

Appendix C Copies of Documents

ICCOREIS: Policy for Cooperative Special Religious Education (SRE) in Schools (NSW) and Code of Practice

Policy Statement

The Members of ICCOREIS affirm the place of SRE in schools in all its approved forms. We affirm our willingness to cooperate in SRE for each generation of students by our commitment to the following principles and code of practice.

Principles of SRE

1. We acknowledge that God is already at work in the school through the Holy Spirit.
2. We seek every opportunity to share the Christian message with those enrolled by parents according to denominational preference. We seek to enable students to make their own informed response as part of a genuinely educational activity.
3. We affirm our Christian responsibility to serve the school community.
4. We recognise the importance of a considered long-term ministry in the school community which is best supported by local churches.
5. We are united in purpose and affirm flexibility in the implementation of SRE.
6. We believe in the importance of cooperation with other Christians and other religious persuasions in the school community.
7. We affirm the importance of consultation among the local providers of SRE to achieve cooperation and a flexible basis of implementation.
8. We recognise the need for cultural relevance in our SRE ministry and respect the varied traditions of Christianity in which the Gospel is expressed across many churches.
9. We recognise that the needs, interests and aspirations of students are central to SRE.
10. We take into account the developing capacities of students and their individual differences.
11. We recognise the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (NSW) Inc as the body established by the churches to provide a representative framework for SRE in public schools. The Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools, in formulating policy and coordinating action among its member churches, is fulfilling the agreed position of the churches expressed in the report *Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980)*.

Code of Practice

1. We recognise, respect and affirm the authority of the school in SRE as conferred by the *Education Act 1990*, in particular, its overall duty of care and its responsibility for negotiating the timetable and allocation of rooms.
2. We recognise the prime authority of parents and their right to enrol their children for the SRE of their choice, which we will at all times respect.
3. We agree to abide by the principles of consultation, cooperation and flexibility as defined in *Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980)* and that SRE is a genuinely educational activity which is to be adequately staffed and competently taught.

4. We seek to promote consultation among the representatives of the religious persuasions, which have been requested by parents to provide SRE in a school, so that a program for SRE can be agreed mutually as a commitment on an annual basis.
5. We affirm the principle that the content of SRE and the appointment of SRE teachers are solely the responsibility of the appropriately designated SRE authority in each church.
6. We agree to identify, contact and reach agreement with the religious persuasions already providing SRE in a school before beginning something new.
7. We seek to encourage cooperation among local churches, inter-church councils and associations of ministers in implementing SRE. We will pursue such implementation on a flexible basis by negotiating with schools within the provisions of the *Education Act 1990* and current memoranda issued by the NSW Director-General of Education and Communities.
8. We seek, when operating in joint-denominational approaches, to prevent SRE from becoming a vehicle for the beliefs of any one denomination or group.
9. We avoid evangelistic appeals requiring a public response from students in SRE to maintain its genuinely educational nature.
10. We seek in language and action to affirm the worth of each individual.
11. We seek to encourage the use of educationally valid terminology and language. Such language takes into account the ages and stages of student development. Our language and terminology will not assume that students share our beliefs in an identical way or to the same extent.

Departmental Documents

Attention is drawn to the relevant sections of the NSW Department of Education and Communities document *Religious Education Implementation Procedures*.

https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/spec_religious/REimplementproced.pdf

- a) *Education Act 1990*,
- b) *Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980) - the Rawlinson Report*
- c) Memoranda issued by the Director-General of Education and Training,
- d) *Religious Education Policy*, NSW Department of Education and Communities
- e) *Religious Education Implementation Procedures*, NSW Department of Education and Communities.
- f) Recommendations of the *Final Report from the Inquiry into Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011*, published in June 2012.

Extracts from Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980) Chapter 6

This is an extract from a comprehensive report into religious education in schools, often referred to as “The Rawlinson Report”.

FLEXIBLE IMPLEMENTATION AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

6.7 While legislative provisions are needed for religious education, they must be capable of flexible implementation by the appropriate authorities to meet the particular circumstances of each school. There will be need to take account of differences from school to school in respect of such matters as locality and degrees of religious, ethnic and cultural commonality or pluralism from community to community. There will also be differences between localities in the kind of contribution which the local churches or other religious bodies will be capable of making to the school programme.

CONSULTATION AND CO-OPERATION

6.8 The Committee believes that the efficient operation of religious education will be dependent, in large measure, upon the combined consultation and co-operation of four distinct groups; the parents, the religious bodies, the schools and the Department of Education. The forms which General Religious Education will take within a school will arise from the initiative of the school staff working within policy statements devised by the Department of Education and in consultation with the community. The forms which Special Religious Education will take will arise initially from consultation amongst the appropriate SRE personnel and then between them and the school. Parents have the right and should be given the opportunity to consult with the school and clergy, and participate in discussions on any of the forms of religious education which will take place within the local school.

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SRE)

6.55 The Committee considers that every child in government schools should have the opportunity to receive education in the distinctive religious tenets of the home and family. Although such education is provided by representatives of the various traditions coming into the school for that specific purpose, it should be acknowledged as an integral part of the school's activities, which takes place in school hours under the jurisdiction of the school.

6.56 Respect for the integrity of those traditions and sensitivity to their meanings and local expression would suggest that those best suited for devising curricula and accrediting teaching staff would be the appropriate representatives of the various religious groups.

6.57 Special Religious Education is therefore defined as: education in the distinctive religious tenets and beliefs of the home and family, provided by the churches and other religious groups for children of parents expressing the desire that they receive such teaching.

OBJECTIVES FOR SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

6.58 SRE should provide opportunities for learners:

- a) to develop an ability to interpret religious data within the traditions of their particular faith;
- b) to gain an appreciation of specific religious interpretations of issues and problems in which committed people apply their faith to life;
- c) to translate their learning about their faith into active expression in a worshipping community;
- d) to encounter, in a peer group learning context, religious teaching given from a position of faith and commitment by a person explicitly associated with the religious community;
- e) to be aware of the availability of personal and group counselling in the area of religious need, as occasion demands.

PRINCIPLES FOR SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 6.59 As part of the process of enrolment at a government school, parents should state whether SRE is desired for that particular child and, if so, which religious group they would want their child to attend, taking into account the range which is already being provided or could be made available in that particular school.
- 6.60 The Committee recognises that, for a variety of reasons, some parents may wish their children to participate in a SRE programme conducted by a religious group other than that of the family faith, or in a joint-denominational programme (see Paragraph 6.85), but may wish them to be identified as belonging to their particular tradition for the purpose of attending recognised religious observances during school hours, (see Paragraphs 5.58, 5.59). At the time of enrolment, therefore, provision should be made for parents to indicate, if they so wish, the religious affiliation (if any) of the child.
- 6.61 Throughout the child's schooling, parents should retain the existing right to have their child attend, or not attend, any form of SRE at any time, without being required to supply any reason. The school should be notified in writing of any change in the parents' wishes.
- 6.62 Pupils withdrawn from SRE should be provided with opportunities for purposeful secular learning which, however, should be of such a nature as to avoid conflict of choice either for the parents or for the pupils receiving SRE.
- 6.63 Several submissions put forward a view that secondary students, particularly at the senior level (Years 11 and 12), should have the right to decide themselves whether or not they want to participate in SRE. The Committee respects this view in so far as adult legal status is attained at the age of eighteen years. Nevertheless, as parents are the enrolling agents, their rights would be abrogated if such choices were the prerogative of the students alone. The decision about participation in SRE should therefore be a matter for each family, with the school respecting the parents' communication of that decision.
- 6.64 The entry of officially recognised religious groups into the school situation should be in accordance with the requirements of legislation and should be in response to parental request by enrolment and not by any 'right' of access as such. In coming into government schools, each religious group should therefore understand that it is to teach only the children of parents who have requested SRE in that particular faith. An exception could be made in a situation where the consent of any religious group and the parents is given, as for instance, in officially organised joint-denominational programmes. Under no circumstances should any religious group construe its function in the school as one of proselytism.
- 6.65 Each religious group, at all levels of its administration, should give SRE in government schools its official support and commitment, making every effort to ensure that, as SRE takes place within the school buildings and in school hours, it is conducted as a genuinely educational activity which is adequately staffed and competently taught. The authorising authority of each religious faith should therefore ensure that its teachers possess knowledge of the relevant doctrine and possess adequate levels of teaching competence.
- 6.66 Each religious group should aim to establish a reserve of appropriately trained teachers and supporting personnel, to overcome the teacher shortage problem which now exists in many areas and to restrict dependence on school staff for supervision of SRE classes to genuine emergencies.
- 6.67 The State should have no say in the doctrine of SRE teaching. Each religious group should be responsible for the formulation of its own curriculum, in conformity with the broad statement of objectives for SRE outlined above, suited to the pupils' needs, ages and stages of development, and to the capabilities of the teaching personnel.

