



ESHER CHURCH SCHOOL

Christ at the Centre; Life to the Full



Prospectus 2020

Welcome

On behalf of our staff, parents and governors, I am delighted to welcome you to Esher Church School.

At ECS our highly experienced and dedicated staff team provide a safe, happy and loving environment and aim to deliver excellent teaching in a way that inspires children to learn and explore and gives them the knowledge and skills that they need to be agents of change in the world. Our academic outcomes are high and we place a strong emphasis on ensuring that all children are challenged so that they are motivated and enjoy their learning.

As a Church of England school, we place a strong emphasis on Christian Values and encourage the children think about how to use these values to have a positive impact on their own lives and the lives of those around them.

We provide wide range of opportunities for the children to engage in practical activities as well as exciting trips, visits and cultural experiences. We actively promote children's participation in sport, music and the arts through our curriculum and through our extensive co-curricular clubs programme.

We will keep you informed about your child's progress regularly. We have an 'open-door' policy and our teachers are happy to arrange meetings with parents to discuss any concerns you may have or indeed any other aspect of school life. Should you wish to talk any matters over with me then you are most welcome to do so. I am never too busy to talk to a parent and always make every effort to be available and visible around school.

I hope that our prospectus provides you with a clear overview of our school, its organisation and aims. There is no substitute, though, for seeing the school in action and talking to our children. We have regular Open Events during the autumn term and are happy to arrange visits at other times.

We want your child to be happy in school, to enjoy their learning, and to grow academically, emotionally and spiritually and to be the best that they can be.

I look forward to meeting you.

Caroline McLennan
Acting Head





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Esher Church School

Our building in Milbourne Lane has been our home since 1968, although the history of the school began with the school on Esher Green. A building fund was launched in 1856 when the existing school, which was managed by the Rector of Esher and a group of helpers, proved too small to meet the needs of local children. Major contributors to the fund were King Leopold I of Belgium who lived at Claremont during his marriage to Princess Charlotte of Wales and Queen Marie Amelie, who lived at Claremont when she went into exile with her husband, King Louis Philippe, after being driven from the French throne in 1848. The fund was sufficient to allow the rebuilding and formal opening of the school in 1859.

Queen Victoria was a frequent visitor to Esher and became the Royal Patron of the school. The Duchess of Albany (the widow of Queen Victoria's youngest son, Prince Leopold) also visited frequently and awarded prizes and gave an annual treat to the pupils. Her daughter, Princess Alice, began the tradition of presenting an annual Needlework prize, a tradition which continued at the school until 2000.

Another prize, the Petre Award, dates from 1871 when money from a bequest made by Mr Nathaniel Petre was used to buy Bibles. These were presented "to the boy or girl who, during the year, have set the best example both in and out of school". Again this tradition was followed until July 2000; since then every child leaving the school has been presented with a Bible at the leavers' assembly in July.

In 1968 the school moved to its present site as a Voluntary Aided Primary School. This later became a First and Middle School before being reorganised as a Primary School in 1993, with two new classrooms built to accommodate our younger children. Subsequently, 5 further new classrooms have been added to the 'old school' to allow the school's expansion to two form entry throughout. The school became an academy in February 2015; it retains its close links to local parishes and to the Diocese of Guildford.

Our Ethos

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

John 10:10

Our school motto, **‘Christ at the Centre; life to the full’**, is based on Jesus’ words in John 10:10

Our aim for every child is to enable them to achieve *‘life to the full’*. This means that we promote the development of the whole child, enabling them to be the very best that they can be physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually as well as academically. We believe that childhood should be a happy time, and that a child’s primary school years should be special; formative and transformative, so much more than a stepping stone to secondary education. It is therefore important to us that every child enjoys and gets the most out of every day that they are with us.

Our Christian Ethos is at the heart of all we do – however we are not a faith school for Christians, but a church school for all. We are an inclusive community and welcome children from all backgrounds.

Our Vision:

To be a safe, happy, loving community where excellent teaching inspires children to learn and explore, care for each other and believe that they can make a difference.

