

The following forms are available by post or electronically :
The Engagement Form EF4
Attachment 4

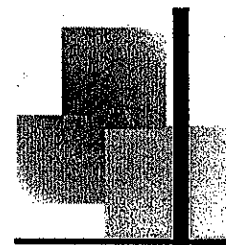
The Authorisation Cards will be posted.
To obtain these items please contact The Board of Education, details below.

This booklet is available to download on the Board of Education webpage
www.nsw.uca.org.au/boe/children/sre

For further information
Contact:

Board of Education
Lv 10/222 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: 8267 4290
Fax: 9261 5879
Email:
amandaj@nsw.uca.org.au



UNITING CHURCH NSW

SRE GUIDE

The Little Book of information for SRE Teachers

Guidelines, information, hints and ideas for SRE Teachers



- You are a Star!
- Things you need to know before you start
- How can my church help me?
- What can I expect from my school?
- The Language of SRE
- How will I manage the class?
- Understanding child development
- How do children learn?
- Creative ideas

2007



Welcome Aboard, You are joining a great team!

Your ministry as a Special Religious Education (SRE) teacher makes you a very important person in the lives of many children. In fact you are a star! And you have the wonderful privilege of bringing Jesus' love and teaching to the children in your classes.

Fewer than 5% of Australian children are involved in the local church, so SRE teaching is a great opportunity. NSW Government Legislation has provided us with a 'gift of time' to share God's love with the children. In 1990 the Education Reform Act again affirmed the right of religious persuasions to enter schools and teach those children whose parents give permission for them to receive Special Religious Education.

Today SRE teachers form the largest volunteer movement within the church, perhaps even the country. Week by week, volunteer teachers, like yourself, go into classrooms in almost every state, with a love for God which they want to share with the children. More than ever today our young people need to find the hope that the Christian message brings and to follow the light of Jesus.

Teaching SRE is not just about telling Bible stories, and preparing lessons. It is about developing relationships of genuine concern and love for the children out of which will grow faith and trust. You present a model of faith for the children which they will remember.

There will be tough times but remember that you are not alone. You are part of a team, you are the one at the front line and your church supports you. There are training opportunities available and the prayers of others and yourself will remind you that our God is with you always. You may never know the difference your work in schools has made but the seeds sown are in the hands of our great God who is faithful and can be trusted.

Remember:

You are a star!

Paul says "...you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life." (Phillipians 2: 15,16)



UNITING CHURCH

COOLAMON COLLEGE COURSE

Are you a person who prefers a more flexible and open method of learning?

Is working from home more accessible for you?

Coolamon College Course may be the way forward. Courses are offered through distance education. You can work at home.

TEACHING FAITH—Religious Education in Schools.
Sharpen your skills in SRE teaching by studying subject CMLW216. This topic is designed for anyone who is involved in any Christian educational experience offered in primary or secondary schools. Teaching Faith is a topic in the Coolamon College Explore program. Students studying topics in this program can choose to complete individual topics or work towards a fully accredited diploma.

LESSONS TOPICS

1. Becoming involved
2. Teaching ethically
3. Preparing Lessons
4. Understanding students
5. Teaching in a multicultural setting
6. Teaching students with special needs
7. Managing discipline and pastoral care
8. Applying skills and methods
9. Using the Bible
10. Evaluating teaching

This course requires 70 hours time commitment and the fees are \$170 per enrolment.

Coolamon College

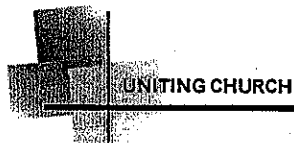
34 Lipsett Terrace

Brooklyn Park SA 5032

Phone: 07 3377 9940

Freecall: 1800 636 385

www.coolamon.org



SRE TEACHER'S BASIC ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATE COURSE

CONTENT OF COURSE

- What's and why's of SRE
- Understanding the learner
- Biblical understanding
- Lesson planning
- Demonstration lessons
- Lesson presentation (two supervised lessons)
- Classroom management
- Classroom skills and practices
- Using language effectively
- Using curriculum resources

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation refers to the level of training completed by the SRE teacher. The Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (ICCOREIS) and individual denominations offer training.

