

Annual assurance of providers of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics 2020

The Department of Education is seeking written assurance that your organisation has in place processes that satisfy the requirements for teaching Special Religious Education (SRE) and Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in NSW Government schools for the 2020 school year.

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (the Act) applies to all persons who undertake child-related work. The Act requires a person over the age of 18, who is employed or engaged in work that will ordinarily involve direct contact with children, obtain a NSW Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance prior to commencement of duties.

The Department of Education regards the conduct of SRE and SEE in NSW public schools to be child-related work.

The approved provider is responsible for ensuring the following:

Recruitment, training and support

SRE and SEE teachers must have a WWCC clearance. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure each teacher has obtained this clearance and the provider to verify the clearance prior to the teacher working directly with children. The provider must keep records of the teacher's verified WWCC clearance.

SRE and SEE teachers are not permitted to work on an application number.

A volunteer under the age of 18 is exempt from having a WWCC. The department requires that volunteers under the age of 18 complete the provider's volunteer authorisation form which has been signed by the volunteer's parent/carer, the volunteer's school, if applicable, and an authorised representative of the approved provider. A SRE or SEE educator under the age of 18, is to be supervised at all times when working directly with children on a school site, by a SRE or SEE teacher over the age of 18.

The authorisation form must be completed by all parties and provided to the school prior to the teacher commencing duties.

The provider must submit to the school a list of the names, date of birth and contact details of local representatives and authorised teachers, before the commencement of SRE and/or SEE in 2020. This will allow schools to check the department's Not To Be Employed (NTBE) database. All information must be provided on documentation clearly identifying the approved provider and confirm in writing the person has met relevant requirements under the Act.

The approved provider must ensure that SRE and/or SEE teachers present photo identification upon request by the school. SRE and/or SEE teachers must also wear a name badge that includes the name of the authorising approved provider. The name badge must be worn at all times whilst on a school site.

More information can be found at: <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/working-with-children-check>

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 and classroom management issues. This information is to be published on the provider's website.

Approved providers are required to conduct regular reviews of SRE and / or SEE teaching and the use of the curriculum used. Providers are required to report on these results and keep records of the review including the action taken to support and change the teachings if required.

Lesson Content

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.

Approved providers are required to have in place a cyclic review of their curriculum e.g. every 5 years. The curriculum delivered through a combined arrangement must be the publicly available curriculum that is authorised by at least one of the approved providers.

Complaints procedure

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 provider's websites. Approved providers are required to be aware of the Department's Complaints Handling Policy: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/complaints-handling-policy>.

Insurance requirements

Approved providers are required to take out and maintain appropriate insurances for volunteer teachers on school sites. As part of the annual assurance process, approved providers are required to forward to the department evidence of current insurance.

Combined SRE arrangements

Approved providers of SRE participating in a combined arrangement are required to have in place a process to notify the school which approved provider is responsible for managing the authorisation of SRE teacher(s), the curriculum and complaints.

Verification required to be provided to NSW Government schools

As part of the ongoing approval process, it is the provider's responsibility to verify that the relevant requirements as outlined in this document have been met by completing the attached form and return it by email to: SREcontact@det.nsw.edu.au by 28 January 2020.

Information about SRE and SEE related matters can be accessed on the website <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics>.

Your reply to this letter with the required assurances will ensure you have approval to provide SRE or SEE in NSW public schools for 2020. Approved providers will lose their approved provider status if the responsibilities outlined in the annual assurance are not addressed.

For any further information regarding this document please contact the SRE & SEE Officer on SREcontact@det.nsw.edu.au or SEEcontact@det.nsw.edu.au

Thank you for your support of SRE and SEE in NSW public schools.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wood

Director, Early Learning and Primary Education

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This form is to be returned by 28 January 2020 to:

Special Religious Education & Special Education in Ethics Officer

EMAIL: SREcontact@det.nsw.edu.au
SEEcontact@det.nsw.edu.au

On behalf of the named provider below, I declare to the Department of Education as follows:

1. That all special religious education (SRE) and special education in ethics (SEE) teachers engaged by this provider have obtained Working with Children Check Clearance numbers and evidence including verification of clearance is kept on record. If under 18, special religious education teachers have undertaken the appropriate declaration to the effect that they are not disqualified persons within the meaning of section 18 of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* and that copies of the declarations are kept on record.
2. That the provider has in place a system of authorised initial and ongoing training for their teachers that includes training in classroom management and child protection. The ongoing training includes efforts to address the findings identified in the review of teaching of SRE and SEE. The review of training indicated: -----

3. That an outline of the authorised age appropriate curriculum scope and sequence used in schools is provided to the public via a website, and the special religious education and special education in ethics teachers are teaching the curriculum with sensitivity and in an age appropriate manner.
4. The certificate of currency for appropriate insurance cover for SRE/SEE teachers is attached.

I warrant to the Department of Education that I am authorised to make this declaration on behalf of _____ (Name of Provider), and I acknowledge that the department will rely on both the information I have provided and this warranty.	
Provider Website home page:	
Direct link(s) to the providers page where the (1) authorised curriculum scope and sequence(s), (2) initial and ongoing training which includes the process to authorise an SRE or SEE teacher, and (3) the providers complaints handling procedures:	
Name:	Position:
Signature:	Date:
Telephone:	Email:
Address of organisation:	

*Please note the section above in grey is public information and will be provided on request.