- 6.68 While noting that over one fifth of the school teachers responding to the survey indicated a personal willingness to teach SRE, and that about two thirds endorsed this notion, the Committee considers that school teachers should not be so involved, for two reasons. First, such a move would in effect mean that teachers employed by the government would be promoting particular forms of religion in different schools. The Committee has argued strongly that the State, while catering for the religious plurality of the community, should maintain a neutral position; on principle this idea is therefore rejected. Second, the potential personal conflicts for teachers, as well as logistic, administrative and industrial difficulties would create such major problems that the system would not be practicable. Therefore, the Committee is of the view that SRE should be taught only by visiting personnel, that is, the clergy and/or lay teachers, and that the appointment of such teachers should be the sole responsibility of each individual religious group.
- 6.69 Each religious group should be responsible for the supervision of its own SRE teachers, who should recognise the requirement of operating within the framework of the school's administration.
- 6.70 The school must reserve the right to intervene in the event of unreasonable disruption to the school, alleged teaching and inefficiency or alleged distortion of religious doctrine. It is expected that matters of such major concern would be pursued by the principal in collaboration with the relevant SRE authorities and, if necessary, officers of the Department of Education.
- 6.71 The Committee wishes to emphasise that the guidelines of flexibility and consultation/co-operation mentioned above (Paragraphs 6.7 and 6.8) are crucial to the effective implementation of SRE.
- 6.72 The form(s) of SRE agreed upon by consultation should be relative to the SRE staff available and appropriate to the school's curriculum and timetabling patterns; be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances; and be acknowledged as a contract requiring the commitment of the SRE personnel and the school, and their mutual co-operation in its implementation.
- 6.73 At each school, adequate consultation procedures should therefore be established to ensure that, preferably by the end of second term each year, the form(s) that SRE will take in the ensuing year will be determined by mutual agreement between the participating churches and other religious groups in the first place, and then between them and the school authorities.
- 6.74 The school is responsible for achieving a balance between two sets of needs when incorporating into the timetable the patterns of SRE agreed upon by consultation. On the one hand, there is the need for timing and conditions best suited to the SRE personnel and the educational concerns of the child. On the other hand there is the need to avoid placing burdens on the school and staff which exceed their expected co-operation in the efficient implementation of the agreed SRE programme.
- 6.75 For varying reasons, the consultative process may generate a pattern of SRE which cannot elicit the full involvement of all the relevant churches and religious groups. In fact, those able to participate may cater for only a minority of the pupils. In order to take full account of the expressed wishes of the parents for SRE and the school's overall obligations in such circumstances, it is important that there be further opportunities for consultation involving the school, SRE personnel and parents.
- 6.76 As the SRE programme should accord with the intentions of parents in enrolling their children, parents should have the opportunity to consult with SRE personnel, if desired.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

6.77 The practical implications of the general guidelines of flexibility and consultation/co-operation and of the above principles are set out in greater detail below in terms of: obligations of participants; allocation of time; organisational approaches; administrative suggestions; teacher preparation and a consultative committee on SRE.

OBLIGATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

6.78 In order to give effect to SRE as an integral part of the school's activities, each school will need to co-operate by:

- a) making the initial contacts with the relevant religious representatives, in response to parental requests for SRE in particular traditions, or supplying the appropriate religious authorities with information required for the effective organisation of SRE (see Paragraph 6.70(a));
- b) consulting with the local representatives on the form and operation of SRE (see Appendix H) and fitting it into the total timetable in as favourable a manner as the available SRE staff and the planned coverage of SRE within the school will permit (see Paragraph 6.79(c));
- c) initiating consultation with parents and SRE personnel with a view to making appropriate arrangements, wherever possible, for any child or children for whose religious group no SRE is currently provided in the school, on the basis of guidance from the education authorities of the churches and other religious groups (see Paragraph 6.80(c));
- d) seeking advice from the appropriate religious education authority, the regional office of the Education Department, and the parents wherever, despite all efforts, the SRE programme proposed for the ensuing year stands in jeopardy through the non-participation of a religious group with significant numbers of children whose parents desire them to receive SRE (see Paragraph 6.80(b) and (g));
- e) familiarising SRE personnel with school policies, practices and procedures;
- f) supporting the SRE programme, wherever feasible, with relevant resources from the school.

6.79 At the local level, the clergy or their appointed representatives have responsibility for:

- a) responding, as the official point of contact for their church or religious body on behalf of parents, to any enquiry from the school concerning SRE for enrolled adherents (see Paragraph 6.78(a));
- b) if not personally involved in, or responsible for, that school, co-operating to ensure that communication is established with the appropriate SRE authority;
- c) engaging in consultation with the representatives of other religious groups and with the school authorities (see Paragraph 6.78(b) and Appendix H);
- d) determining what SRE can be undertaken by the particular religious group in the local school(s), in the light of potential resources and the priorities, talents and gifts of the available clerical and lay personnel (including the extent of the clergy's own participation);
- e) enlisting the teaching and support staff required to fulfil the agreed commitment in terms of local capacity and encouraging loyalty in the fulfilment of that commitment;
- f) ensuring that all visiting staff work within the school's particular administrative and disciplinary procedures;
- g) arranging for replacement staff, wherever possible;
- h) ensuring that adequate notice is given on a known unavoidable absence, and an apology in the event of an unforeseen emergency, if at all possible.

6.80 At the denominational, State, regional or diocesan level, churches and other religious bodies have responsibility for:

- a) clarifying areas of responsibility and lines of communication applicable to the operation of SRE in their particular tradition;
- b) compiling annually a list of their appropriate educational authorities across the State, to be made available throughout the Education Department for the information of principals (see Paragraph 6.78(d));

- c) formulating a sample format letter for the guidance of principals when making arrangements for any child or children for whose religious group no SRE is currently provided in the school (see Paragraph 6.78(c));
 - d) ensuring that adequate training opportunities and appropriate resources are available for their teachers;
 - e) developing for the SRE representatives accreditation procedures suited to their particular religious tradition;
 - f) providing trained SRE consultants to facilitate the consultative process between local SRE personnel and the school, especially in conflict situations (see Appendix H);
 - g) responding to requests from principals or regional education authorities for advice in respect of any school in which the non-provision of SRE, for significant numbers of children whose parents have requested it, may jeopardise the school's total SRE programme (see Paragraph 6.78(d)).
- 6.81 Parents enrolling their children for SRE have the responsibility of co-operating by:
- a) availing themselves of opportunities for consultation on the form and operation of SRE proposed for the local school;
 - b) recognising and supporting SRE as an integral part of their children's education;
 - c) lending their support to the SRE programme and, if they are members of one of the congregations possessing geographical or pastoral links with a particular school, offering their services in the implementation of the SRE responsibilities of their church or religious group;
 - d) giving such practical assistance as is appropriate to their particular school.

ALLOCATION OF TIME

6.82 The Committee considers that there is need for continued official recognition, expressed in legislation, of a basic time allocation for SRE within the curriculum. It is of the view that, on average, not more than one hour per week of the time allocated for instruction in the school should be available for Special Religious Education. The Committee could see no objection to Special Religious Education being conducted on a flexible time schedule, provided that there was agreement among the parties concerned, and that, in total, the time allocated in any one year did not exceed an average of one hour per week. This would mean, for example that in a given school Special Religious Education could take the form of planned seminars in the senior years.

6.83 The Committee considers that the total amount of time allocated and its actual mode of incorporation within the timetable should be flexibly applied in a manner most appropriate to the form SRE takes in a particular school curriculum. As far as actual lesson or period length is concerned, it is expected that this would be consistent with the operation of normal periods and there would be due regard to the age and attention span of the children, together with the nature of the material being presented.

ORGANISATIONAL APPROACHES

6.84 While the form which SRE will take in any local situation will be relative to the priorities and commitments of the appropriate parishes, churches and other religious groups, the availability of sufficient numbers of suitably trained and qualified teaching and support staff remains the key factor in determining the nature and extent of the SRE programme.

6.85 The normal pattern of SRE may consist of denominational groupings, but in certain circumstances it might contain joint-denominational features. The Committee has selected this term in preference to 'inter-denominational', in order to emphasise that any joint activity, initiated by the co-operating churches is either for a specific purpose or for an agreed and stated period of time, subject to evaluation, amendment or change, without any offence being implied and without prejudicing any rights and responsibilities conferred by the 1880 Act, as amended.

- 6.86 In terms of the guidelines of flexibility and consultation/co-operation, the Committee considers that, in addition to traditional class-based weekly lessons, there is a wide range of organisational possibilities for SRE through which some or all of its stated objectives may be capable of achievement, especially in secondary schools.
- 6.87 Indeed, there are a variety of suggested approaches to SRE featured in submissions and/or in comments on survey forms. Most of these approaches have been given some trial use over the past decade with varying degrees of success. Those listed below do not represent a comprehensive coverage of all possible systems of SRE, nor are they mutually exclusive. They may be used in various combinations and may, from time to time, complement regular class-based teaching. While most of these systems relate to secondary schools, they may provide variety in the primary SRE programme, and some are particularly adaptable for use in primary schools operating on an open plan approach.
- 6.88 Varied Systems of Special Religious Education. The following are listed for special attention:
- a) Class-Based Systems
 - i) Weekly Class Group: In many schools, especially at infants, primary and junior secondary levels, class-based organisation will provide a conducive context for SRE, because of features such as regularity of contact; planned, graded and systematic teaching and the opportunity for closer inter-personal relationships.
 - ii) Block Teaching: Instead of a weekly period, SRE lessons are timetabled to occupy a block of time, roughly equivalent to a term's normal lessons, but on, say, consecutive days for one week twice a term, or for two weeks in succession. Other variations include half days, or even a full day programme.
 - iii) Rotation of Class Involvement: The SRE lessons for a class or year are timetabled to alternate with some other feature of the curriculum on a bi-weekly, month by month, or full term basis.
 - b) Combined Class Systems
 - i) Seminars/Conferences: Reports of experience with this method in New South Wales and elsewhere suggest that it is most suited to the senior secondary years. However, it is often used with mid-secondary and, in special circumstances, with junior secondary years. This approach may be incorporated in a regular programme of seminars, conferences, debates and other learning experiences organised by the school for Years 11 and 12. It enables the help of specialised personnel to be enlisted and special equipment and resources to be used. It may be conducted denominationally or joint-denominationally.
 - ii) Assemblies: While not normally a desirable method for regular SRE, special denominational or joint-denominational assemblies provide opportunity for acts of worship, especially related to major religious festivals and, from time to time, facilitate the use of specialised personnel, resource materials and equipment.
 - c) Small Group Systems
 - i) Small Group Dialogue: The enlisting of clerical and lay personnel, who may not be available or willing for regular teaching, supplies sufficient leaders to enable the division of an SRE class or year into small discussion groups. This approach is often used as an adjunct to other systems such as seminars/conferences. However, from time to time, or for a given number of weeks, it may be fitted into the programme for those classes not scheduled to receive regular SRE in a particular year.
 - ii) Group or Individual Research/Assignment: This method has been employed by some SRE teachers in association with primary schools. It may be suitable for use, on a private study basis, especially with individuals from minority religious groups, for whom face-to-face teaching is not available.

