Dormers Wells Primary School

Parents' and Carers' Right to Withdraw from Religious Education (RE)

Believe Aspire Flourish

Diversity, Opportunity, Resilience, Moral values, Excellence, Respect, Self-Belief

Our commitment to children's rights

Dormers Wells Primary School is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School. We recognise and respect the rights of every child, including their right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- **Article 2:** Every child has the right to be treated equally and without discrimination, whatever their religion or beliefs.
- **Article 14:** Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and to practise their religion, with appropriate guidance from their parents or carers.

Introduction

At Dormers Wells Primary School, Religious Education (RE) is an important part of our curriculum. It reflects the rich diversity of beliefs, religions and cultures within our school community.

Through RE, children learn about different religions and worldviews, explore beliefs and practices, develop their understanding of the world and learn to show respect and tolerance towards others.

We recognise that parents and carers have a legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of Religious Education. This document explains these rights and how parents and carers can exercise them.

1. The legal right to withdraw

In accordance with Department for Education guidance and the relevant legislation, parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from:

- All Religious Education lessons.
- Part of the Religious Education curriculum.
- Specific topics, lessons or activities within Religious Education.

Parents and carers do not have to provide a reason or explain their religious or philosophical beliefs when making a withdrawal request.

The school will respect this right and will not place pressure on parents or carers to change their decision.

2. How to request withdrawal

If you wish to withdraw your child from all or part of Religious Education, please contact the Headteacher.

We recommend making your request in writing so that we can clearly understand which lessons, topics or activities you wish your child to be withdrawn from.

Please include:

- Your child's name and class.
- Whether you wish to withdraw your child from all RE or only specific parts.
- Any particular lessons, topics or activities that your request relates to.

You are not required to give a reason for your request.

The school will acknowledge your request and discuss the practical arrangements with you, where necessary. We will facilitate the withdrawal without unnecessary delay.

3. Arrangements for children who are withdrawn

Where a child is withdrawn from all or part of RE, the school will make appropriate arrangements for their supervision during the relevant lesson or activity.

The school will discuss these arrangements with parents or carers to ensure that the child's needs are appropriately considered.

A child who is withdrawn will not be disadvantaged or treated differently because their parent or carer has exercised this legal right.

4. What does the right to withdraw cover?

The right to withdraw applies specifically to Religious Education.

It does not extend to:

- Other subjects where religious beliefs or practices may be discussed as part of the curriculum, such as History or PSHE.
- Occasional or spontaneous questions about religion raised by pupils during classroom discussions.
- Teaching about cultural, historical or social matters in other curriculum areas simply because they may involve religious beliefs.

Teachers will continue to provide a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum in accordance with their professional responsibilities.

5. Working in partnership with parents and carers

We value the partnership between school and families and recognise that parents and carers have different beliefs, values and perspectives.

We are committed to ensuring that all families feel respected, listened to and supported.

We encourage parents and carers to speak to us if they have any questions about the RE curriculum, the content being taught or their right to withdraw their child.

Exercising the right to withdraw will not affect the school's positive relationship with your family or your child's wider learning experience.

Relevant guidance and legislation

This document has been prepared with reference to:

- Department for Education – Religious Education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools.
- Education Act 1996.
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Articles 2 and 14.