



Diocesan Guidance on Events Held in Church Schools

Rooted in the Church of England Vision for Education: “Life in all its fullness” (John 10:10)

1. Purpose and Scope

This guidance supports Church of England schools in planning and approving events that reflect and deepen their Christian foundation while being inclusive, welcoming, and community-minded. It applies to all events held on school premises or under the school’s name—including those organised by the PTA, staff, pupils, and wider community.

Events are an opportunity for *living out the school’s Christian vision*, contributing to the flourishing of all in the school community (*Genesis 1:27; John 10:10*). They serve as public expressions of the school’s ethos and commitment to serving the common good.

2. Christian Ethos

Church of England schools are called to embody the vision of being **deeply Christian, serving the common good**. This is rooted in four key theological concepts:

- **Wisdom** – promoting thoughtful and meaningful engagement with culture and learning.
- **Hope** – inspiring events that look beyond the present to nurture joy and resilience.
- **Community** – nurturing belonging, welcome, and mutual responsibility.
- **Dignity** – affirming the God-given worth of every person, created in God’s image (*Genesis 1:27*).

Events should reflect these principles and the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22–23*), offering moments of grace, celebration, and connection that affirm the Christian foundation of the school and witness to the local community.

3. Theological Reflection for Event Planning

When planning events, schools are encouraged to reflect theologically on questions such as:

- How does this event align with our Christian vision and values?
- In what ways does this promote *life in all its fullness* for pupils, staff, and families?
- How does this event express *hospitality, hope, reconciliation, or joy*?
- Are we modelling Christian behaviour through the tone and structure of this event?
- How will this be perceived as part of our public witness as a Church of England school?
- How does it nurture relationships and community?



- Are there opportunities for awe, wonder, celebration, or stillness?
- Could we pray before or after the event as a leadership team or with attendees?
- Have we considered the impact on those from different backgrounds and with different needs?

4. Types of Events and Theological Considerations

Event Type	Examples	Theological and Ethos Reflection
PTA Fundraisers	Quiz nights, raffles, adult socials	Emphasise generosity, community, and stewardship. Where alcohol is involved, reflect on moderation and witness (see section 5).
Staff Events	Social End-of-term gatherings, team-building	Celebrate human dignity and rest (Sabbath principles). Be mindful of boundaries and cultural inclusion.
Multicultural Celebrations	Diwali, Eid, Lunar New Year, Black History Month	Affirm diversity and promote interfaith understanding while maintaining theological clarity. Honour shared human dignity while articulating the distinctiveness of Christian belief.
Wellbeing Activities	Yoga, mindfulness, meditation	Consider their alignment with Christian spirituality. Where practices arise from other faith traditions, offer theological framing or alternatives such as Christian contemplative prayer.
Worship and Prayer Events	Taizé, Compline, Eucharist	Ensure accessibility and pastoral sensitivity. Frame liturgical experiences as part of the rhythm of Christian life. Offer contextual explanations to encourage participation and deepen understanding.
Community Events	Fairs, open days, concerts	Emphasise welcome, relationship-building, and joyful witness. Design events that echo the values of celebration, hospitality, and inclusion found throughout Scripture.



5. Alcohol and Adult-Only Events

Where alcohol is served, schools must:

- Comply with all legal and safeguarding requirements (e.g., obtaining a Temporary Event Notice).
- Consider the *theological principles of moderation and responsibility*.
- Avoid undermining the school's witness or creating barriers to participation.
- Reflect on how such events model behaviour to the wider school community and uphold the dignity and wellbeing of all.

All events must be planned in accordance with the safeguarding principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025.

6. Inclusivity and Cultural Sensitivity

Events should reflect the diverse composition of school communities while maintaining a clear Christian identity. Inclusivity in Church schools is rooted in the belief that all are made in the image of God. This means:

- Avoiding tokenism by engaging meaningfully with different cultures and traditions.
- Offering choices that allow for conscientious opt-in or opt-out without judgment.
- Providing opportunities to explore difference in the light of shared human dignity and mutual flourishing.

7. Governance and Oversight

Christian hospitality is an essential part of mission. The church school community should not be seen as a closed or exclusive group, but open and available to all in line with safeguarding expectations. Often schools have halls or buildings which others in the community ask to use and allowing groups the use of such facilities can be a useful way of allowing the wider community contact with Christian life, witness and hospitality, as well as a useful source of revenue where groups pay for hire of facilities.

However, while much of such interaction between Church Schools and other groups is mutually beneficial and helpfully builds up community relations, there are potential problems. A small number of groups may wish to engage in practices or activities which are unacceptable to a Christian community.

- Event approval remains the responsibility of the Headteacher, Governing Body and/or the Multi Academy Trust.

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- Records of event planning should include ethical and theological considerations. Leaders should ensure a record is kept of decisions behind event planning.
- Significant or sensitive events should be reviewed with reference to the school's Christian vision and, where needed, in consultation with local clergy or the Diocese. If in doubt, please call or email education@chelmsford.anglican.org

9. Review and Support

Schools are encouraged to review events annually through the lens of their vision, theological distinctiveness, and community impact. The Diocese remains available to:

- Support theological reflection and planning;
- Offer training or feedback on ethos-aligned events;
- Help schools articulate their vision in ways that are meaningful, inclusive, and deeply rooted in the Christian faith.

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