



UT VOCE ITA VITA

EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

Policy on Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural

provision Last reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

Governor oversight: Pastoral

Exeter Cathedral School recognises the central importance of educating the whole child and of the development of character alongside, and as part of, a rigorous and exciting curriculum. We are committed to knowing each of our pupils as an individual, and are proud of our very fine reputation as a school which really nurtures, cares for, and values each individual child, and for our reputation as a school which is welcoming, inclusive, tolerant and loving, as a community where all members understand the central importance of equality and inclusivity, and in which diversity and Pupil Voice are championed.

Our vision and values

Our Vision and Values statement – published on our website – makes specific reference to this core part of an ECS education. We are:

- An ancient foundation with traditional values and a modern approach, which recognises and promotes the central importance of the development of character.
- 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.
- A happy and purposeful community where *people* matter.

Our aims

Our statement of aims – published on our website – makes clear our belief that the personal development of the whole child is of paramount importance at Exeter Cathedral School:

- We seek to offer a first-rate all-round educational experience to pupils aged 3 – 13, 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.
- To do this, we seek to 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 people

We are proud to be a school where *people* matter. We aim to work with families to help our pupils acquire the right habits for life.

Our habits

Our School rules – published to all pupils and parents – make specific mention of our School habits: habits we expect each of our pupils and staff to model and promote in their daily interactions and behaviours.

Pre-Prep Golden Habits	Prep School Habits
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

Our foundation and our history

Exeter Cathedral School was founded in the 12th century as a choir school for the Cathedral. Christian worship, the gentle majesty of the Cathedral, and the centuries-old pattern of Sung Eucharist and Choral Evensong is therefore at the very heart of the School's foundations, and to this day our pupils experience a culturally-rich and historically-significant musical education, and are blessed with the deeply-entrenched spiritual, pastoral and practical relationship that exists between Cathedral, School and the wider community.

Our ancient foundations and our crucial and inextricable links with the Cathedral continue to have a significant bearing on the character of the School through spiritual spaces and opportunities for reflection and mindfulness, through a sense of serving the community, through being part of something greater and more timeless than ourselves, and through daily exposure to the values which underpin our school: an appreciation of the spiritual; a tolerance, acceptance and celebration of others and of other; an unwavering sense of gentleness, kindness and compassion; and the firm commitment to nurturing the development of each child as an individual within a supportive, loving, considerate and gently-Christian community.

Our SMSC Provision

Our SMSC provision is delivered formally (through PSHE lessons, form time, and outside speakers) and informally (through the curriculum, assemblies, collective worship, Cathedral services, pastoral and disciplinary systems, daily exposure to the people, spaces and spirituality of the Cathedral and its community, and through the day-to-day interactions between staff and pupils).

Our SMSC provision encompasses the following areas

- To help pupils distinguish right from wrong and to respect civil and criminal law
- To help pupils identify their own moral codes and values and recognise the consequences of their own actions
- To encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely
- To develop pupils' social and interpersonal skills to enable them to foster good relationships and recognise negative or abusive ones.

- To help pupils to manage their relationships confidently and sensitively
- To learn the values of respect for one another and empathy
- To promote and celebrate equality of opportunity
- To promote and celebrate diversity within our School and the wider community
- To champion Pupil Voice, so that all pupils know their voice matters, who they can speak to, and how they can make themselves heard
- To provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England
- To assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions
- To help pupils to make choices based on respect and understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice
- To introduce pupils to the UK political system
- To encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- To prevent radicalization
- To help pupils engage in charitable fundraising and participation in local, national and international community projects

Throughout our provision we carefully consider different political standpoints without the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School. We will take steps to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. The following examples highlight the wide range of material covered at different ages and through a varied medium:

Assemblies: Interfaith Week, International Women's Day, the General Election, Consideration of Others, Courtesy and Kindness, Charitable Giving, Altruism, How to Improve your Sleep, The Royal Family, Birth Order and Personality Types, Small Acts for Big Change, One Voice One Vote, Language and Minority Groups, Gender Stereotypes, Easter, The Christmas Story, Pupil Voice, Saying Thank You, Pupil Leadership, The Importance of Failure, Common Ground, the Importance of Contributing, Perseverance, Silent Reflection, National Events and Days, non-Material Wealth, Friendships and Relationships, The Environment and Endangered Animals, Remembrance Day, The Language We Use, Social Media and Mental Health, Chinese New Year, Diversity.

Form Time: School Council elections, Eco Committee elections, Food Committee elections, charitable fundraising, participation and engagement, pupil voice, the choices we make, working and playing with others, Mental Health, Safer Internet Day, Weekly BBC Newsround, Wellbeing Check-Ins, New Years Resolutions, Diversity, Online Safety, Year 8 Mentors' Visits, Year 8 Readers' Visits.

