



The Guide

FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION TEACHERS

**Helpful tips for teaching RI
in Queensland Schools**

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You're a Star!

In 1910 legislation was passed to permit clergy to teach religion in Queensland primary schools. A similar 'right of entry' was granted to high schools in 1931.

This legislation is an important educational endeavour that enables young people to understand their own experiences of faith and the faith of those in their community.

Today, State School RI teachers form one of the largest volunteer movements within the country. Week by week, volunteers go into classrooms in almost every state, with a love for God which they want to share with the children in their classes.

Teaching RI is not just about preparing lessons, creating visuals and speaking to children. The essence of this teaching is based in relationships of genuine love and concern for the children out of which can grow trust and faith. It is more about 'being' than 'doing'.

There will be tough times... but remember, you do not stand alone in the classroom. Take advantage of training opportunities as they come your way, enjoy time with other RI teachers and spend time in prayer. You may never see the fruits of your labour but our faith is in a faithful God.

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

One hundred years from now
It will not matter what kind of car I drove,
What kind of house I lived in,
How much I had in my bank account,
Nor what my clothes looked like.
But the world may be a little better
Because I was important in the life of a child.
Author unknown.

Before the Year Starts

A ... You

Your RI lesson does not begin when you walk into your classroom on the first day. This culminating step in the process prepares the way for you to be effective in your role as a teacher and friend.

1. Ensure that you hold and carry a current blue card. For more details visit:
<http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/>
2. The religious leader is required to provide a copy of the received Form 2: Religious instructor approval to each religious instructor as evidence of their approval. You are to retain a copy of Form 2: Religious instructor approval letter issued from each school visited. You are not required to carry the letter of approval with you while at the school. <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-operations/ri-policy-statement.html>
3. Talk to your RI Coordinator and/or minister/church leaders about their expectations for the RI program in the school.
4. Find out the starting dates, term dates, class allocation and any other school calendar events which may impact your program.
5. Get your RI curriculum material as early as possible. Read ahead through at least one term's materials so you get the big picture of where the lessons are going.
6. Start collecting visuals and other resources in advance.
7. With your RI Coordinator reflect on the goals for the RI program (as recorded in your community's cooperative agreement) and develop outcomes for what you hope to achieve with your classes. Be prepared to adjust and evaluate these several times through the year.
8. Start praying now for yourself, your class and your school.
9. 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.
10. Get to know your classroom teacher. Ask if there are any special needs or other issues of which you need to be aware. (Remember, some of this information may be confidential.)
11. Get to know your RI Coordinator, your fellow RI teachers and ask about training opportunities throughout the year.
12. Get to know your school as well as you can in advance. Ask for a copy of the 'School Profile' document and map. The following section will help you in this...

Before the Year Starts


B... Your School

As a volunteer RI teacher you are one of a team of people who input into the lives of the children in the 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.

1. Get to know the names of school administrators, secretary, and your classroom teachers.
2. Inquire about obtaining a list of class names so you can learn your students' names. In dealing with any information regarding children you need to be aware of Privacy Act considerations as they apply in your school. Consult with the principal if you have any concerns.
3. Consider providing your classroom teacher with your contact details
4. Find out the school's procedures for:
 - ✓ Photocopying
 - ✓ Using resources (AV equipment, etc.)
 - ✓ Calling in sick (keep a copy of school's & RI Coordinator's phone numbers)
 - ✓ Signing RI teachers' register
 - ✓ Name Tags
 - ✓ School Newsletter (see if you can get regular copies & read them)
 - ✓ Individual students leaving classrooms
 - ✓ Parking
 - ✓ Storage of materials used in RI

Before the Year Starts

B ... Your School (*continued*)

5. Check with your RI Coordinator for the school's policy on the role of classroom teachers in the RI program.
6. Ask for a copy of the school rules, *Encouraging Responsible Behaviour* policy & handbook. These should also be available on the school website.
7. Be prepared to offer your services to help on class outings or other school activities.
8. Ask if you can observe one or two regular classes, so you can become familiar with normal classroom procedures and ethos.
9. Find out school's fire drill procedure, evacuation route, assembly point, etc. (An "Orientation Meeting" with RI teachers and school Principal or Deputy is a great way to cover much of this.)
10. Check with your RI coordinator as to when school-based induction in Student Protection <http://education.qld.gov.au/parents/school-life/health-wellbeing/student-protection-policy.html> and Code of Conduct  training occurs so that Education Queensland requirements may be fulfilled.

