

November 2021

Dear Prospective candidate

**FAITH REFERENCES**

As you are aware the person specification for the post for which you are applying states that you are asked to provide a ‘*positive and supportive faith reference from the priest/minister where the applicant regularly worships’*.

In the light of this and given that a priest is often managing ministry teams and/or more than one church/parish, we offer the following advice when seeking faith references.

1. Speak to the priest before completing your application to ask them to agree to act as a referee.

2. Ensure that the priest is aware of:

* your involvement in parish life e.g. groups you attend/lead, Bible reading or intercession rota etc. (it may be that currently you are not heavily involved in parish life due to other commitments)
* your present post – name of school, areas of responsibility, etc
* the post to which you are applying – name of school, post, etc

By following the above advice, you are able to prepare the priest for the reference request and so ensure it will be completed as fully as possible~~.~~

Candidates who do not use their Parish priest/minister must explain the reason for this in the letter of application. This can be for a number of reasons, e.g. because the parish is in vacancy, or has a recently appointed priest. Whatever the situation, failure to explain may lead to your application not progressing further in the process.

The following websites set out the current list of churches that are members of Churches Together in England, the Evangelical Alliance and North-West Gospel Partnership. Please ensure that your place of worship is on the list.

The list of Churches Together in England and its associated bodies can be found at [www.cte.org.uk](http://www.cte.org.uk) The list of member churches of the Evangelical Alliance can be found at [www.eauk.org](http://www.eauk.org) The list of member churches of the North West Gospel Partnership can be found at <https://northwestpartnership.com/>

Yours faithfully,

Pam Carter

**Associate Adviser for Blackburn Diocese**

**Other matters.**

The National Society Contract of employment will be used.

The relevant section of the contract is as follows:

*As the Headteacher of a Church of England school, you are required to have regard to the Christian character of the School and its Foundation and to undertake not to do anything in any way contrary to the interests of the Foundation.*

*You are required to give and/or supervise the giving of religious education in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England and the Trust Deed of the school.*

*You are required to take part in and lead acts of religious worship.*

**Board of Education**

Diocesan Offices

Clayton House

Walker Office Park

Blackburn

BB1 2QE

Tel. 01254 503070

**The Diocese**

The Diocese of Blackburn covers most of the County of Lancashire, the Unitary Authorities of Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and part of the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan.

There are 211 parishes and 280 churches within the Diocese, divided into two arch deaneries, served by the Bishop of Blackburn and his two Suffragan Bishops of Burnley and Lancaster.

**The Diocese and its schools**

No other Diocese has such an extensive commitment to Church of England and Methodist schools. The diocese has some of the most distinctive schools, most of which are aided or formerly aided. There are a small number of church academies in comparison with many being part of three multi-academy trusts that have church majority membership. Schools range in size from 1600 pupils in the largest to small primary schools in rural communities with less than 30 on roll, educating over 44 000 students on a daily basis.

The Diocese, like the Church of England nationally, believes that church school education stands at the centre of the church’s mission and rigorously promotes the distinctive nature of church schools. Church schools endeavour to ensure that a Christian perspective informs all aspects of life. This is reflected in our promotion of Christian belief and values throughout the whole curriculum, the high priority given to worship and religious education and in the Christian nurture and care afforded to all members of the school community.

**Diocesan support for Church education**

The staff of the Diocesan Board of Education provide a considerable range of services to the schools of the Diocese: governor training, preparation of policies, advice before and after Inspection, SIAMs Inspection service, Admission/appeal advice, support for religious education and worship, legal, practical and financial help for Aided school buildings, negotiations with local authorities, the Church of England Education Office and the DFE.

In addition, a co-operative approach has been developed with the Methodist Church and its education officers for the support of Methodist schools in the North West Districts. There is also very close liaison between the Church of England Dioceses in the North of England.