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SRE Teacher Training Fundamentals

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Policy references and guides:

Religious Education Policy (revised 11 May 2020): <https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/religious-education-policy?refid=285776>

Special Religious Education Procedures (revised 4 May 2020):

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

Working with Children Check:

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>

Office of the Children's Guardian Training and resources:

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/training-and-resources>

Work Health & Safety Policy: <https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/work-health-and-safety-whs-policy>

1. Overview and Training Standards

All Special Religious Education (SRE) approved providers need to ensure that all SRE teachers have access to basic training standards.

These standards include the following:

- Understanding the history of SRE in NSW and the role of the SRE teacher
- Discussing the Special Religious Education Procedures, Code of Conduct, Child Protection and WWCC requirements
- Understanding school protocols
- Planning for and implementing effective teaching and learning
- Creating and maintaining supportive learning environments
- Reviewing, reflecting and assessing personal feedback
- Engaging in professional training and ongoing learning

Our Teacher Training Fundamentals organises these standards into four domains:

- Context, policy and procedures
- Curriculum knowledge
- Teaching practice and delivery
- Professional learning and development

These Teacher Training Fundamentals represent a minimum standard of training. This training is intended as basic entry level for those new to SRE and is accompanied by a 2-day Teacher Training program developed by Viên Giác Buddhist Association (VGBA). All SRE Teachers are also given a Teacher Manual to support their training and for later reference as required.

We support a culture of ongoing professional learning and development among our SRE teacher community and offer guidance and support for ongoing teacher development.

2. Context, policy and procedures

SRE teachers are required to be aware of all legislation, policies, procedures and work related to the role. This includes awareness of the context of Special Religious Education in public schools, the role and expectations for SRE teachers and adherence to the Department of Education SRE Code of Conduct.

The VGBA Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct outlines our policies and procedures with regard to child protection, guided by the Child Safe Standards adopted by the NSW Government. Any of our staff who participate directly in activities with children and young people (including SRE teachers) must complete initial and ongoing training, which may include eLearning courses provided by the Office of the Children’s Guardian.

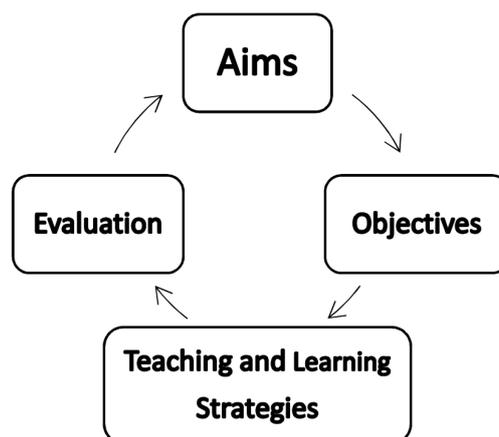
Our teacher training in context, policy and procedures covers the following Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcomes	Notes & Resources
1. Introduction to SRE Education	
1.1 Awareness of SRE and the school curriculum	Religious Education Policy
1.2 Understand role and expectations of SRE teachers in a public school context	VGBA Teacher Manual
1.3 Discuss SRE Code of Conduct, and responsibilities of an approved SRE provider (ref. Annual Assurance)	SRE Guidelines in VGBA Teacher Authorisation Process (summary in Appendix)
1.4 Review Special Religious Education Procedures and understand its contents	Special Religious Education Procedures
2. Child protection, safety & mandatory reporting	
2.1 Review Child Safety policy and Code of Conduct	VGBA Child Safety Policy & Code of Conduct
2.2 Complete Dept of Education child protection and mandatory reporting training (ANNUALLY)	VGBA Teacher Authorisation Process
2.3 Review and check compliance with WWCC obligations	Working with Children Check
2.4 Understand the safety of the teacher in a WHS context	Work Health & Safety (WHS) Policy

3. Curriculum knowledge

At Viên Giác Buddhist Association (VGBA) our curriculum has been specially developed, tailored and approved for teaching at stages 1, 2 and 3 in primary schools. SRE teachers must be familiar with the content and structure ('Scope and Sequence') of the curriculum and understand why it is designed like this.

SRE teacher training also covers core skills for behaviour management in the SRE classroom, taking into account the particular context and challenges of this environment.



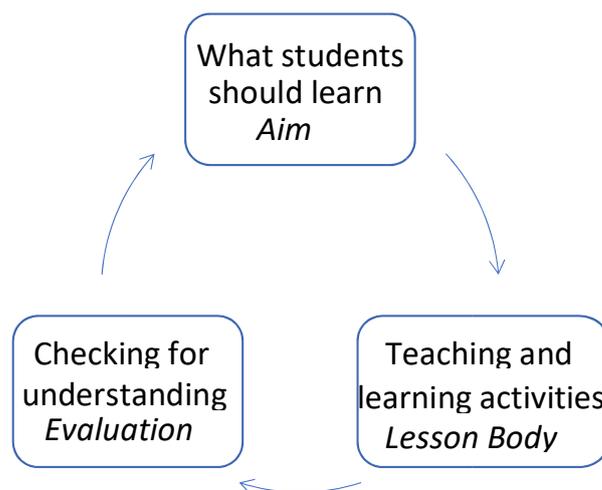
Our teacher training in curriculum knowledge covers the following Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcomes	Notes & Resources
3. Introduction to SRE Education	
3.1 Discuss what we're doing and why we're doing it	VGBA SRE Curriculum Scope & Sequence
3.2 Review our curriculum structure and content	
3.3 Explore and discuss differences between Stage 1, 2 and 3 curriculum	
4. Behaviour and classroom management	
4.1 Discuss child development, milestones and link to curriculum	VGBA SRE Curriculum Scope & Sequence
4.2 Identify behaviour management techniques for primary school students	VGBA Teacher Manual Classroom Management in SRE (Nan Tien Temple resources)
4.3 Discuss and role play scenarios for classroom behaviours and management strategies	4 Steps to Effective Classroom Management in SRE (Youthworks blog)

4. Teaching practice and delivery

Once familiar with the curriculum, SRE teachers need to know how and when to teach it as part of the SRE program. Teachers will consider how to work with different types of learners, and how to plan and prepare for lessons using the curriculum provided.

