidden premises by discussing a range of applicable scenarios.	*Gossip and social media* An examination of the relationship between gossip and harm – especially with respect to social networking sites.
Term 4	*Induction* Can we prove general claims true or false? How reliable is observation?	*Getting even* Using children's own examples, they will investigate the concept of 'pay back' and the costs and benefits of getting even. This will be followed by a discussion around different ways of resolving conflict.	*Intention* 'I didn't *mean* to do it!" What do we mean when we say this? Students will examine the relationship between intention and blame.

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Year 5 (Stage 3.1)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	*Performance enhancing drugs in sport* Performance enhancing drugs are banned in all sports. Students will discuss the concept of unfair advantage and whether the taking of performance enhancing drugs is morally wrong.	*Image: How much should we care about the way that we and others look?* Students will examine the issue of image, including how much they are influenced by fashion, advertising and what their friends think and whether the way other people look affects the way we treat them.	*What does it mean to be patriotic?* What is patriotism? Does it mean putting Australia and Australians first? Can we be patriotic and egalitarian? Students will also look at the issue of cultural stereotyping.
Term 2	*Punishment* Students will examine issues around punishment, leading to the final question, 'Can punishment be fair?'	*Structure of Arguments* Students will examine all aspects of arguments including premises, hidden premises, conclusions and what makes good and bad arguments.	*How far does our moral responsibility extend?* Using age-appropriate scenarios, students will examine the issue of how far moral responsibility should or does extend.
Term 3	*Stealing is illegal. Is it also morally wrong?* Through discussion of various scenarios, students will consider whether stealing is morally wrong in all circumstances.	*Validity* Students will learn what a valid argument is by considering 'If-then' statements, and the classical logic of modus ponens and modus tollens.	*Homelessness* Do we, as individuals and as a society, have a responsibility to help those who are homeless?
Term 4	*Killing animals for food: Is it morally right to eat animals?* Using the yes/no/don't know approach, students will state their initial opinions and reasons, which will be followed by whole class evaluation of the arguments.	*Spirits, rhino horns, big bangs and genes: Why should we trust science?* Students will examine false beliefs that matter and the use of theories (everyday and scientific) as explanations. They will then look at the issues of choosing between competing theories.	*Fairness: treating people equally or unequally?* Is it fair to treat people (or groups of people) equally? Why or why not? Is it ever fair to treat people (or groups) unequally? Why or why not?

Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework

Year 6 (Stage 3.2)	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Term 1	*A fair society?* Students will use *The Outsiders* story to consider issues of fairness in society.	*Should Human Rights be extended to other animals?* Human rights: where do rights come from and how are they justified? What obligations do they impose on governments and individuals? To what extent, if any, should human rights be extended to other living creatures?	*Only two topics in Term 1*
Term 2	*Fatalism* Are our futures and fates fixed? Does what we do today have any effect on what happens in the future?	*Beliefs, Opinions, Tolerance and Respect* What does it mean to respect another person's beliefs or opinions? Should we always respect the beliefs of others? To what extent should we be tolerant of moral difference?	*Moral responsibility* To what extent can we be held morally responsible for our actions? What might it mean for society if it turned out that even our conscious decisions were determined in advance?
Term 3	*Voting - an ethical issue?* Students will explore what issues determine how we vote in school and government elections – and whether we should vote solely on the basis of self-interest.	*Revisiting the danger of appealing blindly to authority – the law, the majority, religion…* To what extent do we still appeal unquestioningly to authorities in our everyday lives? What are the consequences of thinking and acting for one's self? Students will look at examples of groups that have refused to follow blindly.	*Revisiting the dangers of relativism* Human rights/women's rights: historical and contemporary issues/case studies
Term 4	*The value of nature and the environment.* Does nature have intrinsic value? Is the environment worthy of moral consideration just because it exists? Or does it have value only because it meets human needs?	*Can war ever be just?* What is wrong with war? Is it ever right to go to war? Students will examine the issue of pacifism and non-violence (e.g., Ghandi) and discuss if there is a moral way to conduct war.	*An ethical life* Consideration of our moral responsibility to others. To what extent do we have a responsibility to continue examining and discussing ethical issues once we leave Primary Ethics classes? Should we always stand up for our beliefs?

Primary Ethics Curriculum Framework