

# ST STEPHEN & ST THOMAS PARISH PROFILE AND STATEMENT OF NEEDS AND TRADITIONS

## STATEMENT OF MISSION

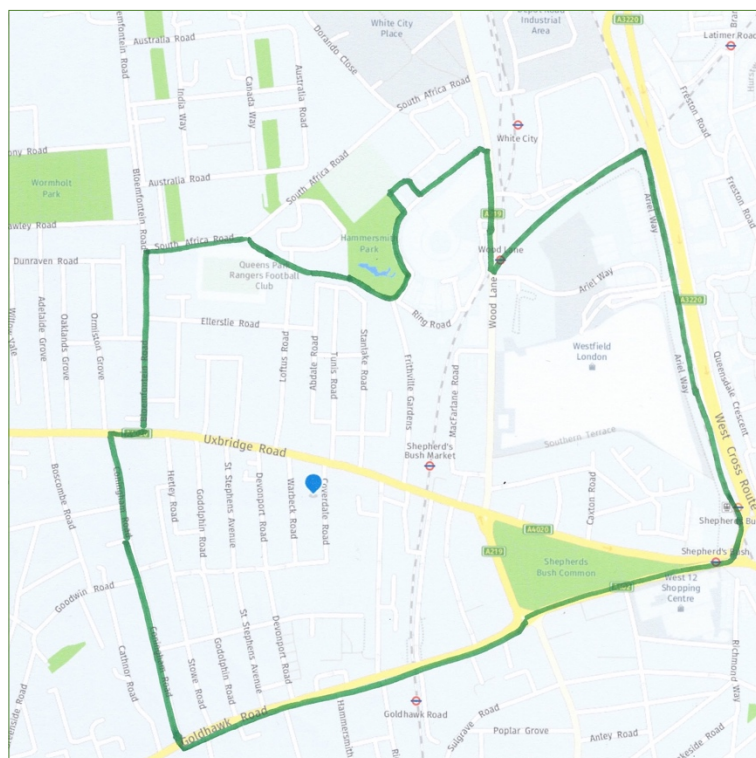
- As a church we seek to grow in faith and spirituality
- to increase our effectiveness at preaching the Gospel
- to be open to change whilst respecting our heritage
- to challenge injustice and pursue peaceful reconciliation in our world
- to be vulnerable, willing to face challenges and question assumptions
- to empower our congregation in practical Christian living
- We pledge to safeguard God's creation and the world around us
- to be hospitable and to respond to the needs of those around us
- to transform Shepherds Bush through God's Love

## THE PARISH

Shepherds Bush is a popular inner city suburb, which encapsulates the inequality and contradictions of West London – from our parish, the blackened ruins of Grenfell Tower can be seen looming over the new John Lewis department store.

The parish comprises a single church, built in 1850 and dedicated to St Stephen the Martyr. In 1962, the parish of St Thomas Church in Godolphin Road was incorporated into St Stephen's Parish; at that time the benefice became the Parish of St Stephen & St Thomas.

## Boundaries



As defined by the February 1 2019 Pastoral Measure. The parish boundaries are:  
To the East; The West Cross Route

To the south: Goldhawk Road

To the West: Coningham Road and part of Bloemfontein Road (as far as South Africa Road)

To the North: including the northern end of Loftus and Stanlake Roads, Hammersmith Park and the old BBC TV centre, south on Wood Lane until the railway line, and towards the north East as far as the West Cross Route. (the northern boundary is the new one). The parish now excludes the White City Estate, which under the new

Pastoral measure becomes part of the Parish of St Michael & St George, White City. A map of the Parish is below.

### **Communications and commerce**

The parish is exceptionally well served for communications Incorporating two Hammersmith & City Line Stations, one Central Line station and one main line station while many bus routes run through the parish. A significant proportion of the area covered by the parish is taken up by the Westfield shopping complex and associated buildings or roads. A five-star hotel on Shepherds Bush Green, several music, theatre and entertainment venues, Queen Park Rangers Club, and the UAL London College of Fashion (Lime Grove) are some of the many institutions based within the parish. By extreme contrast with the vastness and luxury of Westfield's shopping centre, the shops on Goldhawk and especially Uxbridge Road cater to the multi-ethnic population, many of whom live in local streets or on the White City Estate. Two separate parts of Shepherds Bush Market either side of the elevated Hammersmith and City Line form a shopping hub for the local populations of many ethnic backgrounds, hosting mostly independent shops.

