



'Faith in Education'

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Withdrawal from Religious Education & Collective Worship Policy

Adopted By Governors	March 2023
Date for Review	March 2025
Signed: Chair of Governors	

DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**
— DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION —



St Mary's Catholic Primary's policy for withdrawal from Religious Education & Collective Worship

The place of RE and worship in the Catholic school curriculum

Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" in a Catholic school (Pope St John Paul II). Placing RE at the core of the curriculum in Catholic schools helps the school to fulfil its mission to educate the whole person in discerning the meaning of their existence, since "Religious Education is concerned not only with intellectual knowledge but also includes emotional and affective learning." (Religious Education Curriculum Directory p4) Furthermore, religiously literate children and young people are able to engage in a fully informed critique of all knowledge, "leading, for example, to an understanding of the relationship between science and religion or history, and between theology, sport and the human body." (Religious Education Curriculum Directory p4). The outcome of excellent Religious Education is religiously literate and engaged young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to reflect spiritually, and think ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life (Religious Education Curriculum Directory p6).

In Catholic terminology 'worship' is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God's world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

Religious Education and Collective Worship at St Mary's Catholic Primary School are at the core of the curriculum. The school will ensure that parents are fully informed about the RE curriculum and the opportunities for prayer, liturgy and worship and have the opportunity to discuss this with school staff.

The right of withdrawal from RE & Worship

It is acknowledged by the Local Governing Committee that parents are their child's first teachers. Whilst the governors take their responsibility of providing high quality religious education and worship seriously they respect that in law parents have the right to ask for their child to be withdrawn partly or fully from religious education and/or worship in order to offer religious education for their child which is not provided by the school.

Parents do not have to offer a reason for the withdrawal but the request will need to be discussed in order for the school to make arrangements should the parent wish to proceed.

Managing the right of withdrawal from RE & worship

If a parent requests that their child is wholly or partially withdrawn from RE lessons and/or worship the headteacher will offer to meet the parents to discuss the request and to make the parent fully aware of the content of the RE curriculum and the worship/liturgy. This will include the offer of observing a Religious Education lesson or attending a prayer/liturgy.

The headteacher will explain the options available of the parent either providing work for the child linked to their own religious beliefs or arranging for the child to receive religious education linked to their own belief at another site without impacting adversely on the child's attendance.

For the first option, the headteacher will explain who will supervise the pupil, where that supervision will take place and that the pupil can do work set by the parent to further educate their child in their

own religious belief. The work set will be monitored by the person supervising the child's withdrawal to ensure tasks set are completed but that the assessment of such work will be done by the parent.

The headteacher will make it clear that the pupil will not be able to receive instruction in National Curriculum subjects during the time of withdrawal as this time is given over to Religious Education.

If after viewing the RE curriculum/worship and meeting with the headteacher the parent still wishes to remove their child from RE, the headteacher will ask the parent to make a written request for withdrawal.

This written request will be acknowledged in writing with an explanation of the agreed arrangements for that academic year.

A separate request is needed for each academic year and for each individual child within a family.

Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years by headteacher and local governing committee.

Equality statement

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.

This policy has been impact assessed by governors in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.