- d) **Supporting Systems**
- i) **Excursions:** With parental consent and by arrangement with the school authorities, visits to certain places or events are planned to provide some specific learning experience, often associated with a particular religious festival.
 - ii) **Camps and Out-of-School Contact:** Being normally extra curricular in nature, these activities are additional to the SRE programme operating within the school. However, they may, with parental approval and school co-operation, be so timetabled as to serve as an alternative method of providing SRE in special circumstances or on some appropriate occasion.
 - iii) **Pastoral Care (Chaplaincy):** By arrangement with the school, clergy or other SRE personnel are provided with accommodation for the conduct of interviews with individuals or small groups of students to discuss personal problems, especially of a religious nature, in the lunch hour or other suitable free time. When the need arises, a particular pupil may be referred to such a person at the request of the principal or school counsellor. These contacts, including those of an informal nature, should have due regard to school organisation and requirements, parental authority and student need.

Note: The Committee draws attention to a concept applicable to almost all the above approaches, namely, team teaching, whereby two or more people work together in sharing the teaching and support roles. This encourages the use of specialist skills such as artistic, musical and pastoral ability. In most cases this approach is also a help with discipline problems.

- 6.89 The Committee does not consider that its role is to provide any evaluation of these systems, with regard either to their effectiveness or to their applicability to the circumstances of the various religious groups. Such information should be obtainable from the educational authorities of each denomination or religious group and from the Inter-Church Consultative Commission on Religious Education in Schools.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUGGESTIONS

- 6.90 The Committee considers that, for each school, an experienced SRE teacher or other suitable person from the community might be kept free from regular teaching commitments to act on behalf of his/her religious group (or all groups represented at the school) in the following ways:
- a) as Co-ordinator of the SRE programme,
 - b) in liaison with school authorities,
 - c) as the person to whom behavioural problems arising in the SRE class situation can be referred, in the first instance, for guidance and pastoral care, and who, when disciplinary action seems necessary, can refer the pupil to the appropriate school authority.
- 6.91 The Committee suggests that there be no SRE teaching during the first week of the school year and that this time be used for SRE teacher orientation. The aim would be for the appropriate member(s) of the school staff to familiarise SRE personnel with the total operation of the school, including location of equipment and facilities, school philosophy, curriculum and timetable patterns, staff roles, methods of organisation and disciplinary procedures.
- 6.92 The Committee further suggests that religious bodies should give serious consideration to the appointment of regional SRE co-ordinators and/or professional teams, for each particular faith or on a joint-denominational basis or even on behalf of all faiths, to develop and undertake new organisational patterns of SRE, especially for the secondary level.
- 6.93 Significant among the practical issues affecting the implementation of SRE in secondary schools is the relationship between the overall provision made in school staff allocations and the number of SRE classes conducted by visiting personnel. The Committee is of the view that this could be an important consideration in terms of the degree of co-operation and harmony between school staff and visiting personnel, particularly in schools where there is a minimal

involvement in SRE. Accordingly, the Committee suggests that this matter be examined in detail by the Department of Education, having due regard to the needs of the individual schools.

- 6.94 A major problem in the implementation of SRE, especially at the secondary level, occurs where the SRE programme depends for its continued operation on the regular minding of classes by school teachers. Wherever this is the case, the Committee is of the opinion that the SRE programme should be subject to immediate review and re-determination by means of consultation within the school, in terms of the principles and procedures outlined in this Report.
- 6.95 The Committee is of the firm view that the churches and other religious groups must accept responsibility for ensuring that SRE teachers entering government schools are appropriately prepared. SRE teachers, therefore, should be encouraged to avail themselves of relevant training opportunities, including in-service and tertiary courses. In this context the Committee stresses the relevance of the principles enunciated in Paragraphs 6.65 – 6.67.

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SRE Recommendations from Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980)

Endorsed by the Minister for Education, February, 1986

36. That Special Religious Education, as defined in Recommendation 3(b), be recognised as an integral part of the school's activities, which takes place in school hours under the jurisdiction of the school. (6.55)
37. That the objectives of Special Religious Education as stated in this Report be endorsed by the Department of Education and be commended to the churches and religious groups for their implementation. (6.58, 6.67)
38. That Special Religious Education be implemented in a flexible way on the basis of consultation and co-operation, involving the school and other parties, and in terms of the principles stated in the Report. (6.7, 6.8, 6.71-6.76)
39. That as part of the process of enrolment at school, parents state whether Special Religious Education is desired for their child and, if so, which religious group they would want their child to attend. (6.59)
40. That, on the school enrolment form, provision be made for parents to indicate, if they so wish, the religious affiliation, if any, of the child to enable the school to cater for the child's attendance at recognised religious observances outside the school, where such attendance is requested by the parents. (6.60)
41. That throughout the child's schooling, parents retain the right to enrol their child in, or withdraw their child from, any form of Special Religious Education at any time, without being required to state any reason, and that notification of any changes in enrolment or intended withdrawal be given to the school in writing. (6.61)
42. That pupils withdrawn from Special Religious Education be provided with opportunities for purposeful secular learning which should, however, be of such a nature as to avoid conflict of choice, either for the parents or for the pupils receiving Special Religious Education. (6.62)
43. That the churches and other religious groups perceive their role in schools as a response to parental wishes as expressed by means of the enrolment of their children for participation in Special Religious Education. (6.59, 6.64)
44. That the participation of officially recognised religious groups in Special Religious Education be in accordance with legislative provisions and the normal operation of the school. (6.64, 6.69)
45. That any churches or religious groups providing Special Religious Education in schools be requested to give it their official support and commitment, and undertake it as a genuinely educational activity which is adequately staffed and competently taught. (6.65)
46. That the State have no say in the doctrine taught by Special Religious Education personnel and that the educational authorities of the churches and religious groups prepare curricula and develop or recommend materials consistent with the broad statement of objectives outlined in the Report, and suited to the pupils' needs, ages and stages of development and to the capabilities of the teaching personnel. (6.67, 6.80(d))
47. That Special Religious Education be taught by visiting personnel and that the appointment of such teachers be the sole responsibility of each individual church or religious group. (6.68)

48. That the churches and other religious groups develop procedures for accrediting Special Religious Education teachers, which are suited to their particular tradition and circumstances. (6.56, 6.65, 6.80(e))
49. That the training facilities of the churches and religious groups at local, regional and State levels be directed towards the supply of adequate numbers of teachers with knowledge of the relevant doctrine and with teaching competence; of supporting personnel to assist them; and of reserve staff to relieve and replace them as need arises. (6.65, 6.66, 6.79(g), 6.80(d))
50. That the religious authorities responsible for Special Religious Education at the local school level ensure that sufficient numbers of trained and competent personnel are available to fulfil their particular commitment in the school and that the Special Religious Education staff are appropriately supervised. (6.69, 6.79(e) & (f))
51. That Special Religious Education personnel teach with sensitivity to the child and his family's religious background and adopt the normal courtesies and practices expected of all teaching staff within the local school. (6.56, 6.69, 6.79(f) & (h))
52. That, on average, not more than one hour per week be available for Special Religious Education, it being understood that a flexible time schedule could be used, subject to the agreement of the parties concerned and provided that, in total, the time allocated in any one year does not exceed an average of one hour per week. (6.82)
53. That the total amount of time allocated and its actual mode of incorporation within the timetable be flexibly applied in a manner most appropriate to the form that Special Religious Education takes in a particular school curriculum. (6.83)
54. That actual lesson or period length for Special Religious Education be consistent with the operation of normal periods and be in accord with the age and attention span of the children, as well as the nature of the material being presented. (6.83)
55. That the form which Special Religious Education will take in a school be determined on the basis of consultation among participating Special Religious Education personnel and the school authorities and, to facilitate this, the procedures outlined in the Report be adopted. (6.72, 6.73, 6.78(b), 6.79(c) & (d), 6.80(f))
56. That in the consultative process, full account be taken of the expressed wishes of parents for Special Religious Education, the number of personnel available, and the school's obligation to provide as satisfactorily as possible for Special Religious Education within the context of its responsibilities to the total school community. (6.74, 6.75, 6.84)
57. That Special Religious Education personnel be available for consultation with parents concerning Special Religious Education, and that parents recognise their responsibility to support and co-operate in the programme wherever possible. (6.76, 6.81)
58. That, although subject to review in the light of changing circumstances, the form of Special Religious Education determined through consultation for the ensuing year be seen as a firm agreement and recognised as a commitment by the Special Religious Education personnel and the school, requiring their mutual co-operation in its implementation. (6.72, 6.73, 6.78 - 6.80)
59. That the varied systems of Special Religious Education, outlined in Paragraph 6.88, be acknowledged as valid forms for implementation in schools, together with the use of joint-denominational approaches agreed to by parents and the religious groups concerned. (6.85 - 6.89)