Wellbeing Sessions and PSHE Programme: self-knowledge, self-confidence, growth mindset, reflection, asking for help, the importance of law, equality and inclusion, international/diversity fayre, Pride and LGBTIQI+, Healthy Minds, Fantastically Great Women theatre trip, Revision Masterclass, Remembrance, staying safe online, making good online decisions, asking for help online and awareness of screen time, health-related fitness, nutrition.

RS curriculum: Personalities and difference, places of worship and contrasting religions, serving the poor, working with outcasts, reconciliation, marriage/civil partnerships/other relationships, religious festivals, Christianity & Science (for example, Year 7 and 8 pupils will explore the question: 'can the account in Genesis and modern science both be right?').

Visiting Speakers & ECS Live Lectures: Bart Wielenga (Head, Blundell's School) – Making the Transition to Senior School, Oliver Ridley (King's College Taunton) – The Power of Rhetoric & Debating Workshop, Emma Haddleton (sports psychologist) – Our Amazing Brains, Andrew Berrow and Victoria Richardson (Blundell's and Wellington School) – How to Prepare for Interviews, James Sanders (Wellbeing Exeter) – An Introduction to the Wellbeing Service in Exeter, Ben Huggins (Great British Design) – My Life as an Architect, Balloons Charity – Helping Bereaved Families, Exeter Foodbank – Why Foodbanks Matter, Colonel Pearce (West Buckland School) – Developing Leadership: How to Climb a 12 Foot Wall, Christopher Godfrey (Barrister, Colleton Chambers) – What Happens in a Courtroom, Chris Bruerton (King's Singer) – High Performance: Life as a King's Singer, Roland Williams (Adventurer) – How to Build Your Own Adventure, Lizzie Featherstone – Life as a Top 100 Woman in Engineering, Sophia Pickles – The Best James Bonds are Women. Dr Vikki Barnes – What is a Doctor in Psychology and How to Become One, Leanne Ashmead – Life in the NHS, Emma Laws – Being a Curator, Dario Sansone – Economist, Jo Harris – a Career as a Vet, Charlotte Murphy – Leading Academic Research, Rachel Candler – What a Solicitor Does, Sarah Hindle – Practising Family Law, Rees Jenkins – Surveying and the Royal Marines.

Morning Assemblies (Sectional Assemblies, Headmaster's Assemblies): Prep School Assemblies take place in the Cathedral Quire and the Chapter House (or, when unavailable, within the School). The calmness and majesty of the building set the tone for the period of reflection and SMSC opportunities which follow, and we are reminded that we are part of something greater and more timeless than ourselves: an institution which for hundreds of years has welcomed, served and met the spiritual needs of a whole county and beyond. Headmaster's Assemblies begin with a period of silent reflection and end with a prayer. A hymn is usually sung, and all pupils are encouraged to sing heartily in collective worship. The sense of community and spirituality that is fostered through this collective singing is considerable, as is the exposure to the music and culture of the Church.

Pre-Prep collective worship takes place in the Nursery building and is led by the Head of Pre-Prep, the Headmaster, the School Chaplain, or another member of staff. The session begins with quiet music and stillness, the lighting of a candle, and a range of SMSC topics are introduced and discussed (perhaps through story-telling or role-play).

Clergy Assemblies: A member of the Cathedral Clergy takes an assembly once a week, either in the Cathedral/Chapter House or within the School. Pupils engage in talks about scripture, and ideas pertaining to Christian values and worship are discussed. A sense of community and spirituality is further fostered through thinking about each other and through singing and praying together.

Hymn Singing: Hymn Practice takes place for all pupils in the Prep School as part of the timetabled morning programme. Pupils can request hymns to sing.

The Pre-Prep gathers for a singing practice once a week (led by the Director of Music or Music Teacher) to learn songs and hymns appropriate to their age and understanding.

School Services: The School meets a few times each term, according to the Christian Calendar, in the Cathedral (Quire or Nave) for a (private) School service – often a Eucharist, to which, on occasion, parents and the wider school community can be invited. This takes place during the normal School day (the timetable is suspended). These services are usually designed through collaboration between the School and the cathedral's Department of Music and Liturgy, and pupils often play a central role (serving, reading, leading the prayers).

