St James CE

Primary School

Religious Education Policy

September 2026

Policy adopted: 1st September 2026
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St James Church of England Primary School

Inclusion, Equality and Community Cohesion Policy Statement

At St James Church of England Primary School, we aim to provide high quality education which is inclusive and equips pupils for life-long learning. We strive to enable all pupils to achieve their optimum potential.

We aim to promote inclusivity, equality and community cohesion as an integral aspect of our school development, permeating all our policies, in order to increase the learning and participation of all our pupils.

We recognise and value the varied life experiences and needs of all members of our school community. Our school is one in which the teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of each child matters.

We are committed to ensuring that school practice reflects our inclusive aims by utilising resources to both within the school and the Local Community, by responding to diversity and equality.

We aim to develop an acceptance of the British Values and democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect, fair mindedness and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The school strives to establish equal rights and inclusive values by having high expectations for all pupils, by valuing all children and through the sharing of the same philosophy by all staff, governors and parents alike.

Religious Education Policy - St James CE Primary School

Religious Education in a Church School should be of the highest standard, always striving for excellence, reflecting the school's distinctive Christian character.

St James CE Primary School is a Voluntary Aided School and as such the management of Religious Education is a distinctive role of the Governors and Head Teacher. It is a member of the Liverpool Diocese Trust. At St James Church of England Primary School, the Religious Education provided is in conformity with the school's Trust Deed and in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England. The Governing Body as a whole is responsible for determining the nature of Religious Education provided and have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus which fulfils all legal requirements and the RE Statement of Entitlement from the Church of England Education Office 2019. Although Religious Education and Collective Worship naturally compliment and enrich one another, these are managed separately.

Our School Vision:

As a Church of England School our Christian vision is central to all we do. Our vision is:

"Journeying together to Live, Learn and Laugh with the Love of God.

The apostle Paul writes about the Christian virtues of love in his letter to the church at Corinth: "Do everything in love' (1 Corinthians 16:14.) This virtue is not only important in Christian discipleship; it is also important to how we live our lives at St James CE Primary School. Both pupils and staff endeavour to live out this daily at St James.

Linked to our school vision is our Journey Drivers. The purpose of our Journey Curriculum is to ensure that our children are successful in life and learning, no matter what their starting points and barriers to learning may be. Just as the journey undertaken by thousands of Christians each year along the

Camino de Santiago to the tomb of St James symbolises faith, courage and hope, the Journey Curriculum is designed to offer our children the opportunity to develop their own faith, their own spirit and hope for the future in terms of their achievements and aspirations. As a school, our curriculum sets high expectations for each and every child, meaning that we are relentless in our commitment to overcoming barriers faced by our pupils and to developing children who are self-motivated in their pursuit of learning. St James urges us to ask God for wisdom as we journey through life and with this in mind, our Journey Curriculum signifies our commitment to accruing wisdom at every level, thus allowing children to flourish across their time with us and beyond.

The intent of our Religious Education curriculum, reflecting our Christian distinctiveness and theologically underpinned Christian Vision, is for all of our pupils to acquire and develop a deepening knowledge and understanding of global Christianity, alongside the other principal world religions that are represented throughout our multi-cultural world. Our core religious teaching encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to all aspects of their learning and also to enhance their personal spiritual, moral, social and cultural development— thus providing our learners with the wisdom, knowledge and skills to be a functioning member of society. These attitudes include self-awareness, respect, open-mindedness and appreciation and wonder.

A key feature of our curriculum is within the large number of questions included in each unit, nurturing our children's curiosity around the impact of Religion within their lives. The purpose of these questions is to give pupils the opportunity to investigate, reflect, evaluate and make meaning. In doing so, they will discover more about themselves, their relationships with others, their relationship with the world around them and their relationship with God.

Through our RE teaching, we also prepare children for citizenship in today's diverse society and enabling our children to celebrate difference and diversity by developing ways to show respect for others.

St James is a Church school and so the teaching of RE lies at the very heart of the school's curriculum.

At St James Church of England Primary School, we deliver a RE curriculum that enables pupils to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, this should include the ways in which it is unique and diverse. With teaching centered around the Understanding Christianity resource, pupils will engage with biblical text and theological ideas in an age appropriate way with an exploration of core concepts and questions. Pupils will also engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews, including extensive opportunities for them to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. Our Religious Education Curriculum also introduces pupils to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences.

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement, governors have adopted the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Syllabus for RE which reflects the National Framework for RE, the National Society Statement of Entitlement and the requirements of SIAMS. At least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE, (although this is as high as up to 10% of teaching time) and Christianity is the majority religion studied in each year group. There is appropriate teaching about the Jewish and Islamic faiths and world views is included in the RE curriculum.

The aims of Religious Education at St James 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.

At St James, our 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.

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.

Religious Education at St James helps 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 other 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.

Religious Education in Church Schools should 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.

It is necessary in today's world that children should be encouraged to foster a respect for the followers of the other world faiths. It is essential that this respect is based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of those faiths.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. Spiritual development within us RE curriculum enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

Moral development is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer 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' command 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 an impact on the lives of millions of people.

British Values:

Our school Christian values and our Journey Drivers of 'Understanding British and Christian Values') ensure that British Values are implicit and embedded in all that we do. This is part of our long-term plan to prepare our children for living in modern Britain where we value every individual person, whether child or adult. We actively promote equality and diversity. It also means that we will promote through discussion, respect for democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths. Evidence for this will come from work in classes (including our St James Spirit Curriculum) as well as the Vision Ambassadors, Pupil Leaders and other clubs. We will challenge opinions or behaviours in anyone who does not uphold these values.

Children with Special Educational Needs:

Every pupil can achieve access our RE curriculum including all pupils with SEND as a statutory part of the core curriculum. Our highly skilled teachers tailor the planning of the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils through adaptive teaching. The law says that the Agreed Syllabus is to be taught to SEND pupils 'as far as it is practicable.' RE provision for different groups of

pupils will vary but all pupils are included. Please read our SEND information page for more in depth information.

Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting:

The Curriculum Leader alongside the Religious Education Subject Champion are responsible for the monitoring and reviewing of the teaching of RE in school and for reporting standards in RE to the Governing Body. This includes, work scrutiny, pupil interviews, lesson observations and the review of assessment data. The Subject Champion is responsible for ensuring that RE is appropriately resourced.

Assessments are carried out on a half termly basis in line with recommendations in the Blackburn Diocese Board of Education Syllabus. Class teachers report on standards in RE to parents in the children's annual progress report and progress is also discussed in termly pupil progress meetings.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Collective Worship Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality objectives

Parental Rights of Withdrawal.

'The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England or Methodist Church Foundation. 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 or Methodist Church ethos, 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.'

Executive Headteacher: Jennifer Young.
Curriculum Leader: Tina Briers
Religious Education Subject Champion: Karen Lister.