Each denomination is responsible for the accreditation of their teachers. The NSW Synod of the Uniting Church awards a certificate when basic accreditation is completed.

Some teachers will have completed components of this basic accreditation through other groups. To gain credit for these courses teachers will need to supply details to the Board of Education.

For further details of the next SRE Basic Accreditation Course contact:

**Board of
Education**

Lvl 10/222 Pitt St

Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: 02 8267 4290

x: 02 9261 5879

Email: amandaj@nsw.uca.org.au

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For information regarding courses please ring Mandy Jones (8267 4290) or email amandaj@nsw.uca.org.au.

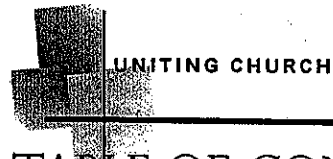


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What must I do before I start?

Your role as an SRE teacher does not begin when you walk into your classroom on the first day. That is the last step in a process that prepares you to be as effective as you can in your new role as a teacher.

Here are a few things which need to be done or thought about before you step foot into a classroom! They prepare the way for you to be an effective SRE teacher.

1. Ensure that you have completed:
 - a. An SRE Engagement Form (EF4) which includes the Statutory Declaration signed by a JP.
 - b. Attachment 4 PED form, issued by the Commission for Children and Young People.

Originals of both are to be filed in your church office. A copy of the SRE Engagement Form is to be sent to the Board of Education.
2. Ask your minister or SRE co-ordinator to provide you with a Authorisation Certificate (Green Card) - and carry it with you. The School Principal may ask to see it.
3. Talk to your minister or SRE co-ordinator about their expectations for SRE in schools.
4. Find out the starting dates, term dates, class allocation and other school calendar events which may affect your program.
5. Obtain your SRE curriculum material as early as possible. Read ahead so that you have the big picture of where your lessons are going.
6. Start collecting visual aids, pictures, objects etc. in advance.
7. Start praying now for yourself, your class and your school.
8. Get to know some children the same age as your class. Learn as much as you can from them about their interests, concerns, likes and dislikes.
9. Get to know your school and your school SRE co-ordinator (usually a member of staff) and other SRE teachers. As the year progresses you will learn the names of the school principal, secretary and class teacher.
10. Find out about training opportunities throughout the year. Look up Board of Education web page.

Curriculum Suggestions

RELIGION IN LIFE is the curriculum suggested for those working in primary schools.

It is Bible based, focuses on the children, educationally sound and teacher friendly.

It is suitable for joint denominational groups.

The children are encouraged to enjoy the Bible. They learn basic facts about the Christian faith and the content is determined by what is real to the children. In keeping with educational practice it begins with life experiences (the known) and then moves to the experiences of faith (the unknown).

The easy to use teacher books are comprehensive with clear lesson plans, teaching tips and information on child development. Music and further resources are also available.

Student resources include a coloured magazine style workbook and copiable worksheets.

It is written by SRE teachers and is published by Christian Religious Education in Schools, Victoria.

Freecall number for inquiries: 1800 063 341

Teaching in Secondary Schools

Religion in Life produces resources for students 12 to 16

Something Else (4 modules) 12 to 14 years

Worlds of Difference: Exploring Worldviews and Values (15 to 16 yrs)

InLite is another resource. It uses video clips containing music, interviews and movie clips which encourage students to think and discover God in their world. Available from Crosswire (02) 9975 1231

SRE teachers in secondary schools are often employed by a board made up of the churches in the area. If such a model is to be used it is important to include all churches in the area in the setting up and decision making. Those churches who have volunteers in the secondary schools and who do not wish to be part of the board must have their needs considered.

