



# Religious Instruction Policy Statement 2018 – 2022

Adapted from  
Queensland Government Department of Education  
"Religious Instruction Policy Statement"



August 2021

# West End State School Vision and Values



Empower every student to  
achieve their personal best to  
make the world a better place.



Document History	Date	Reviewed by	Due for Review
Version 1.0	2012	Leadership Team	2013
Version 2.0	2013	Leadership Team	2018
Version 3.0	August 2018	Leadership Team Representative / School Council Working Party	August 2022
Version 3.1	March 2019	Updated to include Vision & Values	
Version 3.2	August 2021	Leadership Team Representative – Minor DOE Update	August 2022



## Department of Education Religious Instruction Policy Statement

Queensland state schools embrace a multitude of cultural, religious and non-religious beliefs and encourage students to grow and develop as a whole person, in particular, in beliefs, values and attitudes. State schools respect the background and beliefs of all students and staff by not promoting, or being perceived as promoting, any particular set of beliefs in preference to another.

Queensland state schools provide religious instruction in accordance with Chapter 5 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#) (EGPA) and Part 5 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017](#) (EGPR) by making available up to one hour per week for the provision of [religious instruction](#) to students (except Prep students) who are members of a [faith group](#) that has approval to deliver religious instruction at the school.

**\*\*Religious Instruction (RI) is defined as a program of instruction approved and provided by a religious denomination or religious society to eligible students (s.76 [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#) and Part 5 [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017](#))**

**\*\*Religious Education (RE) is defined as the study of an approved curriculum relating to religion (eg. Authority subject Study of Religion or Authority-registered subject Religion and Ethics).**

### **Delivering a religious instruction program**

In accordance with s.28 EGPR, religious leaders approve the program of religious instruction to be used by their accredited representatives as religious instructors. The religious leaders are responsible for the quality of the religious instruction program that is to be delivered in schools and are required to screen their accredited representatives, provide them with ongoing support and training and ensure they are delivering only the [authorised program](#).

The religious leader (or leaders in a cooperative arrangement) nominates a [religious instruction coordinator](#) to manage and monitor the religious instructors and the delivery of the authorised program in a school.

Religious instructors are required to maintain accreditation with their faith group, have a current and valid [Blue Card](#) and deliver only the authorised program of the faith group.

As part of school-based induction, religious instructors are required to complete [Student Protection](#) and [Code of Conduct](#) training.

As defined in s.31 and s.32 EGPR, principals register the attendance dates and times of the religious instructors who attend the school and ensure religious instruction and [other instruction](#) are not conducted in the same classroom.

[Faith group publications](#) used for religious instruction are not to be accessible for other students and are to be securely stored or removed from the school premises at the completion of religious instruction.

The religious instructor is required to follow the advice and directives of the principal while on school premises.

## West End State School (WESS) Religious Instruction Program

Students from Years 3 – 6 have the opportunity to attend Religious Instruction classes about the beliefs and values of a particular religion, each Wednesday afternoon, based on information from their WESS Enrolment Forms and Permission Forms which are sent out at the beginning of Year 3.

These classes include Baha'i, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Orthodox/Greek Orthodox, Protestant (Christian) and Roman Catholic:

Years 3 & 4	between 2.00pm and 2.30pm
Years 5 & 6	between 1.30pm and 2.00pm

A copy of the permission form is located at [Appendix 1 - Religion - Religious Instruction Options and Permission Form](#). Participation in religious instruction is not compulsory.

### **No Nominated Religion/Other Instruction**

West End is known for its multicultural community which prides itself on tolerance and respect of ethnicity, beliefs and religions. This is enhanced by education and awareness. Families at WESS who have no religion nominated on their WESS Enrolment and Permission Forms, yet wish their children to participate in the religions of the world may contact the school to take advantage of our range of religious instruction options.

**If “No Religion” is stated on a student’s enrolment form, there are 2 options for parents/carers to choose from:**

1. The student can participate in other instruction in the form of independent work already covered in class including reading, personal research and/or assignments or revision of class work, under the supervision of a teacher in a non-



religion class. Other instruction is conducted at the same time as religious instruction, but in a separate, supervised location.

2. A parent/carer can request in writing that their child attend a religion of their choice for the year. If a parent/carer wishes for their child to cease attendance at the nominated religion during the year, then the parent/carer will need to inform the Administration Office in writing. Their child will then attend the non-religion/other instruction class for the remainder of the year. Parents will be advised of any changes to the religious instruction programs to ensure they are able to make an informed decision on their child's participation.

