

# St Stephen's Church of England Primary



St. Stephen's CE school and the Bradford community we serve



We have invested significantly in reading books to support pupils' love of reading

St Stephen's Church of England Primary is a voluntary aided two-form school, which educates children from three to 11 years old. The school serves a culturally diverse community with a high level of transience and pupils from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The buildings stand on a split-level site with limited internal and external space and are surrounded by low-cost housing within an industrial area of Bradford. Headteacher Paul Urry explains more.

Our vision, "Nurture, Grow, Flourish", compels us to seize the sheer potential of now. It stems from a Christian belief in the unique value of each child. Every action for children, staff and the wider school community is driven by the quest for excellence in provision, by ethical decision-making and by the conviction that we must also be the hub where resources for pupils' flourishing are readily accessed. Diligent collaboration with partners provides the additional services families need. Partners include Bradford Children's Social Services, health practitioners and community groups, especially Shine, an award-winning local charity run by St Stephen's Church.

## Nurture

Nurture embraces pupils, staff and the wider community; it identifies need and provides a well-judged balance between support and challenge. Highly skilled staff listen attentively, observe closely and identify a wide range of social, emotional and mental health issues. Staff are courageous advocates on behalf of children, and daily give strong support to children and families in crisis. Families are helped to access online services for income support and paying bills or to understand communications from the secondary school their child will soon attend.

## REPORT CARD ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY

- » Headteacher: Paul Urry
- » Founded in 1983
- » Location: Bradford, West Yorkshire
- » Type of school: Voluntary aided primary
- » No. of students: 452
- » [www.ststephens.bradford.sch.uk](http://www.ststephens.bradford.sch.uk)

“A culture of clear expectations securely underpinned by open and trusting dialogue has proved its worth”

To manage behaviour for good conduct, we use restorative practice supporting pupils and staff to reflect on their interaction and consider how best to prevent harm. The Behaviours Policy focuses on staff behaviours, ensuring that these are appropriate. We are good at perceiving the likely sources for a child's behaviour and bring understanding of context into the process of redress. We seek to build an open and trusting environment where pupils feel safe, confident and alert for each day's learning. Through consistent practice of this policy, we have developed a culture in which laughter flourishes and incidents of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, are infrequent but thoroughly addressed.

Nurture is rooted in a Christian ethos with strong values, including thankfulness, perseverance and forgiveness. With such tools we build confidence, strengthen emotional resilience and empower by opening eyes to new worlds. As these roots are embedded, all pupils are enabled to function and grow. A culture of clear expectations securely underpinned

by open and trusting dialogue has proved its worth; mutually supportive relationships among staff and children are encouraged. Staff and pupils are confident that you can make a mistake and learn from it, and this supports the generation of fruitful ideas, worthy of community celebration.

## Grow

Pupils learn through careful curriculum design that they have a place in the world beyond their starting points. We provide scope for hands-on experience and abundant books because we believe that wide reading develops children's word power and their capacity to engage with more complex intellectual challenges. In recent TV interviews year 6 pupils were able to deploy correct scientific terminology as they explained their role in the Born in Bradford project to assess the impact of air pollution on pupil and adult health. In the next phase pupils are going to use program coding devices to design pollution monitors. We can do such exciting projects because we employ specialist subject teachers in scientific, technical and artistic fields to extend pupils' learning and opportunities. These specialists work both independently and collaboratively, and so, for example, our artist in residence has worked with technical staff to produce digital works of art. The actor in residence has directed year 5 productions for public performance through the Shakespeare in Schools project and has identified talented pupils, nurturing them to seek further opportunities. Working with technicians who control our radio station equipment, the actor has coached pupils in voice production and recorded stories that introduce key figures from Bradford's past, including the parliamentarian W. E. Forster and the educationalist Margaret McMillan. Each class is known by the name of its patron.

The new uniform and logo: bright, positive, smart and aspirational





School recently introduced a uniform, chosen through community consultation. The preferred option in school colours was shirt, tie, sweater with logo and black shoes, not trainers, and a quality book bag. The choice reflected high aspirations. One parent said: "We don't want the children to feel they are playing; we want them to regard learning with high respect." Another added: "Be smart in your head and smart in your clothes."

## Flourish

Through consultation and strategic investment, the learning environment has been transformed. Lighting, furniture, colour and wallcoverings have been chosen to support the growth of wellbeing, curious interest and sound learning. Next, we will enhance outdoor facilities to support children's need for vigorous physical activity. In collective worship, around school and in class pupils listen to good music, and they also experience meditative silence. We strive to provide the best resources for children's flourishing. Staff are encouraged to base innovation on research. We work at the cutting edge of educational research to review and improve our practice. Middle leaders next term will work alongside Evidence Based Education (winners of the Queen's Award for Enterprise, Innovation category) to ensure the most effective assessment tools support flourishing learning.

With successful nurture and growth, flourishing is full of surprises, as we discover the productive energy confident children and staff can generate. Our learning strategies emphasise collaboration, so we reward only pupils who demonstrate positive behaviours for learning, including effective communication, co-operation, thoughtfulness, respect, adaptability, enquiry and resilience. We are strong



We aim to create and inspire learning opportunities; here in our new radio station

advocates for children's potential; we expose children to a wide range of books, skills and experience. Structures are in place that allow staff to function interdependently, regardless of seniority. This supports a flourishing, open and constructive dialogue within a safe environment. Staff are self-reflective, eager to develop themselves and others in school. A well-coordinated leadership team keen to empower produces the energy that drives school improvement and creates opportunities for all pupils, staff and the wider community. The England footballer Ian Wright is an inspiration. His teacher gave him not just skills but deep values that affirmed and transformed his life: "Don't just score goals; score beautiful goals, Ian."

Here is the vision that secured the nurture of pupils, staff and families throughout the pandemic, and will enable the rehabilitation of pupils' wellbeing, growth and flourishing into the future. Our constant aim is excellence, and we build a flourishing St Stephen's through a virtuous spiral of initiatives that are sustainable and continuously refined through reflective dialogue.

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