

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2010-2011**

**Outcome 2 - Schools**

**DEEWR Question No.EW0880\_11**

**Senator Mason asked on 24/02/2011, Hansard page 34.**

**Question**

**NATIONAL SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM**

Senator MASON—Ms Paul, I receive all sorts of things, believe me. The good, the bad and the ugly—I get it all. They cannot proselytise Christian ethics. Ms Paul—They cannot proselytise, that is right. I do not know if we have got them here, but we are happy to quote from the guidelines if it would help or we take it on notice.

**Answer**

The National School Chaplaincy Program requires all chaplains to adhere to a Code of Conduct which provides direction on how chaplaincy services are to be provided. All chaplains are required to sign the Code of Conduct prior to commencing work at a school.

The Code of Conduct includes a number of provisions relating to the religious beliefs of the student and parents/guardians, and on the subject of proselytizing, in particular:

Clause 2. Respect the rights of parents/guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children is in line with their own convictions.

Clause 8. Act as a reference point for students, staff and other members of the school community on religious, spiritual issues, values, human relationships and wellbeing issues. This includes providing support for grief, family breakdown and other crisis situations. In doing this, a school chaplain will:

- a) respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs that may be different from his or her own;
- b) uphold a parent/guardian and individual's right to choose their beliefs and values;
- c) actively discourage any form of harassment or discrimination on the grounds of religious ideology or doctrine;
- d) under certain circumstances, refer a child to a chaplain who is in accordance with their own beliefs and values.

Clause 9. While recognising that an individual chaplain will in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her denomination or religious beliefs, a chaplain should not take advantage of his or her privileged position to proselytise for that denomination or religious belief.