60. That the churches and other religious groups give consideration to the appointment of regional co-ordinators and/or professional teams to develop and undertake new organisational patterns of Special Religious Education, especially for the secondary level. (6.92)
61. That at each school an experienced Special Religious Education teacher or other suitable person from the community be kept free from regular SRE teaching commitments to act in a co-ordination, liaison, disciplinary and pastoral care role. (6.90)
62. That during the school year provision be made, preferably during the first week, for appropriate members of the school staff to familiarise Special Religious Education personnel with the total operation of the school. (6.91)
63. That the school reserve the right to intervene in the event of unreasonable disruption to the school, alleged teaching inefficiency or alleged distortion of religious doctrine, and that such matters be pursued by the principal in collaboration with the relevant Special Religious Education authorities and, if necessary, officers of the Department of Education. (6.70)
64. That in any school, especially at the secondary level, where the Special Religious Education programme depends for its current operation on the regular minding of classes by school teachers, it be subject to immediate review and re-determination by means of consultation within the school, in terms of the principles and procedures recommended in this Report. (6.93, 6.94)
65. That the churches and other religious groups accept responsibility for ensuring that Special Religious Education teachers entering schools are appropriately prepared. (6.65, 6.80(d), 6.84, 6.95)
66. Add to Recommendation 72.
- 67.

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Extracts from Education Act 1990

Education Act 1990 sections 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 33A.
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/

EDUCATION ACT 1990 - SECT 26

Certificate of exemption from attending particular classes

- (1) The [parent](#) of a child enrolled at a [government school](#) may give the [Director-General](#) written notice that the [parent](#) conscientiously objects on religious grounds to the child being taught a particular part of a course of study.
- (2) The [Director-General](#) may accept any such objection and grant a certificate exempting the child from attending classes relating to the part of the course concerned if satisfied that the objection is conscientiously held on religious grounds.
- (3) A certificate of exemption under this section may be given subject to conditions.
- (4) A certificate of exemption under this section may be cancelled by the [Director-General](#).

EDUCATION ACT 1990 - SECT 30

Secular instruction

In [government schools](#), the education is to consist of strictly non-sectarian and [secular instruction](#). The words "**secular instruction**" are to be taken to include general religious education as distinct from dogmatic or polemical theology.

EDUCATION ACT 1990 - SECT 31

Instruction to be free

- (1) The instruction provided in [government schools](#) is to be free of charge.
- (2) This section does not apply in relation to [overseas students](#).

EDUCATION ACT 1990 - SECT 32

Special religious education

- (1) In every [government school](#), time is to be allowed for the religious education of children of any religious persuasion, but the total number of hours so allowed in a year is not to exceed, for each child, the number of [school](#) weeks in the year.
- (2) The religious education to be given to children of any religious persuasion is to be given by a member of the clergy or other religious teacher of that persuasion authorised by the religious body to which the member of the clergy or other religious teacher belongs.
- (3) The religious education to be given is in every case to be the religious education authorised by the religious body to which the member of the clergy or other religious teacher belongs.
- (4) The times at which religious education is to be given to children of a particular religious persuasion are to be fixed by agreement between the [principal](#) of the [school](#) and the local member of the clergy or other religious teacher of that persuasion.
- (5) Children attending a religious education class are to be separated from other children at the [school](#) while the class is held.
- (6) If the relevant member of the clergy or other religious teacher fails to attend the [school](#) at the appointed time, the children are to be appropriately cared for at the [school](#) during the period set aside for religious education.

EDUCATION ACT 1990 - SECT 33

Objection to religious education

No child at a [government school](#) is to be required to receive any general religious education or special religious education if the [parent](#) of the child objects to the child's receiving that education.

EDUCATION ACT 1990 - SECT 33A

(This Act is the *Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010*.)

Special education in ethics as secular alternative to special religious education

- (1) Special education in ethics is allowed as a secular alternative to special religious education at [government schools](#).
- (2) If the [parent](#) of a child objects to the child receiving special religious education, the child is entitled to receive special education in ethics, but only if:
 - (a) it is reasonably practicable for special education in ethics to be made available to the child at the [government school](#), and
 - (b) the [parent](#) requests that the child receive special education in ethics.
- (3) A [government school](#) cannot be directed (by the Minister or otherwise) not to make special education in ethics available at the [school](#).

Religious Education Implementation Procedures

For the current Religious Education Policy see

https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/spec_religious/REimplementproced.pdf

(current at January 2015)

Religious Education Implementation Procedures

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Religious Education Implementation Procedures 3

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Definitions

Special religious education is education in the beliefs and practices of an approved religious persuasion by authorised representatives of that persuasion.

General religious education is education about the world's major religions, what people believe and how that belief affects their lives. It is taught mainly through the school curriculum.

Special education in ethics is education in ethical decision making, action and reflection within a secular framework, based on a branch of philosophy.

Special religious education

Background

Section 32 of the *Education Act 1990* requires that 'in every government school, time is to be allowed for the religious education of children of any religious persuasion'.

The procedures for special religious education in public schools consider:

☐ recommendations 36-72 of the report, *Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980)*, which were adopted by the government of the day as the basis of an agreement with the churches about the implementation of special religious education

☐ *Education Act 1990* Section 33A, an amendment approved in 2010 to allow the option of special education in ethics for parents/caregivers who do not wish their children to attend special religious education

☐ the recommendations of the *Final Report from the Inquiry into Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011* that were published in June 2012.

The provision of special religious education is not government funded.

Parent/caregiver rights

The right to religious education

Parents/caregivers in public schools have the right to have their children receive instruction in their religious persuasion, where authorised teachers of that persuasion are available.

The right of choice

Parents/caregivers may nominate an alternative persuasion, where special religious education cannot be offered for students of a particular religious persuasion, or for other reasons.

Parents/caregivers also have the right to choose not to have their children attend special religious education

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 4

The right to information

Parents/caregivers have the right to know how special religious education will be organised each year and which religious organisations will deliver it.

Parents/caregivers who choose for their children not to attend special religious education also have the right to know what options are available including special education in ethics.

Responsibilities for special religious education

Responsibilities of schools

Provision of special religious education

Principals allow time for special religious education where authorised representatives of approved providers are available.

Special religious education is an integral part of school activities, taking place in school hours and under the jurisdiction of the school.

Principals support special religious education by ensuring that no academic instruction or formal school activities occur during time set aside for special religious education. Such activities create conflict of choice for some parents and students attending special religious education.

Teaching special religious education

Special religious education is delivered by religious persuasions that have the approval of the Minister for Education for that purpose. A list of approved providers is available at <http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/religion/index.htm>.

Only persons authorised by approved religious persuasions teach special religious education.

While on duty, members of a school's staff do not teach special religious education.

Timing of special religious education

Special religious education is organised by negotiation and agreement between the principal and the approved religious providers. Principals are sensitive to the voluntary nature of special religious education and are aware that many special religious education teachers have commitments in more than one school.

On average, not less than 30 minutes and not more than one hour of meaningful teaching time per week should be allocated for special religious education. The lessons or period length for special religious education should be consistent with the age and attention span of the students. A flexible time schedule may be used, if the principal and the approved religious providers are in agreement and provided that the time allocated does not exceed an average of one hour per school week. Arrangements are reviewed regularly by the principal.

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 5

Information for parents/caregivers

Parents/caregivers are advised how special religious education classes are organised including the religious persuasions that will be providing special religious education for particular classes or year groups.

This advice also includes options if parents/caregivers do not wish their children to attend special religious education, including special education in ethics where it is available.

This information is provided through enrolment information, the school website and the school newsletter.

Enrolment in special religious education

At enrolment, parents/caregivers are to be advised:

☑ of special religious education options at the school, including the religious persuasions providing special religious education and arrangements made for students whose parents/caregivers indicate that they are not to attend special religious education

☑ that they may nominate an alternative persuasion, where special religious education is not offered for students of a particular religious persuasion, or for other reasons.

Where a religious persuasion was nominated on enrolment, the student is enrolled in a special religious education class of the religious persuasion identified on the student's enrolment record.

Where a religious persuasion was not nominated, the student is placed in alternative activities.

When a particular religious persuasion is not available, parents/caregivers are informed of options including other special religious education and alternative activities.

A parent/caregiver may at any time notify the school in writing that they do not wish their child to attend special religious education.

Students are to continue in the same arrangement as the previous year, unless a parent/caregiver has requested a change.

Students not attending special religious education

In the times set aside for special religious education, students not attending are located in a separate physical space from special religious education classes.

Schools provide meaningful activities with appropriate care and supervision. These activities neither compete with special religious education nor are they lessons in the curriculum. Suitable activities include reading, private study and completing homework.

Special education in ethics is an option for students not attending special religious education, where it is practicable and requested by the parents/caregivers.

When insufficient teachers or accommodation are available, the school's policy on minimal supervision operates.

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 6

Communication

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure parents/caregivers and the wider community are aware of special religious education and alternative activities offered at the school.

Any changes to special religious education, alternative activities or special education in ethics options should be communicated to the school community.

Early during Term 4, special religious education coordinators from religious persuasions are informed of estimated numbers for special religious education classes for the following year to assist in recruiting teachers.

Special religious education teachers are also informed if there are any changes to timetabling that will affect special religious education classes.

