

Fairness in Religions in School

2021 Compliance Audit

SRE and SEE information on NSW public school websites

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1. Introduction and summary

In February 2021 FIRIS was contacted by members of the Hindu community enquiring about Hindu religious organisations delivering Special Religious Education (SRE – commonly referred to as ‘scripture’) in NSW public schools.

FIRIS decided to

- (1) conduct an audit of the websites of schools which reported a Hindu student subpopulation with a religious persuasion of 10% or greater in 2018 enrolment data (see Section 3.2 below for the lists of schools audited)¹, and
- (2) an appraisal of the degree to which SRE for minority (ie. non-Christian) faiths are available or addressed

A key aim of the audit was to identify school websites which were and were not implementing the Department’s Special Religious Education Procedures² (the Procedures) and their supporting documents correctly.

1.1. Presence of SRE and/or SEE

FIRIS identified that

- in 2018 enrolment data, 64 NSW public primary and 17 public secondary schools reported a student population with a Hindu religious persuasion of 10% or more
- all of those 64 primary schools audited this year, ie. 2021, had religious organisations delivering SRE in 2021, including 44 delivering Hindu SRE
- 15 of the 17 secondary schools audited this year, ie. 2021, had religious organisations delivering SRE in 2021, including four delivering Hindu SRE.

1.2. Provision of general information about SRE and SEE

Six of the 64 primary schools and two of the 15 secondary schools providing SRE (9.4% and 13.3%, respectively), failed to meet minimum policy requirements for the provision of general information about SRE and SEE on their websites.

¹ The last student religious persuasion data provided by the Department of Education is for the 2018 school year. That data identified 449 schools in which at least five students had their religion declared as 'Hindu' in school records. See <https://data.cese.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset/student-religious-persuasion-in-nsw-government-schools> - accessed 27.06.2021. FIRIS does not think this data has been collected since 2018 due to the removal of the SRE / religion question from the enrolment form in 2019 (one year transition period) and the subsequent transition to the SRE and SEE Participation Letter in 2020.

² <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf>

1.3. Identification of approved SRE and SEE providers

Twenty-nine of the 64 primary schools (45%) failed to identify all the approved SRE and/or SEE providers currently active in them, thereby failing to meet minimum procedural requirements (including four schools which continued to fail to provide necessary website information after being sent emails in March 2021 pointing out their procedural requirements).

Of the 15 secondary schools at which SRE was available, ten (66.7%) failed to identify all their current approved SRE and/or SEE providers, thereby failing to meet minimum procedural requirements; including five secondary schools whose websites contained no information at all regarding the organisation of SRE.

1.4. Links to curriculum scope and sequence documents

The websites of the 64 primary schools audited contained a total of 314 hyperlinks to curriculum scope and sequence documents, including on pages other than their 'Learning at our School' page. Of these 314 links

- only 19 (6.1%) went directly to curriculum scope and sequence documents, and
- 34 (10.8%) did not function.

Across the websites of the 15 secondary schools, including pages other than the 'Learning at our School' page, **21 hyperlinks were provided**. Of these 21 links, only 6 (28.6%) were directly to curriculum scope and sequence documents.

1.5. Provision of information about 'alternative meaningful activities'

Of the 64 primary school websites audited, only 35 mentioned 'alternative meaningful activities'. Therefore, **29 (45.3%) failed to meet minimum procedural requirements**.

Of the 15 secondary schools providing SRE, only six mentioned 'alternative meaningful activities' on their websites. Therefore, **nine (56.5%) failed to meet minimum procedural requirements**.

1.6. Compliance with all requirements

In June 2021, **only 14 of the 64 primary schools audited (21.9%) met the minimum requirements** set by the Department. However, it must be noted that four of these 14 schools did not have the required information when first visited in March 2021. Therefore, it is highly likely that only 10 of the primary schools (15.6%) provided required information on their websites prior to the start of the 2021 school year.

In June 2021, **only three of the 15 secondary schools audited (20%) met the minimum requirements set by the Department**.

1.7. General issues

In addition to the above, this 2021 audit identified the following issues of concerns

- Schools listing SRE providers not found on the Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers,
- SRE and SEE Participation Letters failing to identify the SRE providers active in the school
- Evidence indicating incorrect implementation of the SRE and SEE enrolment process, increasing the likelihood of students being placed in SRE without express written consent from parents and carers,
- Schools unwilling to respond to correspondence from FIRIS pointing out issues of non-compliance.

1.8. Wellbeing, including spiritual and other wellbeing education and development

The NSW Department of Education's Wellbeing Framework for Schools³ states

*The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) is committed to creating quality learning opportunities for children and young people. This includes strengthening their cognitive, physical, social, emotional and **spiritual** development.* (emphasis added) [p. 2]

Using the 2018 enrolment religious persuasion data as a general approximation for the religious persuasions or worldviews of the current 2021 student populations of the schools audited, the percentage of primary students who would not have access to an equivalent 'spiritual' education to those students taking part in SRE

- at schools providing Hindu SRE would range from 13% to 56%
- at schools *not* providing Hindu SRE would range from 42% to 75%.

The percentage of secondary students who would not have access to an equivalent 'spiritual' education to those students taking part in SRE

- at schools providing Hindu SRE would range from 19% to 46%.
- at schools *not* providing Hindu SRE would range from 46% to 92%.

Furthermore, the Department's SRE Procedures and SEE Procedures state that principals **must** ensure that no academic instruction or formal school activities occur during the time set aside for SRE and/or SEE. Therefore, not only are these students missing out on an equivalent 'spiritual' education, they are also denied access to academic instruction and formal school activities while SRE and SEE are taking place.

See Tables 3.1 & 3.2 in Appendix 1.

³ Retrieved from https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/student-wellbeing/whole-school-approach/Wellbeing_Framework_for_Schools.pdf - accessed 13.08.21.

1.9. Conclusions and recommendations

The key findings of this and previous audits are

- misidentification of 'approved' SRE providers, indicating schools' SRE coordinators are not always accessing the Department's list of approved SRE providers to verify whether religious organisations seeking to provide SRE in NSW public school students are approved to do so (thereby increasing the risk of unauthorised personnel gaining access to NSW public school students)
- low rates of compliance of schools with the Department's SRE Procedures (and their supporting documents) requiring school websites to provide certain information about SRE, SEE and 'alternative meaningful activities', indicating that many principals and/or their delegates are not consulting and/or are not familiar with the SRE Procedures and their supporting documents.

In response to the findings of this and previous audits, FIRIS recommends

- the NSW Department of Education amends the Special Religious Education Procedures and/or its supporting documents to include more specific instructions on what is to be included on school's websites and 'SRE and SEE Participation Letters', including the following directions

"SRE and SEE providers are to be listed on the school website and in the 'SRE and SEE Participation Letter' **using their names as found on the Department's list of approved SRE providers.**"
- the NSW Department of Education amends the Special Religious Education Procedures to include a clear statement that

only students with verifiable express consent from parents and carers can be enrolled in SRE or SEE, and that, in the absence of such consent, students are provided with 'alternative meaningful activities'.

2. Background

2.1. NSW Department of Education requirements regarding the provision of information on school websites

The Special Religious Education Procedures (the Procedures) and their supporting documents state that parents and carers have the right to information about SRE and Special Education in Ethics (SEE – ‘ethics’), including information about what will be taught and how they are run each year. This information must be provided on the school’s website,⁴ in enrolment information,⁵ and in the school newsletter.⁶

If SRE and/or SEE are available at a school, the school’s website, preferably the ‘Learning at our school’ page, **must**⁷

- say which SRE and SEE providers are active at the school.⁸
- provide a link to the curriculum scope and sequence document (outline of lessons) of each SRE and SEE curriculum used in the school.⁹ It should also have a link to each SRE and SEE provider’s website.¹⁰
- say what the ‘alternative meaningful activities’ are for students who do not go to SRE or SEE.¹¹

If a group of SRE providers have come together to provide SRE as a ‘combined arrangement’, each and every SRE provider *in* the combined arrangement **must** be listed on the school’s website.

The school should ensure that any changes to SRE, SEE, or to the ‘alternative meaningful activities’ options are communicated to the school community on the school website.¹²

See **Appendix 2** below for sources of these requirements in the Procedures and other documents.

2.2. Previous FIRIS audit findings

2.2.1. Metropolitan North – Secondary Schools – August 2019

Of the 69 secondary schools in the Metropolitan North school region providing SRE, only 5 schools met all of the Department’s requirements regarding the provision of information regarding SRE and AMA on their websites. See Appendix 3.1 for a more detailed summary of the findings.

2.2.2. Rural North – Primary Schools – September/October 2019

Of the 280 schools providing SRE in the Rural North school region, only 26 (9.3%) schools met all of the requirements regarding the provision of information regarding SRE on their websites.

See Appendix 3.2 for a more detailed summary of the findings.

⁴ The sources of the information in this document are provided in Appendix 2. In this instance see sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12.

⁵ See 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, and 1.6 in Appendix 2.

⁶ See 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 in Appendix 2.

⁷ See 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13 in Appendix 2.

⁸ See 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.14 and 3.15 in Appendix 2.

⁹ See 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11 in Appendix 2.

¹⁰ See 5.1 in Appendix 2.

¹¹ See 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12 in Appendix 2.

¹² See 3.8 in Appendix 2.

3. This 2021 Audit and its findings

In consideration of the information in 2.1 above, FIRIS audited selected school websites to determine whether

1. the school's website had a 'Learning at our School' page
2. the school's 'Learning at our School' page identified the approved SRE providers active in the school or if this information was available elsewhere on the school's website
3. the school's 'Learning at our School' provided links to the scope and sequence documents of the SRE curricula used by the SRE providers active in the school
4. the school's 'Learning at our School' page provided information regarding 'alternative meaningful activities'

References to 'generic' information in this audit are to a presumed template 'Religion and ethics' page linked to the 'Learning at our school' page on many NSW Government schools websites. This page has the following text

NSW schools offer special religious education and special education in ethics. Approved providers deliver these, where available.

Write to the school if you wish to withdraw your child from special religious education, sometimes known as scripture. Special education in ethics is an option for your primary-age child if you withdraw them from special religious education. For more information, visit [Religion and ethics](#).

If SRE / SEE / AMA is offered at a school, such 'generic' text would not be compliant with the Procedures.

In the absence of the 'Learning at our school' page on a school website, FIRIS used site-search functions (if available) and performed general internet searches to try and find information related to SRE on the relevant school's website.

3.1. NSW Government Schools with more than 10% Hindu students

The last student religious persuasion data provided by the Department of Education was for the 2018 school year. That 2018 data identified 449 schools in which at least five students had their religion declared as 'Hindu' in school records.

See <https://data.cese.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset/student-religious-persuasion-in-nsw-government-schools> (accessed 27.06.2021)

FIRIS is aware of the limitations arising from the use of the 2018 data to select schools for a 2021 audit. However, this data is unlikely to have been collected since 2018 or 2019 due to the removal of the SRE preference and religion persuasion questions from the *Application to enrol in a NSW Government school* form in mid-2019 and the subsequent transition to use of a *Special Religious*

Education and Special Education in Ethics Participation Letter (the Participation Letter) for new enrolling students for 2020 and since.¹³

It should be noted that the NSW Department of Education chooses not to collect actual data about SRE and SEE participation, despite such data collection being recommended in

- (i) the final report of the *General Purpose Standing Committee No 2, Inquiry into the Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill*, and
- (ii) the *2015 Review of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics in NSW Government Schools*.

Sixty-four primary and **17 secondary schools** across NSW had a Hindu student population of more than 10% in the 2018 data. The websites of these schools were audited by FIRIS in March and June 2021.

The primary and secondary schools audited are listed in the Tables 1 and 2 in Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, respectively, below.

3.1.1. Hindu SRE by school region and district

There are eight Government school regions in NSW. The primary schools and the secondary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located in three: Metropolitan North, Metropolitan South and Metropolitan South and West school regions.

See Tables 1 and 2 in Section 3.2 below for the locations of schools audited.

Metropolitan North

Twenty-five of the 64 primary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located across nine of 13 school districts making up the Metropolitan North region.

Six of the 17 secondary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located across four of the 13 school districts making up the Metropolitan North region

Metropolitan South

Twenty-two of the 64 primary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located across six of 14 school districts making up the Metropolitan South region

Seven of the 17 secondary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located across four of 14 school districts making up the Metropolitan South region

Metropolitan South and West

Seventeen of the 64 primary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located across 6 of 13 school districts making up the Metropolitan South and West region

Four of the 17 secondary schools with a Hindu student population of 10% or greater in 2018 are located across three of the 13 school districts making up the Metropolitan South and West region

¹³ <https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/a40c5202-946b-4cc3-b5ff-3d06fcd76b3/1/sre-see-letter.docx>

3.2. Presence of SRE and/or SEE

3.2.1. Primary schools

Based on information provided on websites and/or communication with the schools, FIRIS identified that **all** of the 64 primary schools with a Hindu student subpopulation of more than 10% in 2018 had religious organisations active in the school in 2021 for the purposes of delivering SRE, including –

- 44 schools providing Hindu SRE
- 59 schools offering Christian SRE (59 Protestant/Anglican, 59 Catholic, 7 Orthodox)
- 50 schools offering Islamic SRE
- 21 schools offering Sikh SRE
- 9 schools providing Buddhist SRE
- 1 school providing Baha'i SRE
- 1 school providing Jewish SRE
- 22 schools providing Special Education in Ethics

FIRIS was unable discern any information about SRE from the websites of five primary schools, Glenwood Public School, Homebush Public School, Homebush West Public School, Minto Public School, and Penshurst Public School. When the websites of these five schools were visited between 16 March and 3 April 2021, the 'Religion and Ethics' pages of these schools' website contained generic text typical of schools that don't have any information about SRE.

FIRIS was, however, able to confirm that SRE was available at these schools because (i) one school, Homebush West PS, stated so in a 2021 school newsletter (of 15 February), and (ii) the other four confirmed so during telephone conversations with a FIRIS member.

Homebush Public School confirmed it provided Hindu SRE when asked. Otherwise, questions about the types of SRE available were not asked of those four schools.

Emails were sent to Homebush Public School, Homebush West Public School and Minto Public School (on 16, 18 and 22 March 2021, respectively) requesting information but none responded. When their websites were revisited between 8 June 2021 and 15 June 2021, no changes were detected.

Table 1: Primary (Public) Schools (in decreasing order of Hindu student as a proportion of the total school student population)

School	District	Region	Total No. of Students (2018)	Hindu Student Number (2018)	Hindu Students as a % of total school	SRE available	Hindu SRE available
Girraween PS	Girraween	Metro South *	1238	860	69.5%	✓	✓
Westmead PS	Parramatta	Metro South	1593	1063	66.7%	✓	✓
Wentworthville PS	Girraween	Metro South	586	337	57.5%	✓	✓
Darcy Road PS	Girraween	Metro South	652	299	45.9%	✓	✓
Parramatta PS	Parramatta	Metro South	1055	449	42.6%	✓	✓
Rosehill PS	Parramatta	Metro South	741	303	40.9%	✓	✓

School	District	Region	Total No. of Students (2018)	Hindu Student Number (2018)	Hindu Students as a % of total school	SRE available	Hindu SRE available
Homebush PS	Strathfield	Metro South	473	193	40.8%	✓	✓
Pendle Hill PS	Girraween	Metro South	275	107	38.9%	✓	✓
Kogarah PS	Kogarah	Metro South	425	151	35.5%	✓	-
Blacktown North PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West *	251	80	31.9%	✓	✓
Metella Road PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	708	225	31.8%	✓	✓
Blacktown South PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	1067	339	31.8%	✓	✓
Homebush West PS	Strathfield	Metro South	564	171	30.3%	✓	-
Riverbank PS	The Ponds	Metro North *	1107	309	27.9%	✓	✓
Parramatta North PS	Parramatta	Metro South	450	120	26.7%	✓	-
Quakers Hill PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	1018	260	25.5%	✓	✓
Matthew Pearce PS	The Hills	Metro North	1447	364	25.2%	✓	✓
Holsworthy PS	Chipping Norton	Metro Sth & West	690	172	24.9%	✓	✓
Parramatta West PS	Parramatta	Metro South	860	211	24.5%	✓	✓
Barnier PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	904	184	20.4%	✓	✓
Minto PS	St Andrews	Metro Sth & West	220	44	20.0%	✓	-
Waitara PS	Hornsby	Metro North	930	180	19.4%	✓	✓
Quakers Hill East PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	713	137	19.2%	✓	✓
West Ryde PS	Ryde	Metro North	664	122	18.4%	✓	✓
Caddies Creek PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	1036	190	18.3%	✓	-
Seven Hills PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	143	25	17.5%	✓	✓
Burwood PS	Strathfield	Metro South	597	102	17.1%	✓	✓
Glenfield PS	Glenfield	Metro Sth & West	416	69	16.6%	✓	-
Liverpool PS	Liverpool	Metro Sth & West	739	122	16.5%	✓	✓
Epping PS	Gordon	Metro North	513	84	16.4%	✓	✓
Ropes Crossing PS	Mount Druitt	Metro North	756	123	16.3%	✓	-
Kellyville Ridge PS	The Ponds	Metro North	832	133	16.0%	✓	✓
Strathfield South PS	Strathfield	Metro South	789	125	15.8%	✓	✓
Macquarie Fields PS	St Andrews	Metro Sth & West	963	151	15.7%	✓	-
Bert Oldfield PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	282	44	15.6%	✓	✓
Toongabbie PS	Girraween	Metro South	635	95	15.0%	✓	✓
Parramatta East PS	Parramatta	Metro South	546	79	14.5%	✓	✓
John Palmer PS	The Ponds	Metro North	864	125	14.5%	✓	✓
Ironbark Ridge PS	The Ponds	Metro North	940	134	14.3%	✓	✓
Greystanes PS	Girraween	Metro South	750	106	14.1%	✓	✓

