



Schools for Every Child

Right of Withdrawal: Religious Education, Relationships & Sex Education, Assemblies and Worship

Religious Education (RE)- Under Section 71(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from Religious Education (RE).

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)- Statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education provides parents with the right to withdraw their child from the sex education elements of RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education. The Department for Education has made clear that the content of Relationships Education, including learning about families, friendships, respectful relationships, personal safety and online safety, is essential for all pupils.

Assemblies and Collective Worship- Attendance at school assemblies forms part of the compulsory school day and is therefore mandatory for all pupils. Assemblies may include shared learning, celebration of achievement, pastoral themes, values education and safeguarding messages. Where an assembly includes an act of collective worship, parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from the collective worship element only, in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The right of withdrawal does not extend to withdrawal from assemblies as a whole, nor does it apply to other compulsory aspects of the curriculum or wider school life.

Compulsory Curriculum - All other aspects of the curriculum and school provision are compulsory, including PE & trips. The school recognises that some families hold religious or philosophical beliefs that may restrict participation in activities such as singing, music or dance. However, schools in England are required by law to provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum and to promote British values, including mutual respect, tolerance and cultural understanding. As such, withdrawal from compulsory curriculum subjects, including music, dance, physical education, drama or art, is not permitted. These subjects are delivered in a non-religious, inclusive manner and are mandatory for all pupils. Respect for individual belief does not override the school's statutory duties, nor does it create an entitlement to alternative curriculum provision.

Withdrawal from RE, the sex education elements of RSE, or collective worship does not prevent pupils from encountering related themes, values or discussions that arise naturally in other areas of the curriculum or wider school life, including safeguarding education, PSHE, assemblies, literature or class discussion.

Requests for Withdrawal

Before any formal written request for withdrawal is submitted, parents must arrange a meeting with the Headteacher / Executive Head to discuss the request. This meeting provides an opportunity to explain the curriculum content, clarify any misconceptions and explore how the school meets its statutory duties.

Following this meeting, any request to withdraw a pupil from:

- Religious Education (RE),
- the sex education elements of RSE, or
- collective worship

must be made in writing to the Headteacher / Executive Head

Where more than one person holds parental responsibility, the Headteacher / Executive Head reserves the right to meet individually with each parental responsibility holder as part of this process.

Where agreement is not reached between all individuals holding parental responsibility, the school will maintain the status quo. This means that the pupil will continue to receive the full curriculum, including RE and the religious aspects of school life.

A withdrawal request must be accompanied by either:

- written agreement & identification from all individuals with parental responsibility, or
- a court order directing the school otherwise.

Nothing in this policy overrides the school's statutory safeguarding duties. The school retains the right and responsibility to ensure that all pupils receive information necessary to keep them safe, including content relating to safeguarding, wellbeing and child protection.

Provision During Periods of Withdrawal

Where a pupil is withdrawn from RE, the sex education elements of RSE, or collective worship:

- The pupil will remain on site and under the supervision of school staff at all times. (If parents choose to supervise their child during this time, then they must only be removed from the site for the exact duration of the content being withdrawn from)
- The school will provide appropriate supervision and may offer alternative educational activities that are reasonable and practicable within existing staffing and timetabling arrangements.
- Alternative activities will be non-specialist and non-instructional.

The school will **not**:

- provide bespoke or individualised teaching as an alternative to the withdrawn content,
- replicate or re-teach the withdrawn curriculum in another form,
- guarantee one-to-one supervision or tailored learning programmes, or
- provide alternative activities that place an unreasonable burden on staffing, resources or the operation of the school.

Parents remain responsible for ensuring that any withdrawn content is covered outside of school if they wish their child to receive it.