

# MANLY VALE PUBLIC SCHOOL



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## SRE SEE Policy 2019

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Special Religious Education (SRE) is the beliefs and practices of an approved religious persuasion delivered by authorised representatives of that persuasion. It is the distinctive religious tenets and beliefs of the home and family, provided by the churches and other religious groups for children of parents expressing a desire to receive such teaching. The *Religious Education Policy and Procedures* are available on the *religion and ethics* website.

Special Education in Ethics (SEE) is education in ethical decision making, action and reflection within a secular framework, based on a branch of philosophy. The *Special Education in Ethics Policy and Procedures* are available on the *religion and ethics* website.

General religious education is education about the world's major religions, what people believe and how that belief affects their lives. It is taught through the school curriculum. Further information is available on the *NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) website*.

Voluntary student activities of a religious nature in schools (VSA) is not part of SRE and is not part of the school or SRE curriculum. Information on VSA is available on the *voluntary activities* page of the *religion and ethics* website.

## 2. CONTEXT

*Section 32 of the Education Act 1990* requires that 'in every government school, time is to be allowed for the religious education of children of any persuasion.' The provision of SRE is not government funded.

*Section 33A of the Education Act 1990* allows SEE as an option for children whose parents have withdrawn them from special religious education. Primary Ethics is currently the only approved provider of special education in ethics. Primary Ethics have a curriculum for Kindergarten to Year 6. The provision of SEE is not government funded.

At Manly Vale Public School, time is allocated weekly for the instruction of SRE and SEE. This takes place each Wednesday from 9-9:35, run concurrently for each SRE and SEE group.

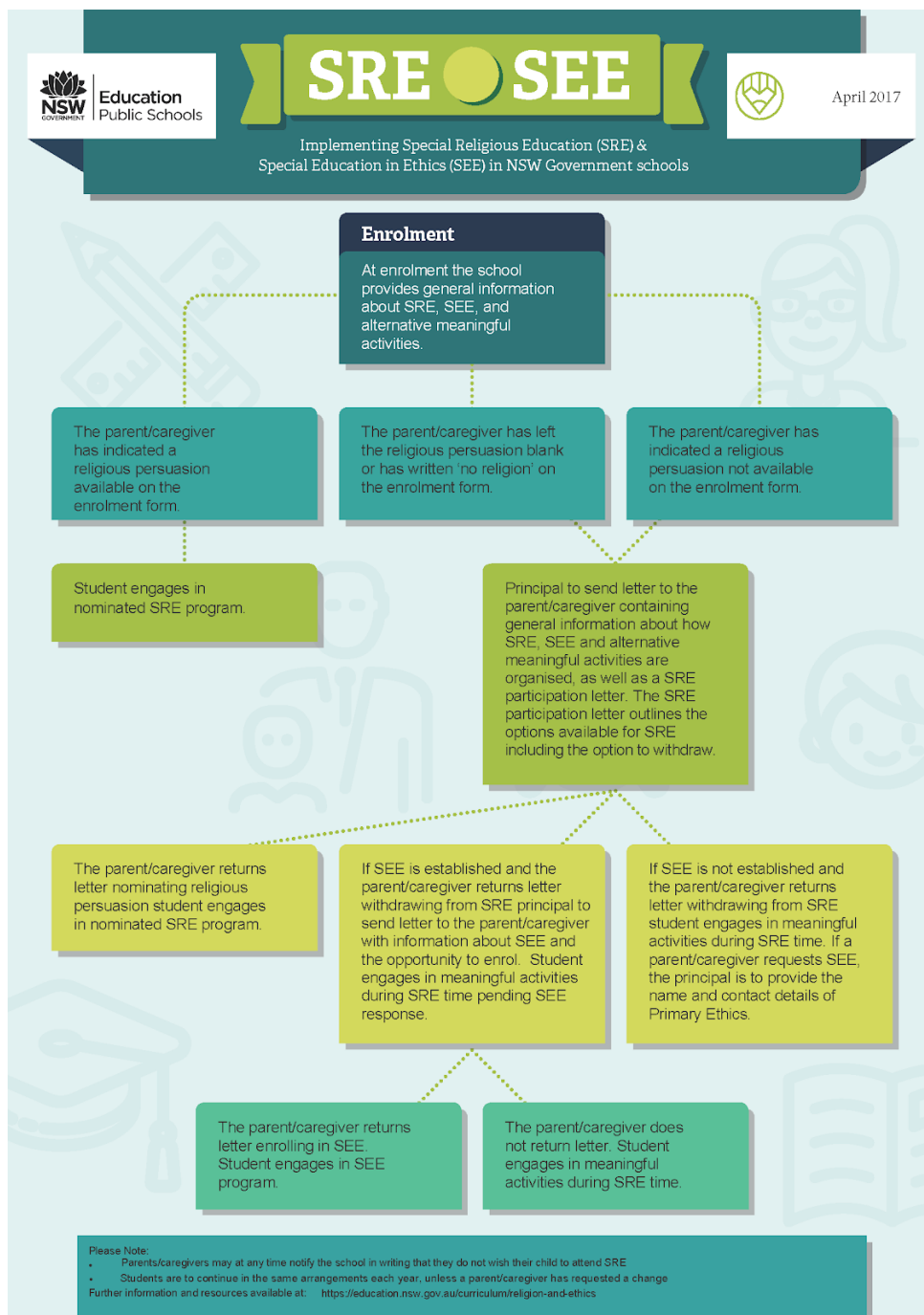
The procedures at Manly Vale Public School for SRE and SEE consider the:

- Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980) report recommendations 36-72 that were adopted by the government of the day as the basis of an agreement with the churches about the implementation of SRE
- Option of SEE for parents/caregivers who do not wish their children to attend SRE (s33A of the Education Act 1990).
- Recommendations 1-5 of the report, NSW Ethics Course Trial, Final Report (2010), which were adopted by the government in November 2010.
- Final Report for the Inquiry into Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011 recommendations
- 2015 Review of Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics in NSW government schools recommendations.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANLY VALE PUBLIC SCHOOL

#### 3.1 Communication about SRE and SEE

Parents/Caregivers have the right to know how SRE and SEE will be organised each school year and which organisations will be available to deliver it.



Parents/caregivers can choose to enrol their child into SRE or SEE from the school's approved provider(s) or to withdraw their child from SRE and SEE. Student withdrawn from SRE or SEE can elect to engage in a different program where positions are available, or can participate in the school's Non-Scripture Program (NSP).

A parent/caregiver may at any time notify the school in writing that they do not wish their child to attend SRE/SEE or to change their nomination. Students are to continue in the same arrangement as the previous year, unless a parent/caregiver has requested a change. Changes to class placements, if requested, are amended at the end of each term.

### **3.2 Provision of SRE and SEE**

Manly Vale Public School allocates time weekly each Wednesday from 9-9:35 for SRE and SEE where authorised representatives of approved providers are available. SRE and SEE are an integral part of school activities, taking place during school hours, under the jurisdiction of the school. In the event that no SRE providers are available, SEE will still be delivered. In the event where no SEE providers are available, SRE will still be delivered.

In the delivery of the Non-Scripture Program no academic instruction or formal school activities will take place at the time set aside for the instruction of SRE and SEE.

SRE and SEE is organised by negotiation and agreement between the principal and the approved providers. The principal of the school (Mrs Tina Lee) and the SRE and SEE Coordinator (Mrs Clair O'Connor) are sensitive to the fact that SRE and SEE teachers are volunteers and that they may have other commitments.

The principal of the school (Mrs Tina Lee) and the SRE and SEE Coordinator (Mrs Clair O'Connor) will ensure that adequate learning facilities are provided for the delivery of SRE/SEE, including adequate accommodation and access to classrooms. Should there be any changes in school routine, a timely directive to the SRE/SEE coordinators will be made.

Manly Public School adheres to *privacy legislation* and make sure that confidential information, in any form, cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons. This includes details about students, SRE and SEE teachers.

Manly Vale Public School is responsible for:

- Cross-referencing SRE and SEE teachers on the department's Not To Be Employed (NTBE) database in Electronic Casual Pay Claims (eCPC) each term or when a new SRE or SEE teacher commences
- If the worker coming in to the school has been engaged by a third party employer (eg. A Special Religious Educator) the employer must provide written advice to the school principal that the worker's WWCC clearance has been verified.
- 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 will be provided to new families at enrolment, is listed on the school's website, and is in the school newsletter
- Student behaviour management and retain duty of care, including for student supervision, health, order and conduct. It is the responsibility of the principal of the school (Mrs Tina Lee) to manage such cases with the representative of the approved provider
- Where a parent/caregiver requests SRE or SEE and it is not currently available in the school, the school will provide the parent/caregiver with the names and contact details of the approved provider of SRE and SEE within the school.
- In line with the department's *Code of Conduct*, employees of the Department of Education are not to teach SRE or SEE whilst on duty.

### **3.3 Students not attending SRE or SEE**

In the allocated time set aside for SRE and SEE, students not attending are to be provided with supervised alternative meaningful activities. This could include reading, private study or completing homework. They will be supervised in a separate physical space to SRE and SEE classes and will be supervised by one or more members of the Manly Vale Public School staff.

Supervision of students is completed in a manner consistent with the Department of Education's *Code of Conduct*. Students are not to be participating in lessons in the school curriculum or other extra-curricular activities during this time.

### **3.4 School SRE and SEE Coordinator**

For 2019, Mrs Clair O'Connor has been appointed as the SRE and SEE Coordinator of Manly Vale Public School.

Duties of the Coordinator include:

- Arranging meetings early in Term 4 of each year between the school and representatives of the approved providers to discuss the SRE and SEE organisation for the following year, including estimated numbers.