Information about students

Student information is confidential and teachers of special religious education are only to be given:

- ☑ the names of the students in their class
- ☑ any special information, such as disability or special needs, which might affect the health, behaviour or performance of particular students.

Information about lesson content

The principal is not responsible for, and does not disseminate details of, lesson content for special religious education, but will provide the name and contact details of the approved provider or their local representative.

Student behaviour management

Principals and teachers retain duty of care for students and intervene in cases where it is necessary to maintain good order and conduct.

The principal pursues such cases with the representative of the approved provider.

Class teachers are not required to attend classes in special religious education, but may, with the agreement of the teacher of special religious education or at the request of the principal, assist with behaviour management or remain in the classroom.

Complaints

Principals who have received complaints concerning alleged teaching inefficiency or inappropriate lesson content take appropriate steps and notify the representative of the approved provider that authorised the teacher.

If a principal receives allegations of improper behaviour or other complaints of a serious nature it is managed in accordance with the Department's policies and procedures. The principal must refer allegations of a child protection nature to the Department's Employee Performance and Conduct Directorate.

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 7

School special religious education coordinator

Where appropriate, a member of staff is appointed as the school's special religious education coordinator. Duties of the coordinator include:

- ☑ arranging meetings early in Term 4 between the school and representatives of the approved religious providers to organise special religious education organisation for the following year
- ☑ liaising with special religious education teachers to:
 - familiarise them with the procedures and operations of the school, especially at the beginning of the year
 - advise them of any variations of school routine affecting special religious education
- ☑ maintaining special religious education records, including:
 - an up-to-date list of the authorised special religious education teachers from the approved religious providers
 - a list of the names of students in each class for special religious education teachers .
- ☑ advising parents/caregivers of arrangements for special religious education classes for the next year and ongoing information about any changes as they occur.

Responsibilities of providers

Approval to deliver special religious education

Religious persuasions must have the approval of the Minister for Education to deliver special religious education.

Persuasions wishing to obtain approval should contact the Executive Officer of the NSW Department of Education and Communities Consultative Committee for Special Religious Education at srecontacts@det.nsw.edu.au.

Authorisation to teach special religious education

The authorisation of personnel to teach special religious education is the sole responsibility of each individual approved provider.

An approved provider is not to authorise any person as a special religious education teacher who has not signed a prohibited employment declaration or who has a criminal conviction for one or more of the following:

- ☑ a crime against a minor
- ☑ violence
- ☑ sexual assault
- ☑ the provision of prohibited drugs.

Any minister, priest, rabbi, mufti, other like religious leader or spiritual official of a religion or paid employee providing special religious education must undergo a

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 8

Working with Children Check.

Volunteers providing special religious education in NSW public schools must complete a declaration that they are not a person prohibited from undertaking child-related employment. This includes anyone under the age of 18 who may volunteer to teach special religious education.

Every approved religious provider must provide annually to the Department, a written assurance that they have procedures in place to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*. These assurances are to be sent to: The Executive Officer NSW Department of Education and Communities Consultative Committee on Special Religious Education 1 Oxford Street SYDNEY NSW 2000

Recruitment, training and support

It is the responsibility of each approved provider to provide sufficient special religious education teachers.

It is the responsibility of an approved provider to recruit, train and authorise teachers of special religious education.

The provider must ensure that the school is informed of the names and contact details of its local representatives and authorised teachers.

The provider must ensure that all special religious education teachers are provided with a name badge to be worn at all times when on a school site.

The representative of a special religious education provider should inform the principal when there are insufficient authorised teachers available.

Lesson content

It is the responsibility of an approved provider to:

- authorise the materials and pedagogy used by special religious education teachers
- provide an annual assurance to the NSW Department of Education and Communities that authorised teachers are only using materials and pedagogy authorised by the provider
- make lesson content accessible on a website or at least provide a program outline and curriculum scope and sequence documents
- provide information about the content of lessons when requested by parents/caregivers/principals.

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 9

General religious education

Conscientious objection on religious grounds to part of a course of study

The *Education Act 1990* Section 26 allows an exemption for students from attending classes at the request of parents/caregivers who conscientiously object on religious grounds to a particular part of a course of study.

Principals are responsible for responding sensitively to the beliefs of parents/caregivers and their children and for taking all steps to minimise feelings of discomfort or embarrassment on the part of students. This will be aided by the publication of a clear statement of school policy and procedures for the benefit of staff and parents/caregivers and should contain a statement about:

- the right of parents/caregivers under the Act to take this action
- the responsibility of the school to provide information about courses if requested
- appropriate supervision or alternative studies
- advice to parents/caregivers about any implication for the award of the Record of School Achievement or Higher School Certificate
- the school’s certificate of exemption (Illustration 1)
- keeping a record of the written request by parents/caregivers and the certificate of exemption
- provision of a copy of the school’s certificate of exemption to the student.

Example:

Certificate of exemption

Name of school: _____

Student’s name: _____ First name Surname

Class/Year _____

Under the provisions of Section 26 of the *Education Act 1990*, the above named student is exempt, on the basis of conscientious objection on religious grounds, from the following classes or lessons:

Principal’s signature _____ Date _____

Illustration 1.

Curriculum-related programs with a religious base

When considering the use of external curriculum-related programs that have been developed by a religious persuasion, principals should ensure that these programs do not implicitly or explicitly promote that persuasion. Programs that promote a particular religious persuasion should be considered special religious education and are unsuitable for instruction outside the provisions for special religious education.

Chaplains

School Chaplaincy does not fall within the religious education policy. For more information on the Commonwealth *National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program* please refer to: <http://deewr.gov.au/national-school-chaplaincy-and-student-welfare-program>

Voluntary student activities of a religious nature in schools

Voluntary religious activities and prayer groups are not part of special religious education, but may operate under the auspices and supervision of the principal. Scripture Union (NSW) coordinates Interschool Christian Fellowship (ISCF) groups in secondary schools and Scripture Union Primary Age (SUPA) groups in primary schools.

School prayers

Schools are permitted to use or to write school prayers. These prayers are to be interdenominational Christian or multi-faith to reflect the diversity of the school community. Consultation with the school community should occur about both the prayer and the types of occasions on which it will be used.

The Education Act 1990, section 33 states parents/caregivers can object to any general religious education. Children of parents/caregivers who have indicated this objection, including their children being present when prayers are said, should be supervised in another area of the school.

Commemorations, religious observances and multi-faith services in schools

Schools may wish to hold an event that contains religious elements such as school commemorations, religious observances and multi-faith services.

These events are the product of consultation with the school community and parents/caregivers are notified of the nature of the service and reminded of their right to object to the inclusion of their children. Schools provide alternative activities in another area of the school for students who do not participate.

Providers of special religious education may be invited to participate in particular commemorations and observances.

Religious Education Implementation Procedures 11

School commemorations

These include events such as Education Week, Anzac Day, Remembrance Day and school centenaries.

Education Week

Whether a school holds an Education Week service or not is a decision made by the school principal.

Where there are students not permitted by their parents/caregivers to participate in this service, the school could arrange alternative services in conjunction with the appropriate religious leaders, or continue special education in ethics classes, where applicable.

Religious observances

These can be conducted as part of general religious education and include religious observances from a range of faith groups.

Multi-faith services

When schools consider a multi-faith service, religious groups and individuals should not be pressured to compromise their faith for the sake of holding the service.

Where there is a desire to bring together people of different religions and a multi-faith service is considered appropriate, the following principles should apply:

- ☑ All religious leaders in the local community should be invited to participate from commencement of preparation of the service.
- ☑ A local committee set up to develop the service should have adequate representation from all relevant religious groups.
- ☑ A 'Multi-Faith Order of Service' should be used as the word 'worship' may create barriers to participation on such occasions. Individual religious groups are not expected to compromise their beliefs for the sake of holding such a service.

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Appendix A: Patterns of special religious education organisation

A range of patterns is used to organise special religious education in schools. Care is taken not to adopt any form of organisation which could be of more benefit to some providers than to others.

Any pattern of providing special religious education must be equivalent to at least 30 minutes per week and no more than one hour per week.

Class groups

In many schools class-based organisation will support special religious education because it features regular contact, planned and systematic teaching. Time assigned for these weekly classes will reflect the age and attention span of students and will be no less than 30 minutes.

Combined arrangements

Religious persuasions may decide to provide a combined arrangement. If this occurs, all religious persuasions authorise the persons who teach, and authorise the curriculum content. No religious persuasion is compelled to participate in this form of organisation. A combined arrangement is reviewed often by the school and the religious persuasions. In a combined arrangement only those students who have nominated one of the participating religious persuasions on their enrolment form should be involved.

Excursions or visits

Any activities offered over and above the allocated time for special religious education are extra-curricular activities and are to be treated as such.

During time allocated for special religious education

The principal will take into account the time provision for special religious education of the nominating provider and the capacity of the personnel to carry out that activity within the principal's duty of care. External to time allocated for special religious education

Principals ensure parents/caregivers are clear that these activities are not school activities.

Schools have no involvement in such activities.

Note that if a parent/caregiver decides to send their child to an event planned by an outside organisation, which is not supported by the school principal, the absence would be recorded as unjustified as explained under the Student Attendance in Government Schools – Procedures.

Report into Ethics Classes Repeal Bill

Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011

General Purpose Standing Committee No 2. Report (Legislative Assembly)

May 2012

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government:

- Not seek to repeal section 33A of the Education Act 1990 that allows for Special Education in Ethics classes in NSW government schools; and
- Continue to facilitate the delivery of Special Education in Ethics in NSW government primary schools as an option for students who do not attend Special Religious Education.

