

Esher Church School



Collective Worship Policy

2025 - 2026

Approved by:	Christian Distinctiveness committee
Last reviewed on:	December 2025
Review cycle	Annual
Next review due by:	September 2026

Vision and values

Our school vision and values are based on and reflect a Christian understanding of the nature of God and how they motivate, underpin and express the school's service to its community.

The ECS Vision

'Love one another' – John 13:34

*Rooted in Christian values of **community, wisdom and courage**, we aspire to grow in kindness, learn with confidence and make a difference in the world.*

Our Core Purpose

At Esher Church School, we aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment, based on our school's Christian values, where all feel confident to learn, face challenges and take risks. We ensure that all are motivated, engaged and supported in becoming the best possible version of themselves.

Introduction:

As a Church of England school, we consider worship to be central to the life of our school. It is an affirmation and celebration of the values, principles and ethos of the school and provides the principal opportunity for the children to express and develop their spirituality.

There is a legal requirement, under the Education Reform Acts 1988 and 1993 for pupils to take part in a daily act of collective worship. The National Society (Church of England) for Promoting Religious Education, in its 'Terms and Union' states: 'The daily act of collective worship required by law in the school shall be consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England' and 'use shall be made...of the parish Church or other Church of England places of worship, both for occasional acts of collective worship and for religious education.'

In its fullest sense, worship is a 'whole life' concern and embraces everything we do which expresses the centrality and worth of God. We could, therefore, include respect for all others who are made in God's image as an act of worship. However, in respect of Collective Worship in this Church of England school, and particularly for the purposes of this policy, we are concerned here with those designated and/or special acts and occasions whose purpose is to enable all who belong to the school to encounter and show reverence to God.

Collective Worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly, or in a service held in the Church. Everyone is expected to participate, and those conducting Collective Worship do so in a manner that, as far as possible, is sensitive to individual traditions, beliefs and questions of all members of the school. All acts of worship in our school will contain at least some explicitly Christian worship (that is worship offered to or through Jesus Christ); however, there are occasions when, as part of this, it is also appropriate to acknowledge and occasionally reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Collective Worship at Esher Church School also encompasses classroom prayers and time for reflection during the school day.

In line with the Church of England's 'Collective Worship in Church of England Schools Guidance' (2021), acts of worship at Esher Church School aim to be: Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring:

Inclusive: In the Church school pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all.

Invitational: Worship should provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with integrity.

Inspirational: Worship should be formational and transformational: it should enable pupils and adults to ask big questions about who we are and why we do what we do. It should motivate pupils and adults into action, into thinking differently and into reflecting on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions."

The descriptions above are taken from the guidance which can be found in full here: [Collective Worship Guidance](#)

Aims of collective worship

We aim to:

- provide an opportunity for all who belong to the school to worship and pray to God;
- reflect in the context of worship upon the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and of the Church throughout the ages; and therefore to:
 - help children to explore and develop their own spirituality and encourage them to learn how to worship;
 - enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
 - enable children to explore their own beliefs;
 - encourage participation and response;
 - develop in children a sense of community spirit, promoting a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship in our school.

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Worship Format	Values / Our World This Week. Linking global current events to Christian values	Songs of Praise Celebration through song	Themed – half termly	Themed – half termly	Celebration Assembly
Who Attends	All staff	SLT	All Staff	SLT	Support staff
Led by	Headteacher	Music teacher	Rector of Christ Church Esher	Clergy of Holy Trinity Claygate	SLT

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We support an appropriate atmosphere by using music and we light a candle that acts as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The Headteacher, other teachers and visitors from local parish churches lead Collective Worship. Other representatives of local religious groups are also welcomed. Faith Prefects and the Faith Team and other pupils are also involved in leading worships for the rest of the school.

We plan our Collective Worships to respond to the needs of the children, community and what is going on in the world. We take the themes of our acts of Collective Worship from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Our daily acts of Collective Worship may be drawn from a variety of sources, including the Diocesan Collective Worship scheme and Picture News, and where possible linked with our school values, positive learning behaviours and other key current development priorities. Children and staff are frequently asked to listen to the message of worship and then lead prayer in response at the end of the session.

Our acts of Collective Worship also naturally reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in Collective Worship by asking them to take part in sessions, show their work to the other children, discuss their successes and raise issues that they have discussed in their classes. Our weekly Celebration Assembly offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised. Esher Church School is a good school as rated by OFSTED 2024 (SIAMS 2018 rating Excellent) and we celebrate the successes of all the children in Friday's Celebration Assembly.

Seasonal Services:

Our Collective Worship programme also includes participation in a number of seasonal services, held in Christ Church Esher, over the year. These include Easter, Harvest Festival*, Christmas and the Year 6 Leavers' Service. Parents/carers, where the children lead these services for the other children, staff members and parents/carers. *(blessed in school by the clergy)

Monitoring:

It is the role of the Headteacher and RE Leaders to monitor the policy and practice of Collective Worship. Staff and pupils are encouraged to give feedback regularly on Collective Worship. This feedback is kept by the Headteacher, RE Leaders and members of the trustees Christian Distinctiveness committee and fed into future planning. Faith Prefects and members of the Faith team are also asked for regular feedback on collective worship. Trustees are also invited throughout the year to attend collective worship.

Equal Opportunities:

Our aim is that every child is given the opportunity, and support in taking advantage of the opportunity, to learn and develop their potential in every area of school life regardless of sex, race, ability, social class, religion or appearance.

Right of Withdrawal:

We expect all children to attend Collective Worship. However, any parent/carer can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents/carers do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the Education Reform Act.

The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who are withdrawn from Collective Worship.