

School's Easter Cancellation Sparks Outcry and Protests

Tensions flared in Eastleigh, Hampshire, as Christians gathered in protest outside Norwood Primary School after it dropped long-standing Easter events, a move many believers see as part of a larger trend to erase Christianity from public life.

As reported by The Christian Post, the school's headteacher, Stephanie Mander, notified parents in a letter that this year's Easter Bonnet Parade and church service would not take place. Instead, she said students would learn about the religious significance of Easter through in-class activities and crafts. The decision, she wrote, was meant to foster an environment that respects all faiths.

That explanation didn't sit well with many local Christians, around 50 of whom showed up to peacefully demonstrate. With English flags waving and banners declaring "Jesus is King," protesters voiced their frustration with what they say is the steady marginalization of their faith in schools and society.

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Rev. Chris Wickland of Living Word Church in Fareham, one of the protest organizers, emphasized the event wasn't about causing trouble. Instead, he said it was about standing against the erasure of Christianity from school traditions, according to GB News.

Ukip leader Nick Tenconi took the protest a step further, reading Mander's letter through a loudspeaker and accusing the school of prioritizing diversity metrics over Christian values. He argued that these types of decisions are often motivated by funding opportunities rather than genuine

inclusion.

Among the protesters was Marie Pigney, a grandmother from nearby Titchfield, who said the move to cancel Easter events was yet another example of how Christians are increasingly painted in a negative light.

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Others echoed similar concerns, saying that removing these public expressions of faith chips away at the country's Christian heritage. Protesters also handed out Easter eggs and held a "Happy Easter" banner to share their message with students and parents.

While the demonstration remained peaceful, not everyone agreed with the protest. A small group of about 10 parents staged a counter-protest near the school, accusing the demonstrators of spreading unnecessary tension. One unnamed parent defended the school's actions, claiming the parade was dropped in part due to financial difficulties among families and a desire to accommodate a broader range of beliefs.

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Criticism of the school's decision had already been brewing online, where it was labeled "disgraceful" and "shambolic" by commenters. In response, Mander reaffirmed her stance, stating she wants to find new, inclusive ways to celebrate seasonal events moving forward.

Police were present during the protest, though no arrests were made and no incidents were reported. The demonstration concluded with a collective prayer just before the school day ended.

For many Christians in the UK, this protest marks more than a disagreement over school programming. It's a sign of growing frustration and a determination to no longer stay silent as Christian traditions are quietly erased.

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James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*