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## GREENS' EDUCATION POLICY CLEAR FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

National Catholic Education Commission executive director Ross Fox has expressed surprise that the Australian Greens are upset that their education policies have attracted scrutiny.

"As I stated yesterday, the education policies of the Greens are difficult to reconcile," Mr Fox said.

"Today Senator Di Natale and Senator McKim have restated their commitment to needs-based funding. However, their education policies continue to state that government funding to Catholic schools has harmed government schools.

"The only reasonable conclusion from the Greens policy is that funding would be stripped from non-government schools so that it could be channelled to government schools.

"The Greens also want to restrict religious freedom in Catholic schools and prevent schools from employing staff who support the values and mission of the school."

Mr Fox said when considered as a whole, the Greens' policies would harm non-government schools and the quality of education they can provide.

"The Greens' policy states that federal funding must prioritise government schools. This directly contradicts a commitment to sector-blind funding," he explained.

"Catholic education supports education policies that prioritise need – not one school sector over another.

"The Greens have failed to explain why a government schools student should be prioritised for funding because of the school her family chooses for her education."

Mr Fox said many factors will understandably inform people as they approach the election on Saturday.

"It should come as no surprise that Catholic education aspires that all candidates and parties seeking election on Saturday respect and support the contribution of all schools to educating young people," he said.

"All policies should be assessed on their merits. Unfortunately, the Greens' education policy has damaging implications for local Catholic schools across Australia in terms of funding and employing staff to support the choice of the school community."