



# Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics

Special Religious Education (SRE) is education in the beliefs and practices of an approved religious persuasion. Special Education in Ethics (SEE) is a program in ethical decision making, action and reflection within a secular framework, based on a branch of philosophy.

## Background

[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 religious persuasion.'

[The Education Amendment \(Ethics Classes Repeal\) Bill 2011](#) and [Section 33A of the Education Act 1990](#) gives parents/caregivers who have withdrawn their child from special religious education in writing, the option of SEE.

## Responsibilities

### Principals

Principals must allow time for SRE/SEE where representatives of approved providers are available. On average, not less than 30 minutes and not more than one hour per week should be allocated. The lesson period should be consistent with the age and attention span of the students.

Parents/caregivers have the right to general information about how SRE/SEE will be organised each year and which organisations will deliver it. This general information can be provided to the school community in a number of ways. Parents/caregivers can receive general information about SEE, for example, via the school website, during parent meetings, in school

newsletters and at enrolment.

Principals should use the information provided in the enrolment form to set up classes. If a religious persuasion is written on the enrolment form and available at the school, then the student will be placed in that SRE program.

If 'no religion' is written, students participate in meaningful activities. Where there is no nominated persuasion or the persuasion is unavailable, then the principal is to send a [preference letter](#) to parents/caregivers, outlining the options available for SRE including the option to withdraw.

The Principal is to send a [preference letter](#) to all students in Kindergarten, and Year 7, as well as all subsequent new enrolments in the 2015 and 2016 school year.

Parents/caregivers may at any time notify the school in writing that they wish to withdraw their child from SRE. Parents/caregivers are to then be advised of specific information about options, [including SEE](#) if established in the school.

Principals will support SRE/SEE by ensuring that no academic instruction or formal school activities occur during the time set aside for SRE/SEE.

Students not attending SRE or SEE should be in a separate space from these classes and be provided with meaningful activities such as reading, private study or completing homework.

## SRE/SEE Providers

SRE/SEE is delivered by providers that have the approval of the Minister for Education for that purpose. A list of [approved providers](#) and sample letters are available at:

<http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/religion/>

Only persons authorised by approved providers teach SRE/SEE.

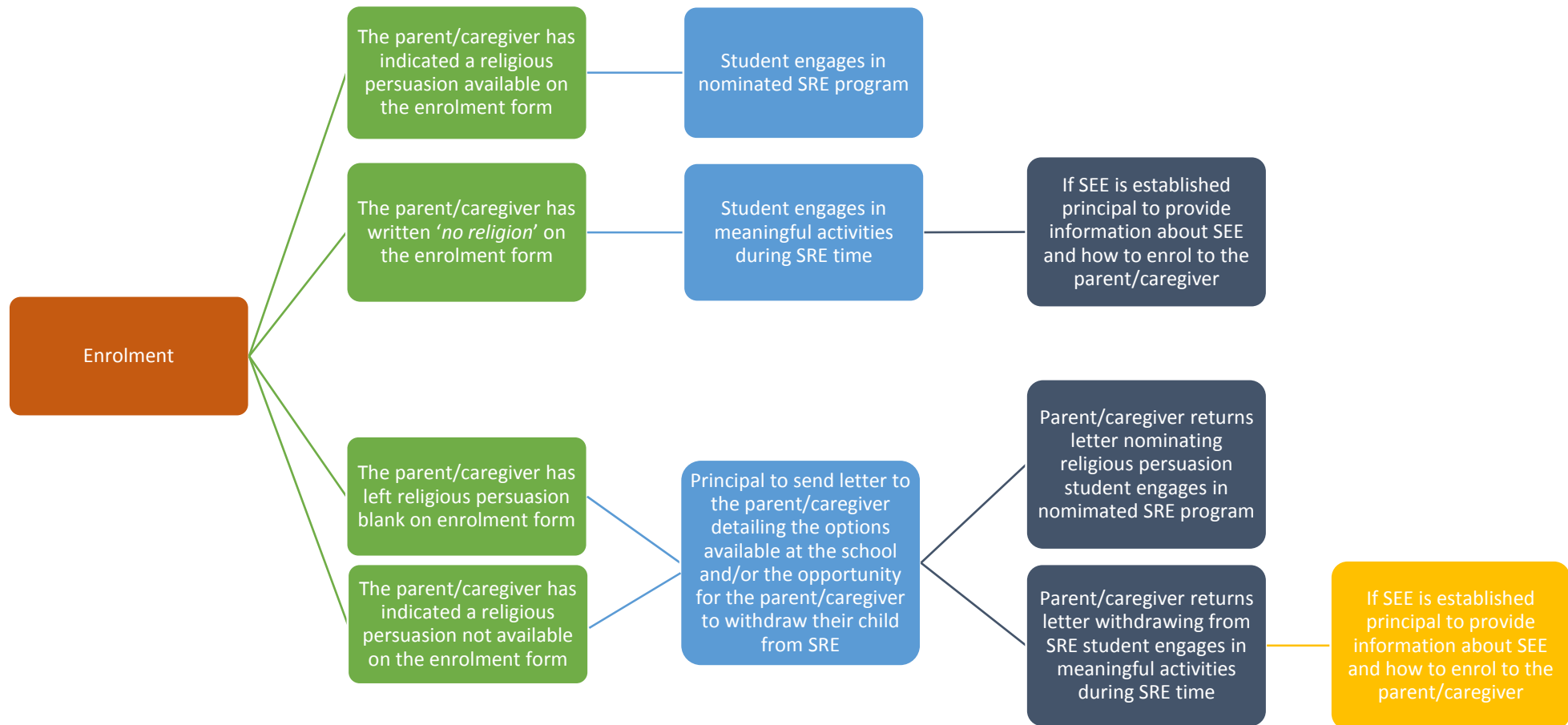
A provider must ensure that all personnel have had a Working with Children Check or signed a Working with Children Check Declaration. <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>

Providers must publish age-appropriate curriculum on their website.

## Contact Information

Special Religious Education and Special Education in Ethics Officer  
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E [SREcontact@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:SREcontact@det.nsw.edu.au) or  
E [SEEcontact@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:SEEcontact@det.nsw.edu.au)  
Early Learning and Primary Education  
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Darlinghurst NSW 2010

# Implementing Special Religious Education (SRE) & Special Education in Ethics (SEE) in NSW Government schools



**Please Note:**

- Participation letter to be sent to all 2015 and 2016 Kindergarten and Year 7 students, as well as all subsequent new enrolments
- Parents/caregivers may at any time notify the school in writing that they do not wish their child to attend SRE

Students are to continue in the same arrangements each year, unless a parent/caregiver has requested a change

Further information and resources available at: <http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/religion/index.htm>