

**Submission  
No 280**

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

**Name:** Ms Anousha Zarkesh

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Please do not repeal the Education Act (Ethics) 2010.

It would be abhorrent to see the choices currently offered to children and families alike withdrawn on a political whim.

It has taken many years to get Primary Ethics at all primary schools as an option to the SRE choices. My 2 children have spent 30 minutes every Tuesday in the library doing nothing, in fact, it's against the law to have any instruction from teachers at all while they are there, whilst the other children are tutored in various religious instruction. My children have had no choice but to sit in the library doing nothing. This is archaic. Times have changed. Students / parents are interested in secular and philosophical debate about morals and ethics. The school my children attend now offer Primary Ethics. They learn about ethics, values and meaningful behaviour in a non religious framework and I would say half of their year attend these classes now. This says a lot about the choices parents want to make about teaching their children ethics, and moral behaviour without involvement in religious organisations. This is about CHOICE...I am angry this inquiry is being dictated to but the religious lobby groups. They have their religion - they can keep it. There is no question Special Religious Education is staying. Thats not the issue. But there are many thousands of parents/children who dont want their children to attend these classes. We need an alternative. Thats all we are asking. I am strongly in favour of maintaining the option for students to avail themselves of the current options where they can attend the SRE classes or the Primary Ethics classes.