

**Submission  
No 407**

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

**Name:** Mrs Lucy Hookway

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The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Fax: (02) 9230 2981

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing today as both an Ethics teacher and a mother of three primary school children who have attended/are attending non-SRE.

I taught ethics for the last two terms of 2011 to a group of 20 Year 5/6 students. It was the most rewarding and enriching experience to see this group of boys and girls engage with each other and myself for half an hour each week about topics that are relevant to them and the society in which they live.

These children looked forward to their Ethics class every week, as it was a different style of learning than what they experience during the other parts of their school day. We are not there to teach these children right from wrong, we are there to act as a facilitator for them as we discuss issues that are relevant to them and their environment.

As an Ethics teacher we provide the students with a topic for discussion with which ideas grow and form and inevitably a lively debate will take place. They are able to see things not only through their own eyes but through the eyes of their peers and that can only be a positive thing which will hold them in good stead for the future.

These classes and more importantly these children are doing no harm to anyone and as far as I am concerned Fred Nile is using them as lever to achieve his political goals. Reverend Nile could well do with sitting in on a class or two of Ethics and learn a little from these kids.

I take issue with the fact that SRE classes have never been scrutinised with a Parliamentary enquiry in all the years they have been operating in schools, and believe it is blatant discrimination against those who chose non-SRE for their children.

I would strongly encourage any member of the community who is opposed to the Ethics classes to go along to a class and see first hand what goes on in the Ethics class. It does not seem fair or logical to make a judgement without seeing first hand the positive influence these classes are having on the children.

After all, these children are our future and I believe they can only gain positives from these classes.

Finally, I would like to include a couple of comments from the students in my class when they were asked at the end of last year what they taken from the Ethics class "not to stereotype other people", "what the right thing to do is", "caring about people", "everyone gets a say, learnt about lots of different things and there are no sides", "I've enjoyed brainstorming and giving our ideas - we're not wrong or right. It was great that we can learn to make the right decision", "I enjoyed learning about other types of lives and what they go through" and "learning things in scripture instead of messing around in non-scripture"

Yours sincerely

Lucy Hookway