School	District	Region	Total No. of Students (2018)	Hindu Student Number (2018)	Hindu Students as a % of total school	SRE available	Hindu SRE available
Glenwood PS	Glenfield	Metro Sth & West	228	32	14.0%	✓	-
Victoria Avenue PS	Strathfield	Metro South	263	36	13.7%	✓	✓
John Purchase PS	The Hills	Metro North	639	87	13.6%	✓	✓
Bardia PS	Glenfield	Metro Sth & West	360	48	13.3%	✓	✓
Rockdale PS	Kogarah	Metro South	431	57	13.2%	✓	-
Colyton PS	Eastern Creek	Metro Sth & West	851	111	13.0%	✓	✓
Schofields PS	The Ponds	Metro North	423	54	12.8%	✓	✓
Parklea PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	686	85	12.4%	✓	-
Kingswood PS	Cambridge Park	Metro North	437	54	12.4%	✓	-
Walters Road PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	609	74	12.2%	✓	-
Artarmon PS	Gordon	Metro North	1179	142	12.0%	✓	-
Seven Hills West PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	349	41	11.7%	✓	-
Penshurst PS	Georges River	Metro South	441	50	11.3%	✓	-
Jasper Road PS	The Hills	Metro North	866	97	11.2%	✓	✓
Hornsby South PS	Hornsby	Metro North	681	75	11.0%	✓	✓
Hambledon PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	642	70	10.9%	✓	✓
The Meadows PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	233	25	10.7%	✓	-
Marsden Park PS	The Ponds	Metro North	85	9	10.6%	✓	-
Ashfield PS	Canterbury	Metro South	505	53	10.5%	✓	✓
Glendenning PS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	626	65	10.4%	✓	-
Blacktown West PS	Bungarribee	Metro Sth & West	409	42	10.3%	✓	-
Epping West PS	Carlingford	Metro North	1208	124	10.3%	✓	✓
Cherrybrook PS	The Hills	Metro North	869	89	10.2%	✓	✓
Concord West PS	Strathfield	Metro South	359	36	10.0%	✓	✓

* **Metro North** = Metropolitan North; **Metro South** = Metropolitan South; **Metro Sth & West** = Metropolitan South and West

3.2.2. Secondary schools

Based on information provided on websites and/or communication with the schools, FIRIS determined that 15 of the 17 secondary schools with a Hindu student subpopulation of more than 10% in 2018 had **religious organisations active in the school in 2021 for the purposes of delivering SRE**, including

- 4 offering Hindu SRE
- 1 school offering Buddhist SRE
- 10 providing Christian SRE (10 Protestant/Anglican, 5 Catholic)
- 3 providing Islamic SRE
- 1 offering Sikh SRE

Baha'i SRE, Jewish SRE and Special Education in Ethics were not offered at any of these 15 secondary schools.

Table 2: Secondary (High) Schools (in decreasing order of Hindu student as a proportion of the total school student population)

School	District	Region	Total Student Number (2018)	Hindu Student Number (2018)	Hindu Students as a % of total school	SRE available	Hindu SRE available
Girraween HS	Girraween	Metro South *	759	310	40.8%	✓	✓
Parramatta HS	Parramatta	Metro South	894	362	40.5%	✓	-
Penrith HS	Penrith	Metro Sth & West *	925	306	33.1%	-	-
Macarthur Girls HS	Parramatta	Metro South	1031	318	30.8%	✓	✓
Blacktown Boys HS	Bungaribee	Metro Sth & West	593	170	28.7%	-	-
Baulkham Hills HS	The Hills	Metro North *	1213	256	21.1%	✓	✓
Macquarie Fields HS	St Andrews	Metro Sth & West	1121	223	19.9%	✓	-
Cherrybrook Technology HS	The Hills	Metro North	1986	289	14.6%	✓	-
Blacktown Girls HS	Bungaribee	Metro Sth & West	765	106	13.9%	✓	-
Glenwood HS	Quakers Hill	Metro North	1477	199	13.5%	✓	-
Strathfield Girls HS	Strathfield	Metro South	1070	143	13.4%	✓	-
Normanhurst Boys HS	Hornsby	Metro North	761	94	12.4%	✓	-
The Ponds HS	The Ponds	Metro North	1111	134	12.1%	✓	-
Hornsby Girls HS	Hornsby	Metro North	728	87	12.0%	✓	-
Arthur Phillip HS	Parramatta	Metro South	1183	129	10.9%	✓	-
Sydney Boys HS	Port Jackson	Metro South	1212	124	10.2%	✓	✓
Homebush Boys HS	Strathfield	Metro South	1112	113	10.2%	✓	-

* **Metro North** = Metropolitan North; **Metro South** = Metropolitan South; **Metro Sth & West** = Metropolitan South and West

Also see Table 3.2 in Appendix 1, pp. 30 and 31.

Of the five secondary schools providing SRE but without readily available information about it, one, the Ponds High School, had information in a school newsletter; two, Cherrybrook Technical and Homebush Boys' High Schools, had scant hard-to-find website information indicating it was available; and two, Blacktown Girls' and Girraween High Schools confirmed it was in brief phone conversations with school staff, and Girraween High School confirmed Hindu SRE was available.

3.3. Wellbeing, including spiritual and other wellbeing education and development

The notion of wellbeing and its domains has been introduced into education speak in recent years.

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (December 2008) ¹⁴ states

*Schools play a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, **spiritual** and aesthetic development and **wellbeing** of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation's ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. (emphasis added) [p. 4]*

and that

*Confident and creative individuals...have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, **spiritual** and physical **wellbeing**. (emphasis added) [p. 9]*

The Introduction to the NSW Department of Education's 'Wellbeing Framework for Schools' ¹⁵ states that

*The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) is committed to creating quality learning opportunities for children and young people. This includes strengthening their cognitive, physical, social, emotional and **spiritual** development. Parents entrust their children and young people to principals, teachers and school staff with confidence that **schools will deliver on this agenda**. (emphasis added) [p. 2]*

And

*wellbeing can be described as **the quality of a person's life** ... [and] ...*

*wellbeing needs to be considered against a background of how we feel and function across **several domains**, recognising the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing. These domains include cognitive, emotional, social, physical and **spiritual** wellbeing.*

*Wellbeing can be shaped by a number of broad influences including the degree to which there is an experience of: **choice**, achievement of meaningful goals, positive relationships, enjoyment, **personal growth and development**, health, and safety. (emphasis added) [p. 3]*

The Wellbeing Framework states in regard to *spiritual* wellbeing

***Spiritual** wellbeing relates to **our sense of meaning and purpose**. It can include our connection to culture, religion or community and **includes the beliefs, values and ethics we hold**. (emphasis added) [p. 3]*

It also states in regard to *social* wellbeing

*Social wellbeing includes the extent to which we experience positive relationships and **connectedness to others**. It is important for pro-social behaviour and our empathy towards others. (emphasis added) [p. 3]*

¹⁴ Retrieved from http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/national_declaration_on_the_educational_goals_for_young_australians.pdf accessed on 13.08.21.

¹⁵ Retrieved from https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/student-wellbeing/whole-school-approach/Wellbeing_Framework_for_Schools.pdf - accessed 13.08.21.

If wellbeing – “*the quality of a person’s life*” – and spiritual-wellbeing *per se*, or as a component of wellbeing, are as important as the NSW Wellbeing Framework or the Melbourne Declaration hold, then it could be argued that any child not being offered SRE or an equivalent for their faith or worldview during time set aside for SRE is being disadvantaged and discriminated against in and by the provision for SRE in section 32 of the *NSW Education Act 1990*.

Special Education in Ethics is **not** an equivalent ‘spiritual education’.

3.3.1. Children of parents/carers belonging to minority faiths

Using the 2018 enrolment-form-derived religious persuasion data as a general guide for the current 2021 student populations of the primary schools audited herein, the percentage of primary students who would likely belong to minority religions and who would likely *not* have access to suitable SRE or equivalent ‘spiritual education’

- at schools providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 1.5% to 26%
- at schools **not** providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 12% to 45%.

See Table 3.1 in **Appendix 1**, p.26.

Across the nine secondary schools with information on their websites about the SRE options available at them, the percentage of students who would *not* have access to suitable SRE or an equivalent ‘spiritual education’

- at schools providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 8% to 16%
- at schools *not* providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 27% to 71%.

See Table 3.2 in **Appendix 1**, pp. 30 and 31.

3.3.2. Children of parents/carers with non-declared worldviews

Again, using the 2018 enrolment religious persuasion figures as a general guide for the religious persuasions of current, 2021 student populations, the percentage of students in the 64 primary schools audited whose parents/carers –

- did not provide a declaration as to their religion or worldview, *and/or*
- declared their worldview as ‘No religion’ or occasionally as, say, ‘Humanist’ or the like

– would likely range from 8% to 51% of the schools’ total student populations ie. up to 51% of students in the 64 primary schools audited are *not* getting or even being offered an equivalent ‘spiritual’ education to the students of the religious persuasions for whom SRE is potentially available.

See Table 3.1 in **Appendix 1**.

Only nine of the 15 secondary schools providing SRE had information on their websites about SRE available at the school. For these nine schools, the percentage of students *not* being offered an equivalent ‘spiritual’ education to the students for whom SRE would be potentially available would likely range from 11% to 43%.

See Table 3.2 in **Appendix 1**.

3.3.3. Case studies

Parramatta High School (see Table 3.2 in Appendix 1)

If the 2018 religious persuasion data (included in Table 2 above and Table 3.2 in Appendix 1) can be used as a general guide for the current student population, the percentage of the student population at Parramatta High School not being afforded an equivalent 'spiritual education' as the students attending SRE because Hindu SRE is not available would be at least 40%; and they also have their formal learning suspended during the provision of SRE.

Furthermore, the only provider of SRE active at Parramatta High School in 2021 is the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. In 2018, only 19 students were identified as 'Anglican' on their enrolment forms while an additional 49 were identified as belonging to other Christian denominations, excluding Catholic (61) and Orthodox (6). 164 students were enrolled as belonging to non-Christian religions; 129 were enrolled as 'no religion'; and 63 were enrolled without their religion being stated. Therefore, it may well be the case that more than 92% of the student population are not having access to a 'spiritual' education equivalent to that of the declared Anglican students (and that assumes all the 49 students identifying as belong to other Christian denominations also attend the Anglican SRE).

Macquarie Fields High School (see Table 3.2 in Appendix 1)

If the 2018 enrolment figures (included in Tables 2 and 3.2) can be used as a general guide for Macquarie Fields High School's current student population, nearly 20% of the student population at Macquarie Fields High School are not being afforded an equivalent spiritual education because Hindu SRE is not available, *and* they have their formal learning suspended during the provision of SRE.

The school's website and its SRE and SEE Participation Letter only state that Christian SRE is available and fail to identify the approved provider of SRE at the school. In 2018, 138 students were identified as belonging to Christian denominations, excluding Catholic (151) and Orthodox (7). 730 students were enrolled as belonging to non-Christian religions, and 253 were enrolled as 'no religion' or without their religion being stated. Therefore, it may well be the case that 87% of the student population or more are not having access to an equivalent 'spiritual' education while some students take part in Anglican SRE.

A 2017 promotional video for Campbelltown Area High School Ministry (CAHSM) for the first Christian SRE seminar at Macquarie Fields High School in Term 1 2017 made reference to the school being one "where a large number of students identify as Hindu, as Buddhist, or as Muslim" which a reasonable person could regard as a statement of an intent to proselytise. Shortly after the video was posted on FIRIS' Facebook page on 21 September 2017¹⁶, it was removed from YouTube.

¹⁶ Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/secularschools/posts/1546889122039609> accessed 16.08.21

3.4. Suspension of curriculum learning

The Department's SRE Procedures and SEE Procedures state that principals **must** ensure that no academic instruction or formal school activities occur during the time set aside for SRE and/or SEE.

The Department's position is **not** required by the *NSW Education Act 1990* (the Act).

Therefore, in addition to the inherently discriminatory provisions for SRE in the Act, students not taking part in SRE are denied access to academic instruction and engagement with the formal curriculum.

3.4.1. Primary schools

Using the 2018 enrolment figures as a general guide for the current student population of the schools audited, the percentage of primary students who would have their curriculum learning suspended

- at schools providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 13% to 56%
- at schools **not** providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 42% to 74%

See Table 3.1 in Appendix 1, p.26.

3.4.2. Secondary schools

Using the 2018 enrolment figures as a general guide for the current student population of the schools audited, the percentage of secondary students who would have their curriculum learning suspended

- at schools providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 19% to 46%
- at schools **not** providing Hindu SRE would likely range from 45% to 92%

See Table 3.2 in Appendix 1, pp. 30 and 31.

3.5. Schools' websites

Of the 64 primary schools providing SRE in 2021

- 62 had a 'Learning at our School' web-page with a hyperlink to the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page; and, of those 62 schools,
 - 8 had a 'Religion and Ethics' page that provided only the generic text, and, of these 8 schools,
 - two had information regarding SRE at other locations on the school's website,
 - two identified that SRE was available in documents linked to the school website (newsletters, and semester overviews) but there was no information regarding SRE on any page of the school's website, *and*
 - four provided no evidence on the schools' website or in any documents linked to the website that SRE was offered at the schools
 - 41 had a 'Religion and Ethics' page containing information regarding SRE, and, of these 41 schools, three had additional information about SRE on other school webpages

- two did not have a 'Learning at our school' page and, of these two schools,
 - one had a 'Curriculum' page on which a link to the 'Religion and Ethics' page of the schools could be found, *and*
 - the other had a 'Special Religious Education' page

Of the 15 secondary schools providing SRE in 2021

- eleven had a 'Learning at our School' page; and, of those 11 schools,
 - ten had a 'Religion and Ethics' page, and, of these 10 schools,
 - 2 provided only the generic text on the 'Religions and Ethics' page,
 - 1 provided only the generic text on the 'Religions and Ethics' but provided information regarding SRE at another location on the school's website,
 - 5 provided information regarding SRE on the page, *and*
 - 2 provided information regarding SRE on the 'Religion and Ethics' page and information elsewhere on the school's website, and
 - 1 had placed its 'Religions and Ethics' page on its 'Supporting our Students' page rather than on its 'Learning at our School' page
- 4 did not have a 'Learning at our school' page but did have information regarding SRE at other locations on their websites

Therefore, before even considering the quality of the information provided by those schools which did have website information about SRE, **six of the 64 primary schools (9.4%) and two of the 15 secondary schools providing SRE (13.3%) failed to meet minimum policy requirements.**

3.5.1. Identification of approved SRE / SEE providers

3.5.1.1. Hindu SRE

The Department's *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* list (dated 17 March 2021) named five Hindu SRE provider –

- Chinmaya Mission Australia (Castle Hill)
<https://www.chinmaya.com.au/> - (Homepage)
- Jet Australia Foundation
<https://www.jaf.org.au/sydney/sre.html/> - (SRE page)
- The Hindu Council of Australia (Homebush)
<http://hinducouncil.com.au/> - (Homepage)
- The Saiva Manram (Mays Hill)
<https://sydneymurugan.org.au/> - (Homepage)
- Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia (Kellyville)
<https://www.vhp.org.au/> - (Homepage)

Primary schools

Of the 43 references to Hindu SRE on the websites of the 44 primary schools offering Hindu SRE:

- 28 identified the SRE provider using their name as listed by the Department
 - Chinmaya Mission Australia (2)
 - The Hindu Council of Australia (2)
 - The Saiva Manram (7)
 - Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia (17)
- 6 identified the SRE provider using close approximations to their names as listed by the Department
 - The Hindu Council of Australia
 - 'Hindu Council of NSW' (1)
 - The Saiva Manram
 - 'Sydney Murugan Temple' (3)
 - 'Saiva Manran' (1)
 - Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia
 - 1 'Hindu Dharma Parishad' (1)
- 9 failed to identify the approved Hindu SRE provider. References provided included
 - 'Hindu' (7)
 - 'Hindu SRE' (1)
 - 'Hindu scripture' (1)

Of the 44 primary schools offering Hindu SRE, three failed to identify on the school's 'Religion and Ethics' webpage that Hindu SRE was in fact available, including

- one which stated in semester overviews available on its website that Hindu SRE was available at the school
- one which confirmed during a telephone conversation with FIRIS that Hindu SRE was available at the school. An email was sent to the school on 16 March 2021 requesting information but the school did not respond or make changes to the school's website.
- one which identified on its SRE and SEE Participation Letter that Hindu SRE was available at the school but which failed to provide information regarding the approved Hindu SRE providers on its website.

Two schools identified both the 'Sydney Murugan Temple' and the 'Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc' as their Hindu SRE providers resulting in the total above being 46 rather than 44.

Secondary schools

Of the 15 high schools which provided SRE

- 4 provided Hindu SRE
- 4 could not be determined due to the lack of information on their website

Of the 4 secondary schools that provided Hindu SRE

- 3 identified the SRE providers using their names as listed by the Department –
 - The Hindu Council of Australia (2)
 - Chinmaya Mission Australia (1)

- 1 failed to identify on the school's website that Hindu SRE was available at the school despite it being confirmed during a telephone conversation that it was so and despite an email sent to the school reminding it of the requirements regarding the provision of information on the school's website.

