

SRE Information and Guidelines

Document 2021-1

Thank you for volunteering as an SRE teacher!

Since we believe SRE teaching is vital, we need to take precautions to make sure the children are safe, that our SRE teachers are well prepared, and to maintain the integrity of our church.

As an authorised provider of SRE in NSW public schools, the following document is designed to enable SRE teachers to provide safe and high quality SRE lessons, and to comply with Department of Education procedures for the provision of SRE.

Summary

The following is a summary of the steps to be taken to qualify as a BEC SRE teacher. A fuller explanation of these steps follows.

- 1 Obtain a current NSW Working With Children Check (WWCC)
- 2 Gain an understanding of BEC's Safe Ministry Policy.
- 3 Complete child protection training using on-line Safe Ministry Training. This training is to be updated as appropriate. Training can be completed via this link: <https://bathurstevangelical.safeministrytraining.com.au/start>
- 4 Gain an awareness of the Department's Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy
- 5 Gain some familiarity with the scope and sequence of the SRE material.
- 6 Complete an SRE teacher application form.
- 7 Commence the approved ICCOREIS SRE Basic Training Course, Modules 1-6
- 8 Obtain an SRE name badge signed with the authorisation of the BEC Senior Pastor.

Steps to Qualify as an SRE teacher

1 Obtain a NSW Working With Children Check

By law, all SRE teachers need a NSW Working With Children Check (WWCC). This involves a national criminal history check, and a check for findings of workplace misconduct. The WWCC is free for volunteers.

1. Fill out an online application form at www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/check. If access to the internet is not available, please telephone (02) 9286 7219 for assistance.
2. You will receive an application number by email (or other means if the application was not done on-line).
3. Take the application number to the RMS, along with proof of identity.
4. Provided the check is clear, a WWCC number will be forwarded to you which gives clearance to be engaged in child related roles.

More information can be found at www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au. Follow the links to "Working with Children Check"

2 An Understanding of BEC's Safe Ministry Policy

BEC's Safe Ministry Policy (or Code of Conduct) is found at Appendix 1 attached to this document. Alternatively, it may be found as a pdf document on the BEC website page: <http://bathurstevangelical.org.au/about/safe-ministry/>

If you have any questions about this, please speak to the Senior Pastor or the BEC SRE Co-ordinator.

3 Complete Child Protection training

By law, child protection training must be completed. This training will help protect the children, as well as the teacher, in the event of an accusation.

- Upon issue of the SRE Teacher Application Form you will be given a link to 'Safe Ministry Training.' This provides on-line training in child protection.
- This training requires you to name two referees who will be contacted to give assurances that there are no child protection issues known to them which relate to you.
- Once the training is complete and the referees have responded, you and BEC will be notified.
- This training needs to be updated every three years (you will be notified).

4a Have an awareness of the Department of Education Code of Conduct.

The Department of Education's Code of Conduct can be found here:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/The-2014-Code-of-Conduct-approved-by-Minister-1-July-2014-updated-Dec-2016-not-tracked.pdf>

A summary of this code, with which you should familiarise yourself, is found in Appendix 2.

4b Have an awareness of the Department of Education Social Media Policy

A summary of the Department's Social Media Policy is found in Appendix 3. The full policy can be found here: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/social-media-policy>

5 Gain some familiarity with the scope and sequence of SRE material

To get an idea of this go to: <https://cepconnect.com.au/images/uploads/Connect-scope-and-sequence-all.pdf>

There is an enormous amount of material here! However, you only need to read the first page of Connect A, then scroll down to B & C. There is no need to read the appendices!

6 Complete the BEC SRE Teacher Application form

An SRE Teacher Application form (separate document) must be completed by the SRE volunteer and signed by the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor takes responsibility for endorsing SRE teachers and ensuring their completion of the necessary training and checks.

Return the application form to the BEC Senior Pastor, who will pass on a copy to the Bathurst SRE Administrator. The Administrator will then give your details to the SRE Coordinators in the schools marked on your form. They will contact you to organise classes.

7 Commence SRE Teacher training

Teachers of SRE are required be appropriately trained. For the purposes of SRE this means completing the ICCOREIS SRE Basic Training Course, Modules 1-6, over four years. Two or three modules of this are generally available annually in Bathurst.

Professionally qualified teachers need not complete modules relating to teaching skills and age appropriate presentation. They will however need to complete modules on legal requirements and curriculum content.

This training may also include use of technology such as interactive whiteboards and data projectors, but there is no expectation on SRE teachers to use it.