...and...

- ✓ *Think of the classroom teacher and other school staff as colleagues. Remember you're all part of the one team for the total education of your students.*
- ✓ *Remember, you don't have to be a parent to attend the school's P&C meetings.*
- ✓ *Remember to pray for your students by name, the classroom teachers and other school staff.*

Education Act & Regulations 2006

It's important to understand the legislation which defines how we are to operate in schools. Operating within the boundaries of the legislation helps to ensure the continuity of SSRI in Queensland.

What do I need to know?

1. The Principal of a State school appoints the day and time for Religious Instruction.
2. Students in State schools are entitled to receive Religious Instruction for a period not exceeding 45 minutes per week.
3. Each religious instructor must be nominated as a religious instructor by his or her religious leader (Form 1). The RI teacher should ensure she/he has a copy of the Letter of Approval from the Principal sent to their religious leader (Form 2).
<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-operations/ri-policy-statement.html>
4. Parents may withdraw their child/children from RI classes by notifying the Principal in writing.
5. Students may not attend RI lessons given by a representative of a religious society or denomination different from their own unless a parent has given written consent.
6. It is not necessary for students from the participating denominations in a Cooperative RI Program to have a parental letter of consent.
7. RI teachers must not leave any sectarian or denominational material on state school premises.
8. RI teachers must record their name, time and date of attendance in the school register as they arrive and leave the school premises.
9. The school is responsible for providing alternative instruction for students withdrawn from RI classes.
10. RI teachers should be familiar with the Education Queensland Religious instruction policy statement <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-operations/ri-policy-statement.html> , Education (General Provisions) Act Section 76 ([Appendix 1](#)) and Education (General Provisions) Regulation ([Appendix 2](#))

Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is a set of statements which provides ethical boundaries for RI teachers in a cooperative or denominational group. This code is generally developed by the RI team. Ask your RI Coordinator if such a code already exists for your situation.

A Code of Conduct...

1. Encourages appropriate standards for all RI teachers.
2. Provides guidelines for appropriate behaviour in achieving the aims of the RI program.
3. Protects the rights of all participants in the RI program.
4. Encourages respect.
5. Can ensure the smooth functioning of the RI program.
6. May prevent potential problems.

Aims and Goals

Form 1: Single/ cooperative arrangement and religious instructor approval refers to local groups developing Aims and Goals. Below are some examples of aims and goals of a co-operative program

Aims and Goals...

Example one:

- To enable an understanding of foundational Christian ideas, practices and the values that underpin them as well as their origins
- To note the worth of these values as contributing to positive individual and community living
- To enable skills in dealing with and reading sacred texts, in this case, The Bible

Example two:

1. That students might know basic Christian biblical teaching , namely:
 - The nature of God
 - The teachings and person of Jesus
 - Christian morals and values
2. That students might understand that
 - Religious Instruction offers reflection on the spiritual dimension of the human person.
 - a religious dimension to life can transform everyday life
 - beliefs can be put into practice and that they ought to be practiced
 - God's loving presence can be experienced in everyday situations
 - the Church cares for them
3. That students might reflect on
 - The implications of Christian teaching for life
 - Relating to the person of Jesus Christ
 - Christian beliefs in practice

Example three:

- To foster an understanding of religious traditions and spiritualities
- To promote tolerance and respect for religious diversity within the school community
- For Christians to be seen to be working together

Using the Approved Material

RI teachers are required to use the program which has been approved either by the denomination or the cooperative group.

1. Know the approved material which has been agreed upon for your program ... and use it.
2. RI teachers need to remember that it is quite appropriate to adapt a lesson to suit the needs of both teacher and students as long as the overall aim or meaning of the lesson is retained.
3. Ask your RI Coordinator about the level of flexibility allowed in using the material.
 - ✓ Must this material be the only resource used?
 - ✓ Can it be supplemented (not replaced) with another resource which also achieves the lesson's aims and may be more suitable for a particular class or situation? For instance, a different story book, a different song, a quick video clip from a television program which might grab student attention, etc.
4. If some adaptation is allowed, use the Three Circle model (*see page 18*) as one tool to determine when such modification is necessary. A simple way to approach this might be to ask three questions...
 - ✓ Is there content in this lesson which relates to traditional belief systems? (e.g. Bible stories, creeds, symbols, distinctive language, etc.)
 - ✓ Is there content in this lesson which relates to issues and ultimate questions that all humans face? (e.g. Is there an existence beyond this world? Why does evil exist? etc.)
 - ✓ Is there content in this lesson which relates to individual patterns of belief? (e.g. In my experience..., I believe..., I put my faith into action by...)