### **Demographics**

The parish is in the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham. Because the parish boundary has been redefined so recently, no statistics on the demographic mix of the parish are available. However it is recorded that the Uxbridge road is one of the most diverse roads in the country. By contrast, the roads to the north and south of the Uxbridge Road have become increasingly gentrified in the last two decades as the prices of property have risen in all parts of west London. An unusually high proportion of single person households is a characteristic of the area, while the trend across the age spectrum is for an increase in children and working age populations and a decrease in numbers of elderly residents. A significant proportion of the population of the Borough is foreign-born (43% in 2011) which is above the average for London and in 2011, 55% of the Borough's residents were from an ethnic group other than white British. Significant proportion were EU residents, while smaller proportions were from Africa, the Middle East & Asia, and Australasia.

### **Schools**

**St Stephen's Church of England School**, rated outstanding by OFSTED, is on a site contiguous with the church and close connections exist between the school and church. A separate report about St Stephen's School is printed later in this profile.

**Miles Coverdale Primary school**, which is 150 metres away on Coverdale Road is also one of the best in the capital, achieving the fourth highest results in the country in 2018.

Boundaries of St Stephen & St Thomas Parish, as redefined, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

### **ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH - THE SOUL OF SHEPHERDS BUSH**

St Stephen's today would be best described as a community church with an emphasis on young families. Beyond that broad characterisation, visitors note with pleasure the genuine multi-age and multi-ethnic mix in the congregation, and the warm welcome they receive.

### **Traditions**

For most of its existence, St Stephen's worshipped in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, with an emphasis on the sacraments, and formality in worship and liturgical practices. Over the last twenty-five years, a more relaxed style of worship has proved to be more in keeping with the churchmanship of those who attend. Today, the church takes a middle ground position, retaining the importance of the Eucharist as central to weekly worship, while adopting a family-focused approach, which chimes well with our younger congregations.

### **Cultural mix**

In 1962, when Barbadian-born Rev'd Wilfred Wood became curate, St Stephen's was one of the few Anglican churches that welcomed families and individuals from the West Indies, and members of the congregation from the Windrush Generation have enriched our worship ever since. The church became known as a place of welcome for all people irrespective of origin or status, and has remained thus ever since. The children and grandchildren of that senior generation now attend, although in smaller numbers. As well as people of British origin, some of whom have lived in the area all their lives, members of our congregation have heritage from every continent. Our congregation reflects the statistics in the borough as a whole, we have people from Afro-Caribbean, African and Eastern European, Middle Eastern, Indian sub-continental and Asian heritage, also from the Americas and Australia.

### **Worship at St Stephen's**

Sunday worship is a Eucharist at 10am, with a sermon (usually 10 minutes) and hymns (at least 6). The average congregation numbers about 89 adults and 55 children; in term times there can be more (on Remembrance Sunday there were 150 adults and 105 children) and in the school holidays the numbers are lower than average. The worship follows Rite B, with a degree of informality that suits the congregation. After the distribution of Communion, volunteers are available to pray privately in the Lady Chapel with anyone who may ask for special prayers. For children under 5 there is a colouring table in church, and for the more restless children there is an array of toys in the church hall for them to play with during the service. When we had two clergy, there was some teaching and child-orientated singing in the hall during the service but this awaits a volunteer to organise it again. Parents, most of whom work during the week, value the time they spend at church with their children as an important part of Christian family life. As the service progresses, there can be a background murmur of toddler noise from the congregation, but the perceived importance of accommodating children and their parents outweighs the inconvenience. The children of today are the parishioners of tomorrow.

### **First Sunday Children's Services**

On the first Sunday of the month at 10am there is an interactive Children's half hour, with teaching for children under 8, singing and prayer. This is immensely popular and a effective way to introduce young children to church attendance and Christian teaching. A different theme is chosen each month, which may be seasonal or topical. Following this a shorter Eucharist takes place from 10.30am while the families take their children to the hall for refreshments.