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government maintains the current situation where neither providers of Special Education in Ethics or Special Religious Education receive direct financial support from the Government; and that the Department of Education and Communities publish on its website information advising that the provision of Special Education in Ethics and Special Religious Education are not government funded.

Recommendation 3

That the Department of Education and Communities continue to review the age appropriateness of the Special Education in Ethics curriculum and teaching materials.

Recommendation 4

That the Department of Education and Communities, in the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and the new Special Education in Ethics procedures, require all providers to post their curriculum outlines and curriculum scope and sequence documents online, and that all relevant curriculum information be presented in the order in which it is taught.

Recommendation 5

That the Department of Education and Communities establish an open and transparent expression of interest process to allow other organisations to apply to deliver Special Education in Ethics in NSW government primary schools before 2014.

Recommendation 6

That the Department of Education and Communities collect and publish data annually on the number of students participating in Special Education in Ethics, Special Religious Education and for those students who do not attend either.

Recommendation 7

That the Department of Education and Communities include in its revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures recommendations to schools regarding what constitutes adequate supervision for students and for activities that those students not attending Special Religious Education or Special Education in Ethics can be meaningfully engaged in, during that timeslot.

Recommendation 8

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and Special Education in Ethics implementation procedures are effectively communicated to and implemented by principals once they are finalised.

Recommendation 9

That the Department of Education and Communities require and monitor Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics providers to ensure that they have in place a system of accredited initial and ongoing training for their voluntary teachers that includes training in classroom management and child protection issues and that this information is published on the providers' websites.

Recommendation 10

That the Minister for Education investigate the inclusion of philosophy in New South Wales secondary schools as part of the development of the Australian Curriculum.

Recommendation 11

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and the Special Education in Ethics implementation procedures include the requirement for the provision of departmental approved fact sheets for parents at the time of enrolment that include information on the available options of Special Religious Education, procedures for opting out of Special Religious Education and the option of choosing Special Education in Ethics where available, and how to access curriculum information for these options. These factsheets should be available on the departmental website and individual school websites.

Recommendation 12

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and the Special Education in Ethics (SEE) implementation procedures include templates of letters that can be provided to schools for their use to:

- Advise parents/carers of the various Special Religious Education (SRE) classes available for year groups each year
- Advise parents/carers of any changes in organisation and/or availability of any new SRE classes
- Offer parent/carers of non-SRE students the option to attend SEE classes (advice should be clear to principals that this letter should only be distributed to parents/carers of potential non-SRE students only after an 'opt out' decision by parents/carers has been communicated to the school)
- SRE and SEE letter templates should differ in appearance to avoid confusion for parents/carers.

Recommendation 13

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the Learning Services team of the NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre be adequately staffed and resourced to enable 'in servicing' of school leadership teams with regard to providing support for the implementation of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics.

Recommendation 14

That the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) commission an independent review of both Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in NSW government schools to be conducted by appropriately qualified early childhood educational reviewers in 2014-2015 that includes the following:

- Survey of the nature and extent of SRE and SEE
- DEC Implementation Procedures for SRE and SEE including: parent/carer choice through the enrolment process and opting out; approval of SRE and SEE providers by DEC; authorisation of volunteer teachers and curriculum by providers
- Development of complaints procedures and protocols
- SRE and SEE providers training structures
- Registration of SRE and SEE Boards, Associations and Committees

- New modes of patterns of delivery using technology
- Pedagogy, relevance and age appropriateness of teaching and learning across all primary grades in a variety of demographics
- Need for annual confirmation by parents/carers on SRE choice or opting out
- Review of activities and level of supervision for students who do not attend SRE or SEE.

DRAFT

Response from Minister for Education

to Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011
General Purpose Standing Committee No 2. Report (Legislative Assembly)
May 2012



The Hon. Adrian Piccoli MP
Minister for Education

Mr David Blunt
Clerk of the Parliaments
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Blunt

I am writing regarding General Standing Committee No. 2 report Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011 (Inquiry).

The NSW Department of Education and Communities welcomes the opportunity to act on the recommendations of the committee and has confidence that implementation of these recommendations will provide clear guidance to parents, teachers and school communities regarding the implementation of special education in ethics classes in New South Wales public schools.

Please find attached the Government's position on each of the recommendations of the committee, which has been prepared by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. The Department will provide further progress reports and implementation details as requested.

I hope this information is of assistance. For more information please contact Ms Cheryl Best, General Manager Learning and Development on (02) 9561 8919.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Piccoli'.

Adrian Piccoli MP
Minister for Education

*Received at 4:45 pm
Tuesday 4 December 2012*
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be a stylized name.

Level 34 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (61 2) 9228 5261 Fax: (61 2) 9228 5492 Email: office@piccoli.mps.parliament.nsw.gov.au

DRAFT

**General Purpose Standing Committee No 2, Inquiry into the Education
Amendment (Ethics classes repeal) Bill 2011.
Analysis of Committee recommendations**

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government:

- *Not seek to repeal section 33A of the Education Act 1990 that allows for special education in ethics classes in NSW government schools; and*
- *Continue to facilitate the delivery of Special Education in Ethics in NSW government primary schools as an option for students who do not attend Special Religious Education.*

Position:

Supported

Comment:

Issues raised in submissions and appearances before the committee included:

- the level of parental and community support for ethics classes
- the impact of ethics classes on attendance at special religious education classes
- concerns regarding pedagogy of the ethics classes
- moral concerns
- concerns about age appropriateness of the ethics curriculum
- concerns regarding the level of training of volunteer teachers
- lack of state-wide statistics regarding student attendance at ethics and special religious education classes.

The Committee came to a consensus that submissions predominantly expressed the view that ethics classes should continue. Supporters of the continuation of ethics classes included parent groups, lobby groups, principals' associations, school parents and citizens groups as well as the majority of special religious education providers.

A number of religious organisations and individuals do not support the continuation of ethics classes because they believe it diminishes the importance of special religious education, or they believe that ethics classes should be offered to all students, not just those not attending special religious education.

Actions:

Revision and updating of the policy and implementation procedures to support schools, providers and parents/caregivers in the ongoing implementation of ethics classes is currently being completed.

Advice to schools regarding appropriate ways to publish and promote ethics classes needs to recognise the sensitivities of both the proponents and opponents of ethics classes.

A *SchoolBiz* memorandum will be prepared on approval of the updated policy and procedures documents.

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government maintains the current situation where neither providers of Special Education in Ethics or Special Religious Education receive direct financial support from the Government; and that the Department of Education and Communities publish on its website information advising that the provision of Special Education in Ethics and Special Religious Education are not government funded.

Position:

Supported.

Comment:

There have been public misconceptions regarding government funding of both special religious education and special education in ethics.

The Committee agreed that the current position of not providing funding for special religious education or special education in ethics should continue.

Dr John Kaye MLC, in a dissenting report, expressed support for Primary Ethics gaining the tax exemptions that apply to religious organisations.

Action:

A statement affirming that special religious education and special education in ethics do not receive government funding will be included in the revised implementation procedures and on the Department's special religious education and special education in ethics website.

Recommendation 3

That the Department of Education and Communities continue to review the age appropriateness of the Special Education in Ethics curriculum and teaching materials.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

The Department has worked with Primary Ethics, the approved provider of special education in ethics, as it develops its curriculum materials. A small group of primary school education specialists, through the NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre has provided advice regarding the age appropriateness of lesson activities.

The Department is not required to provide advice about age-appropriateness of lesson content to approved providers of special religious education.

Action:

The Department will continue to provide advice to Primary Ethics regarding the age appropriateness of curriculum content. Further modules produced by Primary Ethics will be reviewed by the Department.

Recommendation 4

That the Department of Education and Communities, in the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and the new Special Education in Ethics procedures, require all providers to post their curriculum outlines and curriculum scope and sequence documents online, and that all relevant curriculum information be presented in the order in which it is taught.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

For 2012, the Department commenced a process of requiring special religious education providers and Primary Ethics to provide the Department with an online link to curriculum overviews as part of their annual assurance process.

The majority of providers have provided the Department with a link to curriculum materials for 2012.

Action:

A statement of requirement is being included in the Department's policy and implementation procedures.

Recommendation 5

That the Department of Education and Communities establish an open and transparent expression of interest process to allow other organisations to apply to deliver Special Education in Ethics in NSW government primary schools before 2014.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

The Department has worked with key stakeholders to develop a clear process for organisations to apply for approved provider status, for both special religious education and special education in ethics.

Action:

The Department is preparing appropriate documents for approval.

Recommendation 6

That the Department of Education and Communities collect and publish data annually on the number of students participating in Special Education in Ethics, Special Religious Education and for those students who do not attend either.

Position:

Supported, in principle.

Comment:

Concern was raised that there is no adequate data on the number of students participating in special education in ethics, special religious education and non-special religious education classes.

The General Manager, Learning and Development in appearing before the committee, highlighted the difficulty in collecting this data when the responsibility for holding this data is at the local, individual school level. The fluidity of data was also noted.

For the purposes of the inquiry, special religious education and ethics coordinators in each region provided data on ethics classes only. There was some discrepancy between the data provided by the Department and Primary Ethics regarding the number of students attending special education in ethics classes. There was also discrepancy between the figures provided by Primary Ethics and the NSW Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (ICCOREIS) regarding the number of students opting out of special religious education.

Religious providers affirmed that, according to anecdotal feedback, the introduction of special education in ethics has had little or no impact on the number of students attending special religious education classes.

