

Requests to Withdraw a pupil from RE lessons

Parents have the statutory right under Section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to request their child/ren are wholly or partly excused from:

- RE lessons in accordance with the schools' basic curriculum
- Acts of Collective Worship in schools

As parents, you do not have to provide a reason for requesting the withdrawal. However before exercising any right of withdrawal we would recommend you discuss your concerns with your child's Headteacher.

Important - limitations to withdraw

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching. A pupil may be required to work in another area of the school, such as the library.

- Whilst parents or carers have a right to withdraw children from RE, they should note that child/ren may also encounter religions and beliefs and wider aspects of faith in other areas of the National Curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal.
- On occasion, spontaneous questions about religious matters are raised by pupils or issues related to religion arise in other curriculum subjects such as history or PSHE. For example, schools promote community cohesion and help pupils to understand ideas about identity and diversity, feelings and emotions within both religious and non religious contexts.

Managing the Right of Withdrawal

All requests for withdrawals should be made in writing, addressed to the headteacher.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost.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 it is feasible and appropriate.

Where a request for withdrawal is made, the school must comply and excuse the pupil until the request is rescinded. Though not legally required, as a school we will make contact with any parent that requests withdrawal to talk through any concerns they may have.

(Section 71(3), School Standards and Framework Act 1998)