All pupils (including the EYFS and Pre-Prep where appropriate) attend these services (provision will be made for any pupils whose parents/guardians request special arrangements due to religious beliefs, although we have not known this to be requested) – the School (and the Cathedral's Department of Liturgy and Music) considers it important that the Choristers be able to attend some of these services as members of the congregation/school pupils rather than lead every service through singing. Careful consideration is taken to provide choristers with opportunities for spiritual reflection. Whilst the choristers are invited to sing at key school services (such as Christmas), for many of the regular acts of worship the choristers are encouraged to partake alongside their peers, thus allowing them the same access and space to spiritual education and reflection. Prayer, reflection, worship, music, silence, and communal stillness are afforded to each pupil through these services. Older pupils have the opportunity to serve (as the Crucifer or an Acolyte) at these services, under the guidance of the School Chaplain and the Virger on duty. Communion is offered to those who have been confirmed; a Blessing is offered to others. The School and Cathedral work together to prepare candidates for Confirmation.

Choristers

Chorister rehearsals take place each weekday morning other than Wednesdays. Accordingly, it is not usually possible for Choristers to attend each of the morning assemblies/form time sessions. The School is mindful of the SMSC needs of all of its pupils, including the Choristers, and so the following provision is in place:

- A dedicated Chorister Tutor oversees the pastoral wellbeing of the Choristers
- The Chorister Tutor has daily contact with all of the Choristers and, as required, their parents/guardians
- Choristers also have form tutors and are part of a form group along with their peers
- Wednesday morning Form Times are attended by all pupils, including Choristers
- Choristers attend all lessons and therefore access the full range of SMSC opportunities provided through the curriculum, PSHE, Form Times, visiting speakers
- Headmaster's Assembly is timetabled so that Choristers can attend
- On some Wednesday mornings, a Morning Worship Assembly (given by a senior member of staff) will be run in lieu of (as part of) the Form Time session: Choristers attend this
- The Cathedral's Director of Music is open to requests from the School for Choristers to attend some assemblies/form times/other opportunities by arrangement
- The Deputy Head (pupils), the Chorister Tutor, the Housemaster, the Cathedral Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music and the Canon Precentor meet weekly to discuss Chorister welfare and logistics
- Volunteer Chaperones (managed by the Cathedral) liaise with the Chorister Tutor
- The Choristers are part of a 900-year-old tradition of worship and music and move in and around the Cathedral, its spaces, its calm, its majesty and its people
- Prayer and reflection are an integral part of a Chorister's existence and routine
- Choristers serve the Cathedral, the School and the local community through the pattern of daily sung services
- The congregation comprises a range of people from a variety of backgrounds; some visiting, some regular. This pattern of serving others and of exposure to peoples and backgrounds other than their own makes up part of the daily life of a Chorister
- They take part in high-profile ceremonies and services to mark significant local and national events (Remembrance Day, installations, Carol Services, Solemn Eucharists, Saints' Days, Masonic service, Lord Mayor's concert, Installations, Businessmen's service, parish visits, outreach concerts, Christmas with the Cathedral Choir) often involving collaboration with local or national orchestral players: a Chorister's exposure to, and involvement in, the celebrating and commemorating of national and international institutions and events is therefore considerable
- They experience daily stillness through the prayers and intercessions offered during services: local, national and international events (including current affairs, those in public office, disasters and triumphs) will often be prayed for
- These are gifted musicians whose passion is singing and making music: they immerse themselves in this activity, with their friends, in the awe-inspiring setting of the Cathedral, to the Glory of God, as part of their daily existence
- Choristers range from Year 3 to Year 8 (boys and girls). Vertical integration is an essential part of their existence, and the rigours and rhythms of life as a Chorister provide these pupils with considerable opportunities for developing in key SMSC areas: teamwork, self-reliance, leadership, asking for help, organisation, resilience, self-confidence, high standards, acceptance of others, tolerance, reliability, service
- The Choristers' Prayer: Bless, O Lord, us Thy servants who minister in Thy temple. Grant that what we sing with our lips we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Equal Opportunities

Exeter Cathedral School is committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning outlined in our Equal Opportunities Policy. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability. The School champions inclusivity, equality and

diversity: it will be ensured that equal SMSC opportunities are addressed as follows:

- Pupils with special needs will have equal access to the PSHE curriculum through the use of differentiated learning strategies and tasks. These are based on individual needs.
- Specific teaching strategies will be used to maximise access to the curriculum for pupils with EAL.
- Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity is celebrated through the promotion of multi-cultural themes – with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion being an important aspect of our SMSC provision.
- Gender equality is promoted by ensuring both boys and girls have access to all aspects of SMSC provision.
- Opportunities to address issues of gender, race etc are provided through discussion, assemblies, and other resources.
- An active Pupil Voice agenda ensures that the views and opinions of all pupils are heard.