

Thank you for being available to interview someone who has put their hand up to be involved in SRE in your local school community! SRE teaching is a wonderful privilege, and we value so much the support of church leadership in endorsing and sending people to do this vital ministry.

By agreeing to endorse a suitable person to be part of SRE in local public primary and high schools, you are endorsing on behalf of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT to represent you and your church. In most cases Christian SRE is taught joint denominationally, so you also need to be confident that they can effectively represent the other denominations involved.

Below is a simple stepped out process, which includes a sample list of questions you can ask as part of the interview process for new teachers. Once you have worked through this document and the other documents mentioned, feel free to contact us with any further questions. If you would like to delegate some of the steps below to an SRE coordinator or experienced SRE teacher that is fine. Just ensure the interview section is completed by yourself as the Pastor or acting Pastor duties.

CHECK	STEPS TO TAKE
INITIAL CONVERSATIONS	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chat with prospective SRE helpers/teachers who have expressed an interest and investigate what is required. Offer them the New SRE Helper & Teacher Information sheet and walk them through what is required for their consideration.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine their suitability for the role.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest they observe a lesson or two first to see what is involved in teaching a class. Speak to the SRE team to discuss an observer letter.
CHILD PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure they have a valid Working with Children Check Number (WWCC). Direct them to the website to apply if they don't currently have one. Apply online.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check to see if they have completed Child Protection Training via Creating Safe Spaces Course- this is valid for 4 years. This training is completed in two parts- Part 1 online and Part 2 via zoom/face to face. If they haven't, direct them to getting that started.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department of Education annual Child Protection course (see additional notes)
ENDORSEMENT & COMPLIANCE	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Formally interview person using guided questions on following page and complete a Pastor Endorsement Form.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct them to complete the Baptist Association's Code of Conduct & Screening Questionnaire & DoE Declaration and submit to our office.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask them to read the Association's related policies and procedures located on our website- https://nswactbaptists.org.au/policies-and-procedures/



SRE MODULE TRAINING	
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Helper Status- complete Essentials Modules One , Four & Seven online or via zoom/ face to face if available.
APPLICATION FORM	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure they complete our online application form .
POST APPLICATION & TEACHING	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once the processing of the application is complete the teacher/helper will receive an email notification with a letter of authorisation. The authorisation card gets sent to church and is to be signed by the pastor. This card acts as school identification. The card is valid for 3 years.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep in touch with the teacher/helper to offer support and encouragement and check in to see how it is going for them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider opportunities the church could spotlight SRE in services and other contexts to keep the profile of SRE in people’s minds and prayers. Consider a commissioning service at the start of each year for example. Or honour publicly those who have served faithfully for many years and stepping down.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whilst hopefully this is not ever needed, consider being prepared to reevaluate someone’s suitability to teach if something arises in the future. Contact the Association’s SRE team leader to discuss.

FAQS

What if I am the pastor? Who interviews/endorsees?

If you are the senior pastor, ask your Associate (if you have one) to complete the Pastor Endorsement. If not, ask someone in senior leadership like a deacon or elder.

What if my spouse is the senior pastor?

To allow for transparency it would be best practice to ask another pastor on team if there is one or someone in senior leadership like a deacon or elder.

What happens if this person is being employed by a board?

If someone is being employed by a board to teach SRE (mostly in High School context) they must complete both the board requirements for employment as well as the requirements of the approved provider for authorisation. They may also be asked to complete the Department of Education’s child protection training or additional theological training.

Is endorsing and authorising the same thing?

No. Local church leadership endorses a teacher, as a local representative of the Association. The Association as the Approved Provider is the one who authorises teachers once they have completed all the requirements. No one can teach SRE in a public school without our official authorisation card.

What if someone from a church not associated with the Baptist Association wants me to endorse them?

If the person attends an independent church that is seeking authorisation under the Baptist Association, **you must know the person or know the minister of the church they attend**. They must live in the local area. That person's minister will also need to sign the Pastor Endorsement form. They will also need to provide annually their church's Certificate of Currency. They must also not be a member of a church denomination that is on the DoE's approved provider list. If they are, they must seek authorisation through their denomination.

Suggested Interview Questions

- What/who encouraged you to think about teaching SRE?
- Why do you think you will be suitable to teach SRE?
- What previous experience have you had working with children?
- Are you able to explain what is the difference between children's ministry in a church and teaching SRE?
- If you were to summarise in one sentence, what is your motivation to teach SRE?
- How do you think I can support you in this role?
- As part of the Safe Church Health Check, you can also ask the prospective teacher, is there anything they would need to disclose that may impact their suitability to teach?

For your own reflections post interview before you complete the endorsement form

- Did this interview raise concerns about suitability? If you don't think they will be suitable, it will be important to contact us to let us know and the reasons why.
- Identify what strengths & growth areas this person has.

Contact Shelley Ashton -Team Leader SRE | Baptist Association NSW and ACT

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