### **Sunday School**

Under the guidance of an organiser, parent volunteers run the Sunday school, which has an average roll of up to 20 children, aged from 5 to 10. Getting commitment from volunteers is

ever the problem for the organiser. Future plans involve dividing the group to provide a class for older children in this age bracket with teaching that's more appropriate to their age. Further provision for children aged 11 and upwards, and for children who play sport on Sunday mornings but could attend later in the day, is an area that we are keen for the new incumbent to develop.

### **Choir**

A small but keen amateur choir leads the singing, and provides a background of music during the distribution of Communion. The choir rehearses weekly during the school term. A new organist has recently been appointed and will have the opportunity of collaborating with the new incumbent in shaping the structure and use of music in the Eucharist.

### **Baptisms**

These take place on the last Sunday of the month (except in Lent and Advent) during the Parish Eucharist, following the necessary preparation classes. A maximum of five or six children can usually be accommodated. Baptisms are seen as important points of contact with families who don't yet belong to the church, encouraging commitment to regular worship in the future.

### **Confirmations**

Each year, a handful of candidates are prepared and brought for confirmation. In recent years, candidates have been confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral on Easter Eve.

### **Marriages**

At St Stephen's weddings are relatively unusual, the average being less than one per year.

### **Funerals**

One a month is the average; funerals can be large affairs, with up to 400 attending.

### **Other weekday services**

The following have been held:

Communion service for the homeless and marginalised on Monday evenings

School assembly on Tuesday mornings for a different class each week

Midweek Eucharist on Wednesday evenings

Christian Meditation on Thursday evenings

Informal Sunday afternoon service for children who play football on Sunday mornings.

Statistics for the last few years are as follows:

	2016	2017	2018
Baptisms		30	
Confirmation candidates			
Marriages in church		1	0
Funerals in church		20	14
Funerals at Crematorium		40	1(?)

Electoral Roll (St Stephen's only)	121	124	128
Average weekly attendance (over 16)	64	88	89
Average weekly attendance (under 16)	33	44	55

(full figures will be available)

### **Electoral Roll**

The 2018 Electoral Roll numbered 128, 70 of whom live outside the parish. Being a relatively small parish, even people who live within walking distance may not be in the parish.

### **Other Churches**

St Stephen's hosts two other churches:

**The Beulah Apostolic Church** has been sharing our space for the last 50 years or so. Their worship begins at 12.30 each Sunday and finishes at 3.30pm. They also hold prayer, Bible Study and choir practices at various times in the church.

**New City Church**, an American based Presbyterian group is based in our Church Hall. New City runs the weekly Streetlytes evenings (see below) and other weekly events with New City include a Bible study evening for members and an afternoon open church session. Sometimes summer events for visiting groups are offered, also children's summer holiday courses.

### **Outreach on Mondays in the Parish Hall**

#### **Toddler Group**

9-11am: Volunteers run a group for up to 35 parents or carers with their babies and toddlers. There is time for free play, fruit and drinks are served and a singing session finishes the morning. A number of people who have brought their children to this group have subsequently become church members.

#### **Silver Screening and lunches for the elderly**

11.30am – 3pm: Coffee and tea are followed by a nutritious soup and lunch. People can take home items of food donated via The Felix Project. A film, chosen by those who attend, is then introduced by one of the volunteers and shown (with subtitles) on the large screen. It is run by one leader and a number of volunteers, some from the church community.

#### **Streetlytes**

From 5.30pm, up to 100 homeless and hostel dwellers are welcomed. They are served a home cooked hot meal, after which a film is screened. Clothes and food items (donated via the Felix Project and other local sources) are distributed. For some months a simplified service of Holy Communion was held for their benefit at 7pm. Staff from St Mungo's attend each week to help individuals with clerical or administrative work, and every fortnight the Medi-van is present to attend to guests' medical needs. Typically, over 60% of the guests are from Eastern European Countries. Many have mental health problems and there is a strict no alcohol and no drugs policy; anyone who doesn't comply is removed. We are grateful to the team from New City Church who run this programme for us, week by week,

along with volunteers from the wider community. The project is supported by funding from the Shepherds Bush Housing Association.

### **Safeguarding**

A small group of three assists the Children's Champion and the Safeguarding Officer in considering the correct course of action for any safeguarding issues that arise from time to time. The group of five convenes as and when the need arises.

