

UTC READING

Religious Education Policy

Introduction

For most people throughout the world religious beliefs are embedded in a vast array of faiths providing the underpinning for the way in which they live their lives and provides a significant contribution to their decision making with regard to right and wrong action. Given this the study of religion both in terms of its content and its practices is crucial to the achievement of an educated person in England today. RE can thus make a fundamental contribution to community cohesion, citizenship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Nevertheless students must have also an understanding of what it is to be someone of no religious faith. Furthermore, the fact that the locally agreed syllabus is produced with the involvement of all aspects of the local community including those that are not tied to the locally agreed syllabus, helps ensure that it supports community cohesion, including inter-faith working. To achieve this RE must be taught in an objective and pluralistic manner, and not as indoctrination into a particular faith or belief.

A number of legislative changes within and beyond the world of education in both Britain and Europe have implications for RE. The Human Rights Act 1998, the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2006 contribute to the „bigger picture“ within which RE is provided in schools and experienced students.

Aims

To enable student's according to their ability and level of development to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions
- learn from different world religions and provide opportunities to explore and express their own responses and personal beliefs
- understand the relationship between beliefs and practices develop an understanding of the influence of faiths, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- develop personal learning and thinking skills pertinent to Religious Education, such as questioning, investigation, communication, expression and evaluation and to promote the ability to make reasoned, critical and informed moral judgements to combat prejudice.

UTC expect Religious Education to:

- encourage students to respect and value the right of people to hold differing beliefs, including those with no faith, and to cultivate understanding and respect in a society with a diversity of faiths.
- in line with Section 78(1) of the 2002 Education Act to contribute to the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and help prepare children and young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Curricular Requirements and Provision

The recommended minimum time allowance for the teaching of Religious Education in schools is 5% of curriculum time at KS4, identified in the Dearing Report (1993). No specific proposal is made for Key Stage 5.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 students' follow a recognised external examination course for Religious Education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, this is delivered within the UTC Reading Big debate.

At Key Stage 5 it is a requirement that all registered 16-19 year old students study Religious Education unless withdrawn by parents / guardians or by request from students themselves, if over 18 years of age.

Faith and Values Strand

Faith and Values is seen as an important new strand in teaching Religious Education. It contains material shared by everyone with a faith or faith background and also by others who would perhaps claim not to have a faith.

The UTC fulfils this locally agreed requirement through visits to places of worship as well as by inviting colleagues, parents / guardians, members of faith communities as well as faith leaders to come into the UTC.

The right of Withdrawal from RE

UTC wishes to be an inclusive community yet recognise that parents / guardians, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. We would ask any parent / guardian considering this to contact the Vice Principal, to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at the UTC.

Collective Worship at the UTC

Aim

The aim of the collective worship is to provide the opportunity for students to:

- consider ideas of a theist, atheist and agnostic nature.
- reflect on ideas of morality that are in line with Christian values as well as those of other faith backgrounds and their own beliefs.
- develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values.
- consider spiritual and moral issues

Statutory Duty of the UTC

UTC will provide daily collective worship for registered students (apart from those who have been withdrawn by their parents / guardians).

At the UTC this is provided within Independent Learning Time organised on a company basis each week. This is also contributed to within allocated company time. Collective worship, as specified by the locally agreed syllabus, is not Religious Education though it may contribute to the delivery of the subject.

The nature of collective worship at the UTC is tailored to the faith backgrounds, ages and abilities of our UTC community. We work to ensure that Collective worship will be acceptable to the whole community, employees and students, as well as including a variety of elements at different times to greater involve the students no matter what family or cultural background they are from.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board of Governors and Principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the UTC's RE Policy.

Date created: February 2016

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Date of Review: April 2016

Next Review: April 2019