


COVID-19

Guidelines for SRE

teachers and helpers

(2022).

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Introduction

The Anglican Diocese of Sydney welcomes the opportunity to deliver quality SRE to students in NSW government schools. It acknowledges that the purpose for this access is to deliver Bible-based educational programs using contemporary teaching methods that are suited to the appropriate stage of students' faith and cognitive development.

1. Vulnerable teachers

SRE is undertaken by hundreds of faithful Anglican SRE teachers and helpers who are classified as vulnerable. The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) defines vulnerable as:

*"people aged 70 years and over, people aged 65 years and over with chronic medical conditions, all people with compromised immune systems, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50 with chronic medical conditions. The AHPPC has stated that vulnerable people are at greater risk of more serious illness if they are infected with COVID-19."*¹

Each SRE teacher should decide whether they wish return to SRE. This decision should be made after:

- Listening to health advice
- Talking to family or other household members who may be vulnerable
- Consulting a doctor (where necessary)

Please advise your SRE coordinator if you are unable to return to teaching SRE.

The Anglican SRE Office recommends that SRE teachers in the vulnerable category assess carefully their participation in SRE in 2021.

¹ <https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-advice-on-reducing-the-potential-risk-of-covid-19-transmission-in-schools-24-april-2020>

2. Infection control training

The Department of Health has a free online course available called [Infection Control Training - COVID](#). The course is for health care workers, however the majority of information in the course is applicable to anyone and will assist SRE teachers in maintain good hygiene procedures.

The Anglican SRE Office recommends that all SRE teachers complete the Infection Control Training – COVID-19 before commencing SRE in 2021.

You will need to register with the Department of Health in order to do the course (providing your first & last name, gender, email address, work & home postcode). The course takes between 10 – 30 minutes. Most of the course is reading PowerPoint slides and then there is a number of multiple-choice questions. If you successfully answer the multiple-choice questions you can access a certificate of acknowledgement. This is for your own records and does not need to be kept by either Youthworks or your SRE coordinator.

3. QR Code sign in

All SRE teachers and helpers are required to check-in to the school premises via the school's Service NSW QR code, and check out once they leave the school site.

4. Masks

The rule for mandatory mask wearing for staff and students has been removed.

"From Monday 28 February, masks will no longer be mandatory for staff and students in high schools. Staff in K-12 schools should continue to wear masks indoors in the primary settings.

*From Monday 7 March, masks will no longer be mandatory for staff in primary schools."*²

This means that SRE teachers are no longer required to wear masks (from the two staggered dates as outlined above) whilst teaching in classrooms or on the school grounds unless they choose to do so for their own safety and concern.

However, masks will continue to be required for anyone working with students who are at greater risk of serious illness should they contract COVID-19. For further details see the DoE guidelines at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families#Masks5> and/or talk to your school to work out if this requirement relates to your classes.

² <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families#Masks%3Cb9%3E4> Sited February 23, 2022

5. Singing in SRE

Singing and chanting are permitted in well ventilated or outdoor venues in SRE classes and assemblies. SRE teachers should consider reducing the period of group singing to less than 30 minutes to minimise risk of transmission.

6. Hygiene in the school

All SRE teachers must comply with NSW Department of Education COVID safe hygiene and infection control measures.

a. Personal hygiene measures

- **Do not go to school if you are unwell.** Notify your SRE coordinator and the school if you are unwell and unable to go to SRE. It is the requirement of [NSW Health](#) that anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 be tested. Once tested you are required to self-isolate until you receive results.
- **Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser regularly and thoroughly.**
- **Maintain respiratory hygiene.** Cover your cough or sneeze by coughing or sneezing into your elbow or tissue. Dispose of used tissues immediately. Always wash your hands after you have coughed, sneezed, or blown your nose.
- **Avoid shaking hands when greeting people.**

b. Hygiene measure in the school office

Please plan to arrive at school early, to make sure you have time to sign in, complete your external visitor form and be familiar with hygiene procedures in the school. When entering the school office to sign in, it is important that you:

- **Use hand sanitiser provided when you enter the office.**
- **Maintain physical distance.** Stay 1.5 metres from others. Some may limit the number of people allowed in the office at one time. Pay attention to how many people are there. If necessary, wait outside until some people leave.
- **Follow school advice about sign in procedures.** We suggest that you bring your own pen.

c. Hygiene measures in the classroom

When entering the classroom it is important to:

- **Maintain physical distance.** Avoid close contact with staff and students where possible.

- **Encourage students to practice personal hygiene including hand and respiratory hygiene.**
Hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.
- **Abide by school cleaning procedures.** Please speak to your SRE coordinator to find out what cleaning procedures your school has implemented.
- **Implement cleaning protocol for shared items.** Any equipment (e.g. borrow Bibles) that will be used by SRE teachers or students must be cleaned before use. Equipment that cannot be cleaned should not be shared and must be disposed of between each use. SRE workbooks should be stored in the classroom and handed out by students. External Visitors Form

NSW Health requires that schools collect names and contact details of visitors to the school, to be used for contract tracing in the event of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case in the school.

7. When should I stay home?

All SRE teachers must not attend SRE if **any** of the following three events occur.

- **If you have symptoms of COVID-19.** These include cough, sore/scratchy throat, fever, shortness of breath or loss of taste/smell. If you experience one or more of these symptoms do not attend SRE. It is the requirement of [NSW Health](#) that anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 be tested. Once tested you are required to self-isolate until you receive results.
- **If you are unwell with other symptoms.** Please consult your doctor before returning to SRE.

If you are unable to teach SRE for any of these reasons please contact your SRE coordinator and arrange to notify the school, as soon as possible.

8. 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, and
- Wear a mask indoors at all times.

9. COVID case in the school

The NSW Department of Education has protocols in place for schools to respond to any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. These are available on [the NSW Department of Education website](#).

10. 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.

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

If you don't have a current authorization card please work with your SRE coordinator to ensure your information is updated in your parishes SRE data file and have your coordinator request one from sreoffice@youthworks.net.