3.5.1.2. Summary of findings

Primary schools

Across the websites of the 64 primary schools which offered SRE and/or SEE, *of the 283 references* which should have identified the approved SRE and SEE providers active in the schools

- 183 references (64.7%) identified the SRE and/or SEE providers using their name as listed by the Department,
- 38 references (13.4%) identified the SRE and/or SEE providers using close approximations to their names as listed by the Department, *and*
- **62 references (21.9%) failed to identify the approved SRE and/or SEE providers and thereby failed to meet minimum procedural requirements.**

Of the 64 primary schools

- 15 (23.4%) identified all of the SRE providers active in the school using their name as provided on the Department's list of approved SRE providers.
- 20 (31.2%) identified the SRE providers active in the school, however at least one reference was a close approximation to the name of the SRE provider as listed in the Department's list of approved SRE providers
- **29 (45.3%) failed to identify all of the approved SRE and/or SEE providers and therefore failed to meet minimum procedural requirements,** including
 - 6 whose websites contained no information regarding the organisation of SRE, including 4 schools which continued to fail to provide the necessary information despite being sent emails in March 2021 reminding them of the procedural requirements, *and*
 - 1 whose website had general information regarding the organisation of SRE but failed to identify the SRE providers.

Secondary schools

Across the websites of the 15 secondary schools which offered SRE and/or SEE, *of the 22 references* which should have identified the approved SRE and SEE providers active in the schools

- 14 references (63.6%) identified the SRE and/or SEE providers using their name as listed by the Department,
- 4 references (18.2%) identified the SRE and/or SEE providers using close approximations to their names as listed by the Department, *and*
- **4 references (18.2%) failed to identify the approved SRE and/or SEE providers and therefore failed to meet minimum procedural requirements.**

Of the 15 secondary schools at which SRE was available

- 3 (20%) identified all of the SRE providers active in the school using their names as provided on the Department's list of approved SRE providers,
- 2 (13.3%) identified the SRE providers active in the school, however at least one reference was a close approximation to the name of the SRE provider rather than the correct one as listed in the Department's list of approved SRE providers, *and*
- **10 (66.7%) failed to identify all of the approved SRE and/or SEE providers and therefore failed to meet minimum procedural requirements, including**
 - 5 which referred to the religious persuasions or denominations only rather than the approved SRE providers, *and*
 - 5 whose websites contained no information regarding the organisation of SRE including one school which continued to fail to provide the necessary information despite having been sent an email in March 2021 reminding it of the procedural requirements.

See **Appendix 4** for more detailed information regarding the identification of SRE and SEE providers of other religious persuasions on school websites.

3.5.2. Links to curriculum scope and sequence documents

If SRE and/or SEE are available at a school, the 'Learning at our school' page on the school's website **must** provide a link to the curriculum scope and sequence document (outline of lessons) of each SRE and SEE curriculum used in the school.¹⁷ It should also have a link to each SRE and SEE provider's website.¹⁸

The Annual Assurance of Providers of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics 2021 required SRE and SEE providers to enter the 'direct link(s) to the provider's page where the authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s)' are located.

The Department does not explicitly state that the hyperlinks provided by schools on their websites have to go directly to curriculum scope and sequences. Therefore, there was a wide variety of interpretations and manifestations of the requirement to provide a hyper link to the curriculum scope and sequence ranging from hyperlinks to the homepage of SRE providers to hyperlinks to websites of third parties, such as curriculum publishers.

FIRIS believes that information regarding SRE curricula used in NSW public schools should be quick and easy to locate, and should not require an in-depth knowledge of the provision of SRE in NSW Government schools in order to identify and locate such information. However, audits by FIRIS show very few schools provided direct links to curriculum scope and sequence documents.

¹⁷ See 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11 in Appendix 2.

¹⁸ See 5.1 in Appendix 2.

Primary schools

Across the websites of the 64 primary schools, including pages other than the 'Learning at our School' page, a total of 314 hyperlinks were documented as meeting the requirement to provide a link to the scope and sequence document of each SRE curriculum.

Of these 314 links

- **34 (10.8%) did not function**
 - of these 34 non-functioning links: 20 were links related to Hindu SRE curricula, and, of these 20 links, 13 were supposedly to curriculum materials used by the Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia,
- **only 19 (6.1%) went directly to curriculum scope and sequence documents,**
- 57 went to the home pages of SRE and SEE providers,
- 75 went to the 'SRE' pages on providers' websites,
- 55 went to the 'SRE curriculum' pages on providers' websites,
- 8 went to other pages on providers' websites,
- 1 went to the website of a specific place of worship,
- 53 went to the websites of third parties, such as curriculum publishers, *and*
- 12 went to the learn-at-home resources provided during the 2020 closure of public schools due to COVID-19.

Secondary schools

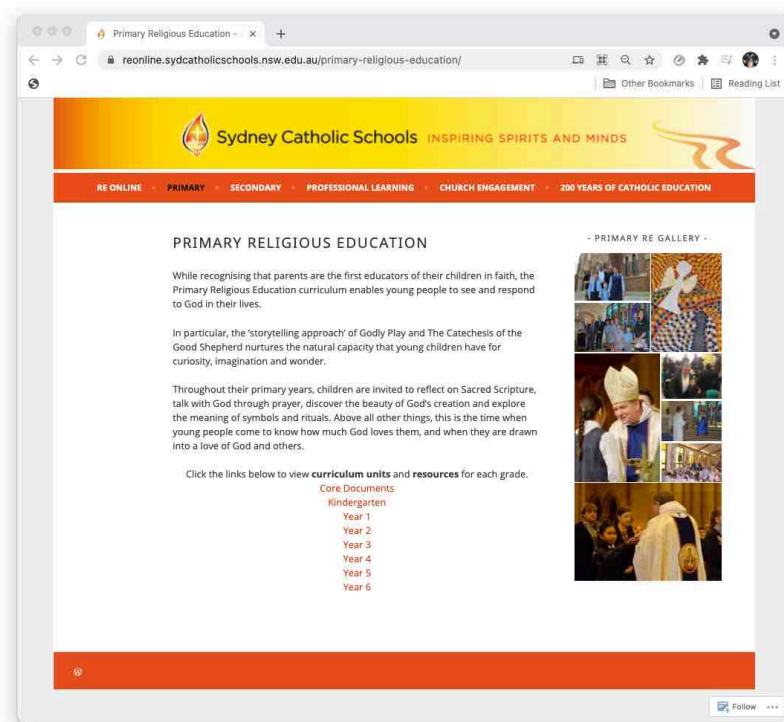
Across the websites of the 15 secondary schools, including pages other than the 'Learning at our School' page, 21 links were provided.

Of these 21 links

- 6 were to the home pages of SRE and SEE providers,
- 3 were to the providers' SRE pages,
- **6 (28.6%) were direct to curriculum scope and sequence documents,**
- 1 was to the website of a specific place of worship, *and*
- 5 were to the websites of third parties.

3.5.2.1. Case study – Burwood Public School

In its document *Burwood Public School: Religion and Ethics Information* linked to the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page, the Burwood Public School failed to identify the approved provider of Catholic SRE. However, the school did provide a link to the website 'Sydney Catholic Schools' (<https://reonline.sydcatholicschools.nsw.edu.au/>).



The school also provided links to the following documents –

- [Curriculum Content Overview 3-6](#)
- [Curriculum Content Overview K-2](#)
- [Introduction to the 3-6 RE Curriculum](#)
- [Introduction to the K-2 RE Curriculum](#)
- [NSW Foundation Statements for RE K-6](#)
- [Prayer Overview K-2](#)
- [Prayer Posters 3-6](#)
- [Prayer Scope and Sequence Years 3-6](#)
- [Prayer Purpose and Principles Years 3-6](#)
- [Scripture Overview K-2](#)
- [Scripture Overview 3-6](#)
- [Storytelling Resources Years 3-6](#)

FIRIS questions whether these documents are related to Catholic SRE curricula used in NSW schools.

FIRIS wrote to 'Sydney Catholic Schools' seeking confirmation or denial that the organisation was associated with Catholic SRE in NSW public schools. FIRIS did not receive a response.

3.5.3. General information about ‘alternative meaningful activities’

If SRE and/or SEE are available at a school, the ‘Learning at our school’ page on the school’s website **must** say what the ‘alternative meaningful activities’ are for students who do not go to SRE or SEE.¹⁹

The Department’s Special Religious Education Procedures currently say that AMA **can include** reading, private study and completing homework, but **cannot include**

- academic instruction
- lessons in the school curriculum
- formal school activities
- other extra-curricular activities.

Primary schools

Of the 64 primary schools audited, 35 mentioned ‘alternative meaningful activities’.

Therefore, **29 (45.3%) failed to meet minimum procedural requirements.**

Across the 35 schools that mentioned ‘alternative meaningful activities’ on their websites, there were 67 references to the activities offered:

- 12 references stated that students not taking part in SRE take part in ‘alternative meaningful activities’,
- 6 references repeated the Procedure’s statement that ‘alternative meaningful activities ‘could include reading, private study or completing homework’, *and*
- 49 references mentioned activities including
 - non-key learning tasks and activities (1)
 - reading (14), private study (3), homework (4)
 - reviewing previously covered coursework (1)
 - finishing class work (5)
 - free drawing (3)
 - ‘book related independent activities’ (1)
 - ‘provided with a visual stimulus and will have the opportunity to respond through independent writing, drawing or discussion with others.’ (1)
 - writing (1)
 - research (1)
 - problem solving (1)
 - being supervised (1)
 - alternative tasks (1)
 - STEM (1)
 - wellbeing activities (1)
 - values education lessons (3)
 - ‘meaningful values-based activities’ (1)
 - ‘taught Ethics by class teachers’ (1), ‘ethics and life skills program directed by...teachers’ (1)

¹⁹ See 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12 in Appendix 2.

- 'other activities considered appropriate by the school community' (1)
- 'fine motor skill practice, directed drawing, numeracy games, silent reading, colouring, Studdyladder and STEM challenges' (1)
- 'positive behaviour for learning activities' (1)
- mindfulness (1)

Secondary schools

Of the 15 secondary schools providing SRE, 6 mentioned 'alternative meaningful activities' on their websites. Therefore, **9 (56.5%) failed to meet minimum procedural requirements.**

Across the six schools that mentioned 'alternative meaningful activities' on their websites, there were seven references to the activities offered

- three references repeated the Procedure's statement that 'alternative meaningful activities 'could include reading, private study or completing homework', *and*
- four references mentioned activities including
 - reading (2), private study (1)
 - wellbeing activities (1)

3.5.4. Compliance with all requirements

Primary Schools

Of the 64 primary schools offering SRE, 35 identified the approved SRE providers using their name as provided on the Department's list of approved SRE providers, or a close approximation thereof.

Of these 35 primary schools, 23 provided information about 'alternative meaningful activities' on their websites.

Of these 23 schools, 14 had ensured that all of the SRE-related links provided on their websites and were functioning links to external SRE related websites. However, of these 13 schools, 4 did not contain the necessary information when first visited in March 2021 and were sent an email by FIRIS reminding them of the requirements of the Procedures in the same month.

Therefore, **only 14 of the 64 primary schools audited, ie. 21.9%, met the minimum requirements set by the Department.** It must be noted that this finding does not consider the quality of the information provided on the external SRE-related websites or the ease or difficulty in finding SRE curriculum related information on those websites.

Although not considered in this summary for compliance reporting purposes, it should be noted that one of the 14 schools did not have 'next gen SWS'²⁰ and therefore did not have a 'Learning at our School' page.

However, given that four of the 14 schools did not have the required information when first visited in March 2021, it is highly likely that **only 10 (15.6%) of the primary schools provided parents and carers of students enrolling in the 2021 school year with the required information on their websites.**

²⁰ See section 3.11 in Appendix 2.

Secondary Schools

Of the 15 secondary schools offering SRE, only five (33.3%) identified the approved SRE providers using their name as provided on the Department's list of approved SRE providers, or a close approximation thereof.

Of these five secondary schools, four provided information about 'alternative meaningful activities' on their websites.

Of these four schools, three had ensured that all of the SRE-related links provided on their websites and were functioning links to external SRE related websites.

Therefore, **only three of the 15 secondary schools audited, ie. 20%, met the minimum requirements set by the Department.** It must be noted that this finding does not consider the quality of the information provided on the external SRE-related websites or the ease or difficulty in finding SRE curriculum related information on those websites.

3.5.5. General issues

In addition to the above, the audit identified the following issues of concerns –

- Evidence indicating the incorrect implementation of the SRE and SEE enrolment process increasing the likelihood that students have been placed in SRE without express written consent from parents and carers
- Schools failing to respond to correspondence from FIRIS regarding issues of non-compliance, in particular, failing to rectify issues on non-compliance
- SRE and SEE Participation Letters failing to identify the SRE providers active in the respective schools
- SRE providers listed by schools not found on Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers
- Hyperlinks provided by schools not working
- Links provided by schools not matching the relevant SRE provider
- School websites providing links to third party websites which did not provide the required information
- School websites not identifying the curricula used by SRE providers
- SRE listed, and referred to, as a core subject
- Misleading nomenclature regarding SRE
- References to inappropriate SRE curricula
- Lack of neutrality
- Special Education in Ethics available but no information provided on school's website.
- Hyperlinks provided to superseded policy documents
- SRE providers not providing links to curriculum scope and sequence documents on their websites
- Hyperlinks provided by SRE providers on their websites not working
- SRE providers' websites providing links to incorrect documents

See Appendix 5 for more detailed information regarding the general issues identified by the audit.

See Appendix 6 for changes made to school websites between March and June 2021.

Appendix 1 – SRE availability by school region and district

All student numbers in the two tables below are based on the last student religious persuasion data provided by the Department of Education, that is, for the 2018 school year.

See <https://data.cese.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset/student-religious-persuasion-in-nsw-government-schools> - accessed 27.06.2021.

The green shaded cells indicate the presence at the school of SRE providers belonging to the religious persuasion of the students.

'Christian' includes Anglican, Armenian Apostolic, Congregational, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, Seventh-day Adventist, Uniting Church, Wesleyan Methodist Church, Assemblies of God, Assyrian Church of the East, Brethren, Christadelphians, Christian City Church, Christian Outreach Centres, Community of Christ, Ethnic Evangelical Churches, Jehovah's Witnesses, Church of Latter Day Saints, Christian (Other), Pentecostal (other) Protestant (Other).

'Catholic' includes Catholic (Western/Roman), Catholic (Chaldean), Catholic (Maronite), Catholic (Other).

'Orthodox' includes Greek Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Macedonian Orthodox, Romanian Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox (Other), Oriental Orthodox (Other)

'No religion' includes 'No religion', Not stated (Intentionally), Unknown/Not provided, and Humanism.

Table 3.1: Primary schools

	Total student number (2018)	Hindu student number	Baha'i student number	Buddhist student number	Christian student number	Catholic student number	Orthodox student number	Islamic student number	Jewish student number	Sikh student number	'No religion' student number	Indicative Number of Students doing SRE	Indicative % of Students doing SRE	Indicative No-SRE student number	Indicative No-SRE Students as a % of total
Metropolitan North															
Cambridge Park															
Kingswood PS	437	54	0	7	54	76	0	40	0	26	166	170	38.9%	267	61.1%
Carlingford															
Epping West PS	1208	124	0	69	271	115	0	48	0	0	552	627	51.9%	581	48.1%
Gordon															
Epping PS	513	84	0	26	86	54	0	24	0	0	218	248	48.3%	265	51.7%
Artarmon PS	1179	142	0	33	188	138	0	58	12	0	573	429	36.4%	750	63.6%
Hornsby															
Waitara PS	930	180	0	23	110	80	0	35	0	0	477	405	43.5%	525	56.5%
Hornsby South PS	681	75	0	18	113	84	0	39	0	0	323	329	48.3%	352	51.7%
Mount Druitt															
Ropes Crossing PS	756	123	0	10	142	172	0	70	0	20	192	384	50.8%	372	49.2%

	Total student number (2018)	Hindu student number	Baha'i student number	Buddhist student number	Christian student number	Catholic student number	Orthodox student number	Islamic student number	Jewish student number	Sikh student number	'No religion' student number	Indicative Number of Students doing SRE	Indicative % of Students doing SRE	Indicative No-SRE student number	Indicative No-SRE Students as a % of total
Quakers Hill															
Quakers Hill PS	1018	260	0	50	122	158	0	113	0	95	186	798	78.4%	220	21.6%
Barnier PS	904	184	0	19	203	181	7	57	0	34	190	602	66.6%	302	33.4%
Quakers Hill East PS	713	137	0	18	109	135	11	52	0	76	153	527	73.9%	186	26.1%
Caddies Creek PS	1036	190	0	28	127	162	0	50	0	182	267	471	45.5%	565	54.5%
Parklea PS	686	85	0	0	192	129	0	39	0	40	201	400	58.3%	286	41.7%
Hambledon PS	642	70	0	10	145	134	0	36	0	16	212	365	56.9%	277	43.1%
Glendenning PS	626	65	0	0	77	121	0	76	0	73	188	271	43.3%	355	56.7%
Ryde															
West Ryde PS	664	122	0	11	120	91	0	40	0	8	266	373	56.2%	291	43.8%
The Hills															
Matthew Pearce PS	1447	364	0	156	235	197	18	107	0	41	305	1118	77.3%	329	22.7%
John Purchase PS	639	87	0	64	124	96	0	20	0	0	229	391	61.2%	248	38.8%
Jasper Road PS	866	97	0	9	208	148	8	69	0	7	308	530	61.2%	336	38.8%
Cherrybrook PS	869	89	0	29	248	148	0	16	0	0	315	485	55.8%	384	44.2%
The Ponds															
Riverbank PS	1107	309	0	13	140	135	6	113	0	114	256	811	73.3%	296	26.7%
Kellyville Ridge PS	832	133	0	16	221	137	0	70	0	28	186	589	70.8%	243	29.2%
John Palmer PS	864	125	0	13	194	149	0	84	0	61	210	613	70.9%	251	29.1%
Ironbark Ridge PS	940	134	0	37	237	146	0	75	0	28	253	657	69.9%	283	30.1%
Schofields PS	423	54	0	6	93	75	0	17	0	15	143	237	56.0%	186	44.0%
Marsden Park PS	85	9	0	0	7	21	0	8	0	0	19	28	32.9%	57	67.1%
Metro Sth															
Canterbury															
Ashfield PS	505	53	0	29	73	68	0	33	0	0	218	227	45.0%	278	55.0%
Georges River															
Penshurst PS	441	50	0	15	37	32	12	44	0	0	224				
Girraween															

