The CLP Government’s latest plan to cut teacher numbers was today slammed by Shadow Education Minister, Michael Gunner.

John Elferink today admitted that the CLP wanted to take student-teacher ratios out of the teacher’s Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) which means less teachers and overcrowded classrooms.

“The only reason you would scrap student-teacher ratios is to cut teacher numbers,” Michael Gunner said.

“This will lead to overcrowded classrooms, less teacher time with students and a drop in our children’s educational outcomes.

“The CLP cut the education budget by 10% in the mini budget last year, stripping schools of resources. Now they are cutting the most important teaching resource of all – teachers.

“No wonder Adam Giles knocked back the $300 million Gonski funding for education. He is cutting teachers not increasing them.

“The CLP promised not to cut any frontline workers, and they’ve broken that promise. It doesn’t get much more frontline than teachers,” Mr Gunner said.

The CLP again raised the budget to try and desperately justify their teacher cuts. The budget figures are the same as published before the election – nothing has changed.

“The budget figures they based their promises on to increase resources for schools are the identical figures they are now using to justify getting rid of teachers.”

“The suggestion from Mr Elferink that student-teacher ratios are an “ancillary” issue and shouldn’t be part of the EBA is nonsense. The number of students in a classroom is clearly a workplace condition for teachers and a very important part of an EBA agreement,” Mr Gunner said.

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