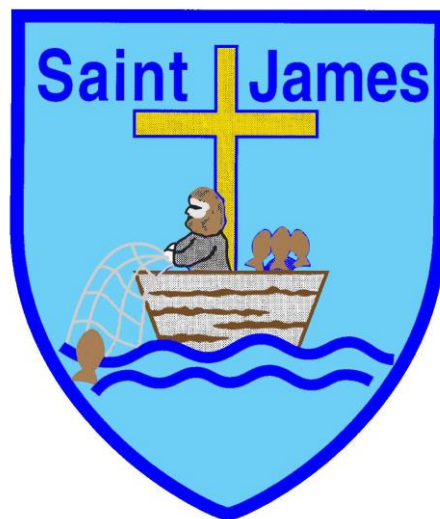


Blackburn Diocese
Altham St. James' C.E.
Primary School



Religious Education Policy

Religious Education (together with Collective Worship, through which various elements of RE will be delivered or supported) contributes to the school Christian vision.

Our children will learn to love themselves and to embrace the differences in our society. Developing the whole child is extremely important to us. We will endeavour to live out the teaching: ***“Love each other as I have loved you.” John 15:12***

Altham St James’ is a small, church school much like a family, with a child-centred approach. We work closely with family, friends and members of the church community to embed the love of God through living and learning together. We want our children to be the best they can be and believe they can make a difference because we have faith that: ***“Everything is possible with God.” Matthew 19:26***

It is our intent that children will develop a love of learning through exciting, challenging and stimulating experiences enriched by visits and visitors.

It is our mission to:

- **Be the best that we can be**
- **Respect the world and everyone in it**
- **Love, forgive and reconcile**

Altham St. James Church of England Primary School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. The school encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. At Altham St. James’ we bring together all stakeholders to promote our Christian ethos and vision and ensure that children flourish. Religious Education at Altham St. James’, aims to give children a sound knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. It also aims to support children in developing their own values and attitudes through an exploration of shared human experiences and the place and significance of Christianity and other religions in our world. Through Religious Education we build a firm foundation based on faith and knowledge that empowers children to be the best that they can be.

The school follows the Religious Education Syllabus for Church Schools, ‘Questful RE’ as provided by The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education (BDBE). The syllabus includes reference to the Understanding Christianity Syllabus and the Christian Concepts. This reflects the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2019.

At Altham St. James’ Religious Education lies at the very heart of the curriculum. The aims of Religious Education in our Church School are:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
 - To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2019

Appropriate to age at the end of their education in Church schools the expectation is that all pupils are religiously literate and, as a minimum, pupils are able to:

- Give a theologically informed and thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith.
- Show an informed and respectful attitude to religions and world views in their search for God and meaning.
- Engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all faiths and none.
- Reflect critically and responsibly on their own spiritual, philosophical and ethical convictions.

RE Statement of Entitlement: The Church of England Education Office 2016

We learn about

- God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets;
- God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

We learn from

- an empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- responding personally to the stories and teachings of Jesus Christ;
- examples of Christian living which give priority to the values of unconditional love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, compassion and faith.

At Altham St. James' we aim to help pupils to:

- learn about all faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and from them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;

- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions.

We also aim to help pupils to:

- reflect theologically and explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today;
- understand the challenge faced by Christians in today's pluralist and post-modern society;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is based on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- begin to develop their own commitments, beliefs and values;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with all faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain believers in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.

Through Religious Education we aim to enable:

- pupils and teachers to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule;
- pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity;
- pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- pupils from all faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- pupils with no religious background to be given an insight into what it means to be a person of faith;
- pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the ultimate questions and challenges of life in today's society.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

The Religious Education curriculum makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children in our school: The spiritual development within the RE curriculum in a Church school enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment. Children learn to connect with God through valuing the world we share. Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offers pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives. Social development enriches pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' 'to love one another' is put into practice. Cultural development provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a

worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has impact on the lives of millions of people. We welcome all people of faith into our school.

Organisation of RE within the school

The school follows the updated Diocesan Syllabus 'Questful RE 2022' to take into account our mixed age classes. From September 2024, the Year 1/ 2, Year 3/ 4 and Year 5/ 6 classes follow a two year rolling programme, whilst the reception pupils follow a single year programme. Christianity plays a central role within the teaching.

Assessment

Children are assessed at the end of each unit, with a decision made with individual pupils, following book observations and marking, together with class contributions and discussions.

In addition, RE is assessed termly and the results recorded.

Inclusion

Children of all abilities (including SEND and AGT pupils) are planned for using differentiated tasks and support from teaching assistants. Teachers set suitably challenging learning experiences and ensure that:

- Learning styles are considered and planned for.
- A variety of learning activities take place.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England. This foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England, removal of pupils from Worship and/or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate them from the religious life of the school. If such a request for withdrawal is made, the Headteacher will explore the reasons for the request and seek to arrive at an accommodation. It may be that only some elements of Religious Education or Worship are objected to. Parents may request the governing board to provide Religious Education for their children according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. This can only be requested when parents cannot, with reasonable convenience, arrange for their children to attend another school where Religious Education is provided according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The governing board should make provision unless the circumstances make it unreasonable to do so. Should the governing board be unable to make such arrangements for Religious Education to be delivered according to the Agreed Syllabus, the responsibility for doing so then falls on the Local Authority. The Local Authority may decide that such a request for separate Religious Education is unreasonable and the parental request then fails.

Resources

The resourcing of RE falls in line with the resourcing of the rest of the curriculum. We will in addition aim to use the church, its clergy and congregation as an additional source of resources

Responsibility for Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy shall be borne by the RE subject Leader (Janet Patterson) and the head teacher (Carol Woods). A termly report will be provided for Reverend Toby Webber, the RE Governor, who will report back to the Governing Body. The theologically rooted Christian vision is also a termly item on the Governor's agenda.

Reviewed April 2024