



Buddhist Council of NSW
Working for the Buddhist Community

Buddhist SRE Information for New Teachers

What is the Buddhist SRE Program?

Every government school is required to allow from 30 to 60 minutes per week for special religious education (SRE) for children from years Kindergarten (Stage 1) to Year 10 (stage 5). SRE is not taught by school staff, but instead by volunteers from authorised providers. The Buddhist Council of New South Wales manages the largest and most comprehensive Buddhist SRE program. Each week, SRE teachers trained and supported by the Buddhist Council help thousands of young people to live better lives.

The Buddhist SRE Program is seeking to train and support even more teachers for schools on our waiting list across New South Wales.

How is it Taught?

Buddhist SRE is *not* taught so that students remember what's in a textbook. The Buddhist SRE Syllabus aims to help children lead happy and healthy lives by instilling values and life skills based on the teachings of the Buddha. The emphasis on values and life skills does not exclude learning about the Buddha's life, or his original teachings, as these are also included in the Buddhist SRE Syllabus. In the long run, values and life skills will help to build self-confidence and purpose. Life skills in particular will help a child to be more resilient to the ups and downs of life. The Buddhist SRE Syllabus therefore aims to:

- Instill values and attitudes which are consistent with the Buddha's teachings
- Help children to understand Buddhist teachings and how to practice them
- Enable children to learn practical life skills

Buddhist teachers are trained by the Buddhist Council to run SRE classes in ways which help young people to understand and practice the essence of the Buddha's teachings using stories, mindfulness exercises, games, plays, lively discussions, arts and crafts and other activities that children enjoy.

How Fulfilling Is It?

Teaching Buddhist SRE is rewarding on many levels. Teachers are reminded to remain "grounded" in their own Buddhist practice, because teaching by example is always more effective. But even more convincing, are the comments noted by our SRE teachers directly from **students**:

"I have learned that in rough times, meditation helps you relax." (year 5)

"Buddhism is about control over your mind." (year 3)

"You can make someone else happy just by smiling." (year 4)

"I have learned to be more generous." (year 3)

"Buddha taught about suffering first because he had seen suffering himself, and if he taught on happiness, people might think there was no suffering and be disappointed when it came along." (year 3)

"We feel good when we have been kind." (year 2)

How Are Teachers Appointed?

Becoming an SRE teacher requires *accreditation* that you are capable of teaching, which includes training (provided by the Buddhist Council's Training Unit), a Working With Children Check, a reference letter on your Buddhist background and an interview. After accreditation, you can be *appointed* to a class at a nearby school and you will be issued with a Teacher's Kit, identification badge and access to a wide range of free teaching resources which support the Buddhist SRE Syllabus, as well as your own teaching style.

How are Teachers Trained?

The initial two-day training program for SRE teachers comprises five modules:

- TM-11 provides an appreciation of all Buddhist traditions and cultures
- TM-41 provides an introduction to the Buddhist SRE Program
- TM-42 gives essential guidance on safe and proper working with children
- TM-43 overviews effective skills and techniques for teaching Buddhist SRE
- TM-45 demonstrates with numerous examples the practicalities of lesson planning

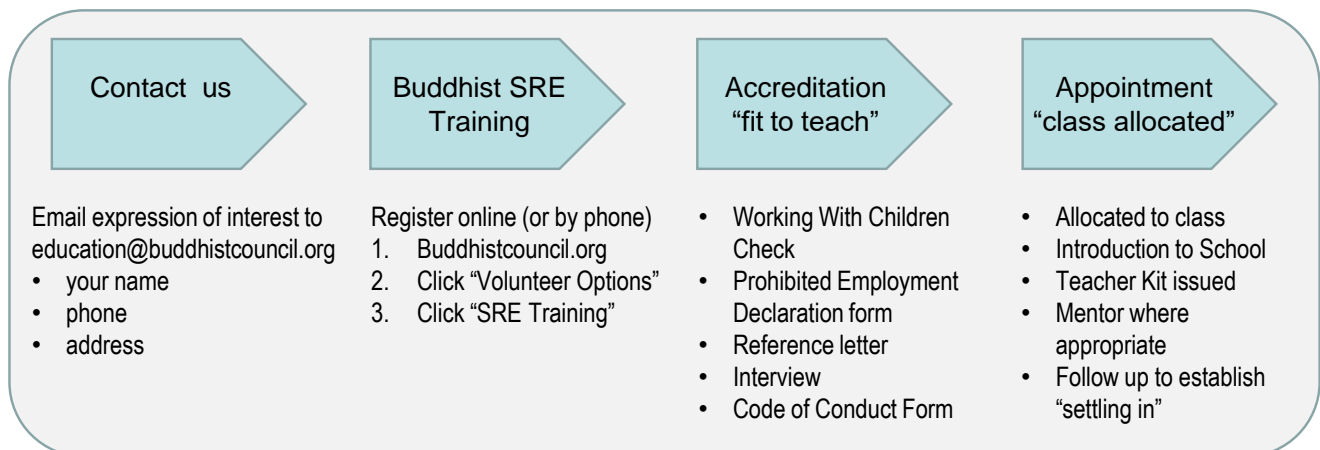
How are Teachers Supported?

Buddhist SRE teachers are supported in a number of ways.

- **In-Service (Development).** SRE teachers come together to hear updates on SRE (e.g. government regulations), useful information (e.g. coordinated Vesak activity) and new methods (e.g. teaching meditation to children).
- **Expense Claim.** SRE Teachers can be reimbursed from the BCNSW Education Fund for allowable expenses.
- **In-Service (Networking).** SRE teachers gather together locally with other SRE teachers, for example at a morning tea sponsored by the Buddhist Education Fund.
- **Library Loan.** SRE teachers can borrow resources from the SRE Reference Library.
- **Supervision.** Due to the Buddhist council's accountability for the Buddhist SRE program, the SRE Support Team keeps in touch with active SRE teachers.

How Can I Apply?

If you are interested in becoming an accredited SRE teacher, the SRE Support Team will help you along the path. Here are the steps.



Further Information

More information is available from the SRE Support Team at the Buddhist Council of New South Wales.

PO Box 593 CROWS NEST NSW 1585
Office@BuddhistCouncil.org (02) 9966 8893