	Total student number (2018)	Hindu student number	Baha'i student number	Buddhist student number	Christian student number	Catholic student number	Orthodox student number	Islamic student number	Jewish student number	Sikh student number	'No religion' student number	Indicative Number of Students doing SRE	Indicative % of Students doing SRE	Indicative No-SRE student number	Indicative No-SRE Students as a % of total
Girraween PS	1238	860	0	6	76	68	0	68	0	12	134	1072	86.6%	166	13.4%
Wentworthville PS	586	337	0	7	42	21	0	61	0	22	74	483	82.4%	103	17.6%
Darcy Road PS	652	299	0	8	26	28	0	63	0	15	188	431	66.1%	221	33.9%
Pendle Hill PS	275	107	0	0	32	19	0	21	0	13	67	179	65.1%	96	34.9%
Toongabbie PS	635	95	0	13	179	115	10	33	0	0	169	422	66.5%	213	33.5%
Greystanes PS	750	106	0	17	83	195	16	112	0	9	171	512	68.3%	238	31.7%
Kogarah															
Kogarah PS	425	151	0	0	36	47	0	56	0	0	126	139	32.7%	286	67.3%
Rockdale PS	431	57	0	26	16	49	58	84	0	0	116	207	48.0%	224	52.0%
Parramatta															
Westmead PS	1593	1063	0	29	84	84	0	135	0	38	130	1366	85.8%	227	14.2%
Parramatta PS	1055	449	0	15	24	45	0	97	0	15	389	615	58.3%	440	41.7%
Rosehill PS	741	303	0	7	44	34	0	96	0	25	208	477	64.4%	264	35.6%
Parramatta North PS	450	120	0	0	63	59	0	68	0	0	136	190	42.2%	260	57.8%
Parramatta West PS	860	211	0	19	62	61	0	307	0	21	160	641	74.5%	219	25.5%
Parramatta East PS	546	79	7	6	49	48	0	103	0	7	220	279	51.1%	267	48.9%
Strathfield															
Homebush PS	473	193	0	0	40	29	0	70	0	0	111				
Homebush West PS	564	171	0	22	49	41	0	48	0	8	210				
Burwood PS	597	102	0	26	75	54	0	36	0	0	293	267	44.7%	330	55.3%
Strathfield South PS	789	125	0	71	114	94	27	156	0	0	173	587	74.4%	202	25.6%
Victoria Avenue PS	263	36	0	0	17	51	0	22	0	0	112	126	47.9%	137	52.1%
Concord West PS	359	36	0	0	73	44	0	41	0	0	137	194	54.0%	165	46.0%
Metro Sth & West															
Bungarribee															
Blacktown North PS	251	80	0	0	9	7	0	34	0	44	56	174	69.3%	77	30.7%
Metella Road PS	708	225	0	16	148	118	10	25	0	11	140	491	69.4%	217	30.6%
Blacktown South PS	1067	339	0	19	86	113	0	153	0	65	260	756	70.9%	311	29.1%

	Total student number (2018)	Hindu student number	Baha'i student number	Buddhist student number	Christian student number	Catholic student number	Orthodox student number	Islamic student number	Jewish student number	Sikh student number	'No religion' student number	Indicative Number of Students doing SRE	Indicative % of Students doing SRE	Indicative No-SRE student number	Indicative No-SRE Students as a % of total
Seven Hills PS	143	25	0	0	19	22	0	17	0	11	35	94	65.7%	49	34.3%
Bert Oldfield PS	282	44	0	0	37	46	0	34	0	22	81	183	64.9%	99	35.1%
Walters Road PS	609	74	0	0	114	77	0	96	0	17	205	304	49.9%	305	50.1%
Seven Hills West PS	349	41	0	0	52	37	0	65	0	28	106	89	25.5%	260	74.5%
The Meadows PS	233	25	0	0	28	20	0	32	0	0	99	80	34.3%	153	65.7%
Blacktown West PS	409	42	0	0	81	59	8	45	0	11	128	193	47.2%	216	52.8%
Chipping Norton															
Holsworthy PS	690	172	0	17	118	91	6	101	0	0	169	482	69.9%	208	30.1%
Eastern Creek															
Colyton PS	851	111	0	7	111	131	0	265	0	8	187	626	73.6%	225	26.4%
Glenfield															
Glenfield PS	416	69	0	11	45	46	0	85	0	0	122	176	42.3%	240	57.7%
Glenwood PS	228	32	0	0	36	29	0	21	0	0	86				
Bardia PS	360	48	0	0	59	66	0	59	0	0	105	232	64.4%	128	35.6%
Liverpool															
Liverpool PS	739	122	0	11	79	69	35	194	0	16	85	464	62.8%	275	37.2%
St Andrews															
Minto PS	220	44	0	0	35	22	0	40	0	16	52				
Macquarie Fields PS	963	151	0	25	141	96	0	287	0	7	223	524	54.4%	439	45.6%

Table 3.2: Secondary schools

The green shaded cells indicate the presence at the school of SRE providers belonging to the religious persuasion of the students.

The pale yellow shaded rows indicate schools whose websites failed to identify the SRE providers active at the school.

	Total student number (2018)	Hindu student number	Baha'i student number	Buddhist student number	Christian student number	Catholic student number	Orthodox student number	Islamic student number	Jewish student number	Sikh student number	'No religion' student number	Indicative Number of Students doing SRE	Indicative % of Students doing SRE	Indicative No SRE student number	Indicative No-SRE Students as a % of total
Metropolitan North															
Hornsby															
Normanhurst Boys HS	761	94	0	49	227	111	0	17	0	11	234	227	29.8%	534	70.2%
Hornsby Girls HS	728	87	0	51	224	105	0	17	0	0	223	224	30.8%	504	69.2%
Mount Druitt															
Ropes Crossing PS	756	123	0	10	142	172	0	70	0	20	192	384	50.8%	372	49.2%
Quakers Hill															
Glenwood HS	1477	199	6	34	380	291	24	112	0	136	269	807	54.6%	670	45.4%
The Hills															
Baulkham Hills HS	1213	256	0	115	272	138	0	37	0	22	348	666	54.9%	547	45.1%
Cherrybrook Tech HS	1986	289	12	114	558	290	10	123	0	26	509				
The Ponds															
The Ponds HS	1111	134	0	13	204	145	0	119	0	86	373				
Metro Sth															
Girraween															
Girraween HS	759	310	0	37	91	92	0	48	0	27	137				
Parramatta															
Parramatta HS	894	362	8	27	68	61	6	108	0	21	192	68	7.6%	826	92.4%
Macarthur Girls HS	1031	318	8	18	91	67	0	354	0	30	118	830	80.5%	201	19.5%
Arthur Phillip HS	1183	129	0	52	172	111	0	397	0	8	270	569	48.1%	614	51.9%
Port Jackson															
Sydney Boys HS	1212	124	0	81	216	149	13	76	0	0	516	646	53.3%	566	46.7%
Strathfield															
Strathfield Girls HS	1070	143	0	68	184	129	14	157	0	0	339	313	29.3%	757	70.7%

	Total student number (2018)	Hindu student number	Baha'i student number	Buddhist student number	Christian student number	Catholic student number	Orthodox student number	Islamic student number	Jewish student number	Sikh student number	'No religion' student number	Indicative Number of Students doing SRE	Indicative % of Students doing SRE	Indicative No SRE student number	Indicative No-SRE Students as a % of total
Homebush Boys HS	1112	113	0	65	175	122	17	307	0	6	275				
Metro Sth & West															
Bungarribee															
Blacktown Boys HS	593	170	0	16	88	61	0	115	0	33	87				
Blacktown Girls HS	765	106	0	15	142	94	0	211	0	19	148				
Penrith															
Penrith HS	925	306	0	44	128	125	0	81	0	32	169				
St Andrews															
Macquarie Fields HS	1121	223	0	59	138	151	7	242	0	9	253	138	12.3%	983	87.7%

The greyed rows of Blacktown Boys HS and Penrith HS indication those two schools do not have SRE available

Appendix 2 – Policy & Procedures

See table below for a list of current requirements regarding school websites and the SRE and SEE Participation Letter.

1	Rights when enrolling students
1.1	<p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE and SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. Parents/caregivers should also be informed of the alternative meaningful activities for those who have withdrawn. This general information should be provided to the school community in a number of ways, for example...at enrolment.</p> <p>SRE and SEE Fact Sheet (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/864f7fce-ca01-4d34-9b10-ebc5a79c6513/1/sre-see-fact-sheet.docx</p>
1.2	<p>Schools are responsible for...providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided at enrolment...</p> <p>Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 3.2, pp. 5-6. https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>Schools are responsible for...providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided at enrolment...</p> <p>Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 3.2, p. 5. https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>
1.3	<p>Schools provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities at enrolment...</p> <p>SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx</p>
1.4	<p>Schools are responsible for providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided at enrolment...</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
1.5	<p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE/SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. Schools must provide access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information also needs to be provided at enrolment...</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
1.6	<p>The principal should...ensure that they provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities at enrolment...</p> <p>Principal Checklist – SRE & SEE (December 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/0da078bf-4111-4337-a4ae-db544b2686d3/1/SRESEEPPrincipalChecklist.docx</p>
1.7	<p>The principal should...advise parents/caregivers how SRE/SEE classes are organised at enrolment, and provide updates as changes occur, using usual school procedures to communicate information to parents/caregivers.</p>

	Principal Checklist – SRE & SEE (December 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/0da078bf-4111-4337-a4ae-db544b2686d3/1/SRESEEPrincipalChecklist.docx
2	The SRE and SEE Participation Letter
2.1	Schools are responsible to...provide parents/carers with the SRE and SEE Participation letter in the enrolment pack or at the time of enrolment. Advice for Schools (Last updated: 17 March 2021) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/advice-for-schools
2.2	The participation letter is given to parents/carers in the enrolment pack or at the time of enrolment. SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx
2.3	The participation letter needs to be updated with the name of the approved provider(s) working in their school. If a combined arrangement, the school needs to make it clear which approved providers are involved. SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx
2.4	When the parent/carer returns the participation letter the student engages in the nominated program. SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx
2.5	If the student starts school before the return of the participation letter, the student is to participate in alternative meaningful activities pending a response. SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx
2.6	The principal should...update the SRE and SEE Participation letter with the name of the approved provider(s) working in their school and ensure it is given to parents/carers in the enrolment pack or at the time of enrolment. Students participate in alternative meaningful activities pending a response and principals make all reasonable attempts to receive a response from parent/carers and keep the written response on file. Principal Checklist – SRE & SEE (December 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/0da078bf-4111-4337-a4ae-db544b2686d3/1/SRESEEPrincipalChecklist.docx
2.7	SRE/SEE participation letter includes the name/s of the approved providers taken from the authorisation letter. For combined arrangements, the participation letter includes the names of the approved provider in the combined arrangement and which approved provider is responsible for delivery of SRE. SRE and SEE Enrolment Guide https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/sre-see-enrolment-guide.docx - accessed 18.09.2020.
2.8	I, (name)Have checked and verified the following...The name of the approved provider is included on the SRE & SEE participation letter. Authorisation Letter – Single Provider (dated March 21) https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/authorisation-letter-sreDOCX.DOCX - accessed 02.03.2021
2.9	I, (name)Have checked and verified the following...The name of the approved provider is included on the SRE & SEE participation letter. Authorisation Letter – Combined Arrangement (dated March 21) https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/authorisation-letter-combined-arrangement-sre.DOCX - accessed 02.03.2021

3	Information required to be on school websites
3.1	<p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE and SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. Parents/caregivers should also be informed of the alternative meaningful activities for those who have withdrawn. This general information should be provided to the school community in a number of ways, for example, via the school website...</p> <p>SRE and SEE Fact Sheet (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/864f7fce-ca01-4d34-9b10-ebc5a79c6513/1/sre-see-fact-sheet.docx</p>
3.2	<p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE/SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. Schools must provide access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities.</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
3.3	<p>Schools are responsible for...providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information <u>needs to be provided...on the school's website...</u></p> <p>Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 3.2, pp. 5-6 https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>Schools are responsible for...providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided...on the school's website...</p> <p>Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 3.2, p. 5 https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>
3.4	<p>Schools are responsible for providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information <u>needs to be provided...on the school's website...</u></p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
3.5	<p>Schools are responsible for providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities.</p> <p>School Website – Suggested Text (Last updated: 17 March 2021) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/school-website-suggested-text</p>
3.6	<p>The school website provides information for parents/carers on SRE/SEE as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of approved provider/s • link to approved provider's authorised curriculum scope and sequence • alternative meaningful activities. <p>SRE and SEE Enrolment Guide https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/sre-see-enrolment-guide.docx - accessed 18.09.2020</p>
3.7	<p>Schools determine the Alternative Meaningful Activities and include their plan for alternative meaningful activities in general information to parents/caregivers on their school website...</p>

	<p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
3.8	<p>Schools are encouraged to provide information to parents/caregivers and the wider community regarding SRE/SEE and alternative meaningful activities offered at the school. Any changes to SRE/SEE, or alternative meaningful activities options should be communicated to the school community.</p> <p>Information should be updated whenever a change or variation occurs to existing choices and programs provided by the school.</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
3.9	<p>Schools are responsible to.....ensure that they provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities on the school website under the 'learning at our school' page. The website is to include a link to the approved provider's curriculum.</p> <p>Advice for Schools (Last updated: 17 March 2021)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/advice-for-schools</p>
3.10	<p>Principals should...ensure that they provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities...on the school website under the 'learning at our school' page. The website is to include a link to the approved provider's curriculum.</p> <p>Principal Checklist – SRE & SEE (December 2018)</p> <p>https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/0da078bf-4111-4337-a4ae-db544b2686d3/1/SRESEEPPrincipalChecklist.docx</p>
3.11	<p>Schools provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities ...on the school website under the 'learning at our school' page. The website is to include a link to the approved provider's curriculum.</p> <p>SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018)</p> <p>https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx</p>
3.12	<p>If your school has the <u>next gen SWS</u>, under Learning at our school, you will have a Religion and ethics page which states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW schools offer special religious education and special education in ethics. Approved providers deliver these, where available. • Write to the school if you wish to withdraw your child from special religious education, sometimes known as scripture. Special education in ethics is an option for your primary-age child if you withdraw them from special religious education. For more information, visit <u>Religion and ethics</u>. <p>Schools should add information to this page which will provide parent/carers with general information about SRE, SEE and alternative meaningful activities. Below are examples of text that can be added to your website.</p> <p>School Website – Suggested Text (Last updated: 17 March 2021)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/school-website-suggested-text</p>
3.13	<p>Examples of text</p> <p>At name Public School, SRE and SEE is delivered on day from time (alternatively if SRE/SEE is held over different times for different years: time for K-2 students and from time for Years 3-6 students).</p> <p>On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE and SEE participation letter (consider uploading and hyperlinking your schools letter) to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE/SEE should be given to where, in writing.</p> <p>The following SRE classes are offered at name Public School:</p>

	<p>Name of denomination SRE (E.g. Catholic SRE) is provided by name of approved provider (e.g. Catholic Diocese of Sydney). More information about name of denomination SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the name of approved provider website (hyperlink to the website).</p> <p>SEE is provided by Primary Ethics. For more information about SEE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Primary Ethics website (hyperlink to the website).</p> <p>During the time that SRE/SEE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities name activities (activities could include reading, private study or completing homework).</p> <p>School Website – Suggested Text (Last updated: 17 March 2021) https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/school-website-suggested-text</p>
3.14	<p>I, (name)Have checked and verified the following...The name of the approved provided [sic] has been included on the Religion & Ethics page on the school's website.</p> <p>Authorisation Letter – Single Provider (dated March 21) https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/authorisation-letter-sreDOCX.DOCX - accessed 02.03.2021</p>
3.15	<p>I, (name)Have checked and verified the following...The name of the approved provided [sic] has been included on the Religion & Ethics page on the school's website.</p> <p>Authorisation Letter (dated March 21) https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/authorisation-letter-combined-arrangement-sre.DOCX - accessed 02.03.2021</p>

4	Information required to be in the school newsletter
4.1	<p>Schools are responsible for...providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided...in the school newsletter.</p> <p>Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 3.2, pp. 5-6. https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>Schools are responsible for...providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided...in the school newsletter.</p> <p>Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 3.2, p. 5. https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>
4.2	<p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE and SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. Parents/caregivers should also be informed of the alternative meaningful activities for those who have withdrawn. This general information should be provided to the school community in a number of ways, for example...in school newsletters...</p> <p>SRE and SEE Fact Sheet (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/864f7fce-ca01-4d34-9b10-ebc5a79c6513/1/sre-see-fact-sheet.docx</p>
4.3	<p>Schools provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities...in the school newsletter...</p> <p>SRE/SEE Flowchart (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/8c236afd-66cb-4264-9547-380becc1b085/1/sre-see-flowchart.docx</p>
4.4	<p>Schools are responsible for providing access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information needs to be provided...in the school newsletter.</p>

