

## **Religious Education at Faringdon Community College - alternative provision protocol**

Every pupil has a legal entitlement to Religious Education (RE). RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and must be provided in all state-funded schools. The RE curriculum "shall 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". Contemporary guidance from the Government makes clear that the breadth of RE will include the six principal religions of the UK and non-religious worldviews. In the UK, parents have the right to withdraw their child from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own RE.

### **The aim of this protocol is to provide:**

- a transparent understanding of how requests for alternative RE provision at FCC will be responded to
- an opportunity for the RE Department to remind parents / carers of the value of studying RE, as well as its inclusive nature
- reassurance to parents / carers that they can change their mind about their initial request

### **The main influences determining the protocol:**

- FCC strongly believes the RE curriculum is of great value to all students whatever their background and beliefs. RE is a subject that can teach pupils about the world around them and encourages them to reflect on their own place within it (see RE curriculum intent document for further details).
- RE is integral to the curriculum at FCC and all students aim to complete GCSE RE by the end of Year 10. This provides valuable GCSE experience and the chance to gain a formal qualification in advance of Year 11. FCC takes seriously its commitment to equality of access, meaning that all students should have the opportunity to gain this qualification.
- Specific steps in the protocol are based on the nationally recognised NATRE guidance

### **Procedure for moving to RE alternative provision in line with regulations:**

1. Parent / carer should contact the Subject Leader (SL) for RE to discuss their request for alternative provision. The SL will have a telephone or email conversation with the parent to explore the reasons behind the request.
2. If the parent / carer still wishes to proceed, they will meet with FCC Headteacher and SL for RE. The purpose of this meeting will be to further explain the benefits of participating in the full RE curriculum at FCC. It will also provide greater detail on the parent / carer responsibilities for the alternative RE provision.\*
3. If the parent / carer still wishes to proceed, the Headteacher and SL for RE will liaise with the parents / carer regarding putting the alternative provision into place for an agreed date. Parents / carers will be requested to submit clear plans for what the alternative RE provision will entail, and how it will be addressed during timetabled curriculum time. Decisions will be made on the staffing of this alternative provision dependent on the level of student need and staff availability. The parent / carer will be made aware that while every effort will be made to avoid this, it is possible that parents / carers will be required to supervise alternative provision in person at FCC if there are no suitable staff available.
4. At the start of the alternative provision, a follow-up letter will be sent to the parents / carer confirming arrangements. These will then be reviewed in person at FCC once every academic year. Students can always return to regular RE provision at a parent / carer's request either during these meetings or at any time in the year. However, a return to regular provision will mean the protocol above will need to be repeated if the parent / carer wishes to provide alternative provision again at a later date.
5. If a parent / carer does not engage with the protocol at any stage after Point 1, provision will revert to RE lessons until such time that the parent / carer re-engages with the protocol.

\*Meeting between FCC and parent / carer will include discussion around:

- a) Sharing of this protocol document with parents / carers
- b) Positive explanation of purpose and benefits of RE full curriculum teaching at FCC
- c) Examples of curriculum intent, lessons, and the locally agreed syllabus
- d) Whole or partial alternative provision
- e) Understanding that a student cannot be placed into another lesson when following RE alternative provision
- f) Potential alternative options for supervision during RE lessons
- g) Students cannot be withdrawn from other subjects with religious elements (e.g. crusades or religious art)
- h) RE alternative provision (and supervision material) is the parents responsibility; this may include the supervision of the student in person at FCC
- i) RE alternative provision should be reviewed with a meeting annually. Students may return to the regular RE curriculum if the parent or carer requests this.