

Right to Withdraw from Religious Education (RE)

Introduction

The *Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010* states: "All pupils are entitled to receive RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum at school which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development." However, under the 1988 Education Reform Act, parents maintain the legal right to withdraw their child from Religious Education lessons.

At Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent, we fully respect this right. While the law does not dictate exactly how RE should be organised, our academy aims to ensure that:

1. Parents are fully aware of their right to withdraw their child from RE.
2. Any decision to withdraw is an informed one, based on a clear understanding of the curriculum.
3. Students continue to receive a well-rounded education that supports their progress and potential.

Parental Right to Withdraw

Parents may choose to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the academy. Our role is to ensure that parents and carers are aware of this right, as well as the educational objectives and content of our RE syllabus.

Supervision and Expectations

If a pupil is withdrawn, the academy has a duty to supervise them; however, we are not required to provide alternative teaching or incur additional costs. Typically, withdrawn pupils will be supervised at the back of their usual or a nearby classroom or in the Library (when supervised) to engage in independent reading. Please note that this time cannot be used for extra study in other curriculum subjects.

Withdrawal Procedure

If you wish to withdraw your child from RE, please follow these steps:

- Inform the Headteacher of your request, specifying whether you intend a partial or total withdrawal. This must be done in person or in writing. Please note that verbal messages (via phone, the student, or contact form) cannot be accepted as formal notification.
- Parents will be invited to meet with the RE Subject Leader and a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This meeting serves to discuss any concerns and clarify the practical implications of withdrawal.

- During this meeting, we will share details of the curriculum and provide an opportunity for questions. While parents have the right to submit a written request for withdrawal without providing an explanation, we strongly recommend this meeting take place before a final decision is reached.

Visits to Places of Worship

Parents also have the right to opt out of school visits to places of worship. Prior notification is required to ensure that we can arrange adequate alternative supervision for the student.

Note: While the academy respects the right to withdraw from RE, this does not extend to other subject areas (such as History or English) where religious beliefs or history may be discussed as part of the standard curriculum.