	<p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
4.5	<p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE/SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. Schools must provide access to current information about approved providers working in their school, including links to the approved providers' authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s) and information on alternative meaningful activities. This information also needs to be provided...in the school newsletter.</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
4.6	<p><i>What information should be in the school newsletter or other school communication resources?</i></p> <p>Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE/SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it.</p> <p>Any changes to SRE, SEE and/or alternative activities options should be communicated to the school community.</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions (Last updated: 19 February 2020)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/support-materials/frequently-asked-questions</p>
4.7	<p>Principals should...ensure that they provide general information about SRE, SEE, and alternative meaningful activities...in the school newsletter...</p> <p>Principal Checklist – SRE & SEE (December 2018)</p> <p>https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/0da078bf-4111-4337-a4ae-db544b2686d3/1/SRESEEPPrincipalChecklist.docx</p>

5	What SRE and SEE providers must tell schools																				
5.1	<p>It is the responsibility of an approved provider to...provide the link to their website to the school so it can be placed on the school's website to be easily accessible to parents/ caregivers.</p> <p>Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.3, p. 8.</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>It is the responsibility of an approved provider to...provide the link to their website to the school so it can be placed on the school's website to be easily accessible to parents/ caregivers</p> <p>Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.3, p. 8.</p> <p>https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>																				
5.2	<p>Authorisation Letter – Single Provider</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Provider Details</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Approved Provider</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Approved Provider Website</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religious Persuasion (If applicable)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Church/Mosque/Temple (If applicable)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coordinator</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contact Phone Number</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Email</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Name of Authorised Curriculum</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Curriculum Website</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Authorisation Letter – Single Provider (dated March 21)</p> <p>https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/authorisation-letter-sreDOCX.DOCX - accessed 02.03.2021</p>	Provider Details		Approved Provider		Approved Provider Website		Religious Persuasion (If applicable)		Church/Mosque/Temple (If applicable)		Coordinator		Contact Phone Number		Email		Name of Authorised Curriculum		Curriculum Website	
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5.3	Authorisation letter – combined arrangement <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Name of Combined Arrangement (e.g. Combined Christian, Combined Hindu etc.)</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Approved Provider[s]</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Provider Website</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Local Representative</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Contact Details</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Lead Provider Details</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;">Lead Coordinator</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;">Contact Phone Number</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;">Email</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;">Curriculum Approved Provider</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;">Name of Curriculum</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;">Curriculum Website</td> </tr> </table> <p style="margin-top: 10px;"> Authorisation Letter – Combined Arrangement (dated March 21) https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sre-see/authorisation-letter-combined-arrangement-sre.DOCX - accessed 02.03.2021 </p>	Name of Combined Arrangement (e.g. Combined Christian, Combined Hindu etc.)		Approved Provider[s]	Provider Website	Local Representative	Contact Details													Lead Provider Details	Lead Coordinator	Contact Phone Number	Email	Curriculum Approved Provider	Name of Curriculum	Curriculum Website
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6	What SRE and SEE providers must have on their websites
6.1	<p>It is the responsibility of an approved provider to...make their curriculum scope and sequence(s) accessible on their website in sufficient detail for parents/caregivers and schools to be able to understand what is covered in SRE lessons.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.3, p. 8. https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>It is the responsibility of an approved provider to...make their curriculum scope and sequence(s) accessible on their website in sufficient detail for parents/caregivers and schools to be able to understand what is covered in SEE lessons.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.3, p. 8. https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>
6.2	<p>Approved providers are required to provide online access to their authorised age-appropriate curriculum scope and sequence and ensure SRE and SEE teachers are teaching the curriculum with sensitivity and in an age appropriate manner. The curriculum scope and sequence must be provided in sufficient detail for parents/caregiver to understand what is covered in SRE/SEE lessons. Providers must provide a website link to the school to where the authorised curriculum scope and sequence can be found to enable schools to place the link on their website. (emphasis added)</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Annual Assurance of Providers of SRE and SEE 2021</p>
6.3	<p>Approved providers must make publicly available on their website their complaints procedures.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.4, p. 8. https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>Approved providers must make publicly available on their website their complaints procedures.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.4, p. 8. https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>
6.4	<p>Approved providers are required to have in place a complaints procedure which includes a resolution within a reasonable timeframe. The complaints procedure must be publicly available on the providers' websites.</p>

	Annual Assurance of Providers of SRE and SEE 2021
6.5	<p>Approved providers are required to have in place a system of authorised initial training, regular ongoing training and support, including mentoring for their SRE teachers. The training is to include child protection, classroom management, and how to implement the approved provider's authorised curriculum sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner. This information is to be published on the approved provider's website.</p> <p>Special Religious Education Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.2, p. 8. https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf</p> <p>Approved providers are required to have in place a system of authorised initial training, regular ongoing training and support, including mentoring for their SEE teachers. The training is to include child protection, classroom management, and how to implement the approved provider's authorised curriculum sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner. This information is to be published on the approved provider's website.</p> <p>Special Education in Ethics Procedures (Last revised: 4 May 2020), Section 4.2, p. 7. https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/SEEimplementproced.pdf</p>
6.6	<p>Providers are required to have in place a system of authorised initial and ongoing training for their volunteer teachers that include training in child protection, mandatory reporting and classroom management issues. This information is to be published on the provider's website.</p> <p>Annual Assurance of Providers of SRE and SEE 2021</p>
6.7	<p>Approved providers must publish age-appropriate curriculum on their website.</p> <p>SRE and SEE Fact Sheet (Last updated: November 2018) https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/864f7fce-ca01-4d34-9b10-ebc5a79c6513/1/sre-see-fact-sheet.docx</p>

Appendix 3 – Previous schools audits

3.1 Metropolitan North Secondary Schools Audit

In February and July-August 2019 Fairness in Religions in School (FIRIS) audited all of the websites of NSW Department of Education's secondary schools in the Metropolitan North region.

The aim of the audit was to identify secondary schools whose websites demonstrated correct implementation of the Department's 2019 Special Religious Education Procedures²¹ (the Procedures) and its supporting documents, and therefore demonstrating that they are respecting the rights of parents and caregivers to information regarding Special Religious Education (SRE).

An initial audit conducted in February of both primary and secondary schools in Metropolitan North found that

- of the 228 primary school websites audited, only four (1.75%) contained links to other information. Across these four websites 20 url- or hyper- links to other information were identified: only 11 of these 20 were clear links to curriculum scope and sequence information, *and*
- of the 62 secondary schools audited, only six websites (9.7%) had links to other information: only six of the nine links identified therein were clear links to curriculum scope and sequences.

The February audit identified one religious organisation providing SRE in at least three Government schools without approval from the NSW Minister for Education –

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/mormons-caught-teaching-religion-to-primary-school-students/news-story/ba1a89ca53b591dade5545bdd6696ef>.

A second audit conducted between 29 July 2019 and 18 August 2019 found that of the 69 secondary schools that offered SRE -

- 47 provided information indicating that SRE was being provided at the school,
- only 17 identified the approved SRE providers as included in the Department's list of approved providers *and* provided a link to the provider's website,
- only 25 provided a link, or links, which ultimately led to a curriculum scope and sequence document, *and*
- only 27 identified that there were 'alternative meaningful activities' at the school during the time allocated to SRE.

Of the 69 Metropolitan North region secondary schools providing SRE, only 5 schools met all of the Department's requirements regarding the provision of information regarding SRE and AMA on their websites.

²¹ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/REimplementproced.pdf>

The following issues in relation to child protection, child safety, health and wellbeing were identified

- one religious organisation (Jesus Racing) was referred to as an approved SRE provider but was not on/in the Department's list of approved SRE providers (and never has been, to our knowledge),
- school websites stating the school would place students in SRE without express consent from parents / caregivers, contrary to a statement by the Minister in 2017 and contrary to the then 2019 enrolment process,
- school websites and SRE and SEE Participation Letters not correctly identifying the approved SRE providers forming or making up a 'combined arrangement' for the purposes of delivering SRE,
- statements that all 'Christian' students will be placed in 'Christian' SRE, ignoring denominational and potential sectarian differences, and without informed and express consent from parents and caregivers,
- a need to opt-out of SRE prior to weekly or annual events, contrary to the previous and current enrolment process,
- statements from principals that all SRE instructors are in possession of a Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance number, despite the fact principals are not entitled to request that an SRE instructor show evidence they are in possession of a WWCC clearance number, *and*
- inclusion of guest speakers as part of SRE who may represent organisations not approved to provide SRE in NSW Government schools.

The following issues of confusing and misleading information—misinformation—were identified

- SRE listed, and referred to, as a course approved by the Board of Studies and the Department,
- SRE instructors included in lists of school staff members,
- specific individuals referred to as the approved SRE provider,
- SRE Boards and Associations (ie. 'combined arrangements') referred to as approved SRE providers,
- third parties (eg. Generate Ministries and Youthworks) referred to as approved SRE providers, *and*
- one school has its own Religious Education Policy which is based on the pre-June 2013 Religious Education Implementation Procedures – there have been two major revisions of the Procedures since.

3.2 Rural North – Primary Schools – September/October 2019

This audit, conducted between 11 September 2019 and 16 October 2019, found that, of the 280 primary schools in the NSW Rural North region which offered SRE

- only 68 (24.3%) provided information indicating that SRE was being provided at the school,
- only nine (3.2%) identified the approved SRE providers using their names as stated in the Department's list of approved providers *and* provided a link to the provider's website,
- only 47 (16.7%) provided a link, or links, which ultimately led to a curriculum scope and sequence document, *and*
- only 41 (14.6%) identified that there were 'alternative meaningful activities' at the school during the time allocated to SRE.

Of the 280 schools providing SRE, only six (2.1%) schools met all of the requirements regarding the provision of information regarding SRE on their websites.

If the requirement to list providers and provide a link to their website is ignored, 26 (9.3%) schools met all of the other requirements.

The following issues in relation to child protection, safety, health and wellbeing were identified –

- school websites stating they will place students in SRE without express consent from parents and carers contrary to a statement made by the NSW Minister for Education in 2017 and contrary to the then 2019 enrolment process; for example, stating that only students who provide written objection from their parents/carers will be exempted from attending SRE,
- school websites with statements contrary to all versions of the Procedures since July 2013; for example, statements that changes to SRE / SEE / AMA enrolments can only take place at certain times in the school year, or statements that parents/carers need to make the SRE / SEE / AMA enrolment choice on an annual basis,
- school websites and 'SRE and SEE Participation Letters' not identifying the [approved] SRE providers forming or making up a 'combined arrangement' for the purposes of delivering SRE and thus not giving an indication they are all department 'approved SRE providers',
- inclusion of representatives of other religious organisations as part of SRE who may not be authorised to provide SRE in NSW Government schools and the high likelihood that other relevant procedures, such as *Other activities of a religious nature in schools* and the *Controversial issues in schools* procedures, are not being implemented correctly, *and*
- Unexpected reports of 100% of students attending SRE.

The following confusing or misleading misinformation were identified

- statements that SRE curricula are approved by the Department.
- specific individuals referred to as the approved SRE provider.
- third parties, for example, Generate Ministries, referred to as approved SRE providers.
- statements that SRE curricula are authorised for use by the curriculum developers rather than an approved SRE provider.
- one school stating that it provides SEE through its Values Program, which is incorporated within its Positive Behaviour for Learning framework (PBL).

Appendix 4 – Identification of SRE & SEE providers on schools' websites

Baha'i SRE

The NSW Department of Education's *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* (dated 17 March 2021) listed 1 Baha'i SRE provider with a hyperlink to its website –

- Baha'i Council for South Eastern Australia
<https://bahai.org.au/> - (Homepage)

Primary schools

The one primary school which offered Baha'i SRE used that name, ie.

- Baha'i Council for South Eastern Australia

Secondary schools

None of the secondary schools audited provided Baha'i SRE.

Buddhist SRE

The Department's *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* (dated 17 March 2021) listed five Buddhist SRE providers with hyperlinks to their websites –

- Buddhist Council of NSW
<http://www.buddhistcouncil.org/> - (Homepage)
- Hwa Tsang Monastery Inc.
<http://www.htm.org.au/index.php/en> - (Homepage)
- International Buddhist Association of Australia – Nan Tien Temple
<http://www.nantien.org.au/> - (Homepage)
- Losang Dragpa Kadampa Buddhist Centre
<http://meditateinnewcastle.org/> - (Homepage)
- Vien Giac Buddhist Association Inc.
<http://www.chuaviengiac.org.au/> - (Homepage)

Primary schools

Of the 10 references to Buddhist SRE providers on the websites of the 9 schools that offered Buddhist SRE –

- four identified the 'Buddhist Council of NSW'
- two identified the 'International Buddhist Association of Australia – Nan Tien Temple'
- four stated that Buddhist SRE was available but failed to meet procedural requirements by not identifying the approved Buddhist SRE provider/s active at the schools

Secondary schools

The one secondary school which offered Buddhist SRE correctly identified the SRE provider as the 'Buddhist Council of NSW'.

Christian SRE

Of the 103 approved SRE providers listed by the NSW Department of Education as *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* on 17 March 2021, 85 were Christian SRE providers (82.5%).

Primary schools

Of the 143 references to Christian SRE on the school websites of the 59 primary schools which offered Christian SRE

- 89 identified the SRE provider using their name as listed by the Department –
 - Anglican Diocese of Sydney (30)
 - Australian Christian Churches (2)
 - Baptist Union of NSW (11)
 - Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney (3)
 - Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay (3)
 - Catholic Diocese of Parramatta (23)
 - Catholic Diocese of Wollongong (3)
 - Christian Community Churches of Australia (1)
 - Emmanuel Baptist Church (1)
 - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia (5)
 - Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW) (3)
 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1)
 - Uniting Church in Australia (3)
- 24 identified the SRE provider using a close approximation to a name as listed by the Department –
 - Anglican Diocese of Sydney (4)
 - Baptist Union of NSW (3)
 - C3 Church Australia (1) – not listed above
 - Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney (7)
 - Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay (1)
 - Catholic Diocese of Parramatta (4)
 - Christian Community Churches of Australia (1)
 - Christian Reformed Churches of Australia (1) – not listed above
 - Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW) (1)
 - Uniting Church in Australia (1)
- 30 failed to identify the approved Christian SRE providers. Identifiers provided included –
 - Anglican (2)
 - Anglican SRE (1)
 - Catholic (4)
 - Catholic Scripture (1)
 - Catholic SRE (2)
 - Christian Education Publications (2)
 - Christian SRE (1)
 - Combined Christian SRE (1)
 - Community Life Church (1)
 - Hillsong Church (with ACC) (1)
 - Holroyd Combined Churches (1)
 - Holroyd Combined Churches – Special Religious Education (1)
 - Life Anglican Church (1)
 - Orthodox (1)

- Orthodox Scripture (1)
- Presbyterian (1)
- Protestant (3)
- Protestant Scripture (1)
- Protestant (Non-denominational – K-6) (1)
- Roman Catholic (1)
- Stanhope Anglican Church (1)
- Youthworks (1)

Secondary schools

Of the 13 references to Christian SRE on the websites of the 10 schools at which Christian SRE was available

- 8 identified the SRE provider using their name as listed by the Department –
 - Anglican Diocese of Sydney (3)
 - Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney (1)
 - Catholic Diocese of Parramatta (2)
 - Emmanuel Baptist Church (1)
 - Liberty Baptist Church (1)
- two identified the SRE provider using a close approximation to a name listed by the Department –
 - Baptist Union of NSW (1)
 - Catholic Diocese of Parramatta (1)
- three failed to identify the approved Christian SRE providers. References provided by schools included –
 - Anglican Youthworks (1)
 - Christian SRE (1)
 - Christianity (1)

Islamic SRE

The Department's *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* (dated 17 March 2021) listed four Islamic SRE providers with hyperlinks to their websites –

- Al-Jaafaria Society Inc.
<https://www.shiascripture.org.au/> - (SRE page)
- Australian Islamic Education Services
<https://islamiceducation.org.au/> - (Homepage)
- Islamic Charity Projects Association
<https://www.icpa.org.au/> - (Homepage)
- Islamic Council of NSW
<http://www.isre.org.au/> - (SRE page)

Primary schools

Of the 50 schools which offered Islamic SRE, 46 had reference to it on their website –

- 30 identified the SRE provider using their name as listed by the Department –
 - Al-Jaafaria Society Inc. (3)
 - Islamic Charity Projects Association (2)
 - Islamic Council of NSW (25)

- three identified the SRE provider using a close approximation to the name as listed by the Department –
 - Islamic Council of NSW (3 schools)
- 13 failed to identify the approved Islamic SRE provider. References provided included –
 - Islam (3)
 - Islamic (1)
 - Islamic SRE (2)
 - Islamic Scripture (1)
 - Muslim (1)
 - Islamic Special Religious Education (5)

Secondary schools

Of the three secondary schools which offered Islamic SRE, there were four references to Islamic SRE providers –

- 1 identified the SRE provider using their name as listed by the Department –
 - Islamic Council of NSW (1)
- 2 identified the SRE provider using a close approximation to the name as listed by the Department –
 - Islamic Council of NSW (1)
 - Australian Islamic Education Services (1)
- 1 failed to identify the approved Islamic SRE provider. References provided included 'Islamic SRE' (1)

Jewish SRE

The Department's *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* (dated 17 March 2021) listed one Jewish SRE provider with a hyperlink to their website –

- NSW Board of Jewish Education
<https://bje.org.au/> - (Homepage)

Primary schools

The one school at which Jewish SRE was offered correctly identified the SRE provider as the 'NSW Board of Jewish Education'.

Secondary schools

None of the secondary schools audited provided Jewish SRE.

