

A New Standard for SRE Teacher Training Sally Smith 7 December 2011.

Currently the only requirement for volunteer SRE teachers in protestant churches is that they have done a recognised child protection course and signed the necessary forms so they can be authorised by their denomination.

In the light of recent challenges to SRE, the Inter Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (ICCOREIS) agreed on a common standard for all SRE teachers which was ratified by the heads of various denominations including the Baptist Union.

From 2013, in addition to the current Safe Churches training, all SRE teachers, in order to be authorised, will be required to do training that includes the following, each module being 2 hours.

Content	Module Name
Teaching SRE in a public school	<i>Confident Representatives (1)</i>
Preparing and Delivering a Lesson	<i>Effective Communicators (2)</i>
Classroom Management	<i>Relating Well to Contemporary Kids (3)</i>
The Learner and the Teacher	<i>Teaching and Living the Message(4)</i>
Biblical Foundations	To be Advised

As with Safe Churches training, it is expected that all denominations and SRE boards will bring their training in line with this standard and will recognise each other's courses so SRE teachers can attend any course that is convenient for them. The Baptist SRE Basic Accreditation Course is already inline with this.

SRE teachers with qualifications in theology and/or classroom teaching may be exempted from relevant modules although they would still find them helpful.

We are still seeking to find or develop an interactive Bible Overview to fit the requirements of Module 5.

To satisfy the ICCOREIS supervised lesson requirement we envisage an informal peer mentoring scheme in which teachers find someone they feel they can learn from who will observe one of their lessons and give them helpful feedback, encouraging and supporting them to develop their teaching skills.

We acknowledge that this new standard will be seen as unnecessary by some who are experienced and competent and have done previous training, however we believe all teachers should be part of it for the following reasons

1. As SRE is delivered joint denominationally in most settings, we need to have an agreed standard that all churches are part of.
2. SRE teachers are volunteers, not professionals, however the guidelines for SRE require the authorising body (denomination) to supply 'competent' teachers and this is a minimum way of ensuring competence.
3. Kids deserve teachers who are as good as they can be and this is our way of developing those teachers and equipping them for this important task.
4. Much of the criticism in the media has been around 'untrained' volunteers'. This is one way of deflecting that criticism as this training reflects the standard required for the teachers of Ethics.