These three questions relate to the Three Circle Model on page 19 and demonstrate another use of this model.

Preparing Your Lesson

Lesson material requires preparation time. Some lessons may need to be adapted to suit the students and/or the teacher.

Helpful Hints:

1. Allow yourself plenty of time.
2. Pray for yourself and for the students.
3. Read through the lesson notes and student material.
4. Be clear about what the lesson aims to achieve.
5. Complete the appropriate material in the student workbook yourself prior to the commencement of the lesson.
6. Be clear about what the children are to know, understand and reflect on at the completion of the lesson.
7. Plan an engaging way to introduce the lesson to the students.
8. Highlight the key points of the lesson in your Teacher's Book so that you know what needs to be emphasised.
9. Across the unit of work ensure there is a balance between the three circles ... God Talk, People Talk, Me Talk (*see page 19*).
10. Ensure the activities are suitable for the particular age group and learning styles of the students.
11. Ensure the conclusion draws together the theme of the lesson.
12. At the end of each lesson ask yourself:
 - ✓ What worked well?
 - ✓ What could be improved?
 - ✓ Was the aim of the lesson achieved?
13. Where appropriate, invite feedback from the students for consideration in future planning.

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 a developed 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.... be available as a good role model.
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.

Stages of Child 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 its 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.

The Language of the RE Classroom

Students come to your RE class 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 RE remember:

1. Language and concepts must be appropriate to the student's stage of development
2. Our religious language may contain words and phrases which will provoke a range of responses from children e.g. "Jesus is the Lamb of God". Be prepared to explain or rephrase the concepts in words that are more clearly understood by children.
3. 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.
4. *Ground* what you say so it's clear from where a statement comes e.g. "Many Christians believe...", "For Anglicans...", "Micah 6:8 says..."
5. 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*.
6. 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*.
7. Use language that allows students the freedom to consider belief statements and accept them if they wish.
8. It is important to use *owning* and *grounding* with all year levels.
9. 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 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. Ways of learning

- ✓ Thinking - What we know and believe.
- ✓ Feeling - Our internalised responses (emotions and intuitions).
- ✓ Doing - Actions and activities.

2. The learning process

- ✓ In Early Primary years the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn from immediate experiences and activity.
- ✓ In Middle Primary years the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn through research and discovery.
- ✓ In Upper Primary years the teacher provides children with opportunities to learn through group work and discussion.

3. Learning styles

Children have different preferences for the way they learn best.

- ✓ Auditory - learning by listening.
- ✓ Visual - learning by seeing.
- ✓ Tactile - learning by doing.

4. The journey of faith

Children in primary school are most likely to display the first two of these four styles of faith developed by John Westerhoff III. Read more about this at

<http://www.formedfaith.org/s/Westerhoffs-Faith-Styles.doc>

- ✓ 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.

Creative Teaching Ideas

It 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 to establish relationships with the students.

2. Physical settings

Use posters, banners, move outdoors, etc. to enhance the learning experience.

3. Stories

Use a range of stories - personal stories, Bible stories, children's stories, dramatic stories, stories that use props, video stories, puppetry stories, felt stories, and so on.

4. Music

- ✓ Use a CD, mp3, video, or play an instrument.
- ✓ Display the words on an attractive chart or PowerPoint material that may be supplied with the lesson.
- ✓ Explain the words and apply them to your lesson objective.
- ✓ Encourage involvement with singing, clapping, dancing, or using percussion instruments.

5. Visual aids

Videos, PowerPoint material or pictures, puppets, personal memorabilia, items of clothing, etc.

6. Use the Bible

Let the children see you use your Bible. Allow 'hands-on' opportunities for children to use Bibles as well.

Creative Teaching Ideas

(continued)

7. Prayer

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

8. Games and activities

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 students that relate to the lesson content e.g. clip from a popular film, TV show, pop song, etc.

10. Talk with other teachers

Find out what worked and let them help you.

Encouraging Responsible Behaviour

Many behaviour problems result from students feeling uncared for or bored. If your lessons captivate the students many disruptions can be avoided. It is important to build good relationships with your students. Good preparation and presentation will help encourage responsible behaviour. However, instances may still arise where the following hints will be helpful.