Working Co-operatively

Code of Practice

1. We recognise, respect and affirm the authority of the school in SRE as conferred by the Education Act 1990, in particular, its overall duty of care and its responsibility for negotiating the timetable and allocation of rooms.
2. We recognise the prime authority of parents and their right to enrol their children for the SRE of their choice, which we will at all times respect.
3. We agree to abide by the principles of consultation, co-operation and flexibility as defined in the Report on Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980) and that SRE is a genuinely educational activity which is to be adequately staffed and competently taught.
4. We seek to promote consultation among the representatives of the religious persuasions, which have been requested by parents to provide SRE in a school, so that a program for SRE can be agreed mutually as a commitment on an annual basis.
5. We affirm the principle that the content of SRE and the appointment of SRE teachers are solely the responsibility of the appropriately designated SRE authority in each Church.
6. We agree to identify, contact and reach agreement with the religious persuasions already providing SRE in a school before beginning something new.
7. We seek to encourage co-operation among local churches, inter-church councils and associations of ministers in implementing SRE. We will pursue such implementation on a flexible basis by negotiating with schools within the provisions of the Education Act 1990 and current memoranda issued by the NSW Director-General Education and Training.
8. We seek, when operating in joint-denominational approaches, to prevent SRE from becoming a vehicle for the beliefs of any one denomination or group.
9. We avoid evangelistic appeals requiring a public response from students in SRE to maintain its genuinely educational nature.
10. We seek in language and action to affirm the worth of each individual.
11. We seek to encourage the use of educationally valid terminology and language. Such language takes into account the ages and stages of student development. Our language and terminology will not assume that students share our beliefs in an identical way or to the same extent.

What is expected of me as an SRE Teacher?

Often expectations can become a burden, and we need to examine our own expectations to make sure that they are realistic! Our prayer is that the expectations listed below will become a great joy for you.

- **A loving attitude** towards all the children that you teach, and an understanding and acceptance of their family background, no matter how different it may be to yours.
- **Commitment** to the task that God has given you.
- **Preparation** of each lesson, following the set curriculum.
- **Attendance** at relevant accreditation **training and inservice courses** if possible. Your attendance can be an encouragement to other SRE teachers.
- **A prayerful approach** towards the lessons to be presented and for the children in your class.

Things to do or think about in the first weeks of SRE

Your priority in the first few weeks of the year must be in establishing yourself as the teacher and in consistently applying the classroom rules. These things are more important than getting the lesson finished! Here are a few more helpful hints that will get you away to a good start.

- Sign the attendance book for all visiting SRE teachers/helpers.
- Discover and observe the school rules—discipline policies, children going to the toilet in lesson time. The use of equipment such as pencils, blackboard, tape recorders or video records need to be negotiated with the classroom teacher. As a general rule it is better to be self-sufficient!
- Get to know the names of the students as quickly as you can.
- Never leave your class unattended—if you need assistance send 2 children to get the teacher. At the end of the lesson wait for the teacher to return to the class before you leave.
- Establish class rules with the students and be quietly consistent in applying them.
- Leave the classroom tidy and always finish your lesson on time, ready to hand over to the classroom teacher.
- If an emergency arises and you are unable to attend your class try to find someone who could take your lesson. If unsuccessful, make sure you contact the school so that they can make other arrangements for your children.

What can I expect from my school?

The importance of working together, building relationships with classroom teachers and school administrators cannot be emphasised enough in complementing each other in the important task of the total education of each child. So think of the classroom teacher and other school staff as colleagues. Remember you are all part of the one team.

- * Recognition as a visiting teacher.
- * A class list of the names of the children who will be in your class.
- * An appropriate teaching space, adequately equipped.
- * Contact with the school SRE co-ordinator, who organises the SRE classes and allocates rooms. He/she is your contact person if you are experiencing any difficulties.

How might my church support me?

You might need to show this page to your minister or Church Council! Neglect of SRE Teachers is definitely not intended, but sometimes we may need to take the initiative in highlighting the work of SRE teachers and also their needs.

- * A service of commission at the beginning of the year.
- * Support from your minister and/or church council.
- * Provision of all the teaching materials you require, the teachers manual and activity sheets for the children.
- * Support of fellow SRE teachers.
- * Prayer support.
- * Encouragement to attend training/in-service courses.
- * Advice and assistance if ever needed.
- * Recognition of the work of SRE teachers.
- * Practical help, where necessary e.g. baby sitting, transport, class helpers etc.
- * Financial assistance for purchasing extra craft materials, classroom resources, training/in-service costs.



