



UT VOCE ITA VITA

# EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

## Collective Worship Policy

**Last reviewed:** September 2024

**Next review:** September 2026

**Governor oversight:** Pastoral Committee

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This policy applies to the whole School, including the EYFS.

Fostering a sense of community and spirituality are integral to the ethos and life of Exeter Cathedral School.

The School has its origins in Christian worship, and to this day the magnificent Cathedral continues to play a central role in the lives of pupils and staff at ECS.

Worship and collective stillness are at the heart of the rhythm of the School, and give all members of the School community the opportunity to gather together in stillness, to listen, to reflect, to pray, to focus on God, themselves and the wider community, to adopt an attitude of reverence and worship, and to develop their spirituality, mindfulness and sense of community.

### Objectives

We seek to foster a gently-Christian environment in which the values of love, tolerance, acceptance, gentleness and compassion are endorsed and modelled through our daily interactions and in our decision-making.

### The School's Statement of Aims

Exeter Cathedral School is an Ancient foundation with Traditional values and a Modern approach.

#### The School seeks to:

- Be a happy and purposeful community where *people* matter.
- Promote the central importance of the development of character.
- Be a place where children can be children, where learning – in all its forms – is taken seriously, and where each and every child is known and valued as an individual.
- Offer a first-rate all-round educational experience where the focus is on developing the whole child. Our job is to work with families to help our pupils acquire the right habits for life.

- Foster a supportive, purposeful, stimulating and gently-Christian environment, in which the following provision to pupils is recognised as being paramount and held in high regard:

Academic rigour  
 Exceptional pastoral care and pupil wellbeing  
 Bright and modern facilities  
 A broad and exciting range of extra-curricular activities  
 A high-calibre sporting and wellbeing education  
 A world-class musical education  
 An unparalleled musical heritage and history  
 A sense of spirituality, timelessness, and wonder, borne out of our ancient foundations as a 12th century choir school

### **Our Values, Habits and Skills**

The endorsing and upholding of core values; the modelling and promoting of the right habits; and the acquiring and practising of key skills: this is at the heart of our curriculum (both hidden and explicit), our interactions, our decision-making and our expectations.

The following Habits are explicitly promoted and modelled to, and expected of, our pupils and staff:

<b>Pre-Prep Golden Habits</b>	<b>Prep School Habits</b>
We are kind and helpful We are gentle We listen We look after property We are honest We work hard	The habit of hard work The habit of honouring your commitments The habit of having a go and keeping going The habit of taking part The habit of listening The habit of being honest, modest and kind The habit of looking after other people The habit of looking after your surroundings The habit of looking after yourself

### **Pre-Prep Worship**

The Pre-Prep gathers regularly for an act of worship, meeting either in the Nursery or in classrooms.

Pre-Prep worship is led by the Head of Pre-Prep, the Headmaster, class teachers and occasionally a member of the Clergy or specialist teachers. On occasions we have assemblies which are led by classes, showcasing their learning, who also lead us in prayer. We close our week with a celebration assembly, reflecting on the week's themes and celebrating successes both in and out of school.

Worship in the Pre-Prep includes listening to reflective music, the lighting of a candle with responses, singing of songs and collective prayers and closing with the saying of the Grace. Where possible, usually at a time of a key Christian festival, the Pre-Prep gathers in the Cathedral (Quire, Chapter House, Nave) for an act of worship led by a member of the Clergy.

## **Prep School Worship**

The whole Prep School gathers once a fortnight in the Cathedral Quire (or, during times of building projects, in Kalendar Hall) for Headmaster's Assembly, and pupils and staff from Lower Years and Upper Years attend their own sectional assembly during the week in the Chapter House (or in Kalendar Hall if the Chapter House is unavailable). Prep School hymn practice also takes place once a fortnight. Any member of staff or an arranged visiting speaker may be involved in leading assembly. Worship in the Chapter House/Cathedral usually includes the lighting of a candle, the singing of a hymn, collective prayers, as well as social/moral/spiritual/cultural talk. It also offers an opportunity to share news within the School community and to celebrate achievements, both individual and corporate. The children participate fully in worship sessions.

The School (often involving Pre-Prep) joins together in the Cathedral (Nave, Quire) for a School service to mark key Christian festivals or the start/end of term. This is often a celebration of the Eucharist. The children regularly take part in planning and leading the services, with the support of the Heads of Section/Tutors, and a member of the clergy. These services explore liturgy using form, words, symbolic action, music and art. The Choristers may sing at these services. School services may mark a special day in the church calendar or may mark the start or end of a term. Our worship is enhanced by our intimate links with the Cathedral and by the presence of clergy and choristers, and by the invitation we extend to parents and visitors to join us in our worship where practicalities permit.

## **Clergy Assemblies**

These usually take place each week in the Prep School, and are led by a member of the Cathedral Clergy. A hymn is sung and a reading given, and the talk may involve stories from the Old Testament and New Testament. The member of clergy leads the School in prayer.

## **Confirmation**

Pupils have the opportunity to be prepared for Confirmation. Preparation is organized jointly between the School and the Cathedral.

## **Admissions**

Prospective parents are made fully aware of the gently-Christian ethos of the School and of the worship which is so central to ECS. The School is able to make alternative arrangements for those children whose parents request that they be withdrawn from acts of worship in accordance with its responsibilities under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (and the 1944 Education Act).

The Headmaster and the Head of Pre-Prep are responsible for the spiritual life of the School and, along with the Deputy Heads and the Heads of Section, have oversight of the day-to-day worship. The Job Descriptions of members of staff states that candidates are expected to be 'in sympathy' with the Christian ethos of the School.