



# DEVONPORT HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT POLICY

Named person: A Thomas

Category: Statutory

Review: Annually or when there are significant changes

Date to be reviewed: Summer 2023

**This policy has been reviewed with regard to the work/life balance of staff.**

Adopted by the Governors' Policy Committee on: 28/06/2022

Ratified at the Full Governors' meeting on: 04/07/2022

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT**

The Education Reform Act states that a balanced education should promote the "spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of students". The Act requires that Religious Education (RE) is taught throughout Years 7 - 13 in order to ensure that this goal is achieved. When agreeing the content of provision the school consults the locally agreed syllabus produced by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education). RE encourages inquiry into all the questions about life which a good education should ask and begin to answer: questions about God and humanity, good and evil, happiness and suffering, life and death, justice and mercy, right and wrong. There are two main aims which follow from the nature of the subject:

- RE helps students in their personal and corporate search for meaning and purpose in life by examining those aspects of human experience which prompt fundamental questions about beliefs and values. It enables them to explore the language used to express feelings and deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them.
- RE provides students with knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major religious traditions in order to assist in this search whilst reinforcing that people of all faiths, races and cultures should always be treated with respect and tolerance (one of the fundamental British values). It also aims to provide students with the critical thinking skills to recognise the differences between conservative religious views and extremism.

Parents/carers do have the right to withdraw their daughter/son from RE lessons or assemblies providing they make such a request in writing to the Head Teacher, but given that emphasis is placed on respecting the beliefs (religious or otherwise) of all students we anticipate this should not be necessary. Sixth Form students may choose to withdraw themselves.

Staff use opportunities in all subject areas to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respect for all.

### **POLICY ON WORSHIP**

The Governors of the school affirm that the legal requirement, for all students in attendance to take part in a daily act of worship, will be adhered to. Such acts need not take place when all the school is called together, but may be conducted in classes or with groups of students. This also takes place through the "Thought for the day" published daily on the student notices which is shared and reflected upon during daily morning registration.

The content of such acts of worship will be broadly Christian in character and are truly collective and not corporate thus recognising that we gather as a group of individuals with different beliefs, views and theories. They will be based upon the exposition of sound moral and ethical principles which reflect the ethos and values of the school. They will provide an opportunity to: share common aims and values; reinforce positive attitudes; celebrate achievement and special occasions; nurture students' respect and value for differences, beliefs, opinions and ideas and develop a community spirit. This will enable students to appreciate that each one of us is unique and that each has something to offer deepening an individual's capacity for emotional response.

Due heed will be paid to the sensitivities of those who hold no religious beliefs, or whose belief is not Christian.

The Governors respect the legal right of teachers and Sixth Formers to withdraw from the daily act of worship and for parents/carers to withdraw their children. Under the terms of The Education Reform Act 1988 S.9 (3), a request must be submitted to the Head Teacher. Every effort will be made, however, to create such an atmosphere as to enable the whole of the school to take part with integrity on such occasions.

### **Reflection / prayer room**

We recognise that staff and students may wish for a space for quiet reflection and prayer. We have taken an inclusive approach to providing, where practicable, a quiet room for use by any member of the school community during break times. Through school clubs and societies, such as the Christian Union, Diversity Group and Pride Group, other opportunities are sort to enable students and staff to reflect on their faith, embrace diversity and promote respect and sensitivity for the beliefs and values of others.