



Hollinsclough CE (VA) Academy

The Right of Withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship: 2018

Mission Statement

To encourage high levels of achievement through the enthusiasm and joy of learning, coupled with a creative curriculum and a holistic approach to education that reflects Christian values and supports our community. We guarantee accessibility and availability to all.'

Developing potential

Preamble

This document sets out our position regarding parents requesting the Right to Withdrawal from Religious Education and Collective Worship for their child or children.

Religious Education

All maintained schools and academies are required to teach Religious Education (RE). However, the legislation governing this requirement also allows parents to withdraw their child or children from all or part of the lessons. Pupils can choose to withdraw themselves once they're 18.

Collective Worship

The **1944 Education Act** gave the right to withdraw from RE or collective worship to parents who wished their children to receive a different form of RE or worship. This right is also confirmed in **section 71** of the **School Standards and Framework Act 1998**. In the case of collective worship, the government guidance document is **Circular 1/94: Religious Education and Collective Worship**.

Collective worship in all Church of England schools and academies should honour the school's trust deed and Christian foundations. Worship is central to our school life, offering an opportunity for the whole school community to explore the distinctive beliefs and narrative that underpins the school's Anglican foundations and distinctive Christian character. Worship is the responsibility of the governing body in conjunction with the Principal, working in partnership with the staff and the local parish church.

Church of England schools strive to ensure they are consistently excellent, distinctive, and inclusive, and that the whole curriculum is underpinned by Christian values. Religious Education is an important part of the curriculum in all Church of England schools and academies. It's nature, objectives, and content should be shared with parents each term to ensure that parents can recognise that RE is of educational value to all pupils, whatever their belief background. In the same way, collective worship should lie at the heart of school life, proclaiming its distinctive character and faith in a way that is relevant, inclusive and that leads each pupil a little further in their spiritual journey. In this way, the likelihood of parental requests to withdraw their child or children should be reduced. However, when they are made, they must be handled accordingly to the legal guidance, while there is scope for a little realism and adaptability to ensure the best for every pupil.

In many schools within our Diocese, there is a large percentage of children whose families are members of other faiths. It is the purpose and duty of every church school to be distinctive as a Church of England school. In each school, it is part of the mission of the church to welcome those of other faiths and no faith. In most cases, parents will have chosen the school for their child, making a specific choice of the school because of the ethos and education it offers. In a small number of cases, parents of other faiths will have been offered a place at a church school because no other school has a place for their child within a reasonable catchment area.

The right to withdraw from collective worship should be at the instigation of the parents or pupils above the age of 16.

The Right of Withdrawal from Collective Worship would normally be exercised through the physical withdrawal of the pupil from the place where the act of worship is taking place. Indeed the school could insist that this is the way the right is to be implemented. If, however, both the parent and the school agree that the pupil should be allowed to remain physically present during the collective worship but not take part in it, nothing in the law prevents this.

Experience suggests that it is best to avoid misunderstanding, and therefore we attempt to establish if any new parent wants to exercise the right to withdrawal by outlining;

- the elements of worship to gauge the level of any potential objection to the child taking part;
- the practical implications of withdrawal
- whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship and, if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to a particular faith or denomination, the governors and our Principal will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school; and
- that the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in Section 1 of the 1988 Education Act. (Circular 1/94)

Here at Hollinsclough our arrangements to support the withdrawal request will be in the form of supervision of the pupils during this period by a member of the support staff. Parents requesting the withdrawal will need to provide their children with work related to their own faith or similar. We will not provide extended learning in other subject areas.

Equality Duty

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

British Values

Children who attend our academy experience an enabling environment in which they will develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Coupled with this they will develop the ability to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.

Within this enabling environment, your child or children will develop the ability over time to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely.

While with us, our parents can expect their children to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England, and to develop a personal character that is tolerant and can foster harmony between different cultural traditions, along with respect for their own and other cultures.

We firmly believe and encourage our pupils to show respect for other people; and for democracy and the support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

To be part of our academy, it is unacceptable on the part of any stakeholder to promote discrimination against people or groups on the basis of their belief, opinion or background.

Implementation of this policy

Our academy will manage the implementation of this policy with the support and guidance of the appropriate body/bodies as defined at the time of writing.

General

This policy and its guidance will always reflect the present and future needs of all stakeholders and to support this we are always open to suggestions for changes and alterations of and to any specific individual provision/requirement to ensure full access to all.

Signed...



Designation: Chair of Governors

Date... December 2017

Signed...



Designation: Principal

Date... December 2017

This policy is to be reviewed by Governors during Autumn term 2018