

Policy: Religious Education & Collective
Worship Policy

Approval: Headteacher

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**CHELTENHAM
BOURNSIDE
SCHOOL**

Policies

Contents

1. Context	3
2. Religious Education	3
3. Collective Worship	3
4. Complaints.....	4

1. Context

The duties and responsibilities of the Governors and the Head for the provision of religious education and daily collective worship are set out in the Education Act 2002 and the Non-Statutory Guidance for Religious Education in Schools (2010).

2. Religious Education

The Governors recognise that the 2002 Education Act sets out as the central aims for the school curriculum that it should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The school fully endorses the aims of Religious Education as set out in the Non-Statutory Guidance for Religious Education in Schools (2010). These are that religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It can develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these. RE also contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society.

The Governors recognise that RE is a compulsory subject with special status. RE has equal standing in relation to the National Curriculum subjects but is not subject to statutorily prescribed national attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements.

The Religious Studies curriculum in Key Stage 3 is linked to the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils follow a non-examined Religious Education course that is linked to the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus for Key Stage 4. There is also the opportunity to study Religious Studies in significantly greater depth as the subject is available to select as an 'option subject' from the beginning of Year 10. Students who choose this option will then be entered for a GCSE in Religious Studies at the end of Key Stage 4. In the Sixth Form there is consideration of moral, religious and spiritual issues in the PSCHEE programme and through assemblies. Religious Studies (Philosophy and Ethics) A Level can be studied in the Sixth Form.

Curriculum time for the teaching of Religious Education will be informed by DfE recommendations and the academy's funding agreement, which seeks to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum to all students.

3. Collective Worship

a) The Governors recognise that the aims of collective worship, as set out in the Non-Statutory Guidance for Religious Education in Schools (2010), are that it should provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response; to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

b) The Governors recognise that the full programme of school assemblies which take place each week plays a vital part in the corporate life of the school. These are occasions of quiet reflection bringing together pupils and staff in a sense of common purpose.

3) The Governors recognise that:

a) Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education except from those elements that are in the National Curriculum for other subjects. Requests should be made, in writing, to the Headteacher. Parents are not obliged to give their reasons for wishing to withdraw their child, but are encouraged to discuss the matter with a senior member of staff.

b) Teachers, including the Head, cannot be required to teach RE or to lead or attend worship in school.

4. Complaints

a) Complaints concerning this policy (including those associated with the application of the policy to those with protected characteristics) should be addressed to the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Curriculum.

Annex 1

Policy questions

There are four key Equality and Diversity questions that must be addressed prior to releasing school policies are as follows:

1. Can we demonstrate that the effects of this policy on pupils and employees with protected characteristics has been assessed?

Religious belief is a protected characteristic. The views of those with other protected characteristics are also considered in the course of the teaching of RE. This policy explicitly references a broad range of religious views and worldviews (i.e. the worldviews of those who do not have a religious faith).

2. Does this policy make it clear how complaints about this policy in relation to protected characteristics can be raised?

See paragraph 4a

3. Have we considered what adjustments would be needed to minimise any negative effects on those with protected characteristics?

The policy explicitly states parents have a right to withdraw their children from religious education and that no employee can be directed to teach RE or attend worship in school.

4. If the policy is likely to impact those with protected characteristics, have we sought their views before approving this policy?

The policy may impact upon those with a strongly held religious faith or worldview; however, these are explicitly referenced in the policy and the policy is not likely therefore to impact those with protected characteristics.