



# RE and Collective Worship Policy

# Horsforth School RE and Collective Worship Policy

## I. Aim and Objectives of Religious Education

Religious Education should provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops students' knowledge and understanding of religions fostering personal reflection and spiritual development.

Religious Education encourages students to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics.

Religious Education enables students to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society. It promotes tolerance, respect and empathy.

Religious Education teaches students to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice.

## 2. Context

Horsforth School operates within the guidance and procedures set out by the Department for Education (DfE).

### 2.1 Introduction to Religious Education

Religious Education is a national statutory entitlement for all students aged 11-16. All students in years 7-11 have Religious Education lessons. Our aim is for students to not only learn about religion, but learn from religion. We believe Religious Education contributes to the education of the whole child; not only does the subject teach knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, but it enables students develop the skills of respect, tolerance and empathy.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced; ensuring that all six major world faiths are studied. Through their studies, students will learn core beliefs of believers and how these impact on attitudes, lifestyles and worship. Students will explore philosophical and ethical issues and a range of responses from not just a faith perspective, but from their own. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, it is our aim that students will develop their own sense of morality and grow in respect for themselves and others.

Religious Education at Horsforth School plays a key role in delivering Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural education to our students. Lessons create space for individual reflection, with a focus on wondering, who and why? Lessons identify the reality of injustice and suffering and it opens up visions of how life for different groups can be affected positively by religious and humanistic values. It promotes an awareness of others in society and a tolerance with this.

### 2.2 Collective Worship: Introduction to Collective Worship

At Horsforth School we believe that an act of Collective Worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our whole school assemblies. We value this time in the school day for the space it gives our students to develop a reflective approach to life.

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age students take part in an act of Collective Worship. These acts of worship must be "wholly or mainly of a broadly

Christian Character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the students”.

We recognise that in asking our students and staff to worship, we have to consider the diversity of faiths within the school, including those with no faith. It is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert. The faith background of both the staff and the students’ family is respected at all times.

DFE Circular 1/94, section 50 says:

“Collective Worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for students to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.”

### **2.3 Aims of Collective Worship**

Through our assemblies and Theme of the Week for Personal Development Time (PDT) we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment, with SMSC and character development at the core of what we plan. We aim for students to:

- become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- grow in understanding of the feelings of the other people in everyday situations and beliefs
- deepen their sense of awe and wonder about the world around them
- grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- acknowledge diversity and affirm each person’s life stance, whether it be religious or not
- contemplate something of the mystery of God/ultimate reality
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs

### **3. Evaluation**

This policy will be evaluated every three years by the Trustee Board to ensure it is still fit for purpose. Circumstances may require more frequent modifications.

### **4. Author**

This policy has been updated by SAN in September 2018.

### **5. Procedures**

Procedures to support this policy are appended as follows:

Appendix 1 - Curriculum Provision for Religious Education

Appendix 2 - Withdrawal from Religious Education/Collective Worship

## Appendix I

### Curriculum Provision for Religious Education

- RE at Horsforth School will ensure equal opportunity for progress and enjoyment through a variety of teaching methods, such as debates, music, writing, drama, visual arts and ICT where suitable. Students will have time to reflect, to explore beliefs and values, to ask their own questions, to investigate, research and respond personally where appropriate.
- Schemes of work in RE will ensure both 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion and other world views to ensure students can meet both attainment targets, as set out in the Leeds Agreed Syllabus.
- In KS3 students have a one hour lesson of RE every week. At KS4 students have two hours over the fortnight for CORE RE and five hours over the fortnight for the GCSE option.
- The RE curriculum at KS3 and KS4 is based upon the guidance from the Leeds Agreed Syllabus and the AGA GCSE specification. We teach aspects of Christianity along with other world faiths and world views.
- To ensure RE is relevant to our students, there are planned visits to places of worship at specific key stages:
  - Local Horsforth Christian Church (Year 9)
  - Local Leeds Mandir (Year 9)
  - Local Jewish Orthodox Synagogue (KS5)
  - Jewish Reformed Synagogue (KS5)
  - Buddhist Centre (KS5)
  - Auschwitz (KS5)
- RE has cross curricular links with history and lifeskills. The departments work closely together. In Year 9 and at GCSE students study the Holocaust. Therefore our decision to teach Judaism at KS3 aids understanding of this and promotes cross-curricular skills. In lifeSkills students cover Hate Crimes in Year 9, with a focus on religious discrimination.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Withdrawal from Religious Education/Collective Worship (Assembly)**

#### **Introduction**

The law gives parents/carers the right to withdraw their children from collective acts of worship and/or RE lessons. We respect that right.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To ensure that parents/carers are aware that they have the right to withdraw students from RE classes and assembly.
2. To ensure that when parents/carers make a decision to withdraw students from either RE classes or assembly, they do so, on the basis of an informed decision.

#### **Guidelines:**

1. When parents/carers make a request to withdraw children from RE/Assembly, the Curriculum Leader of RE in conjunction with the appropriate Pastoral Leader should invite the parents/carers to inspect and discuss the use of the Leeds Agreed Syllabus for RE and the GCSE specification's.
2. Parents will be invited to discuss the implications of withdrawal.
3. If a student is withdrawn from class, appropriate work must be organised by the parent/carers and adequate provision must be made for the work to be done. This is usually within the library.
4. If a student is withdrawn from assembly, the Tutor will also be informed. The pastoral leader and the Tutor will decide on the provision and supervision for the assembly time.