Teachers will have opportunities to discuss the basic structure of a lesson, to practice delivering an example lesson and hear feedback from peers so that they can learn and make changes as needed.



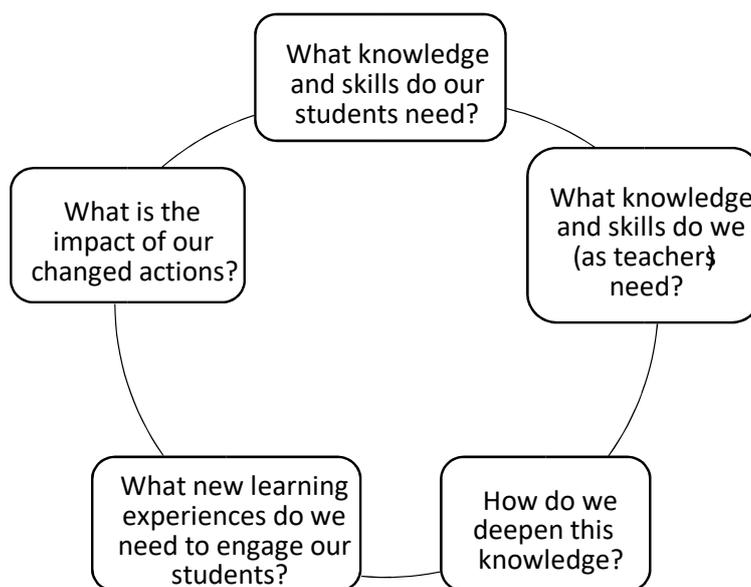
Our teacher training in teaching practice and delivery covers the following Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcomes	Notes & Resources
5. Lesson planning	
5.1 Identify different components of a program, lesson and unit of work	VGBA SRE Curriculum Scope & Sequence
5.2 Consider how to engage learners with diverse needs (visual, pace etc)	Collaborative workshop option – brainstorm lesson ideas with peers
5.3 Plan an SRE class, using the curriculum documents	Social media policy (Teacher Manual)
5.4 Prepare resources for a class	IWB & digital projectors policy (Teacher Manual)
6. Lesson structure and delivery	
6.1 Discuss basic structure of a lesson (introduction, body, conclusion), and reasons for structure (e.g. chanting and/or breathing techniques in first 10 mins helps with focus and engagement in the rest of the session)	VGBA SRE Curriculum Scope & Sequence and VGBA SRE Curriculum Overview
6.2 Practice delivering an example lesson with peers	Collaborative workshop option – delivering example lesson activities to peers
6.3 Listen to feedback on teaching delivery and consider changes for next lesson	

5. Professional learning and development

Finally, SRE teachers learn how to reflect and self-evaluate in their teaching. VGBA has developed a Teaching Review Process to help structure and support this in more detail.

All SRE teachers are encouraged to discuss, share and problem-solve any challenges in their teaching as part of a supportive SRE community.



Our teacher training in professional learning and development covers the following Learning Outcomes:

	Notes & Resources
7. Teacher self-evaluation	
7.1 Reflect and evaluate teaching delivery, and what could be changed next lesson	VGBA SRE Teaching Review Process
7.2 Discuss any requirements for further training, development and support	
8. Annual Assurance Process	
8.1 Discuss what is needed for the Dept of Education from all SRE Approved Providers, and your role in this	Annual Assurance documentation

Appendix: SRE Guidelines Summary (quick reference)

As a teacher of SRE it is expected that you:

- Be punctual and attend classes regularly
- Wear your name tag at all times
- Arrive at school 5-10 minutes before the class begins
- Sign in and out of the Visitor's Book, which is located in the school reception
- If you are unable to attend a lesson, ensure this is approved by your authorised SRE organiser
- Greet the students and complete class rolls. If your roll doesn't match the students in attendance, please check with the school SRE coordinator
- Supervise the students at all times
- Follow the class procedures if a child is sick or has an accident during SRE class time
- Ensure that any visitors invited into the classroom are approved by your authorised SRE organiser and the school SRE coordinator
- Teach with sensitivity, being aware of the child and the family's religious background, and adopt normal practices and courtesies expected of all teaching staff in the school
- Be courteous and polite to other faiths that teach their lesson at the same time
- Enquire if any children have special learning difficulties, endeavouring to understand their special problems by consulting their normal class teacher
- Only teach the approved VGBA SRE curriculum. Do not discuss controversial topics as it may not be in accordance with the department's Controversial Issues in Schools policy
- Ensure direct communication with parents is restricted to matters relating directly to SRE, as approved by your authorised SRE organiser
- Understand that counselling students for emotional problems is the responsibility of the school staff who have access to wider information and resources