

Part 6—Religious education in schools

78—Standing Committee on Religious Education

- (1) The Minister shall appoint a Standing Committee on Religious Education in Government Schools, which shall be composed of a representative of the Department, who shall be Chairperson, and such representatives of the Churches, the teaching service, parent organisations and those universities which provide courses in teacher education, as the Minister shall determine.
- (2) The committee shall advise the Minister on such matters relating to religious education in schools as he or she may refer to it and shall carry out such other duties as the Minister may determine.
- (3) The committee may be assisted to carry out its duties under this regulation by such sub-committees and project teams as the Minister may approve.

79—Religious education committees in schools

- (1) The head teacher of a school in consultation with the school council shall establish a committee consisting of the head teacher, not more than two teachers, not more than two parent members of the school council, and not more than four local clergy, to be called the Religious Education Committee for that school.
- (2) A meeting of the committee shall be held whenever the head teacher so decides, or whenever at least two members of the committee request the head teacher to convene a meeting of the committee.
- (3) The committee shall advise and assist the head teacher in such matters concerning religious education in the school as the head teacher and the committee shall determine and shall carry out such other duties as are provided in this Part.

80—Approved courses in religious education

- (1) The Director-General shall provide courses of instruction in religious education for use in schools, the courses to be approved by him or her on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Religious Education.
- (2) The head teacher of a school, acting with the advice of the Religious Education Committee for that school, shall select from the approved courses in religious education the course to be used in that school.

81—Persons to conduct religious education classes

- (1) Subject to the provisions of section 63(4) of the Act and regulation 84 no person may teach religious education classes unless he or she is registered as a teacher or holds written authority from the Teachers Registration Board to teach such classes.
- (2) No such registered or authorised teacher shall be required to conduct nor shall conduct a class in religious education in a school unless he or she has stated to the head teacher of that school his or her willingness to teach that subject.

82—Organisation of religious education classes

- (1) Except as provided in subregulation (2)—
 - (a) religious education shall normally be taught in groupings common to the day-to-day organisation of the school; and
 - (b) classes in religious education shall be held throughout the year, provided that the head teacher may vary these provisions on the advice of the Religious Education Committee for the school, or for reasons deemed sufficient by him or her.
- (2) The head teacher shall arrange, on the request of local clergy, and in consultation with the Religious Education Committee, for a maximum of one half day in each term to be set aside for the churches desiring to participate to hold seminars or gatherings on school property or elsewhere. Subject to regulation 83, children will attend the function appropriate to their denomination or faith, and the head teacher shall supply those clergy, if they so desire, with the names of the children who, as far as is shown by official records, are eligible to attend their seminar or gathering.

83—Exemptions

Where a parent of a child attending a school seeks permission in writing of the head teacher for his or her child to be exempted from attendance at religious education classes on conscientious grounds that child shall be exempted from attendance at such classes at that school accordingly.

84—Transition provision

- (1) The subject of religious education shall be introduced progressively into all grades of primary and secondary schools as courses of instruction become available and as the supply of teachers registered to teach that subject permits.
- (2) Until a date to be fixed by the Director-General and published in the Education Gazette, the Religious Education Committee of a school may authorise clergy and lay people to participate with teachers taking religious education classes pursuant to the provisions of this Part.