

Submission re Draft Report: Philanthropy/Future Foundations For Giving

To Whom It May Concern

I write as an individual concerned with the social cohesion of our society, and the increasing antisocial behaviour seen among our young people, as evidenced by the number of emergency calls made by school communities, for example.

I have had the privilege of teaching Special Religious Education in a local government school for over 30 years. I have seen at first hand the positive way the children respond to simple, biblical teaching which includes the value of individuals and the need to treat each other with compassion. My role is strictly voluntary, with expenses towards the syllabus and teaching materials required by the Department of Education, mainly borne by myself.

I also financially support the employment of a qualified teacher to teach SRE in two local government high schools. This teachers is fully funded by donations from the local community/ He chooses to spends his lunch and recess breaks in the school playground, chatting with and interacting with students. More than once he has been able to break up or prevent an altercation between students, which the supervising teacher on playground duty was unaware of. The school executive have said that the student behaviour is much improved on those days when the SRE teacher is present.

The health of any society depends on the quality of the grass roots members, all helping and supporting the community. Volunteering is what keeps many, many worthwhile community sporting and support groups running. 'Religion' has become a dirty word among many people, who rightly condemn such things as child institutional abuse. However, the sheer goodness of most members of the faith communities needs to be encouraged and supported. In my local town alone, the hungry are fed by faith groups; they are given access to cheaper groceries; they are helped to find household items otherwise unaffordable. Who else looks out for these needy people? Who else will help the helpers if the current tax-deductibility is changed?

Please would you consider the issues very carefully indeed, and continue the present status of such donations.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Turvey