



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Last Review:	March 2026
Committee:	SLT
Date Ratified:	March 2026

1. Rationale

1.1. Our inclusive ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in our practices. We value opportunities for encouraging students to consider issues outside the prescribed curriculum and encourage this reflective approach to life. This policy is in place to reflect the school's commitment to the spiritual and moral development of our students and echoes the core values of the school.

2. Aims

2.1. The aim of this is to provide the opportunity 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 other people in everyday situations and beliefs;
- explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not

3. Legal Requirements

3.1 Every student in a school must be taught Religious Education. Oldfield School, as an academy, has to provide RE for all of our students, except for those whose parents exercise the right of withdrawal. RE must be provided as part of a **broad and balanced curriculum** contributing to pupils' moral, cultural and spiritual development, as restated in the National Curriculum Framework (DfE, 2013).

3.2 The Curriculum provided must 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental, and physical development of student' and 'prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life'.

3.3 Academies must teach RE within the requirements for a locally agreed syllabus, set out in section 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School

Standards and Framework Act 1998. The requirements are that a syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. Oldfield School's RE curriculum meets all these expectations in law.

- 3.1. In consultation with the Governing Body, the Headteacher is responsible, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, for arranging the daily collective worship. The precise nature will depend on the family background, ages and abilities of the pupils.

4. Religious Education and Collective Worship Provision

- 4.1. Religious Education and collective worship contributes to students' development in providing opportunities for:

- spiritual development: deciding on the value, purpose and meaning of life;
- moral development: reflecting on matters concerning right and wrong;
- social development: encouraging students to relate positively to each other, to take responsibility and to participate fully in the community;
- cultural development: appreciating their own cultural traditions and the teachings of other cultures.

- 4.2. Other issues which might be covered include being healthy, being safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, economic wellbeing, inclusion and community cohesion.

- 4.3. 'Collective worship' is defined as any act where members of the school community are given opportunity to reflect upon broader spiritual, moral, social or cultural questions, to reinforce and contribute to the ethos of the school and to challenge their assumptions.

- 4.4. Collective worship can take place at any time in the school day and the whole school does not need to get together at the same time. Collective worship can be organised into Tutor, House or Year groups or whatever is appropriate for the school.

4.5. Practice

- Delivery of assemblies will be, in the main, to year groups, but on occasion to House Groups or to the whole school.
- The Heads of Year and House and the Senior Leadership Team, will deliver the majority of assemblies, but all staff will be invited and volunteers used to lead. Tutor groups may also be asked to lead assemblies focussing on a specific theme. Outside agencies will also be invited to lead assemblies.
- Assemblies will take place during the morning registration (8.30am – 8.50am), but special assemblies may be held at other times.
- Tutors are required to escort their tutees to their assembly and stay with them throughout
- Students are always welcome to help with the delivery of assemblies and are encouraged to do so. Any member of staff leading an assembly may involve students in such activities as drama, dance, music, poetry and reading.
- All students have the opportunity to develop their awareness of spiritual and moral issues in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics lessons. The scheme of work covers elements of Christianity and other world religions, that may or may not be represented in our school community.

The **Education (Assemblies) Bill [HL] 2024–25** proposes **removing the requirement for daily acts of collective worship** and replacing them with

nonreligious assemblies for schools without a religious character. This bill is not yet law but legislation in this area is under Parliamentary review.

5. Right to Withdraw from Collective Worship and Religious Education lessons

- 5.1. The main aim of this policy is for it to be meaningful and relevant to all students and staff, for those with a faith background and those with none. It is therefore hoped that few parents will feel that they must remove their child from collective worship or religious education lessons.
- 5.2. Parents do, however, have the right to withdraw their child without any explanation. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any collective worship or religious education lessons at the school the school must comply.
- 5.3. The school remains responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from collective worship, unless the child is taking part in collective worship elsewhere.
- 5.4. If a student is withdrawn from fully or partly from religious education lessons, then the school remains responsible for the supervision of the students but is not expected to provide alternative education. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to provide alternative education if their child is withdrawn from religious education lessons. The withdrawal time cannot be used for other curriculum subject areas and the school must not incur extra costs because of the withdrawal from religious education lessons.
- 5.5. Parents do not need to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal. However, in order to avoid misunderstanding, the Headteacher may wish to clarify with any parent wanting to withdraw:
 - the religious issues about which the parent would object their child being taught;
 - the practical implications of withdrawal;
 - the circumstances in which it would be reasonable to accommodate parents' wishes;
 - if a parent will require any advanced notice of such issue in the future and if so, how much notice.

6. Monitoring and review

SLT review this policy. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.