The Committee noted that a conservative estimate, made in lieu of concrete data, suggests that approximately 60 000 primary school students do not attend either special religious education or special education in ethics.

The Committee agreed that the Department should collect data on students attending special education in ethics, special religious education and non-special religious education classes.

Whilst the Department currently collects information on enrolment forms regarding a student's religion, it does not have a process in place to collect centralised data about

the number of students attending a particular special religious education or special education in ethics' class. The introduction of Learning and Business Management Reform (LMBR) may provide an opportunity for collection of such data.

Action:

The Department will work with the Learning Management and Business Reform project to investigate ways of collecting data.

Recommendation 7

That the Department of Education and Communities include in its revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures recommendations to schools regarding what constitutes adequate supervision for students and for activities that those students not attending Special Religious Education or Special Education in Ethics can be meaningfully engaged in, during that timeslot.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

Special education in ethics was developed in response to parental concerns regarding the activities that children not attending special religious education were able to undertake during that timeslot.

A number of submissions to the committee suggested that the Government had not fully implemented recommendation 42 of the Rawlinson Report (1980), the last formal review of religious education in public schools. Recommendation 42 of this report stated:

That pupils withdrawn from SRE be provided with opportunities for purposeful secular learning which should, however, be of such a nature as to avoid conflict of choice, either for the parents or for the pupils receiving Special Religious Education.

Action:

Additional information has been drafted for inclusion in the revised implementation procedures. The Department website for special religious education and special education in ethics will include a variety of suggestions and ideas for teachers.

Recommendation 8

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and Special Education in Ethics Implementation Procedures are effectively communicated to and implemented by principals once they are finalised.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

The Department is currently reviewing its policies in response to the Local Schools, Local Decisions initiative. Given the legislative imperative for special religious education and special education in ethics, it is anticipated that the updated policy will be published on the Department's policy website.

On approval of the updated policy and implementation procedures documents, a number of avenues will be used to inform schools and parents/caregivers, including a media release, items in *SchoolBiz*, Regional Director's meetings and through communication with regional contacts.

Action:

A communication strategy will be developed to disseminate information about the updated policy and implementation procedures documents.

Recommendation 9

That the Department of Education and Communities require and monitor Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics providers to ensure that they have in place a system of accredited initial and ongoing training for their voluntary teachers that includes training in classroom management and child protection issues and that this information is published on the providers' websites.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

There was concern expressed to the Committee that adequate training for volunteers who deliver special education in ethics was not provided. There was also some suggestion professional teachers should teach both special religious education and special education in ethics, rather than volunteers.

The Committee acknowledged the contribution made by volunteers and highlighted the fact that the Department has no role in monitoring the adequacy of training for volunteer teachers of special religious education or special education in ethics. They identified classroom management, curriculum knowledge and child protection training as necessary for adequate preparation.

The Committee recommended the Department require special religious education and special education in ethics providers to implement a system of accredited initial and ongoing training for their teachers, and that the Department monitor providers' compliance with this requirement.

With the exception of requiring an annual assurance, the Department's capacity to monitor training is limited.

The inclusion of a training statement on the annual assurance will provide a monitoring mechanism, along with spot visits to training days of organisations.

Action:

The Department will monitor training via the annual assurance process for approved providers of special religious education and special education in ethics.

Recommendation 10

That the Minister for Education investigate the inclusion of philosophy in New South Wales secondary schools as part of the development of the Australian Curriculum.

Position:

Investigation supported

Comment:

A statement was made in the submission of Dr Philip Cam, University of NSW that New South Wales was the only state that did not have a philosophy option in its secondary school curriculum.

Responsibility for NSW syllabus development lies with the Board of Studies NSW.

The Board of Studies currently does not provide a philosophy course. Individual schools may develop their own School Developed Board Endorsed Course in Philosophy.

Action:

To be followed up with Board of Studies NSW.

Recommendation 11

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and the Special Education in Ethics implementation procedures include the requirement for the provision of departmental approved fact sheets for parents at the time of enrolment that include information on the available options of Special Religious Education, procedures for opting out of Special Religious Education and the option of choosing Special Education in Ethics where available, and how to access curriculum information for these options.

These fact sheets should be available on the departmental website and individual school websites.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

The Committee noted concerns with the amount of information provided by schools to parents and caregivers to allow them to make informed decisions about their children's education in the area of special religious education and special education in ethics.

The Committee could not establish if parents have enough information to make informed decisions for their children. The Committee proposed that fact sheets be made available to parents on enrolment of their children.

The Department is currently in consultation with members of the Department's Consultative Committee on Special Religious Education regarding the format and content of fact sheets.

Individual providers of special religious education and special education in ethics are also able to liaise with individual schools regarding provision of information at student orientation days or enrolment days.

Action:

The Department will develop and publish on its website fact sheets for school use. Schools will be encouraged to include information regarding special religious education and special education in ethics at the local level on the school's website.

Recommendation 12

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the revised Religious Education Implementation Procedures and the Special Education in Ethics (SEE) implementation procedures include templates of letters that can be provided to schools for their use to:

- Advise parents/careers of the various Special Religious Education (SRE) classes available for year groups each year
- Advise parents/careers of any changes in organisation and/or availability of any new SRE classes

- Offer parent/carers of non-SRE students the option to attend SEE classes (advice should be clear to principals that this letter should only be distributed to parents/carers of potential non-SRE students only after an 'opt out' decision by parents/caregivers has been communicated to the school)
- SRE and SEE letter templates should differ in appearance to avoid confusion for parents/carers.

Position:

Supported

Comment:

The provision of information at school level has been contentious in some school communities. The Department's current position allows schools to advise the school community via a school newsletter or website that classes in ethics are available to students who have been exempted from attending special religious education.

A specific letter of offer of position in a class can only be provided to parents of exempted students.

A dissenting committee report by Dr John Kaye MLC on behalf of the Greens Party states:

The Greens strongly support the fundamental direction of the report and in particular Recommendation 1 that the ethics provisions in the Education Act 1990 (the Act) not be repealed. However we strenuously disagree with four aspects of the majority report:

1. *The requirement in Recommendation 12 that schools must offer Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in a second letter addressed only to parents of children who have opted out of Special Religious Education (SRE). This two-stage process is irrational. It is designed to deliberately disadvantage SEE and it would impose an unnecessary and punitive administrative burden on schools. A simpler model based on a single layered form would satisfy section 33A of the Act.*
2. *The absence of a recommendation that the Minister for Education write to the Commonwealth Assistant Treasurer supporting Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status for organisations that develop and deliver SEE materials. Scripture providers have access to DGR status while ethics providers do not.*
3. *The absence of a requirement that religious organisations and their affiliates be prohibited from providing SEE and that potential suppliers of SEE be required to demonstrate a commitment to becoming system-wide provider of philosophical ethics.*
4. *The failure of the report to recommend that the Department of Education and Communities (the Department) develop an open and transparent process to determine which religious organisations and their affiliates are permitted to deliver SRE in NSW government schools.*

The Department's current approach is appropriate, if not always understood by school communities. The revised implementation procedures will make this message clearer.

Action:

The Department will require schools to provide letters offering the option of special education in ethics, if available, to be sent to parents/caregivers of students not attending special religious education.

Draft letters have been developed by the Department.

Recommendation 13

That the Department of Education and Communities ensure that the Learning Services team of the NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre be adequately staffed and resourced to enable 'in servicing' of school leadership teams with regard to providing support for the implementation of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics.

Position:

Supported, with reporting lines adjusted to reflect the Schools Portfolio realignment.

Comment:

A Senior Education Officer level 1 position is currently provided to support special religious education and special education in ethics. This position has been maintained in the functional realignment of the Office of Public Schools within the Early Learning and Primary Education Directorate.

Action:

State Office staffing support for special religious education and special education in ethics will be maintained as part of the realignment of State Office functions.

Recommendation 14

That the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) commission an independent review of both Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in NSW government schools to be conducted by appropriately qualified early childhood educational reviewers in 2014-2015 that includes the following:

- *Survey of the nature and extent of SRE and SEE*
- *DEC Implementation Procedures for SRE and SEE including: parent/carer choice through the enrolment process and opting out; approval of SRE and SEE providers by DEC; authorisation of volunteer teachers and curriculum by providers*
- *Development of complaints procedures and protocols*
- *SRE and SEE providers training structures*
- *Registration of SRE and SEE Boards, Associations and Committees*
- *New modes of patterns of delivery using technology*
- *Pedagogy, relevance and age appropriateness of teaching and learning across all primary grades in a variety of demographics*
- *Need for annual confirmation by parents/carers on SRE choice or opting out*

- *Review of activities and level of supervision for students who do not attend SRE or SEE.*

Position:

Supported

Comment:

It was suggested that the current inquiry was conducted very early in the implementation of special education in ethics, considering classes commenced in 2011.

A number of submissions called for a thorough review of both special religious education and special education in ethics in the future.

The Committee supported the view that there should be a review of special education in ethics in the future, with a focus on curriculum and delivery issues raised in this inquiry.

In recognition that there has not been a review of special religious education for over 30 years, the Committee proposed that special religious education also be reviewed.

Action:

The Incoming Director, Early Learning and Primary Education and the Director, Centre for Educational Statistics will be briefed about the Inquiry and alerted to the 2014 Review.

Basic SRE Training (ICCOREIS)

ICCOREIS MEMO: Basic Training for New SRE Teachers

At the ICCOREIS meeting on 13 November 2012, a basic training standard was accepted. This standard was endorsed as the basic standard for SRE teachers in government schools in NSW. It is called **Basic SRE Training**.