1. Find out the recognised signals used for gaining students' attention, or develop your own e.g. one raised hand, hands on heads, clapping rhythm.
2. Reinforce the classroom rules. Be consistent in your use of these classroom rules.
3. When asking questions of the class, expect raised hands before allowing an answer. Discourage students 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.
5. For minor disturbances, keep the lesson flowing by:
 - ✓ standing near the student
 - ✓ establishing momentary eye contact
 - ✓ using a simple gesture
 - ✓ removing distractions
 - ✓ praising positive behaviour
6. For major disruptions be sure the student understands why the behaviour is wrong. Questions such as "What are you doing?", "What should you be doing?" and "What can you do to make it better?" may help.

Encouraging Responsible Behaviour

(continued)

7. Share your feelings about the misbehaviour rather than the child. Don't jeopardise your relationship with this student 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. "Time Out" is a useful strategy for some students but it must not become a reward for certain behaviour. Time Out should be much less appealing than staying with the rest of the class.
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 the student

The Three Circle Model

There is a range of understandings about the nature and aims of Religious Instruction. This model was developed by the Queensland Religious Education Curriculum Project (RECP) to teach RI in a balanced way.

The model describes RI as drawing on three potential sources of content:

1. Traditional Belief Systems (God Talk)

- ✓ Scriptures / sacred writings
- ✓ Stories of significant people, past or present
- ✓ Creeds and confessional statements
- ✓ Rituals / rites / symbols / gestures
- ✓ Organisational structures

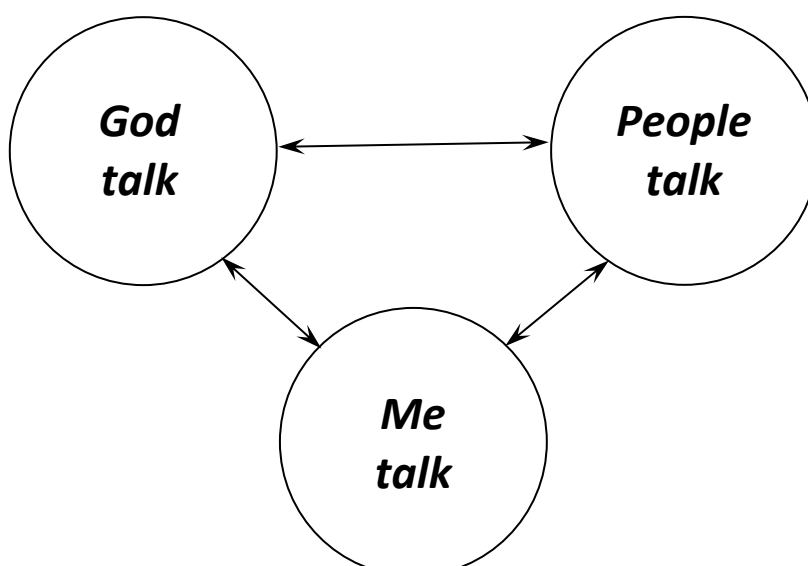
2. Human Experience (People Talk)

- ✓ Stories about people's experiences
- ✓ Things that happen to people
- ✓ Use of everyday experiences to illustrate topic of lesson
- ✓ Concrete examples of life experiences
- ✓ Feelings aroused by experiences being studied
- ✓ Issues and ultimate questions that all humans have

3. Individual Patterns of Belief (Me Talk)

- ✓ Personal experiences, stories and insights
- ✓ Ways in which students / teacher give expression to their beliefs
- ✓ Individual views concerning the topic being studied
- ✓ Classroom interactions that are a small-scale version of a general life issue

An effective program includes a balance of elements from each of the three circles.



Working Cooperatively

An increasing number of schools benefit from an RI program where a range of denominations cooperate by teaching from a common curriculum. Cooperative programs work well when RI teachers:

1. Understand the requirements for establishing a Cooperative Arrangement.
<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-operations/ri-policy-statement.html>
2. Share in the development of goals and aims for the RI program and the Cooperative Agreement. (Ask your RI Coordinator to share this with you if you are new to the cooperative arrangement.)
3. Nurture strong relationships between the school community and the religious community by:
 - ✓ Being friendly
 - ✓ Being punctual
 - ✓ Being prepared
 - ✓ Leaving the classroom as you found it.
4. Make new RI teachers feel welcome and part of the team.
5. Adhere to the curriculum endorsed by the local religious leaders.
6. Work within the boundaries of a Code of Conduct. (See [page 7](#))
7. Meet at regular intervals to support, encourage, and share ideas with each other and to train together.
8. Keep member churches updated regularly about the RI program.
9. Represent all member churches of the Cooperative Agreement in their educational approach e.g. a question about baptism should be met with a response which includes the range of ideas and practices of all member churches. The 'owning' and 'grounding' of belief statements can be helpful to students in these situations. (See [page 12](#))

Working as a team

RI is a team effort. You share with the school staff in the broad education of the children as well as with other RI teachers who may be from different denominations.