Principles of SRE and Code of Conduct

ICCOREIS: Policy for Cooperative Special Religious Education (SRE) in Schools (NSW) and Code of Practice Policy Statement

We affirm the place of SRE in schools in all its approved forms. We affirm our willingness to cooperate in SRE for each generation of students by our commitment to the following principles and code of practice.

Principles of SRE

1. We acknowledge that God is already at work in the school through the Holy Spirit.
2. We seek every opportunity to share the Christian message with those enrolled by parents according to denominational preference. We seek to enable students to make their own informed response as part of a genuinely educational activity.
3. We affirm our Christian responsibility to serve the school community.
4. We recognise the importance of a considered long-term ministry in the school community which is best supported by local churches.
5. We are united in purpose and affirm flexibility in the implementation of SRE.
6. We believe in the importance of cooperation with other Christians and other religious persuasions in the school community.
7. We affirm the importance of consultation among the local providers of SRE to achieve co-operation and a flexible basis of implementation.
8. We recognise the need for cultural relevance in our SRE ministry and respect the varied traditions of Christianity in which the Gospel is expressed across many churches.
9. We recognise that the needs, interests and aspirations of students are central to SRE.
10. We take into account the developing capacities of students and their individual differences.
11. We recognise the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (NSW) Inc as the body established by the Churches to provide a representative framework for SRE in government schools. The Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools, in formulating policy and co-ordinating action among its member churches, is fulfilling the agreed position of the Churches expressed in the Report on Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools (1980).

Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools Inc.

ICCOREIS (formed in 1972) was established by its member Churches to represent them in negotiations with Government and the then Department of School Education in respect of religious education in public schools. It is the churches working together to provide a spiritual and religious dimension in education in Government schools

ICCOREIS aims:

- *To increase the availability and quality of SRE programs and teaching in NSW government schools.
 - *To gain a measurable improvement in support of, and involvement in SRE from member churches, clergy and parents.
 - *To co-operate in the development and implementation of the General Religious Education (GRE) program in NSW government schools.
 - *To achieve more effective and efficient provision of services to member churches through affiliated groups/committees.
 - *To provide a fully representative context for inter-church discussion and negotiations on religious education in public schools. This is done through regular meetings of church representatives.
 - *To provide leadership and structure for consultation between schools and the relevant churches and religious groups.
 - *To provide representatives on the Consultative Committee on Special Religious Education in Schools - a Department body responsible for providing advice to the Director-General in matters related to SRE in schools.
- To contact the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools Website: www.iccoreis.asn.au
or The Board of Education

Phone: 8267 4290



How should I prepare my lessons?

Although lesson materials are already prepared, it does require time to make the lesson your own. Some lessons may need to be adapted to suit your particular students and/or the teacher.

- * Start preparation well ahead! Give yourself plenty of time to prepare craft, visual aids etc.,
- * Pray for yourself and for your students.
- * Read through the lesson plan and student material.
- * Discover the lesson aims—what the children are to know and understand.
- * Make any necessary changes e.g. Will the introduction grab the children's attention? What are the key points of the lesson? Are the activities appropriate to the age/stage of the children's development? Does the conclusion draw the theme of the lesson together?
- * Complete the children's activity yourself.
- * After the lesson ask yourself:
 - What worked well?
 - What could be improved?
 - Was the lesson aim achieved?

Things you need to know

Below is a list of policies/procedures you will need to become aware of:

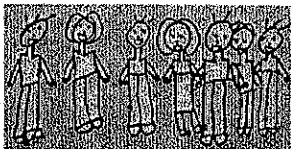
1. Movement of children from assembly area and entry into classroom.
2. Ways children at your school address the teachers.
3. Leaving the room e.g. If a child needs to go to the toilet it is often suggested that a second student accompanies another.
4. Emergency evacuations e.g. fire.
5. Use and care of classroom equipment.
6. School discipline policy. Find out if there is a reward scheme for the school.
7. Access to equipment you might need for your lesson e.g. overhead projector, CD players, video and TV, maps and pictures.
8. Use of school library resources.
9. Seating arrangements for students with special needs. Do you have a school aide assigned to help?
10. Remember, you don't have to be a parent to attend the school's P&C meetings.