Sikh SRE

The Department's *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* (dated 17 March 2021) listed 2 SRE providers with hyperlinks to their websites –

- Australian Sikh Association
<https://www.asaltd.org.au/> - (Homepage)
- Sikh Khalsa Mission
<https://sites.google.com/view/sikhkhalsamission/> - (page not working – 11.07.21)

Primary schools

Of the 20 references to Sikh SRE on the websites of the 21 schools which offered Sikh SRE –

- 15 identified the Sikh SRE provider using their name as listed by the Department –
 - Australian Sikh Association (15)
- three identified the Sikh SRE provider using a close approximation to the name as listed by the Department –
 - Australian Sikh Association (3 – referred to it as the ‘Australian Sikh Council of Australia’)
- two failed to identify the approved Sikh SRE provider. Identifiers provided were –
 - Sikh (1), *and*
 - Sikh SRE (1)

Secondary schools

The one secondary school which offered Sikh SRE correctly identified the Sikh SRE provider as the Australian Sikh Association.

Special Education in Ethics

The NSW Department of Education’s list of *Special religious education and special education in ethics providers* (dated 17 March 2021) includes ‘Primary Ethics’ as the sole provider of Special Education in Ethics (SEE) and provides a link to the organisation’s website –

- Primary Ethics
<http://www.primaryethics.com.au/> - (Homepage)

Primary schools

Of the 20 references to SEE on the websites of the 22 schools which indicated that SEE was available –

- four failed to identify the approved SEE provider. References provided included –
 - Ethics (3)
 - Ethics SEE (1)
- 14 identified the SEE provider using their name as listed by the Department
- two identified the SEE provider using a close approximation to their name as listed by the Department

Secondary schools

None of the secondary schools audited provided SEE.

Appendix 5 – General issues

5.1 Placement of students in SRE without express consent

If SRE and/or SEE are available at a school the school **must** provide parents and carers with a hard copy of, or digital access to, an *SRE and SEE Participation Letter*.²² If a parent or carer returns the SRE and SEE Participation Letter indicating that they want their child to attend SRE or SEE the school must place the student in the chosen SRE or SEE class.

If a parent or carer returns the SRE and SEE Participation Letter indicating that they do not want their child to participate in SRE or SEE the student **must** be provided with ‘alternative meaningful activities’ in a different physical space to where SRE is being held.

If the SRE and SEE Participation Letter is not returned the current enrolment process states that students **must be provided** with ‘alternative meaningful activities’ until the *SRE and SEE Participation Letter*²³ is returned. This means that students **should not be placed** in SRE or SEE without written and express consent from parents and carers.

In 2021, express consent from parents and caregivers is required prior to placing a student in an SRE class.

It is **not** necessary for parents of enrolling students to inform the school in writing that they do not want their child/ren to participate in SRE.

Quakers Hill Public School

The undated Information Booklet for the school states unreasonably -

All students must attend Scripture classes unless their parents ask in writing that they be excluded.

Homebush Boys High School

When visited on 23 June 2021 the school’s ‘Special Religious Education (Scripture)’ page²⁴ contained the following information –

*To opt out from participating in any of the above mentioned [SRE] activities, a student **must** return the withdrawal form to Mr Abbou before the commencement of Special Religious Education. (emphasis added)*

Cherrybrook Public School

When visited on 2 April 2021 and 19 June 2021 the ‘Religion and Ethics’ page of the Cherrybrook Public School stated –

*Parents who choose to withdraw their child from scripture **must** do so in writing. (emphasis added)*

Wentworthville Public School

Both the 2019 letter (available on 16 March 2021) and the 2021 letter (available on 16 May 2021) stated, ‘If you do not wish your child to attend any SRE class, please advise the school.’

The statement would be more accurate if it stated, “If you wish your child to attend an SRE class, please advise the school.”

5.2 Schools not responding to correspondence from FIRIS regarding procedural requirements.

5.2.1 Primary schools

Darcy Road Public School

When visited on 16 March 2021 the website contained only the generic information on the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page. Information in semester overviews for Semester 1 2021 for various stages included notices of a 'Scripture Day' in the school week. The Term 1 Overview for Years 3 and 4 stated –

Protest [sic.], Catholic, Islamic, Hindu and Sikh scripture lessons and ethics classes are taught on Friday on a weekly basis to students. As well, there is non-scripture for students who do not attend scripture.

An email was sent to the school on 16 March 2021 requesting information and reminding the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should be available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this correspondence.

The school's website was revisited on 3 May 2021 and 1 June 2021. The school's 'Religion and Ethics' remained unchanged. A search for information returned the same result as the search conducted in March 2021.

Homebush Public School

When visited on 16 March 2021 the website contained only the generic information on the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page. FIRIS contacted the school who confirmed that SRE was offered at the school.

An email was sent to Homebush Public School on 16 March 2021 requesting information regarding the names of the SRE and SEE providers active in the school, the curricula used, a copy of the 2021 SRE and SEE Participation Letter, and reminding the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should be available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response.

Homebush Public School's website was revisited on 16 March 2021, the 4 April 2021 and 1 June 2021. The school's 'Religion and Ethics' webpage remained unchanged. A search for information returned the same result as the search conducted in March 2021.

Homebush West Public School

When visited on 16 March 2021 the website contained only the generic information on the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page. The school's newsletter contained information indicating that SRE providers were active in the school.

²² See 2.1, 2.2 in Appendix 2.

²³ See 2.5, 2.6 in Appendix 2.

²⁴ School homepage | School | Student Wellbeing | Religious Education >
<https://web3.homebushbo-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/school/student-wellbeing/religious-education> - accessed 23.06.21.

An email was sent to Homebush West Public School on 18 March 2021 requesting information regarding the names of the SRE and SEE providers active in the school, the curricula used, a copy of the 2021 SRE and SEE Participation Letter, and reminding the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should be available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response.

Homebush West Public School's website was revisited on 08 June 2021. Its 'Religion and Ethics' webpage remained unchanged.

Ironbark Ridge Public School

When first visited on 23 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page on Ironbark Ridge Public School's website stated –

Ironbark Ridge Public School provides special religious education by the following approved providers: Anglican, Catholic, Hindu, Islamic Buddhism and Sikh.

The website then listed -

Combined Christian SRE - please click the following link for information about Anglican/Protestant curriculum <https://whysre.com.au/srecurriculum-overview>

Scripture Learning from Home

Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu - please click the following link - <https://betterbalancedfutures.org.au/learningfromhome>

Islamic Scripture

Kindy to Year 2 Instruction

Year 3 to Year 6 Instruction

Buddhist Scripture

Kindy to Year 6 Resources

Anglican Scripture please click the following link -

<https://cepconnect.com.au/learningathome/>

Catholic Scripture please click the following link -

<https://www.ccross.org.au/learning-from-home-sre-lessons/>

On 23 March 2021 FIRIS wrote to Ironbark Ridge Public School requesting the names of the approved SRE providers "as listed in the Department's list of approved providers." and the links to the scope and sequence documents for the SRE curricula documents used by the SRE providers. FIRIS reminded the school that this information should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this correspondence.

On 13 June 2021 FIRIS revisited the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page and found the following information –

SRE Providers Curriculum - for more information about the SRE providers authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please see below:

Combined Christian SRE - please click the following link for information about Anglican/Protestant curriculum <https://whysre.com.au/sre-curriculum-overview>

Catholic SRE - please click the following link for information about Catholic curriculum - <https://ccd.sydneycatholic.org/publications/curriculum-resources/>

Islamic SRE - please click the following link for information about Islamic curriculum - <https://www.isre.org.au/scope-k-6/>

Buddhist SRE - please click the following link for information about Buddhist curriculum - <https://www.buddhistcouncil.org/sre-program/>

Sikh SRE - please click the following link for information about Sikh curriculum - <https://www.asaltd.org.au/religious-teaching-sre>

Hindu SRE - please click the following link for information about Hindu curriculum - <https://hinducouncil.com.au/new/sre-special-religious-education-in-nsw-schools/>

Despite the reminder from FIRIS Ironbark Ridge Public School continued to fail to identify the SRE providers active in the school during the 2021 school year.

The school also failed to identify all of the SRE providers making up the 'combined arrangement' delivering 'Combined Christian SRE'.

John Purchase Public School

When visited on 23 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page for the school contained a link to a parent information sheet *Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) at John Purchase Public School*. The information sheet stated –

SRE options at John Purchase Public School currently include: Buddhist, Catholic, 'Combined Christian' (Anglican, Presbyterian, Uniting, Baptist), Hindu and Islamic.

– and listed the following –

Anglican

<http://www.whysre.com.au/sre-curriculum/cep-curriculum-overview/>

Buddhist

http://www.nantien.org.au/sre-web/Scope_and_Sequence_1.pdf

<http://www.nantien.org.au/sre-web/>

Catholic

<https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/parish-community/ministries/ccd/curriculum>

Hindu

<https://www.vhp.org.au/sre-hindu-dharma-scripture-classes>

Islamic

<https://www.isre.org.au/>

Presbyterian

<https://cepconnect.com.au/curriculum>

Ethics

<https://primaryethics.com.au/about-ethics-classes/our-curriculum/>

On 23 March 2021 FIRIS wrote to the school requesting the names of the approved SRE providers "as listed in the Department's list of approved providers." Including the names of all SRE

providers forming a combined arrangement. FIRIS reminded the school that this information should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this correspondence.

On 13 June 2021 FIRIS revisited John Purchase Public School's 'Religion and Ethics' page to find that the school still failed to provide the required information on the school's website.

Victoria Avenue Public School

When first visited on 23 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page on the school's website contained the following information –

At Our School

Each Tuesday Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Ethics Education (SEE) lessons are offered for 30 minutes.

Students who do not attend Special Religious Education will be supervised by Victoria Avenue PS teachers during this time.

This term, we will offer the following SRE and SEE classes.

Protestant (Non-denominational - K-6)

Roman Catholic (K-6)

Islam (K-6)

Hindu (K-6)

Ethics (Stage 2 only)

The school's website failed to identify the approved SRE providers active at the school or to provide links to the curriculum scope and sequence documents for the curricula used by the SRE providers.

On 23 March 2021 FIRIS wrote to Victoria Avenue Public School requesting the names of the approved SRE providers "as listed in the Department's list of approved providers" and the links to the scope and sequence documents for the SRE curricula documents used by the SRE providers. FIRIS reminded the school that this information should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response.

On 13 June 2021 FIRIS revisited Victoria Avenue Public School's website to find that the required information was still not available on the school's website.

5.2.2 Secondary schools

Girraween High School

When visited on 16 March 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page contained only the generic text. FIRIS contacted the school and it was confirmed that SRE was available at the school, including Hindu SRE.

On 16 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school requesting the identification of the SRE providers active at the school, the names of the SRE curricula in use at the school and the links to the scope and sequence documents for each curricula. FIRIS reminded the school of the need for such information to be available on the school's website.

The school did not respond to FIRIS' request for information.

When revisited on 22 June 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page remained unchanged.

Macquarie Fields High School

When visited on 21 March 2021 and 22 June 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page contained the following information –

The provider attending Macquarie Fields High School offers Special Religious Education in Christianity once per term for years 7-10. Providers- [Lesson Scope and Sequence](#)

The link provided was to the scope and sequence document for the *Think Faith* curriculum.

The school's website did **not** identify the approved SRE provider active at the school.

Parramatta High School

When first visited on 16 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page on the school's website contained the statement –

There are no special religious education and special education in ethics approved providers available at Parramatta High School.

However, a 'Special religious education' page linked to the school's 'Learning at our school' page had the following information –

For information regarding our special religious education (SRE) programs please download:

- *The [Year 7 program \(PDF 54KB\)](#) explores the different aspects of Jesus Christ and what a belief in Him involves.*
- *The [Year 8 program \(PDF 55KB\)](#) works through the core beliefs of Christianity linking them to practical application and biblical knowledge.*
- *The [Year 9 program \(PDF 51KB\)](#) explores stories of the Bible show how God worked in the lives of people.*
- *The [Year 10 program \(PDF 49KB\)](#) utilises current songs that students will mostly be familiar with and explores the themes and issues they bring out, through a biblical framework.*

On 16 March 2021 FIRIS contacted the school and its representative confirmed that SRE was available at the school. FIRIS wrote to the school on the same day pointing out the contradictory information available on the school's website. FIRIS also requested the identification of the SRE providers active at the school, the names of the SRE curricula in use at the school and the links to the scope and sequence documents for each curricula. FIRIS reminded the school of the need for such information to be available on the school's website.

The school did not respond to FIRIS' request for information.

When revisited on 27 March 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' had been changed to include the following information –

At Parramatta High School, Special Religious Education (SRE) is delivered on Wednesdays from 12:00-12:50.

Parents/carers will be given the SRE and SEE participation letter to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's SRE nomination should be given to the Principal, in writing.

Parramatta High School currently offers Christian SRE which is provided by teachers who are authorised and trained by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. The curriculum can be viewed at www.thinkfaith.com.au

The 'Special religious education' page remained unchanged.

When revisited on 22 June 2021 both pages remained unchanged.

5.3 SRE and SEE Participation Letters not identifying the approved SRE providers active in the school

If SRE and/or SEE are available at a school the school **must** provide parents and carers with a hard copy of, or digital access to, an *SRE and SEE Participation Letter*.²⁵ The *SRE and SEE Participation Letter* **must** –

1. list all of the SRE and SEE providers at the school using their name as stated in the Department's list of approved providers.²⁶
2. if a group of SRE providers have come together to provide SRE this is known as a 'combined arrangement'. The combined arrangement should be named in the *SRE and SEE Participation Letter* and each SRE provider in the combined arrangement must also be listed using their name as stated in the Department's list of providers.²⁷

If a parent or carer returns the SRE and SEE Participation Letter indicating that they want their child to attend SRE or SEE the school must place the student in the chosen SRE class.

If a parent or carer returns the SRE and SEE Participation Letter indicating that they do not want their child to participate in SRE or SEE the student **must** be provided with 'alternative meaningful activities' in a different physical space to where SRE is being held.

If the SRE and SEE Participation Letter is not returned the current enrolment process states that students **must be provided** with 'alternative meaningful activities' until the *SRE and SEE Participation Letter* is returned.²⁸ This means that students **should not be placed** in SRE or SEE without written and express consent from parents and carers.

Therefore, if a school says in its enrolment information, in the *SRE and SEE Participation Letter*, on the school's website, or in the school's newsletter that students will be placed in SRE unless parents and carers provide a written objection, it is **not** following the enrolment process correctly.

5.3.1 Primary Schools

All of the 13 SRE and SEE Participation Letters available on the websites of the 64 primary schools at which religious organisations were active for the purposes of delivering SRE failed to identify the approved SRE providers active in the school. Other Issues included –

- one school which listed Baha'i SRE as an option in the Letter but failed to identify the presence of Baha'i SRE on the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page.
- one school which listed Hindu SRE as an option in the Letter but failed to identify the presence of Hindu SRE on the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page.

²⁵ See 2.1, 2.2 in Appendix 2.

²⁶ See 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 in Appendix 2.

²⁷ See 2.3 and 2.7 in Appendix 2.

The list of approved SRE and SEE providers can be found here - NSW Department of Education homepage | Teaching and learning > Curriculum > Learning across the curriculum > Religion and ethics > **Special religious education and special education in ethics providers**

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics/approved-sre-see-providers>

²⁸ See 2.5, 2.6 in Appendix 2.

- one school which also sent home a letter to the parents of students not participating in SRE which also failed to identify the approved SRE providers active at the school.
- one school whose letter available on 16 March 2021 (identified as being for the 2019 school year) and its replacement '2021' letter available on 16 May 21 both failed to identify the SRE providers active at the school.

Both letters also failed to identify both the SRE providers in a combined arrangement active in the school and the SRE provider in the combined arrangement responsible for the delivery of SRE.

5.3.2 Secondary Schools

Of the 3 SRE and SEE Participation Letters available on the websites of the 15 secondary schools at which religious organisations were active for the purposes of delivering SRE –

- one identified the approved SRE providers active at the school
- all three failed to identify the approved SRE providers active in the school, including
 - two Letters which stated that the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page provided information regarding the SRE options at the school despite the 'Religion and Ethics' page failing to do so, including a website which contained only the generic text.
 - a third Letter identified Normanhurst Christian Education Association as the provider of SRE, despite that Association not being listed on the Department's list of approved providers.

5.4 SRE providers listed by schools not found on Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers

5.4.1 Primary schools

Bert Oldfield Public School

When visited in March and June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' pages of Bert Oldfield Public School stated that Islamic SRE *"is provided by Islamic Special Religious Education"*.

But 'Islamic Special Religious Education' is **not** listed by the Department's as an approved providers of SRE.

The school's website did not identify the approved provider/s of Islamic SRE.

Cherrybrook Public School

When visited on 2 April 2021 and 19 June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Cherrybrook Public School's website stated –

Anglican...

Approved provider: Christian Education Publications (CEP)

But 'Christian Education Publications (CEP)' is **not** included on the Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers.

The school's website did not identify an approved provider of Anglican SRE.

The school's 'Religion and Ethics' page also stated –

Baptist...

Approved provider: Community Life Church

But 'Community Life Church' is **not** on the Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers.

The school's website did not identify the approved provider of Baptist SRE.

The school's 'Religion and Ethics' page also stated –

Assemblies of God...

Approved provider: Hillsong Church (with ACC)

But 'Hillsong Church (with ACC)' is **not** on the Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers.

It should also be noted that 'Assemblies of God' is **not** listed as an approved SRE provider or as a denominational subheading on the Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers.

Girraween Public School

When visited on 16 March 2021 and 1 June 2021 Girraween Public School identified Holroyd Combined Churches as the Protestant SRE provider on its 'Religion and Ethics' page and stated in the SRE and SEE document linked to the 'Religion and Ethics' page that –

Christian SRE is provided by SRE teachers from different Christian denominations and churches. The approved provider in this combined arrangement is Holroyd Combined Churches Special Religious Education.²⁹

But 'Holroyd Combined Churches' is **not** on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE and SEE

The school did not identify the approved provider of Protestant SRE.

Glenfield Public School

When visited in March and June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Glenfield Public School stated that Islamic SRE *"is provided by the Islamic Special Religious Education"*.

