



Special Religious Education and General Religious Education

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

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.' It also allows for general religious education.

The revised Religious Education policy (01/06/2013) and implementation procedures can be found at:

<http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/religion/>

Definitions

Special Religious Education (SRE) is education in the beliefs and practices of an approved religious persuasion by authorised representatives of the persuasion.

General Religious Education

(GRE) is education about the world's major religions, what people believe and how that belief affects their lives. This is taught through the school curriculum.

Responsibilities

Principals

Principals must allow time for SRE where representatives of approved providers are available. On average, not less than 30 minutes and not more than one hour per week should be allocated. The lesson period should be consistent with the age and attention span of the students.

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

Parents/caregivers have the right to choose not to have their children attend SRE. Parents/caregivers are to be advised of options if they do not wish their children to attend SRE, including special education in ethics where it is available.

Principals will support SRE by ensuring that no academic instruction or formal school activities occur during the time set aside for special religious education. Students not attending SRE should be in a separate space from these classes and be provided with meaningful activities such as reading, private study or completing homework.

Providers

SRE 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/>

Only persons authorised by approved religious persuasions teach SRE.

A provider must ensure that all personnel/volunteers have had a Working with Children Check or signed a Working with Children Check Declaration for volunteers depending on the phase-in status of the volunteer:

<http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/working-with-children-check>

Providers must publish age-appropriate curriculum on their website.

Contact Information

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