## **Descriptions of the programs offered in the faith based religious instruction classes at WESS as provided by each faith leader, is as follows:**

### ***Baha'i Religious Instruction***

Classes are based on the teachings of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith. In Baha'i classes, the development of spiritual attributes or virtues common to all the world's major religions are explored. In addition Baha'i Religious Instruction Classes attempt to develop within the students the knowledge, skills, understandings and attitudes required to be world citizens and to embrace the equality of all peoples, regardless of race, religion, nation, class or gender. Students participating in the classes explore ways in which they may be able to contribute to society and serve humanity.

### ***Buddhism***

BESS (Buddhist Education Services for Schools) is a voluntary organization committed to providing Buddhism instruction primarily in government schools under the legal provisions for religious instructions. BESS includes members of all three Buddhism streams (Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana) from a variety of local Buddhism Centres including: Amitabha Buddhist Association, Chenrezig Institute, Chung Tian Temple, Linh Son Temple, Pure Land Learning College, Queensland Buddhist Vihara, Rangton Buddhist Centre, Sri Lanka Buddhist Monastery, Tzu Chi Foundation, etc.

The program consists of modules on the life of the Buddha and his basic teachings: ethics, tolerance, metta (loving-kindness), mindfulness, precepts, the Four Noble Truth, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Thirty-Seven Practices Leading to Enlightenment. Simple meditation instructions at a level suitable for children will also be given. The purpose of the program is to teach universal values that the Buddha taught to enhance children's ability to better relate to themselves and others by enhancing children's qualities such as self-discipline, concentration, generosity, honesty, patience, compassion and self-understanding.

### ***Hinduism***

The Hindu program is the 'Essential of Hinduism' program authorised by the Ramakrishnavedanta Centre of Qld – Brisbane.

### ***Islam***

The Islamic faith program is authorised by the Islamic Society of West End. Islam is a complete way of life. Islam is all about three things. Believing all the power ultimately belongs to most Supreme, Allah (GOD), the most just, and the most kind and most gracious and He's in charge of all the worldly affairs and all the time [Tawheed, Oneness to Allah]. Islam teaches us to enjoy what is good and forbid what's evil [Halal and Haram]. Lastly, Islam teaches us the unity and that the doors of mercy and forgiveness of God is always open for everyone at any time. During the classes, children will be taught three main subjects from the teachings of Muhammad: The six pillars of Eman (Beliefs, Faith), the five main pillars of Islam and the equality of men and women (the Adam and Eve story).

### ***Orthodox/Greek Orthodox***

The purpose of Greek Orthodox religious instruction classes is to teach the children what the Church believes about Jesus Christ, His mother Mary and the Saints. We also teach them about what we see and do during the liturgy (Church services).

### ***Protestant Religious Instruction***

In class each week, students are taught about God and the Bible through fun activities, discussions, music and games. Teachers use the "Connect" religious instruction program designed for Australian and New Zealand schools, with each child having their own activity workbook. All teachers are experienced in religious instruction and engaging with children, and are members of local church congregations.

### ***Roman Catholic***

The Missionaries of Charity (sisters of Mother Theresa) teach the Catholic Religion, with lessons largely based on Scripture.

## Policy review

The WESS Religious Instruction Policy will be reviewed every four years to align with the Queensland Department of Education's Religious Instruction Policy, or when Queensland Department of Education amends their policy, or if there is a change to the current faith based religious instruction options.

Principal:

Penny Couch

Signature: ..... *Penny Couch* ..... Date: *14/09/2021*

School Council Chair:

Megan Simons

Signature: ..... *M. Simons* ..... Date: *13/09/2021*

# Appendix 1 - Religion - Religious Instruction Options and Permission Form

## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OPTIONS AND PERMISSION FORM

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Year Level \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_ (as nominated on Enrolment Form)

Please choose one option of the following 3 options:

Option 1 **RELIGION INDICATED ON ENROLMENT FORM**

My child is to attend the following Religious Instruction class (as indicated on the Enrolment Form):

- Baha'i
- Buddhism
- Catholic
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Orthodox / Greek Orthodox (English/Greek)
- Protestant (Christian)

Option 2 **NO RELIGION INDICATED ON ENROLMENT FORM**

**No Religious Instruction class**

I understand that my child will participate in independent work already covered in class including reading, personal research and/or assignments or revision of class work, under the supervision of a teacher in a non-religion classroom.

Option 3 **NO RELIGION INDICATED ON ENROLMENT FORM**

**Religious Instruction class**

Whilst my child does not have a religion noted on the Enrolment Form, my child is to attend the following Religious Instruction class delivered by a faith based religious instructor for 12 months:

- Baha'i
- Buddhism
- Catholic
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Orthodox / Greek Orthodox (English/Greek)
- Protestant (Christian)

*NB. Students can return to Option 2 during the year if they wish to opt out of the nominated religious instruction class.*

Parent/Carer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_