STAGES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LOWER TO MIDDLE PRIMARY YEARS

In the early years at school, children may tell us this week that they want to follow Jesus; last week they wanted to fly to the moon and next week they want to be a firefighter! They are unlikely to have developed a moral sense. Bad is what gets punished, what goes unpunished must be OK. They surprise us with their answers to our questions, but they may be trotting them out parrot-fashion rather than understanding. Religious words can easily become confused.

Some characteristics

1. Like to play
therefore ... include fun elements.
2. Energetic
therefore ... allow opportunities for movement.
3. Dependent on adults
therefore ... give clear instructions.
4. Take words literally
therefore ... avoid abstract language.
5. Short attention span
therefore ... plan your lessons around short, varied activities.
6. Enjoy repetition
therefore ... re-use songs and activities they have enjoyed.
7. Need security
therefore ... be consistent in your care for students.
8. Limited vocabulary
therefore ... use language they can understand.
9. Inquisitive
therefore ... encourage questions, give short answers.
10. Imaginative
therefore ... encourage creative expression.



Advice You May Never Need

Adapted from an article published by: NSW Teachers' Federation,
February 1992)

1. Make it an absolute rule never to be left alone with a child of either sex no matter what their age. It is best always to have as many children with you as possible.
2. Never detain a single child if there are no other staff members or children present.
3. Never allow yourself to be alone with a child or two children in the school building before school or after school. A habit can grow up of having senior pupils perform various tasks in the classroom or around the school. It is much safer not to allow children to develop to a privileged position as this can result in a dangerous situation for the teacher.
4. If you have to discuss a personal problem with the pupil, and this may particularly apply in small schools where pupils are in various stages of maturity, ensure that a discussion of this kind takes place in a conspicuous situation in the playground, i.e. out of hearing but in sight of as many people as possible.
5. Avoid at all times conveying pupils in your car. Even where parents have given their consent, should a child be injured due to your negligence you may be liable for such injuries.
6. It would be wise not to get into the habit of touching children. Sometimes a simple touch to comfort a distressed child can be appropriate (but always in full view of others!). However, it is never appropriate to touch a child in anger.
7. If a child responds to you with affection and physical touch, it is best to divert their attention and gently encourage them to go and play/interact with the other children in the playground or classroom.



Behaviour Management cont.

5. For minor disturbances, keep the lesson flowing by:
 - * Standing near the child
 - * Establishing momentary eye contact
 - * Using a simple gesture
 - * Removing distractions
 - * Praising positive behaviour
6. For major disruptions be sure the child understands why the
 - a. behaviour is wrong. Questions such as "What are you doing?" and "What should you be doing?" may help.
7. Share your feelings about the misbehaviour not the misbehaviour. Don't jeopardise your relationship with the child by being negative about them as a person.
8. Outline the choices and the consequences of the misbehaviour, so as to place the responsibility for the student's actions on their shoulders, not yours. Encourage them to make a good choice.
9. Be specific when you are reprimanding a child for poor behaviour. Link their actions to the class rules. Ask the child what rule they have forgotten, and to tell you what they are doing wrong. Describing poor behaviour as 'being naughty' is not specific enough!
10. Always look behind the presenting problem to consider the real reason for the negative behaviour e.g.
 - * Rejection from friends, not belonging
 - * Home situations
 - * Emotional instability caused by grief, loss, etc.
 - * Lesson not engaging enough

 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT:
 MIDDLE TO UPPER PRIMARY YEARS

Children in their later primary years still struggle to understand abstract concepts like 'truth'; they do, however, believe people whom they trust. We must work hard at turning abstract concepts into concrete teaching. They are normally curious about the world and thirsty for information. They have a remarkably strong sense of justice and loyalty. They leave us breathless with their energy.

