Statement from Education Minister Verity Firth on the teaching of the Holocaust in schools

“The Board of Studies sets the curriculum for all students in NSW.

“Many NSW students study the Holocaust through mandatory and elective subjects in Years 7-10, and also in great detail in Years 11 and 12.

“As the Minister for Education, I think it is important for students to have an understanding of major events which played a significant part in shaping or changing our society, both for the better and worse.

“The 20th century provides a number of important examples of major world events from which we can all learn.

“The Holocaust is one example of the fragility of society and what can happen when a civilised society is overrun by people with extremist views and policies.

“My personal view is that students of history and society should know about the systematic, state-ordered persecution and murder of six million people at the hands of the Nazi regime.

“Through the study of history and literature I understand that students already learn about the Holocaust and more broadly the events of World War II.

“Of course, the cornerstone of the teaching of history in our schools is the study of Australian history.

“Many people may agree with my view, but the curriculum is not determined by one person – it’s been developed by teachers, academics, parents and all school systems.

“It’s often updated but there’s broad agreement that the balance is right.

“Of course there is a limit to how much we can put into the curriculum, but as a community I think it’s important that we have a conversation about the things our children should be taught.”