But 'Islamic Special Religious Education' is **not** included on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE.

However, Girraween Public School's website did go on to state –

"The Islamic SRE curriculum is approved by the Islamic Council of NSW."

Hambledon Public School

When visited on 2 April 2021 and 15 June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of stated that –

Sikh SRE is provided by the Australian Sikh Council of Australia

But 'Australian Sikh Council of Australia' is **not** on the Department's list of approved SRE and SEE providers.

The school's website did not identify the approved provider of Sikh SRE.

²⁹ https://girraween-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/doe/sws/schools/g/girraween-p/localcontent/sre-ethics/Special_Education_in_Ethics_and_Special_Religious_Education.docx - accessed 16.05.21

Parklea Public School

When visited on 21 March 2021 and 14 June 2021 **Parklea Public School** stated that Protestant SRE is provided by Stanhope Anglican [sic] Church.

But 'Stanhope Anglican Church' is **not** on the Department's list of approved SRE providers.

Pendle Hill Public School

When visited on 16 March 2021 and 1 June 2021 **Pendle Hill Public School** also identified Holroyd Combined Churches as the providers of Protestant SRE.

But 'Holroyd Combined Churches' is **not** on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE and SEE

The school's website did not identify the approved provider of Protestant SRE.

Riverbank Public School

When visited on 16 March 2021 and 8 June 2021 Riverbank Public School identified Life Anglican Church as the provider of Christian SRE.

But 'Life Anglican Church' is **not** on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE.

The school's website does not identify the approved provider/s of Christian SRE.

Seven Hills Public School

When visited in March and June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' pages of Seven Hills Public School stated that Islamic SRE *"is provided by Islamic Special Religious Education"*.

But 'Islamic Special Religious Education' is **not** on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE.

The school's website did not identify the approved provider/s of Islamic SRE.

Seven Hills West Public School

Seven Hills West Public School states on its 'Religion and Ethics' page –

Protestant SRE is provided by Youthworks through St Clement's Anglican Church, Lalor Park.

But 'Youthworks' is **not** in the Department's list of approved SRE providers.

Westmead Public School

When visited in March and June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' pages of Westmead Public School stated that Islamic SRE *"is provided by Islamic Special Religious Education"*.

But 'Islamic Special Religious Education' is **not** included on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE.

The school's website did not identify the approved provider/s of Islamic SRE.

5.4.2 Secondary schools

Hornsby Girls High School

When visited on 2 April 2021 and 23 June 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Hornsby Girls High School had the following statement –

Anglican Youthworks is the SRE provider for the Sydney Anglican Diocese.

But 'Anglican Youthworks' is **not** listed by the Department as an approved SRE and SEE provider.

Normanhurst Boys High School

When visited on 2 April 2021 and 23 June 2021 the 'Special Religious Education' page of Normanhurst Boys High School's website stated –

A special religious education program is available at the school and is run by [Normanhurst Christian Education Association \(NCEA\)](#). This is a combined group of Uniting, Baptist and Anglican churches within the local area. All of these organisations are on the Department of Education's list of approved providers. Additional details of the program on offer at the school can be obtained from NCEA. Contact details of the NCEA program coordinator can be provided by the school if required.*

* But 'Normanhurst Christian Education Association' (NCEA) is **not** listed on the Department's list of approved providers of SRE.

The website of NCEA states –

Formed in 1991 with the objective of providing a high standard of Christian Education in local state high schools, the NCEA now employs Elizabeth Harnwell to work at Hornsby Girls' High School, and Tony Jones to work at Normanhurst Boys' High School. Both are employed on a part-time basis and teach using the Youthworks Think Faith Curriculum (see below for how this looks in each school). They are authorised to teach Special Religious Education (SRE) by The Anglican Diocese of Sydney which is an approved provider of SRE in NSW public schools. The NCEA is administered by a Management Committee representing six local churches and supported by eleven churches in the area (these churches are listed with details on the homepage).

The NCEA website does **not** identify the Uniting and Baptist churches forming the combined arrangement with the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.

5.5 Hyperlinks provided by schools not working

Issues with hyperlinks were noted as follows.

5.5.1 Schools

Greystanes Public School

FIRIS wrote to Greystanes Public School on 23 March 2021 informing them that three of the links on the school's website were not working. When FIRIS revisited the website on 13 June 2021 the problems had not been fixed.

Walters Road Public School

There were typographical errors in each of the links for the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, Baptist Union of NSW, Catholic Diocese of Parramatta, Islamic Council of NSW, and the Australian Sikh Association on the 'Religions and Ethics' page of Walters Road Public School's website.

[www.sydneyanglican.net](#) entered incorrectly as <http://www.sydneyanglican/>

[www.nswactbaptists.org.au](#) entered incorrectly as <http://www.nswactbaptists/>

<https://parracatholic.org/> entered incorrectly as <https://parracatholic>

<https://www.isre.org.au/> entered incorrectly as <https://www>

<https://www.asaltd.org.au/> entered incorrectly as <https://www>

5.5.2 Hindu SRE links

The Saiva Manram

Five schools provided the hyperlink <https://sydneymurugan.org.au/murugan2> which returned the error message “*The requested page can’t be found.*”

One school provided the hyperlink <https://www.sydneymurugan.org.au/murugan2> which returned the error message “*The requested page can’t be found.*”

One school provided the hyperlink <http://www.sydneymurugan.org.au/murugan2/index.php/education/scripture-religious-education-sre/scope-sequence> which returned the error message “*The requested page can’t be found.*”

Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia

Ten schools provided the hyperlink <https://www.vhp.org.au/content/sre-hindu-dharma-scripture-teachers-classes-nsw-public-school> which returned the error message “*‘404’ – File Not Found.*”

5.5.3 Buddhist SRE links

Buddhist Connection

One school provided the hyperlink <http://www.buddhistconnection.org/> which returned the error message “*This site can’t be reached.*”

5.5.4 Christian SRE links

Baptist Union of NSW

One school provided the hyperlink <https://nswactbaptists.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=baa52f51ae7bb48ff1755edca&id=49576927c1&e=b6aa42184f> which returned the error message “*No URL found for this tracker ID.*”. However, when the link provided on the school’s website was copied and pasted into the address bar the viewer is taken to the ‘Authorised SRE Curriculum’ of the Baptist Union of NSW.

Christian Community Churches

Quakers Hill Public School provided the hyperlink <https://quakershil-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/learning-at-our-school/Christian%20Community%20Churches> which returned no result.

Godspace

Three schools provided the hyperlink <https://godspace.org.au/curriculum/sre-ri-curriculum/> which returned the error message “*Oops! That page can’t be found.*”

Youthworks

One school provided the hyperlink <https://youthworks.net/SRE> which returned the error message “*Ooops, you found a broken link.*”

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia

One school provided the hyperlink for Pantanassa Monastery Scripture Lessons <http://pantanassamonastery.org/scripture-lessons.html> which returned the error message “*404 Not Found.*”

5.5.5 Sikh SRE links

Australian Sikh Association

Parklea Public School provided the link <https://parklea-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/learning-at-our-school/www.asaltd.org.au> which did not return a result. The hyperlink was different to the text on the school's website www.asaltd.org.au which when copied and pasted into the search bar went to ASA's homepage.

5.6 School's links not matching relevant SRE provider

Cherrybrook Public School

Cherrybrook Public School identified Chinmaya Mission Australia as the approved provider of Hindu SRE on its 'Religion and Ethics' page (visited 2 April 2021 and 19 June 2021). However, the link provided was to a page on the website of the Hindu SRE provider Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia which merely had an error message.

Concord West Public School

Concord West Public School identified 'The Saiva Manran' [sic] as the approved provider of Hindu SRE on its 'Religion and Ethics' page (visited 2 April 2021 and 19 June 2021) while providing a link to the Hindu Council of Australia.

Quakers Hill Public School

Quakers Hill Public School identified Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia as the provider of Hindu SRE but the link on the website was to the Hindu Council of Australia.

5.7 School websites providing links to third party websites which do not provide required information

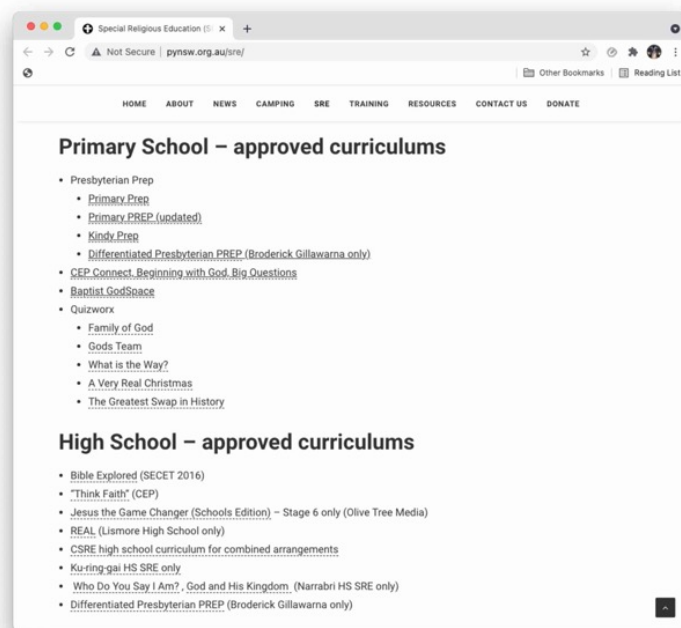
Girraween Public School

Girraween Public School provided links to the websites of St Anthony's Church and Holroyd Combined Churches, yet neither website provides parents/carers with the name of the curriculum being used or access to curriculum scope and sequence information.

5.8 School websites not identifying the curricula used by SRE providers

Many school websites do not identify the specific curricula used by the SRE and SEE providers active in the school. Although this may not be a requirement of the Procedures and its supporting documents, in some cases the failure to do so results in unnecessary confusion and time-wasting research by parents and carers.

For example, the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Epping West Public School identified five approved providers of Protestant SRE and provided a link to the SRE page on the website of Presbyterian Youth (<http://pynsw.org.au/sre/>). This page (see image below) provided links to nine primary school SRE curricula and nine secondary school SRE curricula.



5.9 SRE listed, and referred to, as a core subject

Baulkham Hills High School

When visited on 19 March 2021 and 22 June 2021 the 'Subject Selection' page on the school's website had the following information –

Baulko subject selections forum

An online forum has been set up as a Moodle Course on the school intranet.

If you cannot access the school intranet at home in the usual way, the direct link to the Baulkham Hills High School Moodle is: <https://web1.baulkham-h.schools.nsw.edu.au>

Year 7

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Geography
- Languages
- Technology
- Art
- Music
- PD/H/PE
- **Scripture**
- Integrated Sport

Year 8

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Geography
- Languages

- Technology
- Art
- Music
- PD/H/PE
- **scripture**
- sport

Year 9 and 10

The subjects in year 9 are divided into two groups. There are core subjects and electives.

Core subjects

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Geography
- PD/H/PE
- Sport
- **Scripture**

5.10 Misleading nomenclature regarding SRE

Macquarie Fields Public School

Macquarie Fields Public School 'Religion and Ethics' web-page refers to SRE as 'Religious Studies'. FIRIS believes that this has the potential to mislead parents/carers into thinking that SRE is a formal element of the curriculum.

5.11 Reference to inappropriate SRE curricula

Westmead Public School

Westmead Public School refers the school community to the *Think Faith* SRE curriculum used only in secondary schools. The appropriate primary school curriculum is not identified while parents/carers are referred to website providing links to the scope and sequence documents of three possible curricula produced by CEP.

5.12 Special Education in Ethics available but no information provided on school's website

Holsworthy Public School

Holsworthy Public School states in its newsletter dated 17 February 2021 –

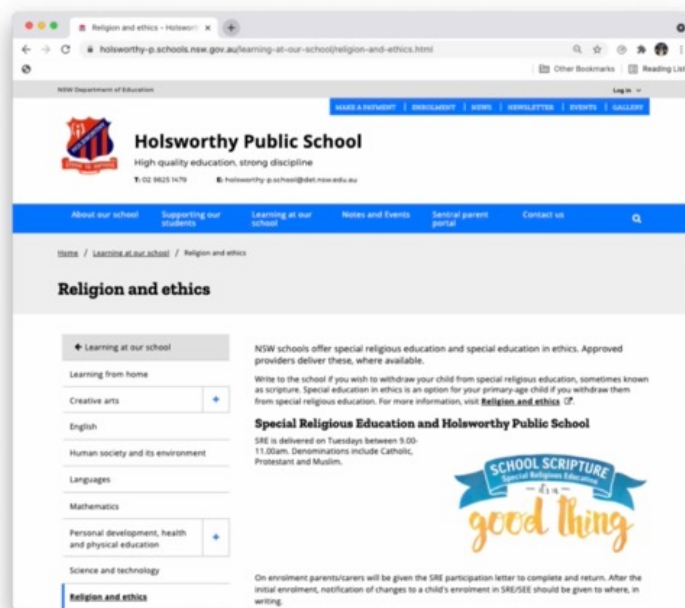
Thank you to those who expressed an interest in the Ethics classes. Primary Ethics has advised at this stage they will be providing classes for Kindergarten and Year 3. Ethics is run at the same time as Scripture. If you had selected Ethics for one of the year levels not currently available and desire your child to attend one of the other Scripture groups please advise the school in writing.

However, when the school's website was visited on 19 March 2021 and 12 March 2021 there was no information regarding Special Education in Ethics available on the 'Religion and Ethics' page.

5.13 Lack of neutrality

Holsworthy Public School

The school's 'Religion and Ethics' page contains positive promotional material for SRE:



<https://holsworthy-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/learning-at-our-school/religion-and-ethics.html> - accessed 12.06.21

5.14 Hyperlinks to superseded policy documents

Baulkham Hills High School

When visited on 19 March 2021 and 22 June 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page provided a link to the version of the Special Religious Education Procedures dated 10 January 2019. This version was superseded on 4 May 2020 and

5.15 SRE providers not providing links to curriculum scope and sequence documents

Glenwood High School

When visited on 21 March 2021 and 23 June 2021 Glenwood High School's 'Religion and Ethics' page provided a link to the Australian Sikh Association's Gurdwara Sahib website, <http://igurudwara.com/asai/>. This website did not identify, or provide a link to, the curriculum or its scope and sequence documents.

Glenwood High School also identified Emmanuel Baptist Church as an approved SRE provider active at the school. The school provides a link to the church's website (<http://www.emmanuel.org.au/>). Both the school's website and the church's 'School Scripture Classes' page (<https://www.emmanuel.org.au/school-scripture-classes>) fail to identify the secondary SRE curriculum being used by the church.

Furthermore, despite the church's declaration on its submitted *Annual Assurance of Providers of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics 2021* that its website provides "direct link(s) to the page where the...authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s)" can be found, the provided link (<https://www.emmanuel.org.au/school-scripture-classes>) does not contain a link to the secondary curriculum scope and sequence documents.

5.16 Hyperlinks provided by SRE providers not working

Buddhist Council of NSW

On the Buddhist Council of NSW's 'SRE Program' page on its website, under the heading Buddhist SRE Scope & Sequence, there is the statement –

*Click on the link below to access the Buddhist Council of NSW Scope and Sequence.
[Buddhist Council of NSW SRE Scope and Sequence 2018](#)*

When visiting the website on 12.06.2021 the error message “*This site can't be reached*” was returned.

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia states on its website

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia has authorised the material and pedagogy used by teachers. This is the curricula of the Pantanassa Monastery. Some details of the curriculum is provided to the public on website:

*<http://www.pantanassamonastery.org/scripture-lessons.html> and
<http://www.pantanassamonastery.org/resources.html>*

When visited on 12 June 2021 both links returned the error message, “404 Not Found”.

Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW)

The link provided on the Presbyterian Youth website to the secondary curriculum Bible Explored (SECET 2016) returned the error message – “It seems we can't find what you're looking for. Perhaps searching can help.”

5.17 SRE providers' websites providing links to incorrect documents

Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW)

The Presbyterian Youth website provides the link to the 2016 document *About Think Faith* rather than to the current *Think Faith* scope and sequence document.

Appendix 6 – Changes to school websites between March and June 2021

(schools listed in alphabetic order)

Bardia Public School

When first visited on 23 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Bardia Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

When the school's website was revisited on 12 June 2021 its 'Religion and Ethics' page contained the following information –

At Bardia Public School, SRE is delivered on Friday from 1:10pm to 1:40pm.

On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE participation letter to complete and return. After the initial enrolment notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE should be advised via the Forms tab in School Stream.

The following SRE classes are offered at Bardia Public School:

Catholic SRE is provided by Catholic Diocese of Wollongong. For more information about Catholic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong website <https://www.ccdwollongong.com/curriculum>.

Hindu SRE is provided by Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc. For more information about Hindu SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc. website <https://www.vhp.org.au/sre-hindu-dharma-scripture-classes>.

Islamic SRE is provided by Islamic Council of NSW. For more information about Islamic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Islamic Council of NSW website <https://www.isre.org.au/scope-k-6/>.

Combined Christian SRE is provided by Anglican Diocese of Sydney: Youthworks and Baptist Union of NSW. For more information about combined Christian SRE, including their authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Anglican Diocese of Sydney: Youthworks and Baptist Union of NSW website <https://whysre.com.au/sre-curriculum/cep-curriculum-overview/> and <https://nswactbaptists.org.au/baptistsre>.

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities provided by classroom teachers.

Barnier Public School

When first visited on 22 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Barnier Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

FIRIS contacted the school who confirmed that SRE was offered at the school. On 22 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school requesting information regarding SRE and SEE and a copy of the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter. FIRIS reminded the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this email.

When the school's website was revisited on 12 June 2021 its 'Religion and Ethics' page contained the following information –

Scripture

Barnier Public School offers special religious education (SRE), also known as 'School Scripture'.

