

## SPECIAL RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

### POLICY

Ripponlea Primary School is supportive of religious and cultural beliefs and seeks to accommodate all faiths and traditions.

### PURPOSE

This Policy sets out the RPS approach to Special Religious Instruction as defined in Section 2.2.11 of the “Education and Training Reform Act 2006” (the Act). The “Act” makes the following distinctions

- General religious education as ‘education about major forms of religious thought and expression characteristic of Australian society and other societies in the world
- Special religious instruction (SRI) as ‘instruction provided by churches and other religious groups and based on distinctive religious tenets and beliefs’.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- In accordance with Ministerial Direction 145 (MD145 - 2018) *“If a principal receives notification from an accredited and approved instructor that the instructor is available to deliver special religious instruction at the school the principal must offer parents of children enrolled at the school the opportunity for their children to be provided with special religious instruction.”*
- If a principal has received notification from an accredited and approved instructor that they are available to deliver SRI at the school they should request the volunteer provide information to enable the principal to seek informed consent from parents, including: the instructor’s name, details of their accreditation and approval, the instructor’s religious affiliations, an overview of the program to be taught by the instructor and any other information the principal requires in order to comply with their obligations.
- Once the principal has sufficient information from the accredited and approved instructor, they must:
  - provide the opportunity to parents to indicate whether they would like their child to participate in SRI in a particular religion using the prescribed CFMD145 consent form and then determine whether the school has sufficient resources available to ensure that duty of care obligations can be met to all students.
- If a principal determines that there are insufficient teaching staff to enable adequate supervision of students, SRI cannot be provided at the school. Duty of care, and MD145, require that both the students who are participating in SRI and those who are not are each supervised by a separate teacher – it is not acceptable for a single teacher to supervise both groups of students.

Additionally, if a principal determines that there is no suitable learning space available for students undertaking SRI or those who are not undertaking SRI, then SRI does not have to be provided at the

school. Students should not be placed in corridors or other spaces that are not generally used for learning.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

Visitors to School

Working with Children Check

## **REFERENCES**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/curriculum/programs/religious.htm>

**Ratified by School Council: June 2020**  
**Next review date: June 2023**