The features of **Basic SRE Training** are:

- A list of competencies, outcomes and processes, arranged in modules.
- Presenting a lesson and being observed is one of the competencies.
- There is no indicative timing for training.
- There is no prescribed assessment method

A copy of the Basic SRE Training Standard is attached.

It will be presented to the Member Churches between November 2012 and June 2013 when the Triennial Meeting will be held. It is hoped it will be endorsed in June by all ICCOREIS Member Churches and eventually by all Christian SRE Providers.

Denominational differences

Each SRE Provider determines the minimum training required for its SRE teachers. Some SRE Providers have already implemented this standard for all their current teachers; for others it will only apply to new teachers from 2013. For others the adoption of the Basic SRE Training will take even longer.

Cross authorisation

Where SRE Providers work together in a cooperative way to provide SRE, they can cross authorise the training of other Providers and training organisations who apply this standard.

We are in a transition time during which grace and understanding needs to be applied as we work towards the excellence we all desire.

FAQs

Q Has the Government introduced new laws about SRE teacher training?

A **There is no new training requirement imposed by NSW government on SRE teachers.**

Q Do new SRE teachers have to be trained?

A **Under NSW law, Approved Providers (generally denominations but also dioceses and some independent churches) have responsibility for recruiting, authorising and training SRE teachers. Approved Providers decide what training is required. ICCOREIS recommends that Basic SRE Training should become mandatory from 2013.**

Q When do new SRE teachers have to be trained?

A **ICCOREIS recommends that new SRE teachers receive Basic SRE Training as soon as is practically possible and within 12 months of their engagement in SRE.**

Q What is the minimum amount of training for new teachers required?

A **Compliance is measured as some training from every module and no less than 80% of the competencies, outcomes and processes being achieved.**

Q Will I be able to teach in 2013 if I have not done the Basic SRE Training?

A **No teacher has to stop teaching unless their authorising body/Approved Provider refuses to authorise them. The Basic SRE Training is recommended by ICCOREIS and other Providers who choose to mandate it, and it is only for NEW SRE teachers.**

Q What should I do if I have never received any training?

- A ICCOREIS recommends that continuing SRE teachers take every opportunity to undertake training. The Basic SRE Training could be used as ongoing formation and training for all teachers.**
- Q I've done basic SRE training. Do I have to do anything else?
- A While this training is intended as basic entry level for those new to SRE, Approved Providers have an expectation that SRE teachers will undertake ongoing training. They may mandate other requirements for volunteers, eg Child Protection Training, Spiritual Formation and advanced skills training.**

The **Basic SRE Training** standard relates ONLY to the list of Competencies, Outcomes and Processes, NOT the content, assessment or module structure of this document. These elements (columns 1 and 3) were included to give clarity to the list.

Module 1 TEACHING SRE IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS			
Content	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes		Suggested Assessment Methods
Why we do SRE (Mission and Ministry)	1.1	Articulate participants' motives for becoming an SRE teacher	Group Discussion or Interview
	1.2	Claim some of the privileges of being an SRE teacher	
Current practice of SRE in NSW (facts and figures)	1.3	Claim some of the responsibilities of being an SRE teacher	
	1.4	Accept their responsibility to complete the authorisation process	View authorisation card
History of SRE in NSW	1.5	Appreciate the place of SRE in NSW Public Education throughout time. Eg, the nature of SRE	
	1.6	Describe the relationship between the schools and church's SRE coordinators	Workbook
How we do SRE? (Legislation, Policy and Guidelines)	1.7	Identify five different models of SRE	
	1.8	Differentiate Denominational and Joint Denominational types of SRE	
Becoming an approved SRE teacher (authorisation)	1.9	Recognise the DEC guidelines for SRE including legislation, relevant laws etc	Questioning
	1.10	Outline the role of the SRE Provider (Church/Denomination)	
How SRE impacts our local school communities (Adding value to public education)	1.11	Locate their church and school personnel in a diagram of how SRE operates in NSW	Workbook
	1.12	Recall the meaning of the acronym " ICCOREIS"	
	1.13	Identify five contributions that SRE makes to Public Education in NSW	
	1.14	Identify three sources of support for themselves as SRE volunteers	

Module 2 LEARNING AND TEACHING			
Content	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes	Suggested Assessment Methods	
Developmental Stages of Learners	2.1 Explore through discussion “how and when children develop?”	Take Home Task	
	2.1.1 examine the characteristics of learners in each of the seven stages of schooling in NSW		
Contemporary Classrooms	2.2 Experience a contemporary school class to identify	Classroom Visit or view DVD recording	
	2.2.1 classroom routine and equipment		
	2.2.2 a range of children including those with special needs and gifted/talented		
Contemporary Learning	2.2.3 school discipline policies and procedures	Observation Sheet	
	2.3 Experience a contemporary school lesson to observe		
	2.3.1 differences in today’s classrooms from participants’ previous experiences		
	2.3.2 teacher expectations and routines		
	2.3.2 preparation by the teacher		
	2.3.3 teacher interaction with children		
Communication in SRE classes	2.3.5 how a lesson is introduced, conducted and concluded	Worksheet	
	2.3.6 learning activities and transitions between them		
	2.4 Name and describe the key elements of a communication process		
	2.5 Propose five tips for effective communication in the classroom		
	2.6 Identify different communication styles employed in SRE		
	2.7 Investigate how various children view God (through children’s drawing and writing)		Pair and share
	2.8 Demonstrate language that is inclusive and respectful of differing opinions		Discussion
2.9 Illustrate awareness of common presumptions in communicating in SRE			
2.10 Express a positive vision of the SRE classroom in Government schools			
Questioning Skills	2.11 Identify the importance of questions and demonstrate the appropriate use of questions	Q & A	

Module 3 PREPARING AND DELIVERING LESSONS		
Content	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes	Suggested Assessment Methods
Authorised Curriculums	3.1 Name the SRE curriculum that participants are or will be using	Workbook
	3.2 Demonstrate a basic ability to navigate the teachers manual of one SRE program	Search and Find
Using a Program	3.3 Identify the main components of an SRE lesson/session	Workbook
	3.4 Plan for an SRE class	Lesson Notes Task
Using a Manual	3.4.1 Assess the learning needs of a particular group of students	
	3.4.2 Prepare a set of lesson notes by selecting appropriately from a published lesson plan(s).	
Developing Lesson Notes	3.5 Apply their knowledge of a particular class to a published lesson plan by adapting that plan to the particular learning environment and group of learners.	
Module 4 COMMUNICATING IN THE CLASSROOM		
Content	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes	Suggested Assessment Methods
Classroom Management	4.1 Evaluate three key principles for good classroom management	Discussion
	4.2 Select five tips for managing an SRE class	Workbook
	4.3 List five different skills of classroom management	
Code of Conduct	4.3.1 Be aware of the principles of Positive Correction esp. the focus on behaviour	Demonstration
	4.3.2 Express three different methods for affirming students	
	4.4 Experiment with words and actions useful for creating a safe and caring environment for children and young people in SRE classes	Role Play
	4.4.1 list behaviours that are considered advisable for SRE Teachers	Workbook
	4.4.2 recognise behaviours that are inappropriate for SRE Teachers	Q & A
	4.4.3 justify the practices recommended for volunteers by the Dept of Education and Community Guidelines for SRE	
Module 5 INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE		
Content	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes	Suggested Assessment Methods
Old Testament and New Testament	5.1 Recognise the principal parts of the Bible	Library Task
	5.2 Identify the books of the Bible	
Library of the Bible	5.3 Recognise a Catholic and Protestant versions of the Bible	

Literary Forms Bible History	5.4	List three contemporary translations of the Bible	Workbook
	5.5	Find 10 bible references from an assortment of Old and New Testament books.	
	5.6	Identify five different literary forms (genre) found in the Bible	Complete Timeline
	5.7	Outline the development of the Bible	
5.8	Complete a Bible history timeline		
Authorship Audiences	5.9	Locate cities and towns on bible maps	Map Task
	5.10	Appreciate the meaning of authorship as a partnership of God and humans	Discussion of theological concepts
Revelation and Inspiration	5.11	Recognise the role of the intended audience as well as the modern reader	
	5.12	Explain the link between inspiration and revelation	Discussion of theological concepts
	5.13	Outline how the Bible develops its major themes	

Module 6 CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Content	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes		Suggested Assessment Methods
Planning a Lesson	6.1	Plan for an SRE class (3.5)	Written Notes
	6.1.1	Assess the needs of a particular group of students (3.5.1)	
Presenting a Lesson	6.1.2	Prepare a set of lesson notes by selecting appropriately from a published lesson plan(s) (3.5.2)	Interview
	6.2	Apply their knowledge of a particular class to a published lesson plan by adapting that plan to the particular learning environment and group of learners (3.6)	
	6.4	Demonstrate an elementary ability to present an SRE lesson to an SRE class in a Government School.	Skills Audit
	6.4.1	Present a structured lesson with an Introduction, Body and Conclusion	
	6.4.2	Demonstrate five different skills of classroom management (4.3)	
	6.4.3	Demonstrate words and actions useful for creating a safe and caring environment for children and young people in SRE classes (4.4)	Observation

GENERAL		
	Competencies, Outcomes and Processes	Suggested Assessment Methods
	G.1 Accept the need for support & ongoing training	Observation
	G.2 Be aware of where to get assistance and support	
	G.3 Recognise the value of future training and availability	

End of Chapter

DRAFT