Research has shown that SRE contributes to students' wholistic education as it nurtures their spiritual wellbeing. For more information about the SRE curriculum visit whysre.com.au.

School scripture times

Scripture lessons are held each Tuesday in the afternoon session:

- 1:45-2:15pm for K-2 students
- 2:15-2:45pm for Years 3-6 students.

Students who elect not to participate in SRE will be supervised by a classroom teacher during this time.

How do I enrol my child in scripture?

When you enrol your child at school you will be given the SRE participation letter to complete and return.

If you wish to make changes to your child's current enrolment in SRE, please notify the office in writing.

Special religious education providers

Combined Christian

The Anglican Diocese of Sydney provides education in Christian beliefs and practices for children of families from various Christian denominations and churches.

Christian SRE teachers at this school are authorised and trained by the following approved SRE providers (<https://sydneyanglicans.net/about>).

The SRE curriculum is produced by Christian Education Publications and is approved by each SRE provider. The curriculum explores the good news about Jesus Christ found in the Bible and the depth of God's love for people.

Each lesson has been developed to be taught in an age-appropriate manner. Lesson activities are fun and inclusive, and give children the opportunity to critically explore and deepen their faith, pray, and reflect.

Catholic

Catholic SRE is provided by the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. For information on the scope and sequence of the content taught, please visit the [Sydney Catholic Diocese website](#).

Sikh

Sikh SRE is provided by the Australian Sikh Council of Australia. More information about Sikh SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the [Australian Sikh Council of Australia website](#).

Hindu Dharma

Hindu SRE is provided by the Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia. For information on the scope and sequence of the content taught, please visit the [Vishva Hindu Parishad website](#).

Blacktown Public School

When first visited on 16 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Blacktown North Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

FIRIS contacted the school who confirmed that SRE was offered at the school. On 16 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school on 16 March 2021 requesting information regarding SRE and SEE and a copy of the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter. FIRIS reminded the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this letter.

On 1 June 2021 FIRIS revisited the school's website to find that 'Religion and Ethics' page had been updated to include the names of the approved SRE and SEE providers active at the school and links to their websites.

Blacktown South PS

When first visited on 16 March 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page contained only the generic text but there was a separate page 'Scripture at Blacktown South Public School'. This page contained the following information –

The following SRE classes are offered at Blacktown South Public School:

- *Catholic scripture is provided by Mary Queen of the Family Parish.*
- *Anglican scripture is provided by Youthworks Oriented for Life.*
- *Islamic scripture is provided by the Islamic Special Religious Education.*
- *Sikhism is provided by the Australian Sikh Association.*

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a seperate [sic] space and will participate in meaningful activies [sic].

Blacktown South Public School failed to identify all of the approved SRE providers active in the school. Mary Queen of the Family Parish, Youthworks Oriented for Life, and Islamic Special Religious Education are **not** approved SRE providers. The school also failed to provide the required links to the curriculum scope and sequence documents of each provider.

When the school's website was revisited on 8 June 2021 its 'Scripture at Blacktown South Public School' page contained the following information –

At Blacktown South Public School, Special Religious Education (Scripture) is delivered on Thursday between recess and lunch. Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 are held 11.35am until 12.10pm. Years 3, 4 and Kindergarten are held 12.15pm and 12.50pm.

On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE and participation letter to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE should be given to the school office, in writing.

The following SRE classes are offered at Blacktown South Public School:

- *Catholic scripture is provided by the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta - curriculum*
- *Combined Christian scripture is provided by Anglican Diocese of Sydney, Baptist Union of NSW and Uniting Church of Australia. - curriculum*
- *Islamic scripture is provided by the Islamic Council of NSW- curriculum*
- *Sikhism is provided by the Australian Sikh Association. - curriculum*
- *Hindu scripture is provided by The Saiva Manram - curriculum*

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities such as reading.

Caddies Creek Public School

When first visited on 20 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Blacktown North Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

FIRIS contacted the school who confirmed that SRE was offered at the school. On 22 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school on 16 March 2021 requesting information regarding SRE and SEE and a copy of the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter. FIRIS reminded the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this letter.

On 12 June 2021 FIRIS revisited the school's website to find that 'Religion and Ethics' page had been updated to include the following information –

Special Religious Education (SRE)

At Caddies Creek Public School Special Religious Education (SRE) is delivered on Wednesdays from 1:50pm to 2:25pm for Years 3 to 6 students and from 2:25pm to 3pm for Years K to 2.

On enrolment parents and carers will be given the SRE participation letter to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE should be given to the office in writing.

The following SRE classes are offered at Caddies Creek Public School:

Catholic SRE is provided by the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. More information about Catholic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Catholic Diocese website sydneycatholic.org/education/#scripture

Anglican SRE is provided by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. More information about Anglican SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Anglican Diocese of Sydney website <https://sydneyanglicans.net/>

Sikh SRE is provided by the Australian Sikh Association. More information about Sikh SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Australian Sikh Association website asaltd.org.au

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities such as reading, private study or completing homework.

Colyton Public School

When first visited on 23 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Colyton Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

On 23 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school requesting information regarding SRE and SEE and a copy of the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter. FIRIS reminded the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should have been available on the school's website.

On 3 April FIRIS revisited the school's website and found that it had been a change to –

At Colyton Public School, SRE is delivered on Wednesday from 9:30am for K-2 students and from 9am for Years 3-6 students.

On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE and SEE participation letter to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE/SEE should be given to the school office, in writing.

The following SRE classes are offered at Colyton Public School:

- *Islamic SRE is provided by the Islamic Council of NSW. More information about Islamic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Islamic Special Religious Education website: <https://www.isre.org.au/scope-k-6/>*
- *Hindu SRE is provided by The Saiva Manram. More information about Hindu SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit The Saiva Manram website: <https://sydneymurugan.org.au/special-religious-education>*
- *Catholic SRE is provided by the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. More information about Catholic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Sydney Catholic Diocese website: <https://ccd.sydneycatholic.org/publications/curriculum-resources/>*
- *Anglican SRE is provided by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. More information about Anglican SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the Anglican Diocese of Sydney website: <https://whysre.com.au/sre-curriculum/cep-curriculum-overview/>*
- *Sikh SRE is provided by The Australian Sikh Association Limited. More information about Sikh SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit The Australian Sikh Association Limited website: <https://www.asaltd.org.au/religious-teaching-sre>*

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in values education.

Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics Participation Letter

Parramatta North Public School

When first visited on 18 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Blacktown North Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

FIRIS contacted the school who confirmed that SRE was offered at the school. On 18 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school requesting information regarding SRE and SEE and a copy of the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter. FIRIS reminded the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should have been available on the school's website.

The school did not respond to FIRIS' correspondence.

When the school's website was revisited on 8 June 2021 its 'Religion and Ethics' page contained the following information –

At Parramatta North Public School, Special Religious Education (SRE) is delivered on Wednesdays from 9:30-10:00 (3-6) and 10:00-10:30 (K-2).

Upon enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE and SEE participation letter to complete and return. After initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE/SEE should be given to the office, in writing.

The following SRE classes are offered at Parramatta North Public School:

Catholic SRE is provided by the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay. For more information about Catholic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit their website: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au>

*Combined Protestant SRE is provided by CEP (Christian Education Publications). * For more information about Combined Protestant SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit their website: <https://cepconnect.com.au>*

Islam SRE is provided by the Islamic Charity Projects Association. For more information about Islam SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit their website: <https://www.icpa.org.au>

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities such as wellbeing activities related to their year group.

* It should be noted that the stated provider of Combined Protestant SRE, that is, CEP (Christian Education Publications), was not, and is not, an approved provider of SRE. FIRIS believes that this indicates an ongoing lack of understanding regarding SRE at Parramatta North Public School. It also clearly indicates that the school has not consulted the list of approved SRE providers.

Rosehill Public School

When first visited on 16 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of Rosehill Public School's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

FIRIS contacted the school who confirmed that SRE was offered at the school. On 16 March 2021 FIRIS sent an email to the school on 16 March 2021 requesting information regarding SRE and SEE and a copy of the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter. FIRIS reminded the school that information regarding SRE and SEE should have been available on the school's website.

FIRIS did not receive a response to this letter.

On 1 June 2021 FIRIS revisited Rosehill Public School's website to find that 'Religion and Ethics' page had been updated to include the names of the approved SRE and SEE providers active at the school and links to their websites.

Schofields Public School

When first visited on 16 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page of the school's website contained only the generic information regarding SRE and SEE.

When revisited on 13 June 2021 the website contained the following information –

At Schofields Public School, special religious education (SRE) and special education in ethics (SEE) is delivered on a Thursday from 2:10pm until 2:40pm for all students from K-6.

On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE and SEE participation letter (consider uploading and hyperlinking your schools letter) to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE/SEE should be given to the school office, in writing.

*The following SRE classes are offered at **Schofields** Public School:*

Catholic Scripture provided by the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta

Protestant Scripture provided by The Baptist Union of NSW. For more information including authorised curriculum click here.

Sikh Scripture provided by The Australian Sikh Association Ltd. For more information including authorised curriculum click here.

Hindu Scripture provided by Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc. For more information including authorised curriculum click here.

SEE classes are provided by:

Primary Ethics (Stage 1 only). For more information including authorised curriculum click here.

For more information about Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE), including a list of the providers, please visit:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics>

During the time that SRE/SEE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities, activities could include reading, private study or completing homework.

Strathfield South Public School

When first visited on 22 March 2021 the 'Religion and Ethics' page on the school website contained the generic text and the statement –

If you would like to make an adjustment to your child's scripture or non-scripture attendance, please email or write to the school stating your request.

When revisited on 13 June 2021 the 'Religions and Ethics' page had been changed to –

NSW schools offer special religious education and special education in ethics. Approved providers deliver these, where available.

At Strathfield South Public School, SRE (also referred to as Scripture) is delivered on Thursdays from 10:30am-12:00pm. Each session is 30 minutes in duration.

On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE Participation Letter to complete and return.

After the initial enrolment, notification of withdrawal from a SRE group, to a non-scripture group, should be provided in writing and sent to the office at: strathfies-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au.

Should you wish your child to change SRE groups or move from a non-scripture group into a SRE group, please complete and return this form.

The following SRE classes are offered at Strathfield South Public School:

CHRISTIAN - CATHOLIC

Catholic scripture endeavours to build upon the efforts of parents, promised at Baptism, that the love and presence of God will be experienced by a child at home from the early years. Age, understanding and personal development are taken into account. Topics include bible stories, especially the life and teaching of Jesus and his relevance today. A sense of belonging to the church with its sacraments and major seasons is encouraged.

Prayer is an important feature of every lesson. Using many activities such as worksheets, dialogue, song and drama, an atmosphere of faith, hope and love is the desired goal.

CHRISTIAN - PROTESTANT (e.g. Anglican, Presbyterian, Uniting)

Protestant Scripture aims to provide a simple experience and explanation of what Christians believe from the Bible. The children are told Bible stories such as Noah's Ark, Moses, Joseph, David and other kings. They learn about the background to Easter and Christmas and the importance of Jesus in the past and present world. Lessons are fun and contain various activities including worksheets, singing, drama and simple craft.

CHRISTIAN - ORTHODOX

Orthodox Christian Scripture lessons are filled with activities, craft and games, Bible readings and stories, as children learn more about our Lord Jesus Christ and the Church from an Orthodox Christian perspective. Lessons are conducted in English. Everyone is welcome.

HINDU

Students are taught devotional songs, stories and simple customs and religious observances so that their visits to temples celebrating festivals will be meaningful and create an interest in the subject. Tests are given periodically. Notes, pictures etc. are given to the students to help them gain an understanding of Hindu beliefs.

BUDDHISM

Buddhist lessons are taught from a book called "Di Zi Gui – Guide to a Happy Life". The book outlines standards for being a good student and child, which were taught by Chinese saints and sages of the ancient past. It covers lessons such as how to be respectful to our family and how to relate to other people.

ISLAM

Islam is a religion that governs every facet of human life, and teaches us that this life is a life of worshipping our Creator, Allah, together with fasting, praying, being kind, patient, respectful and being a source of uprightness and morality. The religion of Islam was founded by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) over 1300 years ago. Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), like Abraham, Jesus, Adam, Noah, Isaac, Moses and Jacob, was a Messenger of Allah.

NON-SCRIPTURE

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities such as independent reading or task completion work.

However, the principal has failed to ensure that school's website identifies the SRE providers active at the school and to provide links to the curriculum scope and sequence documents.

Walters Road Public School

When first visited on 21 March 2021 the 'SRE (Special Religious Education)' page on the school's website contained the following information –

At Walters Road Public School, SRE (Special Religious Education) is delivered on Tuesday mornings.

On enrolment, parents/carers will be given the SRE participation letter to complete and return.

After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE should be given to the office in writing.

The following SRE classes are offered at our school: Sikhism, Protestant, Catholic and Islamic.

Sikhism SRE is provided by the Australian Sikh Association. For more information about Sikh SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the website:

<https://www.asaltd.org.au/religious-teaching-sre>

Protestant SRE is provided by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, the Baptist Union of NSW and the Uniting Church in Australia. For more information about Protestant SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the website:

<https://www.youthworks.net/sre/authorised-curriculum>

Catholic SRE is provided by the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. For more information about Catholic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the website: <https://ccd.sydneycatholic.org/publications/curriculum-resources/>

Islamic SRE is provided by the Islamic Council of NSW. For more information about Islamic SRE, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence, please visit the website:

<https://www.isre.org.au/scope-k-6/>

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities. These activities include: fine motor skill practice, directed drawing, numeracy games, silent reading, colouring, Studdyladder and STEM challenges.

When revisited on 14 June 2021 the page contained the following information –

At Walters Road Public School, SRE is delivered each Tuesday from 9.30 – 10.00 (Grades 3-6) or 10.00 – 10.30 (Grades Kindergarten – 2).

On enrolment parents/carers will be given a consent form on which they indicate their SRE preference, to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE/SEE should be given to the school office, in writing.

The following SRE classes are offered at Walters Road Public School:

- Catholic (Catholic Diocese of Parramatta – <https://parracatholic.org/>)
- Islamic (Islamic Council of NSW – <https://www.isre.org.au/>)
- Sikh (Australian Sikh Association – <https://www.asaltd.org.au/>)
- Protestant – Combined Christian (Anglican Diocese of Sydney – www.sydneyanglican.net; Baptist Union of NSW – www.nswactbaptists.org.au)

During the time that SRE classes are being held, students not attending will be located in a separate space and will participate in meaningful activities.

None of the links provided on the website on 14 June 2021 worked and it seems evident that the hyperlinks have been entered incorrectly. FIRIS believes that this demonstrates that the principal has failed to ensure that the page is functioning correctly.

The removal of the specific AMAs should be noted.

Westmead Public School

Addition of a link to the school's SRE and SEE Participation Letter.

Wentworthville Public School

When first visited on 16 March 2021 the school's 'Religion and Ethics' page had the following information –

Face-to-face Special Religious Education (SRE) will not be available until schools resume normal operations (phase 4). This includes the use of interactive online media such as Google Classrooms, Skype or Zoom.

Following discussions with the Special Religious Education (SRE) approved providers on the Consultative Committee for SRE, approved providers will deliver their authorised curriculum with modifications to enable students to learn from home from the commencement of Term 2, 2020.

The groups that we have represented at WPS are:

- Catholic
- Protestant/Anglican
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Sikh

Online Learning links

Catholic

<https://www.ccross.org.au/learning-from-home-sre-lessons/>

<https://www.christiansre.com.au/learningfromhome>

[Letter from Our Lady of Mt Carmel Parish re Learning from Home SRE lessons](#)

Anglican/Protestant

<https://cepconnect.com.au/learningathome/>

<https://www.christiansre.com.au/learningfromhome>

Hindu - coming soon

<https://www.betterbalancedfutures.org.au/learningfromhome>

Islamic

K-2 <https://www.isre.org.au/students/kindergarten-to-year-2/#>

3-6 <https://www.isre.org.au/students/year-3-to-year-6/>

Sikh

No online link available at this time

FIRIS wrote to the school on 16 March 2021 seeking confirmation that SRE was being offered in 2021. FIRIS pointed out the need for the school's website to contain the information required by the Procedures and its supporting documents.

When accessing Wentworthville Public School's website on 16 May 2021 the information above had been replaced with the following –

On enrolment parents/carers will be given the SRE participation letter (PDF 217 KB) to complete and return. After the initial enrolment, notification of changes to a child's enrolment in SRE should be given to the office in writing.

The groups that we have represented at WPS are:

- *Catholic*
- *Combined Protestant: Anglican, Uniting, Presbyterian, Baptist, Pentecostal*
- *Hindu*
- *Muslim*
- *Sikh*

SRE Approved Providers 2021 (PDF 201 KB)

The PDF document 'SRE Approved Providers 2021' (as accessed on 16.05.21) identified that Hindu, Islamic, Catholic, Protestant, and Sikh SRE options were available at the school. The document also contained 'cut and pasted' sections of the *Authorisation Letter: Approved Provider of Special Religious Education (SRE) / Special Education in Ethics (SEE)*³⁰ for Islamic and Catholic SRE and the *Authorisation Letter: Approved Providers of Special Religious Education (SRE) in a Combined Arrangement*³¹ for Protestant SRE. The document identified that the Anglican Diocese of Sydney and the Baptist Union of NSW were the approved providers forming a combined arrangement to provide Protestant SRE. However, the document did not identify the 'Uniting', 'Presbyterian' or 'Pentecostal' SRE providers referred to on the school's website as additional SRE providers forming the combined arrangement.

³⁰ See Section 5.2 in Appendix 2.

³¹ See Section 5.3 in Appendix 2.