Our Aims:

We welcome and value everyone in our school community

We create a safe environment through being kind and respectful. We are role models to each other, celebrating efforts and achievements

We offer an enriched curriculum that enables children to master academic skills and be ready to develop their creative, investigative and critical powers. We provide opportunities to reflect on injustice and consider ways we can be agents of change

We encourage children to embrace challenge without fear, whilst promoting resilience

We are committed to the wellbeing of staff, pupils and all members of our community



“Pupils enjoy coming to school because of the caring ethos at the heart of the school’s culture.”
Ofsted 2019

Our Values:

We value:

- **Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills:**

Fostering confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and fully developing talents in all areas of life

- **Hope and Aspiration:**

Seeking resilience, coping wisely with things and people going wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.

- **Community and Living Well Together:**

Ensuring a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.

- **Dignity and Respect:**

Ensuring the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique and worthy individual.



*"Relationships and behaviour are very positive and shaped by the school's Christian character."
SIAMS Inspection, 2018*

Our curriculum is carefully planned by teachers to ensure that it will engage, enthuse and motivate our children.

There are five core subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education and Computing plus seven foundation subjects: history, geography, art, design and technology, modern foreign languages (Spanish), music and physical education. In addition we have a detailed scheme of work to teach personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education.

Parents are given details of the curriculum to be covered at the beginning of each academic year; many of the subjects are taught in a cross curricular way, via our 'Big Enquiries'. This means that each year group begins each half term aiming to answer a question, for example, 'Is it better to eat like a Tudor or a Caveman?'. In order to establish the answer to the question they need to know the history of Tudors and cave men as well as what constitutes a healthy diet—so covering learning in both history and science. This method of teaching enables the children to make links between subjects, as well as being a highly engaging way for the children to extend their knowledge.

We place a strong emphasis on the 'cornerstone' subjects of English and Maths. We use a range of teaching strategies to suit the needs of all our children and pay particular attention to stretching our most able children by, for example, entering the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge from year 5 for our able mathematicians and arranging author visits to inspire our writers.

Our curriculum is designed to support the children in understanding how small things they can do can make a difference in the world. Opportunities such as raising money for charity, helping the local environment and supporting the community are woven in to lessons at every opportunity.



"The curriculum is a particular strength. Pupils enjoy coming to school because teachers make learning interesting and relevant....much of the learning is based around real-life experiences. Practical activities are the norm. Educational visits and trips help pupils to make sense of what they are learning about and why."
Ofsted 2019

Our curriculum is enhanced by a range of trips and visits to further inspire the children and complement the learning they undertake in school. These range from a walk to the local woods to look at the changing seasons all the way up to residential visits in years 4, 5 and 6. These experiences help the children to put their learning into context and to experience learning in a range of settings.



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Ofsted 2019

Play

At our school, play is not something that children do in between learning—it is a fundamental part of learning. It is the playground where children have the best opportunities to learn and practice the social and communication skills that are essential to a good education.

We aim to provide high quality, sustainable play opportunities for all children. These inclusive opportunities in play are achieved by offering carefully considered outdoor spaces, equipment and toys that offer a rich choice of accessible play experiences for every child. Play has a vital role in children’s health, happiness and wellbeing and it creates children who are independent, confident, imaginative, adaptable, social and able to assess risks.

Our playground consists of a brand new Playzone, incorporating a large sandpit, pebble play and water play area, a mud kitchen, a forest school zone, a small world play area, a wheeled play zone, dressing up and lots more. We teach the children how to respect and look after their play areas and teach them how to play with one another in a fun and safe way.



Co Curricular Learning

Opportunities continue beyond the taught school day as we run a wide range of co-curricular clubs and activities for your child to enjoy. Clubs are run by teachers or by outside providers. We currently offer:

Art

Athletics (Summer Term)

Chess Club

Chinese

Construction Club

Cross Country

Dance Club

Dramacademy Drama Club

Dramanotes Glee Club

Eco Club

Football

French Club

Gymnastics

Hockey (Surbiton Hockey Club)

Homework Club

Judo

Multisports

Netball

Orchestra

Phase 1/2 Choir

Phase 3 Choir

Recorder Clubs

Tennis (Esher Lawn Tennis Club)



Participating in co-curricular clubs can help to boost children's self-esteem, build their confidence and support them in making new friendships and so we encourage all children to participate in this programme. Children in sports clubs are likely to represent the school in matches in local sports leagues or against other schools, and our choirs and orchestra have regular opportunities to perform both in and out of school.