Refresher training will also need to be undertaken after the modules are completed. The format of this is yet to be determined.

8 Obtain a badge (authorisation to teach)

Once steps 1 to 7 are completed / understood, and training is commenced, BEC will issue an SRE teacher's badge. This is your authorisation to teach. You are required to wear this badge while on the school premises.

The churches in Bathurst have agreed to cross-authorise our SRE teachers, so teachers from one denomination can also teach children from other denominations. This cross-authorisation, which is managed by the Bathurst SRE Administrator, will complete the authorisation process.

Other Matters to Note

1 Approval of Additional Materials and Resources to Assist with SRE

The fundamental content of SRE lessons must always be based on the approved curriculum. However, it is recognised that each SRE teacher will deliver this content in a manner commensurate with their skills and personality. As such, a teacher may bring various resources into the lesson to assist in delivering curriculum content.

SRE Teachers must carefully select appropriate resources based on the following guidelines:

- Age appropriate in content - i.e. topic, use of language (words and tone), visual images etc.
- Appropriate subject matter, conceptual difficulty, humour.
- Modesty in nudity (eg with Adam & Eve) - all private parts covered.
- Material must not be offensive or intended to shock or scare.

A good guideline in selecting material is to imagine that the Principal of the school is present in the classroom as the lesson is given.

2 Teacher Review

Annually, about the beginning of October, each SRE teacher will receive a teacher self-reflection form. This needs to be filled in and returned to the Senior Pastor or BEC SRE Co-ordinator. They, or their representative will contact you if you have raised concerns. See Appendix 4 for a copy of this form.

The teacher review process will guide the focus for ongoing teacher training and the topics identified will be included in the annual assurance to the Department.

3 Complaints Handling Procedure

In the event of a complaint from the school or Principal of the school about an SRE teacher from BEC, the Senior Pastor, the Overseers of BEC, and the Safe Ministry Contacts [the 'BEC Authorities'] are to be informed. The BEC Authorities will, having regard for all relevant information, make a judgement on whether the teacher is to continue with SRE or be withdrawn, together with discussion of the issue with said teacher.

The BEC Authorities must also ascertain if the complaint is serious enough to involve authorities beyond the church and the school – for example the Police and other authorities. If this is the case, the 'Reporting Procedure', outlined in Appendix 1, (5. Commitment to Appropriately Respond to Concerns and Complaints) must be followed.

In all this the school Principal and the Bathurst Council for Christian Education are to be kept informed of developments.

4 Syllabus Information

For SRE syllabus information please go to <https://cepconnect.com.au/curriculum>

APPENDIX 1

baThurst evangelical church

Presenting Christ to Everyone | Presenting Everyone Mature in Christ

Safe Ministry Policy

Developed by www.safeministrytraining.com.au

Approved by Church Council on 8/10/2019

Safe Ministry Commitment

Bathurst Evangelical Church

Background & Governance

This policy outlines the underlying principles that direct our approach to safeguarding vulnerable people involved with Bathurst Evangelical Church. It applies to all staff, leaders, pastors, coordinators, volunteers, trainees and anyone working on behalf of Bathurst Evangelical Church (“Relevant Leaders”). The Overseers of Bathurst Evangelical Church take responsibility for ensuring these principles are reviewed regularly and embedded in the organisation culture at all levels.^{1 2}

1. Commitment to Safeguard Vulnerable People

We are committed to the Biblical call to care for the vulnerable by actively preventing harm and abuse, and by seeking to provide safe programs.³ We are also responsible and accountable for fulfilling our obligations under State and Federal law to protect children and vulnerable people.

We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable people (including children, families, the disabled and elderly) are informed and involved in decisions that considerably affect them. We recognise that the diverse needs of vulnerable people should be taken into account and their concerns taken seriously.⁴ We are committed to embedding this care into all levels of our leadership and culture.

2. Appointment of leaders

All those involved in leadership to children and adults on behalf of Bathurst Evangelical Church, are required to undergo a full screening and training process as outlined below.

Appropriate leaders will have been regular participants at Bathurst Evangelical Church for at least twelve months (or have been given special approval by the church leadership). Each will be assessed for suitability for the position and have their roles and responsibilities clearly outlined for them.

For employees, inquiries are to be made with two referees as to their suitability for the position.

For volunteers:

The approval of the Church Council is required, and this is to be recorded in the church minutes.

Where appropriate, inquiries are to be made into previous positions held to ascertain suitability.

