



ESHER CHURCH SCHOOL

Christ at the Centre; Life to the Full

Collective Worship Policy

Mission Statement and Ethos

Christ at the centre, life to the full

At Esher Church School our vision is based on John 10:10, 'I have come that they can have life and have it to the full'.

We have high expectations for our children's attainment, helping them to be the best that they can be. Underpinning this, we believe that education is as much about character development as it is about academic achievement.

Our Christian ethos encourages us to reflect on and live our lives based on Jesus' teaching and our Christian values which can be summarised into four distinct elements that the Church of England uses to define its role within education: wisdom, hope, dignity and community.

Our aim is to educate for wisdom, hope, community and dignity so that children become independent learners and well-rounded, responsible citizens so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning journey.

Values Education

We blend Christian teaching and Values education in order to create opportunities for children to develop spiritually, physically, emotionally, personally, socially, mentally and intellectually so that their self esteem and well-being is sound and supported by ever growing emotional intelligence. Teaching of Christian Values and British values leads to an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as young citizens.

Christian Values days

Each half term we dedicate a day to explore deeply our Christian Value for the half term. We use a cycle of twelve values over a two year cycle. During Christian Values days, children combine learning and reflection with a range of creative cross-curricular outcomes that are often displayed centrally for the half term. We aim to link each of our Christian values back to the four key elements of wisdom, hope, dignity and community.

Collective worship

At Esher Church School we create many and varied opportunities for children to worship, reflect and meditate. The daily act of collective worship is an integral and important part of school life. It is a time when we come together to:

- learn about God's love
- better understand the Christian faith
- reflect on our values
- celebrate achievements
- share disappointments
- be one body.

Our collective worship varies though out the week to make it accessible and inclusive, and we encourage contributions from staff, children, parents, clergy and other visitors. We recognise the importance of coming together, based on the Biblical model of community, and expect all teaching and support staff to attend collective worship assemblies.

The Collective worship timetable is as follows:

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Headteacher with a theme based on the Lectionary and in a traditional Anglican style
Tuesday	Key stage worship led by the Deputy Head, one for EYFS/KS1 and the other for KS2 The themes are usually the same, based on our value for the half term, but differentiated for the different age groups
Wednesday	Appreciation assembly led by teachers on a rota basis, one for KS1 and the other for KS2
Thursday	Key stage worship, with a greater emphasis on music, drama and child participation, led by the Senior Leader for Christian Distinctiveness. Themes support the value of the half term, follow a specific programme for a half term (such as Fruits of the Spirit) and also key celebrations in the church calendar.
Friday	Whole school celebration, led by the Headteacher or Deputy Head. During this assembly we recognise and thank God for our gifts and talents and ask for His help in using them wisely.

In Reception, the children enjoy collective worship in their classroom. They worship each day, with the children leading the worship by selecting cards showing gathering, message and prayer activities following by some meditation time.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including singing. A range of prayers are used including the Lord's Prayer, the school prayer, prayers written by children and spontaneous prayer from either children or adults. At the beginning of the lunch hour, Grace is said by either an adult

or child in each class. Prayers are also said or written at various times within the school day; these prayers can be displayed in class or in the hall. Every classroom has a Reflective Area, where the Christian Value of the half term is displayed and where there are opportunities for creative prayer. Children use these spaces to give them a moment to reflect during the school day.

Groups of parents and staff hold an evening Prayer Meeting during the second week of each half term. We also hold an informal family prayer meeting termly, at the end of the school day, where children are welcome to come and pray with teachers and their parents.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, Esher Church School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge – their role is to educate, not to evangelise. Our links with our parish church, Christ Church, is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with frequent visits to the school from the Rector of Esher to lead worship and participate in school events. The school holds services regularly in the parish church.

Other Faiths

At ECS our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values; we are committed to respecting the faith stance and culture of each member of our community, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of differences in belief or background. Whilst we teach about Jesus, we make our worship inclusive by encouraging those of other faiths or no faith to make their own prayers or reflect quietly within their own spiritual guidelines.

Evaluation and Monitoring

We plan collective worship using the Lectionary, our cycle of Christian Values and enriching this with series of worship that will be relevant and meaningful for our children. We offer all staff opportunities to lead acts of worship should they wish to do so, and encourage staff to undertake training in this area.

Staff regularly feedback to one another informally about the content and reception of collective worship. Foundation governors also monitor and evaluate collective worship sessions and we request regular feedback from children.

Withdrawal from Collective Worship

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship should they wish to do so. However, we aim to make our worship open and inclusive to allow all children to fully participate.

Equal Opportunities and Special Needs and Disabilities

We aim to include all children in our collective worship, regardless of their faith background.

We provide additional adult support if children require support in order to fully engage with collective worship. We believe it is vital for those with SEND to participate in this act as part of the school community.