

# **COVID-19**

# **Guidelines for SRE**

# **Coordinators (2022).**

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# Introduction

The Anglican Diocese of Sydney recognises the hard work of hundreds of volunteer SRE coordinators to facilitate the provision of SRE in schools. SRE is currently being provided with the following guidelines in place. This document and those referred to below can be found on our [COVID-19 Guidelines for SRE](#) webpage at [youthworks.net/srecovidguidelines](https://youthworks.net/srecovidguidelines).

## 1. Department guidelines

On January 25, 2022, the NSW Department of Education released updated [COVID advice for families](#). The advice allows for *visitors supporting school activities*, which includes SRE.

*"Special religious education (SRE), Special education in ethics (SEE) and Voluntary student activities of a religious nature in schools (VSA) are able to return..."*<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Availability of teachers

Each Anglican SRE teacher will decide whether they wish return to SRE in consultation with their families, health advice and church leadership. This decision is especially pertinent for teachers in the vulnerable category. The NSW Department of Education has communicated with schools informing them that they are not required to assess if a person meets the vulnerable category under Health advice for SRE/SEE as this is the responsibility of the approved provider.

## 3. Cohorts

Schools where cohort restrictions were in place will no longer be required to implement them.

*"From Monday 28 February, schools will no longer need to keep students in their class or year group cohorts. This means schools can remove staggered start and finish times and reintroduce cross-year group activities and events such as assemblies."*<sup>2</sup>

SRE classes that include students from multiple classes across a year group or multiple year groups and stages can now occur. SRE assembly style lessons or significant events such as Easter and Christmas assemblies can occur once again.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/religion-and-ethics>, Sited January 25, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families#Cohorting3> Sited February 23, 2022.

## 4. Update the authorisation letter

Please provide a new [School Authorisation Letter](#) to the school for SRE in 2022 and an updated version of the letter when new teachers are available and required. The revised [School Authorisation Letter](#) needs to:

- include all SRE teachers who are available to teach SRE.
- be completed in conjunction with other providers if in a combined arrangement.

Please be aware that schools are required to check each SRE volunteer against an internal *Not to Be Employed* database. As a result, information about casual/relief SRE teachers must be given to the school with sufficient time to do this. **This cannot be done on the day they need to attend SRE.**

The NSW Department of Education may use the External Visitor Form and School Authorisation Letter for contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 case.

A COVID Safe Plan is not currently required for approved providers of SRE/SEE.

## 5. Current authorisation cards

All active Anglican Diocese of Sydney authorised SRE teachers and helpers must have a valid (red) authorisation card. This includes high school SRE teachers. SRE teachers whose only outstanding requirement is a classroom observation will receive an authorisation card.

**Please ensure your parish data files are up to date to ensure all teachers/helpers have a card.**

SRE teachers without a valid (red) authorisation card must not return to SRE until they have received a valid authorization card.

Please contact the SRE Office by phone (02) 8268 3355 or email [sreoffice@youthworks.net](mailto:sreoffice@youthworks.net) to organise any additional authorisation cards you may require.

## 6. Sudden unavailability of a teacher

The NSW Department of Education advice regarding the return to SRE/SEE states that

*"There are no vaccination requirements for non-Department of Education staff, visitors and volunteers at SSPs. They are however required to wear masks whilst working/volunteering with students at greater risk of serious illness should they contract COVID-19."*<sup>3</sup>

In the event that an SRE teacher is suddenly unavailable:

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<sup>3</sup> <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families/vaccination-requirements-for-school-sites#Vaccinations3> Sited August 11, 2022.

- Ask your teachers to notify you as soon as possible.
- Implement alternative arrangements. These may include:
  - A trained and authorised casual/relief SRE teacher attends in their place.
  - Combine classes if content is age appropriate.
  - Cancel the class with the students to remain with their classroom teacher and complete alternative meaningful activities.

You will need to ensure you communicate clearly with the school, and other providers where necessary.

## 7. Close contacts

On 20 April 2022 the NSW Government eased the isolation requirements for close contacts. SRE teachers and helpers who have been identified as close contacts may attend school for SRE if they

- Do not have any COVID-19 symptoms
- Notify the school of their status as a close contact
- Return a negative RAT on the morning of SRE
- Wear a mask indoors at all times

## 8. Guidance for teachers/helpers

The Anglican SRE Office *COVID Guidelines for SRE teachers and helpers* are available on [the SRE COVID Guidelines webpage](#). Please ensure your SRE teachers have carefully read these guidelines before SRE resumes and are prepared to adhere to them.

All SRE teachers must:

- comply with the AHPPC guidelines and the NSW Health Public Health Orders for COVID-19.
- understand the requirement to comply with the NSW Department of Education's infection control and physical distancing requirements while they are delivering services in a school.
- Check in using the school's Service NSW QR code
- understand the content areas of the curriculum to be addressed at the point of return i.e. at which lesson in the scope and sequence do they start.