Homework (Home Learning)^{1.0}



We believe that a positive partnership between home and school is vital to support children's learning. We never want homework to become a chore or a battle and so have developed a policy which balances support for children's learning whilst recognising that children these days can lead busy lives and family time is precious.

The majority of the homework we set is reading, reading comprehension, spelling and mental maths practice as these represent core elements of children's learning which parents can easily support with. As the children progress

through the school they are set an increasing amount of written work, appropriate to their age. Should children want to do more homework we set some open ended 'learn and explore' activities each half term which are optional but are designed to be fun and engage the children in different styles of learning. These could include designing a poster, researching an aspect of a Big Enquiry or even baking a cake using World War 2 rations.

We run an after school homework club for junior children each week in order to support families who find homework at home difficult for any reason. Children can attend the club every week, or just dip into it if they have a piece of work they are finding particularly tricky or are finding it hard to complete work at home for any reason.

Assessment

When children enter our reception classes, their teachers carry out a simple baseline assessment to gauge what they know and can already do so that we can build on their existing knowledge effectively. From then on children's development is continually assessed whilst they are engaging in both learning and play activities.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessments are made in six areas of learning: personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development.

In years 1-6, continual assessment of children's progress continues, and teachers use this assessment to inform their subsequent teaching. This is known as formative assessment. More formal assessments are made termly when the children sit tests in reading comprehension, spelling and grammar and maths to check what they have learnt and understood. The results of these assessments are shared with parents each term.

Regular assessment ensures that children make good progress and that if children are falling behind, or need greater challenge, their needs can be met.

The school participates in the DfE's statutory assessments. Children are assessed in phonics in Year 1, in reading, writing and maths at the end of year 2, undergo the multiplication (times table) check in year 4 and sit end of year 6 SATs in reading, writing, maths and science before they head off to secondary school.

"Pupils make good or better progress across the school. This is true across the breadth of the curriculum, but particularly in reading and mathematics.."

Excellent pastoral support is at the core of what we do at Esher Church School. As a church school, with Christian Values at our heart, it is important to all our staff that our children are loved and valued and that our parents feel welcomed and supported.

Great pastoral care starts with excellent relationships between staff and children. Teachers aim to greet each child as they come into school every day, and get to know each child individually—their character traits, their likes and dislikes, their hobbies etc—in order to build a trusting relationship.

There are times, though, when children and/or families need a little extra or more specialist support, such as through bereavement, family break ups etc. We have two qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistants in school who are specially trained to support children who need additional help for any reason, using a combination of play therapy, small group or individual programmes or just providing a listening ear. We also have a Home School Link Worker, who will meet with families outside of school and children in school to support with any issues or problems. The Home School Link Worker also runs parenting courses from time to time and holds coffee mornings in school for parents to seek informal advice.

Pastoral care is not something that is only provided by adults at Esher Church School. Our children are excellent at supporting one another both through organised programmes and by helping one another whenever they see a need. When children join us in reception they are paired up with a Year 6 'Big Friend' who will help them to settle in and keep an eye on them at playtime as well as helping out in the classroom, sharing stories, using the computers or creating artwork. We also regularly train 'peer mentors', year 5 children who are able to support other children in sorting out any disputes that might arise.



Esher Church School Association (ECSA)

The ECSA are our school's Parent Teacher Association. Every parent and carer at school is an ECSA member and they form such an important part of our school community. We have a dedicated committee (photo below) who oversee the organisation of some wonderful events throughout the year which not only raise funds for the school but are great fun too. Events include the Summer Fair, the Christmas Bazaar, Quiz Night, Kids' triathlon, Esher Runs (10K and Fun Run Event), Kids' disco and the social event of the year, the Summer Ball, at which our outgoing year 6 children act as waiters and waitresses and help the MC (photo below).

We use funds raised by ECSA events to buy those extras that we would not ordinarily be able to afford from school budgets but which makes learning much better for our children. Recently the ECSA have contributed £17,000 towards the new Playzone and have purchased a class set of ipads for delivering the computing curriculum more effectively.

All of our parents have the opportunity to get involved with these events or can suggest their own ideas—it is a fantastic way to bring our community together.