Unity and cooperation are important, while working against other members of the team can be destructive.

1. Purpose and Vision

Know why you're involved in teaching RI and why you work together as a team. Be committed to these purposes.

2. Relationships

Get to know your RI Coordinator and members of your team.

3. Team Building

Be committed to team meetings. Enjoy the opportunity to expand your skills through training.

4. Relationship with God

Continue to develop your relationship with God as this has a direct influence on the children you teach and on the other members of the team.

5. Cooperation

"Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding." (Romans 14:19)

6. Humility

"Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." (John 13:14)

7. Integrity

Be committed to your responsibilities to the school, the children, your RI Coordinator and other members of the team.

8. Care

Look out for the needs of other members of the team. Offer support and help where appropriate.

9. Set high standards

Make excellence your aim in all you say and do.

Need more help?

Many of the issues touched on in this guide are dealt with in more detail in the Religious Education Teachers' Orientation Program - a six module training course.

For more information talk with your RI Coordinator or contact:

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(07) 3324 3445

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CRECSS

Commission for Religious Education and Chaplaincy in State Schools (CRECSS) is a commission within Queensland Churches Together (QCT). CRECSS acts as an advocate for Religious Instruction and chaplaincy in state schools.

For further information

http://www.qct.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12&Itemid=127

Chapter 5 Religious instruction

76 Religious instruction in school hours

- (1) Any minister of a religious denomination or society, or an accredited representative of a religious denomination or society, which representative has been approved by the Minister for the purpose, shall be entitled during school hours to give to the students in attendance at a State school who are members of the denomination or society of which the person is a minister or the accredited representative religious instruction in accordance with regulations prescribed in that behalf during a period not exceeding 1 hour in each week on such day as the principal of that school appoints.
- (2) Instruction in accordance with a regulation may be given in State primary and special schools during school hours in selected Bible lessons.
- (3) A separate reading book shall be provided for such purpose.
- (4) Instruction of a kind mentioned in subsection (2) is not to include any teaching in the distinctive tenets or doctrines of any religious denomination, society or sect.
- (5) Notwithstanding anything in this section, any parent of a student in attendance at a State school may withdraw such student from all religious instruction in such school by notification in writing to the principal that the parent desires the student to be so withdrawn.
- (6) The provisions pursuant to this section shall not apply or extend to students enrolled in the preparatory year at a State school.

Appendix 2

Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 Part 5 Religious instruction

25 Application for approval of representative

An application under section 76(1) of the Act for approval as an accredited representative must be in writing.

26 Approval to be produced

If asked by the principal of a State school, an accredited representative at the State school must produce an approval given to the representative under section 76(1) of the Act.

27 Authorised religious instruction

A minister of religion or an accredited representative may give only religious instruction approved by the religious denomination or religious society the minister or accredited representative represents.

28 Time for religious instruction

The principal of a State school must fix the day on which religious instruction is given each week.

29 Students to attend religious instruction

(1) The principal of a State school must not allow a student to attend religious instruction given by a minister of religion or an accredited representative other than the denomination or society of which the student is a member, unless the student's parent has given written consent.

(2) However, students may attend classes arranged for students of more than 1 denomination or society by agreement of the ministers of the denominations or societies concerned.

30 Bringing and leaving sectarian publications on State school premises

(1) A person other than a minister of religion or accredited representative must not bring onto, or use on, State school premises any denominational or society publication.

(2) A minister of religion or accredited representative must not leave on State school premises any denominational or society publication used by the minister of religion or accredited representative for religious instruction.

31 Students withdrawn from religious instruction

The principal of a State school must arrange for a student who has been withdrawn from all religious instruction by the student's parent to receive other instruction in a separate location during the period arranged for religious instruction.

32 Register of ministers and accredited representatives

The principal of a State school must keep a register of the ministers of religion or accredited representatives who attend the school and the dates and times of the ministers' or representatives' attendance.

33 Selected Bible lessons

The principal of a State primary or State special school may arrange a period of one-half hour a week for religious instruction in selected Bible lessons.