

Hornsea School & Language College



Religious Education Policy

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Date Created:	May 2024	
Approved by:	Headteacher: 03/07/2024	Governing Body: 03/07/2024
Last Reviewed:	Date: May 2024	By: R Lewchenko
Date of Next Review:	October 2025	

Policy Statement

“RE is an important curriculum subject. It is important in its own right and also makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and supports wider community cohesion.”

Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Religious education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010*, p3.

At Hornsea School, the purpose of Religious Education (RE) reflects the agreed syllabus of the Local Education Authority and the ethos of the school.

RE provides a platform for critical thinking and reflection on moral, social, and ethical issues. By engaging with questions about life, justice, and truth, students develop essential skills in reasoning and analysis. This intellectual rigor not only enriches their academic experience but also equips them with the tools to navigate complex ethical dilemmas in their personal and professional lives.

Moreover, RE fosters personal development and well-being by encouraging self-reflection and the exploration of identity. By understanding how beliefs shape individuals' lives and communities, students gain insights into their own values and beliefs, fostering a sense of self-awareness and confidence. Ultimately, studying RE prepares students to be informed, empathetic, and culturally competent people, capable of contributing positively to a diverse and interconnected world.

Despite its importance in the basic curriculum for all schools, the law gives parents the right to withdraw their child(ren) from collective acts of religious worship and/or Religious Education lessons.

At Hornsea School we are proud to teach inclusive and plural Religious Education & World Views, following the locally agreed syllabus, to all our pupils, and to respect all of the religions and worldviews represented in our community. As a school we believe Religious Education is integral in our vision to 'Broaden Horizons'.

Policy Objectives

1. To ensure that parents are aware they have the right to withdraw students from Religious Education classes.
2. To ensure that when parents make a decision to withdraw students from Religious Education classes, they do so on the basis of an informed decision.
3. To ensure students receive a well-rounded education enabling them to progress and achieve their potential.

Parental right to withdraw children from RE

Parents have the right to choose whether to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them,

This document has been compiled in accordance with Religious Education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010 [Department for Children, Schools and Families]

though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost; suitable work relating to the child's religious education should be provided by the parents.

Pupils will usually remain on school premises, unless the child is lawfully receiving religious education elsewhere.

Whilst Hornsea School respects the rights of the parent to withdraw their child(ren) from RE, these rights do not apply to a parent's request to withdraw their child from a non-RE subject that may teach about religion or religious beliefs.

Withdrawal procedure

- If a parent chooses to withdraw their child from RE, they need to inform the school of their request for their child(ren) to be withdrawn from RE and whether they intend partial or total withdrawal for their child(ren). This should be either in person or in writing to the Headteacher. Verbal communication (e.g. *on the telephone or through the student*) or a note in the student's planner are not adequate methods.
- Parents will be invited to meet with the Head of RE and a member of the SLT, to establish with the school their concerns about RE and to discuss the practical implications of withdrawal. At the meeting, the locally agreed syllabus and Hornsea School Schemes of Work will be made available for the parents to read and ask questions about, should they choose to. It is not envisaged that establishing the reason for withdrawal and practicalities of withdrawal from RE be either lengthy or a means to change parents' minds, but a meeting with the relevant staff is necessary to ensure parents have all relevant and adequate information to make an informed decision. Parents do not have to disclose their reason(s) for withdrawing their child from RE, but it is helpful for the school and subject leader to understand the reasons for the withdrawal so they may seek to improve religious education provision at the school.
- The responsibility for what goes on when the pupil is withdrawn and under the supervision of the school lies ultimately with the parents. Parents of withdrawn children will be asked to provide suitable alternative work for their child/children which has clear outcomes and is to be completed at the time of the RE lesson. It will not be the responsibility of the teacher either to set or mark alternative work. The time when the pupil is withdrawn is intended for the delivery of the basic curriculum for RE and not the National Curriculum or other aspects of the curriculum.
- Students who have been withdrawn will be allocated to a different room on an independent basis (where possible, a 6th Form lesson) in order to ensure suitable supervision. These arrangements may need to change from week to week.

Review of a request to withdraw

The school may wish to review a request each year, in discussion with the parents.