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- Liaising with SRE and SEE teachers to:
  - Provide a site induction and familiarise them with the procedures and operations of the school
  - Advise of any variations to school routine affecting SRE and SEE
  - Provide class list and any special information, such as disability or special needs, which might affect the health, behaviour or performance of particular students.
- Maintaining SRE and SEE records, including:
  - An up-to-date list of the authorised SRE and SEE teachers from the approved religious providers
  - A list of the names of students in each class for SRE and SEE
- Advising parents/caregivers of arrangements of SRE and SEE classes for the next year and ongoing information about any changes as they occur.

### 3.5 School Managed Complaints

The Manly Vale Public School Principal (Mrs Tina Lee) will determine whether complaints are to be managed by the school or by the provider. Mrs Lee will make clear to complainants what issues are the responsibility of the school to resolve and what are the responsibility of the provider to resolve. For example, alleged teaching inefficiency or inappropriate lesson content are managed by the provider.

School managed complaints follow the department's *Complaints Handling Policy*. If Mrs Tina Lee receives allegations of improper behaviour or other complaints of a serious nature, it must be managed in accordance with the department's policies and procedures. Any allegations of a child protection nature must be referred to the department's *Employee Performance and Conduct Directorate* which will determine how the matter should proceed.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROVIDERS

### 4.1 Approval to deliver SRE and SEE

Religious persuasions must have the approval of the Minister for Education to deliver SRE. Only persons authorised by an approved religious persuasion are permitted to teach SRE.

Religious persuasions wishing to obtain approval to deliver SRE should review the *application process*.

Providers must have the approval of the Minister for Education to deliver SEE.

Organisations wishing to obtain approval to deliver SEE should contact the SEE Officer at [SEEcontact@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:SEEcontact@det.nsw.edu.au)

To maintain approval to deliver SRE or SEE, approved providers must return to the department the annual assurance which requires that they have procedures in place to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* including verification of the *Working with Children Check (WWCC)* clearance.

The department's SRE and SEE Officer will send to approved providers the annual assurance via email in Term 4. This must be returned before the start of Term 1 of the following school year.

Approved providers will lose their approved provider status if the responsibilities outlined in the annual assurance are not addressed.

### 4.2 Recruitment, Training and Support

It is the responsibility of an approved provider to recruit, train and authorise sufficient teachers for SRE and SEE and to inform the school of the names, contact details and date of birth of SRE and SEE teachers. The approved

provider should inform the principal of the school (Mrs Tina Lee) and the SRE and SEE Coordinator (Mrs Clair O'Connor) when there are insufficient authorised teachers available.

Approved providers must ensure that all personnel over the age of 18 have had a WWCC clearance. A volunteer under the age of 18 is exempt from needing a WWCC and is required to complete the approved provider's volunteer authorisation form which has been signed by the volunteer's parent, the volunteer's school and an authorised representative of the approved provider. A volunteer under 18 must be supervised by an SRE or SEE teacher on a school site.

The provider must ensure that all SRE and SEE teachers are provided with a name badge that must always be worn on a school site. The badge must include the name of the approved provider.

Approved providers are required to have in place a system of authorised training, regular ongoing training and support, including mentoring for their SRE and SEE teachers. The training is to include child protection, classroom management, and how to implement the approved curriculum sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner. This information is to be published on the approved provider's website.

Approved providers should conduct regular reviews of SRE and SEE teaching and use of approved curriculum. Approved providers are required to report the results of the review through the annual assurance process including efforts to address any identified issues.

#### **4.3 Lesson Content**

It is the responsibility of an approved provider to:

- Authorise the materials and pedagogy used by SRE and SEE teachers, have a process to manage other materials, including internet resources, identified by the SRE and SEE teacher and return the annual assurance to the department as outlined in section 4.
- Make their curriculum scope and sequence(s) available on their website in sufficient detail for parents/caregivers and schools to be able to understand what is covered in SRE and SEE lessons
- Provide the link to their website to the school so that it can be placed on the school's website to be easily accessible to parents/caregivers
- Provide information about the content of lessons when requested by parents/caregivers/principals

#### **4.4 Provider Managed Complaints**

Approved providers must make publicly available on their website their complaints procedures. Complaints must be resolved within a reasonable timeframe.

Where combined arrangements exist, the approved providers must clearly identify to the school which approved provider is responsible for handling complaints.

#### **4.5 Combined Arrangements**

Combined arrangements occur in some schools in the delivery of SRE. Religious persuasions decide to provide a combined arrangement for several reasons, including human resource management. No religious persuasion should be compelled to participate in this form of organisation.

In combined arrangements, each religious persuasion must be an approved provider. The curriculum and the SRE teacher, must be authorised by at least one of the approved providers.

The approved providers must clearly identify to the school which approved provider is responsible for authorising the curriculum and the appropriate website link.

In a combined arrangement, only those students whose parents/caregivers who have nominated this option will attend classes of combined religions.