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¹ This policy is in accordance with the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No 157

² As per Point 1 of the National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations

³ Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Matthew 18:1-6; 19:30; Mark 10:13-16, 12:28-31

⁴ As per Points 2, 3 & 4 of the National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations

3. Commitment to Screening and Training Relevant Leaders

We are committed to ensuring all Relevant Leaders are screened, appropriately supported and trained through the process outlined below.⁵

1. All Relevant leaders must be regular participants at Bathurst Evangelical Church, and have signed and committed to the “Statement of personal faith”. They will have their potential roles and responsibilities clearly outlined for them as they start their role,
2. All Relevant Leaders must provide referees who can confirm the proposed leader is suitable to work with vulnerable people and that there is no reason the proposed leader should not be appointed in such a role,
3. All Relevant leaders must complete the approved Safe Ministry Training Course (www.SafeMinistryTraining.com.au) which outlines appropriate behaviour including how to minimise the chances of harm and abuse, as well as training in how to identify and report cases of abuse.
4. Relevant leaders will have committed to the leader’s Code of Conduct, behave as followers of Jesus and be willing to be held accountable for their behaviour, and
5. If a Relevant Leader is working with children & youth, they must have their State “Working With Children Check” verified.

No-one with a criminal record of child abuse, molestation or similar offences is allowed to be involved in children's or youth ministry at Bathurst Evangelical Church.

4. Commitment to Providing Safe and Accessible Programs

We are committed to ensuring that our programs and events are safe and appropriate for those attending. Careful consideration must be given to the activities chosen, the venue, safe ratios of supervision, appropriate toileting practices, transportation, work health and safety, parental or guardian permission and confidentiality of records kept.

To help maintain appropriate standards, we will give all relevant leaders access to ongoing training and adequate supervision in their roles and responsibilities.

5. Commitment to Appropriately Respond to Concerns and Complaints

We are committed to creating a culture where people feel safe to speak out about inappropriate behaviour without fear of being rejected or ridiculed. We are committed to listening and responding appropriately to concerns and complaints about behaviour and safety at Bathurst Evangelical Church. Throughout this process we are committed to protecting the confidentiality, dignity, health

⁵ As per Point 5, 7 & 8 of the National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations

and well-being of all individuals involved. Any child-related issues will be managed with a focus on the interest of the child and will be reported to the relevant State Child Protection body.⁶

All reports will be managed by the Bathurst Evangelical Church Safe Ministry Contacts.

Safe Ministry Contacts

Jane Corbett-Jones – 0407 108 865

Ruth Clements – 0447 371 176

The Safe Ministry Contacts will follow a **Safe Ministry Incident Management Process**.⁷ This includes reporting any criminal activity to Police, and the possibility of reporting allegations of abuse to the State Ombudsman and the insurer of Bathurst Evangelical Church. In certain incidents (as outlined in the Incident Management Process) the Safe Ministry Supervisors will appoint an Independent Ministry Investigator to investigate allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

Date Instituted: 8th October, 2019

Date of Last Review 23rd November, 2020, by Mark Sutton

⁶ As per Point 6 of the National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations

⁷ As per Point 10 of the National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations

APPENDIX 2

Summary of DoE Code of Conduct

The values that underpin the school and its staff are fairness, respect, integrity and responsibility.

- Unless authorised to do so you must not disclose or use any confidential information about students.
- Duty of Care is the obligation to provide reasonable care for students. It involves adequate supervision, ensuring that the classroom is a physically and emotionally safe place for students, and being able to access medical assistance if required. Duty of Care resides with the school but SRE Teachers must be diligent in the SRE time slot and provide suitable care.
- You must maintain a professional relationship with students.
- The Department's Code of Conduct gives guidelines for appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking. However, BEC requires that where your only contact with a student is through SRE, you DO NOT use any social networking tools to interact with students.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs and smoking – you must not be under the influence, have or condone the use of these substances whilst on duty as an SRE teacher.
- Dress Code - you are to dress in a manner that maintains respect, establishes credibility and upholds the good reputation of the Dept of Education. (No tracksuits, rubber thongs, t- shirts or clothes with inappropriate slogans).

APPENDIX 3

Summary of DoE Social Media Policy

- Always follow the NSW Department of Education Code of Conduct.
- Do not act unlawfully
- Make sure that your personal online activities don't interfere with the performance of your job.
- Be clear that personal views are yours and not necessarily the views of the Department.
- Do not disclose personal information obtained through work (SRE).

