AUSTRALIAN HINDU ASSOCIATION INC.

Code of Conduct, Policy and Procedure for Special Religious Education in Hindu Dharma

A. Introduction

1. This document sets out the policy, procedures and standards of conduct for the Australian Hindu Association's ("AHA") programme for teaching Special Religious Education ("SRE") in Hindu Dharma or other religious education in schools.

B. Mission Statement

2. To promote and protect Sanatana Dharma, commonly known as Hinduism.

C. Statement of belief and doctrine

3. To advance the teaching of Sanatana Dharma through education, research, debate, publications and media.

D. Education Committee and SRE Co-ordinator

4. The AHA is to appointed suitably qualified persons to the following positions:

    a) The Education Committee of AHA; and
    b) SRE Co-ordinator.

5. The Education Committee and the SRE Co-ordinator, subject to the constitution of AHA, are to administer and oversee the SRE programme.

6. The SRE Co-ordinator is to be an approved SRE teacher, qualified priest or other suitably qualified person.

E. Authorisation of SRE Teachers

7. For a person to be authorised as a SRE teacher by AHA, they must meet the following requirements:

    a) Be proficient in the English language;
    b) Have a Working With Children Check (WWCC) clearance;
    c) Undergo training in the NSW Education's Code of Conduct, including its Social Media Policy;
    d) Undergo NSW Education's Child Protection Awareness Induction Training;
    e) Participate in AHA's SRE Teacher Basic Training course;
    f) Have familiarised themselves with the participating school's relevant policies and procedures; and
    g) Agree to participate in AHA reviews and refresher training.

F. AHA Hindu Dharma SRE Curriculum

8. The overriding objective of the AHA Hindu SRE Curriculum is to provide students with a broad, objective and accurate understanding of Santana Dharma (commonly known as Hinduism).

9. The AHA *Special Religious Education in Hindu Dharma (Sanatana Dharma) - Course Curriculum* will be taught at AHA SRE classes.

10. Any external materials to be used in classes such as internet resources, videos, media extracts or publications must be approved by the President of AHA before use. Before approving any such material, the President is to ensure that the content is appropriate and not subject to copyright or any other legal restriction.

11. The President of AHA, or a person nominated by the President, will be responsible for coordination with schools on AHA's SRE in Hindu Dharma.

G. Procedure for Authorisation to be a SRE Teacher

12. The procedure for authorisation is:

    a) The applicant is to submit a completed '*Special Religious Education Teacher Compliance'* form to the President of AHA by email: office@australianhindu.com together with all required supporting documents.
    b) The President of AHA, after considering whether all requirements for authorisation have been met, will notify the applicant in writing as to the outcome of their application.
    c) A volunteer teacher may commence teaching at a school only if the President issues a letter of authorisation to the school, after being satisfied that all relevant criteria has been met.

H. Training

13. The AHA is to conduct a Teacher Basic Training course for all persons seeking authorisation to be a Special Religious Education Teacher. The course may be conducted in person or online by audio-visual mediums.

14. The course will be conducted, under the aegis of the Education Committee, by the SRE Co-ordinator or another suitably-qualified person approved by AHA.

15. The training will include child protection, mandatory reporting, classroom management; and how to implement the approved provider's authorised curriculum sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner.

16. The training is to include content covered in the following documents:

    a) Teacher Basic Training.
    b) Social Media Policies and Procedure.
    c) Interactive Whiteboards and Digital Projectors.
    d) Teacher's Manual.

17. The SRE Co-ordinator, under the aegis of the Education Committee, is to provide training (not less than once a year) and support, including mentoring, to SRE teachers. The ongoing training is to include child protection, mandatory reporting, classroom management; and how to implement the approved provider's authorised curriculum sensitively, in an age-appropriate manner.

I. Audits and Reviews of SRE Curriculum and Teaching

18. The Education Committee of AHA is to meet regularly, and not less than once a year, administer the SRE Teacher Audit Process.

19. The Education Committee, through the SRE co-ordinator, is to do the following:

    a) Ensure that Teacher Self-Reflection Questionnaires are provided to each volunteer teacher at the commencement of the school year.
    b) Ensure that Teacher Classroom Observation Forms are provided to observers.
    c) Collect all Teacher Self-Reflection Questionnaires and Teacher Classroom Observation Forms.
    d) Conduct regular ongoing training which includes child protection, classroom management strategies and implementation of the curriculum.

e) Review of SRE teaching which includes teacher self-reflection, student feedback, classroom observation, supervisor feedback, mentor support and adherence to the authorised curriculum.
f) Reporting the results of the review process which will be a part of the annual assurance process and include a description of efforts to address identified issues such as further training and mentor support.
g) Approval of any materials and internet resources that are identified for use by SRE teachers.

20. The provisions of the AHA's *Teacher Audit Process* are to be followed in audits and reviews.

J. Complaints

21. The complaints procedure for SRE is set out in the AHA's *Special Religious Education Complaints Policies and Procedures* document.

22. Any complaint about any aspect of services provided by AHA's SRE is to be made in the *Approved Provider Complaint Form* and emailed to the President of AHA at office@australianhindu.com.

23. The procedure for the handling of complaints will be as follows:

a) Within seven days of receiving the complaint, the President of AHA shall provide a copy of the complaint to the person/s complained against (after redacting any confidential information).
b) The President shall allow the person/s complained against at least 21 days time to consider the complaint.
c) Within 21 days of receiving the response, the President shall consider the complaint together with the response/s received and make a recommendation to the committee.
d) The committee is to consider the President's recommendation at its next meeting and do one or more of the following:

i) Dismiss the complaint;
ii) Find the complaint proven;
iii) Take action against the person complained against;
iv) Take no action against the person complained against.

K. Public Liability Insurance

24. The AHA is to ensure that its public liability insurance covers SRE volunteer teachers teaching at NSW public schools.

L. Schedule of SRE Documents

25. The following documents comprise the approved documents under this Code:

    a) Teacher Basic Training Course.
    b) Teacher's Manual.
    c) Interactive Whiteboards and Digital.
    d) Special Religious Education in Hindu Dharma (Sanatana Dharma) - Course Curriculum.
    e) Teacher Authorisation Process
    f) Teacher Audit Process
    g) Complaints Policies and Procedures.
    h) Social Media Policy and Procedures & Audio-Visual Material in Schools.
    i) Complaint Form
    j) Special Religious Education Teacher Compliance form.
    k) Authorisation Letter.

26. Any amendment to this Code or the Schedule of SRE documents must be approved by the AHA.

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