Breakfast, After School and Holiday Club

We run a very popular 'wrap around care' service at ECS. Children can be dropped at school from 7:45am and can remain on the school site in our After School Club until 5:45pm. This provides an invaluable service for working parents, but is also used by children who simply want to 'hang out' with their friends after school.



Our holiday club runs for 2-3 weeks in the summer holiday, for around a week at Easter and usually for 3 days during half term breaks.

At these clubs, children are able to use our amazing play facilities and the swimming pool and take part in some organized activities (such as trips to the cinema, baking and slime making (see photo) as well as enjoying some much

needed down time.

Life at Esher Church School

*"Pupils thrive at Esher Church School."
Ofsted, 2019*

So what is it about Esher Church School that sets us apart from the crowd?

Keeping our Christian Ethos and Values at the heart of all we do means that every child is unreservedly respected, valued and loved as a member of our community. This ethos shows too in relationships between staff and the fact that our school is such a happy place means we are able to retain excellent and experienced staff on our team.

Our curriculum is exciting and enthuses the children. It supports them in becoming agents of change. Our children thrive on these opportunities and will frequently ask if they can organise their own fund raising activity or arrange for the school to participate in an event—and we always support them in achieving their goals.

We have high academic outcomes and our children are very well prepared for life at secondary school after they leave us. Secondary school headteachers often comment on how wonderful it is to take children from Esher Church School as their enthusiasm for learning and good manners set them apart. We encourage a growth mind-set in children and adults at school—we learn by making mistakes and we can achieve anything if we put our minds to it.

We firmly believe that learning takes place both in and beyond the classroom, and so, alongside academic rigour, consider the wider opportunities we offer our children to enable them to be the best that they can be.

Our community is incredible. There is a genuine sense of support for one another that comes to the fore whenever there is a need. The Esher Church School network springs into action to offer help and care whenever and wherever it can.

We are a busy school, with lots going on for children to get involved with. Just a flavour of these opportunities are outlined below:

SPORT

We believe that playing sport is vital for children's fitness as well as affording the opportunity for children to develop skills in teamwork and sportsmanship. We partner with some of the best sporting organisations to ensure our children have the best possible teaching in PE and sport. Our youngest children in reception and Year 1 have weekly Play-ball sessions which really supports their early ball and hand/eye co-ordination skills. We play in the local schools' hockey, football and net-ball leagues, the district athletics and cross country competition, the swimming gala, a cycle event, a triathlon, indoor athletics, rugby tournaments and this year are adding a table tennis competition to our repertoire. We have an excellent performance record in competitive sports with our teams standing up well against the competition. We have an excellent streetdance teacher who works with all the children and we work closely with our neighbours at Esher Lawn Tennis Club to offer our children the best in tennis coaching.

We are very fortunate to have our own swimming pool on site which means children in every year group can have a weekly swimming lesson throughout the summer and the first half of the autumn term.



MUSIC

We encourage all our children to participate in musical activities. Our choirs are particularly active, with children regularly singing in church services, visiting care homes and taking part in events such as Voice in a Million—a massed choir event held at Wembley Arena—during which, last year, our choir were selected to perform on stage.

We have a wide range of peripatetic music teachers offering brass, woodwind, violin, voice, drum, guitar and piano lessons and our instrumentalists are encouraged to join our school orchestra and to participate in our informal ‘tea time concerts’, held termly. At the end of each academic year we hold a performing arts showcase, ‘Encore’, held in the performing arts studio at Esher High School, during which our children sing, dance and play beautifully, showing amazing support for one another along the way.



Destination of Leavers

At the end of Year 6, our children move to a range of secondary schools in both the maintained and independent sectors. Approximately half of our children move to independent schools for year 7.

In 2018 our leavers' destinations were:

Esher High School, Hinchley Wood School, Cobham Free School, Heathside, Tiffin School, Tiffin Girls' School, Tolworth Girls' School, Guildford High School, Surbiton High School, Tormead, Royal Grammar School, Reeds School, Halliford, Hampton School, Kingston Grammar School and Claremont Fan Court School.

Each year we hold an information meeting for parents of children in years 4 and 5 to support with making decisions about transition to secondary school.

Joining us...

If you are interested in your child joining us, or if you have any further questions, please give us a call on 01372 463 139 or drop an email to office@esherchurchschool.org.uk

We will be very happy to help.