

Mountjoy School

Religious Education Policy

June 2023



In accordance with Article 14 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.
In accordance with The Dorset SACRE Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

This is a Mountjoy School Policy
Reviewed by: Senior Leadership Team

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Mission Statement

Religious Education at Mountjoy is all about finding out what is important to us and other people around us. It is learning about who we are, where we come from and what we are going to do next. It gives us skills to accept and respect that everyone has different views about the world we live in.

The Legal Position

DCSF Guidance on religious education in English Schools, 2010, states; Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum including RE. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

This will include school children in Reception classes as well as Post 16 students (but not those at Sixth Form colleges). Special schools should comply as far as is practicable. The Education Act (2002 Section 80 (1)(a) ; (2) (a) (b)

Curriculum status and time allocation for Religious Education

- [The curriculum must include] provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- The legal requirements for the provision of RE in maintained schools do not specify any particular time allocation or how the curriculum should be organised. However, given the requirement that RE is a core curriculum subject the Agreed Syllabus expects that the equivalent of a minimum of 5% of curriculum time be allocated to RE

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At Mountjoy school we are an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their child(ren) from all or part of religious education without reason.

In line with 'Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010' "The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. 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 a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient. If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.

Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session."

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Mountjoy School.

Aims

In Religious Education at Mountjoy School, we aim that pupils will:

- develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and its impact on our local community, and on our society today
- develop a knowledge and understanding of some of the other principal religious traditions represented in the UK today
- develop a sense of respect for religious traditions, beliefs and practice
- grow in their spiritual development
- develop a sense of awe and wonder and mystery
- develop skills and attitudes which will support their personal, moral, social and cultural development
- explore some questions of meaning and consider how the world's religions have responded to them
- think about their own beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious, and the values of the school community.

Approaches to Teaching RE at Mountjoy

In order to make religious education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of objects of reference, pictures, stories, and the use of periods of stillness and reflection.

Where possible we want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

As outlined in the Dorset agreed syllabus, RE at Mountjoy should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' (s375 (3) Education Act 1996)

In order to provide a broad and balanced Religious Education curriculum and to ensure statutory requirements are met:

- Christianity must be studied at each key stage.

- The other principal religions, other religious traditions as represented in the United Kingdom and secular worldviews should be studied in the course of key stages 1-3
- As well as Christianity across the Primary key stages at school must focus on Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, but can also include material from the study of Buddhism, Sikhism and Secular Worldviews such as Humanism as appropriate to their curriculum or context.
- As well as Christianity across key stage 3 schools must focus on Buddhism, Sikhism and Secular Worldviews such as Humanism but can also include material from Hinduism, Islam and Judaism as appropriate to their curriculum or context.
- Schools are also encouraged to include material from other religious traditions represented in Dorset. This could include the Baha'i faith and Pagan traditions as appropriate to the school's curriculum and context.
- The Traveller Community is a significant part of Dorset's community and a study of the beliefs and worldviews of this community would be appropriate in Religious Education.

Across 14-19 Schools are encouraged to focus on Christianity and at least one other religious tradition, religion or secular worldview.

It is important to ensure that during their school life pupils encounter all of the principal religions and a secular worldview e.g. Humanism.

As a Special School, it may be necessary to adapt this pattern to suit the needs of the students. The principle for this adaptation remain the professional judgement of the school's RE co-ordinator. It is expected that these judgements will be based on the principle of providing a broad and balanced RE curriculum and one that introduces their students to an encounter with as many of the principal religions represented in the United Kingdom as possible.

Assessment and monitoring of RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and monitoring, It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment of his or her pupils through marking work set. Three times a year, pupils will be assessed in line with their individual curriculum provision. This assessment will form part of his or her work done in RE. The class teacher will record achievements by each pupil. The data will be used by the co-ordinator to track pupil progress through the school and will be used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil accesses Religious Education that is appropriate and sufficiently challenging.

The co-ordinator will monitor RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data and pupils MAPs.