### **OPERATIONS**

**St Stephen's Church Committee** (de facto the PCC) is a strong lay leadership team, which runs the church from week to week. Other role holders are not members of the Committee but assist fully; a list of names and roles is on the church website. [www.ststephensw12.org](http://www.ststephensw12.org) The Committee is composed of a Lay Chair, one Churchwarden (soon to be increased to two), two Deputy Churchwardens, two Deanery Synod Representatives, Two Co-Treasurers, a Children's Champion, a Safeguarding Officer, two Foundation Governors of St Stephen's School and a further five members.

### **Finances**

Here is a summary of income and expenditure for the last three years:

INCOME	2016	2017	2018
Donations	48,117	44,964	41,766
Roof Fund	37,252	14,453	29,357
Rental Income	68,740	70,203	77,436
Other Income	6,308	4,239	2,018
Total Income	160,417	133,859	150,577
EXPENDITURE			
Common Fund	50,700	51,400	52,800
Premises Costs	40,771	42,758	37,966
Other Expenditure	16,975	21,250	14,980
Total Expenditure	108,446	115,408	105,746
Net Income over expenditure	51,971	18,451	* 44,831

\*A building reserve of £40,000 for repairs to 35 Bloemfontein Avenue, anticipated in 2019, is lodged in a CCLA account.

### **Other roles and positions**

- Parish Administrator (paid)
- Hall Manger (paid)
- Organist (paid)
- Cleaners for church and hall (paid)
- Gift Aid Secretary (voluntary)
- Sunday School Administrator (voluntary)
- School references Administrator (voluntary)
- Chair of St Stephen's Roof Fund Committee (voluntary)

## **Volunteering**

There are many opportunities over and above the outreach programmes.

### **Church Garden**

Once a month a dedicated green-fingered team tends the church garden, which is greatly appreciated as being one of the few patches of green in our part of Uxbridge Road. Plants are donated, sometimes to commemorate a special life event, and people stop and talk – it's a great opportunity to engage with local people who aren't churchgoers.

### **Writing and reading intercessions**

A number of people contribute by leading the intercessions each week, training is regularly given to encourage new participants.

### **Serving**

We have a core of nine servers, adults and children, who work on a rota system.

### **Readers**

Members of the congregation read the lesson each week.

### **Refreshments teams**

Nine teams serve refreshments in the hall after the service once every two months. This can be very popular with the Dads.

## **St Stephen's Roof Fund**

£105,000 has been raised to date towards [St Stephen's Roof Fund](#). A sum in excess of £200,000 is needed to replace the aging and war-damaged roof. A Roof Fund Committee, independent of St Stephen's Committee, is the umbrella for three separate sub-committees; their roles are: to organise fund-raising events, to consider technical issues and to oversee funding applications.

## **Sustainability**

Playing our part in being a green church and safeguarding the planet is built into our vision: among other initiatives, this Lent (2019) we are encouraged to give up single use plastic. The parish hall lighting has been changed to LED and when finances allow we will upgrade the lighting in the church to LEDs, while photovoltaic slates are being priced up for the church roof which is to be replaced. The church garden offers a rare green space in Shepherds Bush rubbish is regularly removed and the garden tended by a team of volunteers.

## **BUILDINGS**

### **The Church**

St Stephen the Martyr, designed by Anthony Salvin, built in the early Victorian Gothic Style and paid for entirely by the Bishop of London at the time. The Patron of the parish is the Bishop of London. There is seating for about 250 and with extra chairs the church can accommodate a further 150, some standing. The Church is Grade II listed and falls within the Coningham and Lime Grove conservation area in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The building lost its spire and many of its original windows during enemy bombing in 1940. Only five of the original windows remain (all restored), others have been installed at various times since 1949 and a 2005 window on the south aisle, depicting St Stephen and St Thomas, commemorates the Church's 150th Anniversary.

An extensive programme of repairs to the fabric of the church was carried out in the 1983 and was completed with a re-ordering of the interior in 1988. A further re-ordering,

completed in 2009, opened up more assembly space at the rear of the church, replaced the original wood doors with glass and re-ordered the chancel to allow for more flexible use. The most recent Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in December 2018 and the report is awaited. The Roof will need urgent repair in the next five years and the damp problem in certain parts of the church will need addressing.

