



Heathfield
Community College and Sixth Form

The Right to Withdraw from RE

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Signed..... Richard Karn, Chair of Governors

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Heathfield Community College we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or PSHEe.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Heathfield Community College.

The guidance below is based on the legal requirements as found in Section 71(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and advice and guidance from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (nasacre). This policy should be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy.

Managing the right of withdrawal

- The college will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. In this way parents can make an informed decision.
- Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish.
- The college may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents.
- The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents, and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.
- Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the college.
- Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and the college will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.
- If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.
- Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question unless there are special circumstances which could make it unreasonable to do so, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.
- If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, then the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE, as long as no financial burden falls on the college as a result of these arrangements.