Some characteristics:

1. Influenced by those they admire
therefore ... use real-life and biblical role models.
2. Belonging to a group is important
therefore ... look for opportunities for team activities.
3. Peer pressure is a big influence
therefore ... create opportunities for positive attitudes to be expressed.
4. Influenced by popular culture
therefore ... include positive examples from that culture.
5. Often says "it's not fair!"
therefore ... be fair and consistent in all your dealings with children.
6. Becoming sexually aware
therefore ... be sensitive to these physical and emotional issues.
7. Sometimes hostile to authority
therefore ... balance authority with friendliness.
8. Competitive
therefore ... provide occasional opportunities for healthy competition.
9. Sometimes moody
therefore ... acknowledge and respect situations which may be outside your control
10. Sensitive to criticism
therefore ... choose your words carefully.

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT : LOWER SECONDARY

Once children enter their teen years they start to struggle with their identity, and are sometimes insecurely balanced between childhood and adulthood. Moods are often inevitable and there can be a sense of conflict between doing what is "right" and tossing authority to the wind! Physical growth spurts are normal and conformity to group norms of behaviour is valued more highly than individualism.

Some characteristics:

1. Searching for a sense of identity
therefore— accept and affirm while maintaining established standards. Focus on Jesus public life and relationships with people.
2. At time for testing fixed rules, authority and social order
therefore – Ask for possible alternatives in dilemma situations and explore their implications
3. Anxiety about one's acceptability
therefore—Introduce self awareness exercises and help them to perceive and affirm the good in themselves and others.
4. Growth spurt
therefore—Be willing to listen. Speak to them as young adults. Aim at communicating respect for them as they are.
5. Doubt, questioning and critical judgement developing
therefore— reassure them as they move from a reliance on others to a more reflective & owned faith.
6. Much energy given to teen culture
therefore—give attention to current musical TV & movie trends and use appropriate modern music clips in lessons.
7. Ability to think abstractly developing
therefore— provide enjoyable and stimulating learning tasks which balance intellectual and practical interests.

Creative Teaching Ideas

7. Prayer.

- * Keep it short, using inclusive language.
- * Invite students to participate.
- * Use a variety of styles e.g. spontaneous prayer, responsive prayer, formal prayer, prayer chains, prayer books, prayer circles, etc.

8. Games and Activities. Children love games! Use games that advance the flow of the lesson, are appropriate to the age group, are inclusive, and need not be bound by the classroom setting.

9. Linking Lessons to life. Look for relevant events in the lives of the children that relate to the lesson content e.g. clip from a TV show, pop song etc.

10. Talk with other teachers. Find out what worked, and let them help you! In many areas, encouragement and training are offered to SRE teachers. Take advantage of these special days. You learn so much from others.

Behaviour Management

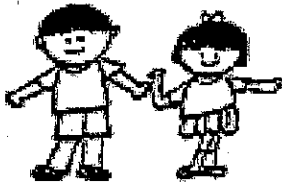
Many behaviour problems will be avoided if your lessons captivate the students. Therefore good preparation and presentation will form the basis of a good behaviour management strategy. However, instances may still arise where the following hints will be helpful.

1. Find out the recognised signals for gaining children's attention, or develop your own e.g. one raised hand, hands on heads, clapping rhythm.
2. Reinforce the classroom rules or alternatively set your own with the help of the class. Enforce these rules consistently.
3. When asking questions of the class, expect raised hands before allowing an answer. Discourage children from calling out by ignoring those who do.
4. Ask teachers if there are any students with special needs in the class e.g. hearing impaired, limited reading ability, behavioural issues. Cater for these students in your planning. An extra classroom helper may be an asset to you.

Creative Teaching Ideas

SRE should never be boring! Here are some ideas to add variety and interest to your lessons.

1. **'Get to know you' Activities.** A short game or activity can help establish relationships with the students. Make a point of learning the names of your children through games and fun activities.
2. **Physical Settings.** Use posters, pictures, banners, or set up a small worship table, with a cloth, cross, bible, vase etc. as a visual focus. Move outdoors etc. to enhance the learning experience and environment.
3. **Stories.** Use a range of stories, personal, bible or children's. Dramatic stories and plays are effective. You can use stories that can be role played, mimed, or told with props. Video stories, felt board stories, and stories told with puppets are all very effective and add variety to the children's experience.
4. **Music.**
 - * Use tape/CD, video, or play an instrument.
 - * Display the words so that they can be easily read.
 - * Explain the words and apply them to your lesson objectives
 - * Encourage involvement with singing, dancing, movement, body percussion or percussion instruments.
 - *
5. **Visual Aids.** The use of videos, overhead projectors, slides or pictures, puppets, personal memorabilia, items of clothing etc. add to the interest that you can create in your lessons.
6. **Use of the Bible.** Let the children see you use your bible. Allow hands on opportunities for children to use bibles as well.