### **The Parish Hall**

Opened in 2010, the Parish hall is actively used and maintains a visible profile, serving the community in numerous ways. The Main body of the Hall is linked to the church by a corridor. The Hall incorporates a main hall on the ground floor with a catering standard kitchen, a smaller and a larger meeting room upstairs plus a small kitchen, a small office, an inner courtyard where children can play safely plus all the usual storage and toilet facilities. There is also a crèche room near the church, where children can be looked after or at other times small groups can meet. The hall is hired on a regular basis by educational, commercial and religious groups:

- Ballet Black Junior School
- Kumon tuition classes
- Hartbeeps and Bouncers (baby sensory awareness sessions and toddler level sport)
- Children's Parties
- Three different prayer groups
- Theatre and tv rehearsals
- Therapy sessions
- Occasional meetings about local issues

The following groups do not pay:

- Church meetings
- Toddler Group
- Silver Screening
- Streetlytes
- New City Church

### **35 Bloemfontein Avenue**

The church owns a four-bedroom terraced Victorian house nearby, which is let commercially. The annual income from lettings which amounts to about £32,000, makes a significant contribution to the health of the church's finances. Within the next year a refurbishment and upgrade of facilities is due, as the current tenants are planning to give notice.

### **Glebe House Flat**

This is a ground floor one bedroom key worker flat, which adjoins the rest of the parish buildings. It is rented to the organist, and has recently been redecorated throughout.

### **Vicarage**

The four bedroom one-bathroom vicarage is due for refurbishment and rewiring; it is a Victorian building of the same age as the church and school, with a study and two reception rooms on the ground floor. One of the four bedrooms will be altered to make an ensuite bathroom for the adjacent bedroom, while part of the floor space will be returned to parish ownership as per the 2009 agreement when the maisonette was bought by the parish. The



space will be added to the upper floor of the parish hall, possibly for use as an office. The second floor of the vicarage is arranged currently as a self-contained flat, which may be re-incorporated into the main house. There is a good sized garden, laid to grass with some areas where wildlife can thrive. In front of the vicarage there is off street parking for two cars.

### **Benefice Summary**

Parishes: 1

Churches : 1

Patron: The Bishop of London

PCCs: 1

Churchwardens: (soon to be) 2 and 2 deputies

Other authorised and licensed ministers: none

People employed by PCC or with whom the PCC has a work agreement:

Parish Administrator, Organist, Silver Screening organiser, church & hall cleaner.

Buildings: 4 (Church, Church Hall, 35 Bloemfontein Avenue, Glebe House Flat)

Churchyard: no burials, ashes in delineated area

Parish population: **TO BE ADVISED**

Average weekly attendance: 120

Electoral roll: 127 (2018)

Parish Share given: £57,500 (2018)

Resolutions passed: None

This post is subject to enhanced DBS disclosure.

### **STATEMENT OF TRADITIONS**

- St Stephen's is a family church in the tradition of the weekly Eucharist, which unites us with Christ and consecrates us as his people.
- Liturgically, the church was founded in the Anglo-Catholic tradition but today seeks to embrace a breadth of styles of worship.
- The congregation is a mix of cultures, ages, demographics and backgrounds. We cherish and celebrate this genuine diversity, which is central to the identity of St Stephen's.
- We welcome visitors or newcomers and understand the impact that a single visit to church can have.
- We seek to develop our close connection with St Stephen's School.
- Outreach to vulnerable groups in the local community is built into our weekly timetable, also a playgroup.
- The parish hall enables outreach (as above) and provides as a valuable facility for the local community, mostly serving children's educational needs.
- In the Church and Parish Hall we host two other churches, which serve other parts of the community.
- Preaching: the normal length of sermons is 10-12 minutes.

### **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, CURRENT AND FUTURE**

- Motivate the laity to take more active roles in leadership, administration, outreach, prayer and worship and to take ownership of their church, by identifying and developing their gifts and skills, spiritual, pastoral and in healing.
- Spiritual and pastoral leadership from the clergy.
- Enhance outreach to families, particularly those whose attendance is linked to securing school places for their children.
- Encourage planned giving as a sign of commitment to the church.
- Improve weekday offerings: bible studies, services for different groups, social events.
- Enhance music in worship.
- Recruit and train servers, adults and children.
- Focus on Sunday School, encouraging parents to volunteer and children to attend.
- Draw children of secondary school age back to church.
- Find our local 18-25s and giving them a place in the church.
- Ideally appoint a lay team with specific roles.
- Possibly allocate individual roles within the PCC.
- Potentially recruit an administrator to assist the vicar.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

