



Parental Right to Withdraw Children from Religious Education

The parental right to withdraw children from Religious Education was introduced in 1944 when RE was called 'Religious Instruction' and carried with it, connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is different now – inclusive, broad and exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. In the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE. They may withdraw their child from part of RE, to opt out of any trips to places of worship or to fully withdraw their child from RE.

Parents have this right, although we as a school must ensure parents or carers are understand the extent of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus alongside the practicalities of what withdrawal from RE entails. If a student is not taking part in their RE lessons, we have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. If a parent decides their child will not take part in any or some RE lessons, the student will sit at the back of another classroom, reading a book whilst their timetabled RE lesson takes place. This time will not be used for other curriculum subject areas, e.g. extra maths or other lessons.

Whilst George Stephenson High School respects the rights of the parent to withdraw their child 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, e.g. History or English.

Should a parent wish to withdraw their child from Religious Education, please notify the school in writing. The Curriculum Leader for RE and Social Sciences will invite the parents to a meeting to establish the nature of their concerns about RE and to discuss the practical implications of withdrawal. At the meeting, information about the school's curriculum will be shared and discussed by parents and member of staff, with there will be an opportunity for parents to ask questions. The aim of the meeting is to ensure that parents have all relevant information to make an informed decision, and should they wish to withdraw their child from Religious Education, discuss if this is for all Religious Education lessons or a partial withdrawal relating to certain curriculum content.

Curriculum Leader of Religious Studies

Southgate, Killingworth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 6SA

T: 0191 216 1115

E: enquiries@gshs.org.uk

W: www.gshs.org.uk

Headteacher:

Deputy Headteacher:

Deputy Headteacher:

Peter Douthwaite BSc (Hons)

Kathryn Williams BA (Hons)

Louise Dunn BA (Hons)