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT:
UPPER SECONDARY

In the final years of school the support of peer groups is strong and a more even pattern of relationships develops. There is also increased awareness of and concern for global issues. They swing between attraction and intimacy with one or a few others and wanting to be alone. Tenderness, the urge to protect, idealism, generosity, indignation and righteous anger are all easily aroused.

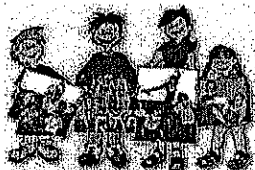
Some characteristics

1. Have greatly developed intellectual skills and experiences therefore— affirm gifts and interests in all areas intellectual and sporting, encourage alertness to public affairs. Acknowledge that they may have greater knowledge in some areas than many adults.
2. See the human condition as one of two extremes, wholly irredeemable or essentially perfect. therefore— express balanced and compassionate responses to disasters whether from natural causes or human error and acknowledge the human suffering involved. Discuss practical ways to help.
3. Beginning to explore commitment therefore—provide opportunities for in-depth exploration of the meaning and demands of the various kinds of commitment open to them. Recognise them as adults.
4. Vulnerable to varied emotions therefore— be sensitive to likely emotional responses, enlist the deep positive drive and energy expressed, affirm their willingness to become involved in the world, seek ways of helping them to appreciate the value of understanding and caring service.
5. Developing an owned faith therefore— encourage their thinking, provide support & share in the journey.

The Language in the SRE Classroom

Students come to your SRE classroom with their own understanding of religious terms and concepts which may be different from your own. Language is a very powerful tool and needs to be used carefully. Therefore when teaching SRE remember:

- * It's appropriate to own what you say so that students know where you stand on a particular issue e.g. "I believe ...", "I feel...", "I think..." etc.
- * Ground what you say so it's clear from where a statement comes e.g. "Many Christians believe..", "For Uniting Church people " "The Bible says..."
- * Fact type statements are those which can be scientifically, historically or empirically proven e.g. "Many people worship as part of their religious observance." These do not require owning or grounding.
- * Belief type statements are those which require an element of faith to be accepted as true e.g. "There is life after death". These should be owned or grounded.
- * Use language that allows students the freedom to consider belief statements and accept them if they wish.
- * It's appropriate to use owning and grounding with all year levels.
- * Explain or simplify religious terms or 'jargon' where appropriate e.g. 'grace'.



Ways Children Learn

We should not assume that all children learn in the same way. An understanding of different learning styles and intelligences will help children benefit most from our time spent with them. Children learn best from teachers who love, respect and build relationships with them.

1. Learning Styles

Children have different preferences for the way they learn best.

- * Auditory—learning by listening
- * Visual—learning by seeing
- * Tactile—learning by doing

2. The Learning Process

- * In Early Primary years (5-8 yr olds) the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn from their immediate experiences and activity.
- * In Middle Primary years (8-10 yr olds) the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn through research and discovery.
- * In Upper Primary (10-12 yrs) the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn through group work and discussion.
- * In High School (12-18 yrs) the teacher provides opportunities to learn through programs that are highly relational and based on abstract thinking and life issues.

In all these stages of growth and learning the implications for us as SRE teachers are enormous. Our lessons must appropriately reflect these stages, so that children will learn more effectively and enjoy the process too.

3. The Journey of faith

Children are at different places in their faith journey

- * Imitative faith—a view of God and faith adopted from significant others
- * Affiliative faith—a sense of belonging to, and participation with, a community of faith
- * Searching faith—seeking integrity between teachings and practice
- * Owned faith—expressing faith in words and actions