In the next vicar of St Stephen's we are looking for somebody who will:

- Convey the gospel with conviction and clarity.
- Be experienced in community work inside and outside the church.
- Listen to and engage with people from all sectors of the congregation and motivate them into more active membership.
- Show appropriate understanding and belief in the importance of the Sacraments and the value of Liturgy in worship.
- Increase provision for worship for ages or groups that are not currently catered for (e.g.teens).
- Be a pastor to the vulnerable and marginalised in our community.
- Keep on top of parish administration.
- Be at ease with people of all ages and from all backgrounds.
- Be interested in developing and growing the partnership with St Stephen's School, enhancing the already significant overlap with the church.
- Work with school governors and the head teacher.
- Collaborate effectively with church officers.

## **SOURCES**

\*London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Profile

## **Appendices**

- 1 Report from St Stephen's School**
- 2 Annual report and accounts 2018 (to come)**

## **Appendix 1**

# St. Stephen's CE School

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## **Mission Statement:**

Providing outstanding education  
in a caring community  
with God at its centre, which celebrates  
the diversity of the local area.

## **Vision Statement:**

We strive to build on our high academic  
standards and provide a range of different  
opportunities for achievement to ensure  
that our children are happy, inspired and  
prepared for the challenges and  
responsibilities ahead.

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School is a two form entry, multi-cultural primary school in the heart of Shepherd's Bush and is very much a school within the community.

We have been serving the community for over 160 years. The school was part of the original village of Shepherd's Bush and built at the same time as the Church.

As a 'school of choice' we were asked to consider becoming a two form entry school a number of years ago and this was a challenge which our whole school community embraced. After extensive building work, we are now two form entry all the way up to Year 6, which is our only remaining single class year group.

Shepherd's Bush is a busy commercial and shopping area, which also includes expensive private housing alongside housing trust homes and local authority housing.

We are a popular and over-subscribed school, with a waiting list for entry to our Nursery and Reception with full classes throughout the school. Our pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.

For more information on the school please visit our website [www.ststephensce.lbhf.sch.uk](http://www.ststephensce.lbhf.sch.uk)

We are proud of our links with St Stephen's Church, which includes many school families among its congregation. Our Christian ethos is embedded in all aspects of our school, and we very much hope to build on the long-standing partnership with the church.

We are looking forward to working with a church leader with a dynamic and vibrant personality who will embrace being part of an energetic, joyful, creative community. We would love a leader who will inspire and support the children in their spiritual growth, a

leader who will work alongside the staff and our parent community with the common aim of enriching our children in both academic and creative skills.

### Possible Secondary School

#### **Introduction**

The Department for Education announced last November 2018 that it will be taking applications to expand voluntary aided schools. To reflect interest by parents and the wider community, St Stephen's CE Primary School carried out a preliminary survey to measure the level of support for creating a new voluntary aided secondary school in our local area.

We have now submitted a formal application to the DfE.

Below are the key features and the vision for a new St Stephen's secondary school.

#### **Key Features**

- Provide a **Church of England co-educational secondary education for children 11-16 years** in the local area (sixth form provision will be considered at a later date)
- Provide an **all through school** for those who attend St Stephen's CE Primary School – all those children at the primary will have priority admission to continue their education at the secondary school.
- Be an **inclusive school** – we would seek to continue to have strong parent and community involvement, including giving preference to children at Miles Coverdale Primary School (thereby guaranteeing places for children from both St Stephen's CE Primary School and Miles Coverdale Primary School)
- Be a **four-form entry secondary school** resulting in a total of 600 secondary school pupils
- 50 % of places will be allocated to Church based applicants and 50% of places will be allocated to community based applicants.

#### **Vision**

- To build a community school with a strong Christian ethos at its centre
- To build on and extend the outstanding academic standards at both primary schools into secondary level
- To continue to provide a range of different opportunities for achievement, to ensure that our children are happy, inspired, and prepared for the challenges and responsibilities ahead
- Provide a safe, nurturing, inclusive and aspirational environment for our children
- Specialist in the creative arts and languages.