**St Stephen’s Primary School**

**Vision Statement**

***Nurture, Grow, Flourish***

Vision is expressed in the life a community shares; it is ingrained as we all strive to meet in full our responsibilities. But also, vision is captured in clear words. At St. Stephen’s just three words declare our vision: nurture, grow, flourish. For anyone seeking to understand our school, this is the best starting-point. Nurture, grow, flourish is our school motto, and all members of our community are asked to commit to these values. We aim to **nurture** each child and family, ensuring that we **grow** as a school and **flourish** as a community.

*Vision and Scripture*

‘The Lord’s Prayer’, that signature tune of Christian faith, is a radical prayer about the human condition, one that works from the roots up. The St. Stephen’s vision is suggested by petitions from ‘The Lord’s Prayer’. (Matthew 6:9ff)

***Nurture***

At St. Stephen’s children come first. Our privilege is to know and value every child and to look for the best in each one. Our task is to be a community where learning is cherished by all. Just as sunlight, warmth, and rain nurture the growth of plants, so we aim to provide the best possible support, helping pupils progress, and inspiring in them a love of learning.

***Give us today our daily bread.***

We are all made in God’s image, and so we aim to respond to the need for nurture in all its dimensions: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual. We ask God to take our teaching and learning as his means to nurture the humanity of each child. To pray this petition is to move from a sense of self-sufficiency. To stand with our pupils in a place of need is in no way a failure, but a place of dignity. When we recognise human dignity in each other we begin to see what we are in the eyes of God, and we become more able to see God in the service and support we give to one another. We provide, we reflect, we are fed.

***Grow***

At St. Stephen’s learning is creative, reflective, and fun. All are encouraged to grow through fresh discoveries. Our privilege is to nourish minds and hearts; we plant seeds of understanding in the rich soil of creative experience. Our task is to engage each child’s curiosity, providing opportunities that tap into fresh interests. We seek to strengthen the confidence that aims high, and that eagerly branches out into new activities. We encourage the growth that bears fruit in the life of each child, and which prepares children for the responsibilities of mature adult life.

***Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.***

Human persons, children and adults, are always in formation. Christian teaching links growth with the vulnerability that comes from recognising our mistakes, whether in learning a skill, or in handling our relationships one to another. To grow we need to know, not that we are always right, but that we are accepted; that we are held in relationships that are nurturing, encouraging us to respond to what is offered, and so helping us to find a good way forward, both growing in knowledge and understanding, and towards maturity. Forgiveness is radical; growing and flourishing depend on it. When we are forgiven by those we have injured, we both accept that we have done harm, and accept that change is possible. Forgiveness is the way in which those who have caused hurt are brought back into a relation where each feeds the other and nurtures their dignity. That mutuality is essential to the growth of individuals, and of community.

***Flourish***

St. Stephen’s is at the heart of the local community and partnership is our watchword: partnership with parents, amongst staff, with the church, and with a range of critical friends. Our privilege is to explore and celebrate the wisdom expressed diversely through faith and culture, enabling our children to seek and find life in all its fullness. Our task is to ensure a flourishing community where challenge and support are well balanced to ensure good growth; where everyone’s voice is important; and where pupils blossom as they try out new ways to play a full, positive, and active part.

***Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.***

In school, this means ‘Let all we do open our eyes to the depths of God’s love at the root of everything’. Where children are confident, creative, attentive explorers of worlds near and far, eager to learn, to share, to make, to communicate, then we see that God is showing through in the ordinary, minute particulars of our everyday lives. We pray and work towards relationships of love and trust, of intimacy and praise, which give us glimpses of that heaven, which Jesus imagined where a young child is placed in the midst. “Jesus said to them, ‘Let the children come to me; do not try to stop them; for the kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.’” (Matthew 19:14)

Our vision is a Christian one, but is not exclusive to those of Christian faith. Many of the families we serve follow Islam. The Holy Quran suggests, *'And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe’. (Alanhaam 6:99)*

Jesus said, “A tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears”. (Matthew 12:33).

As a school, therefore, we believe that we can be known and characterised by the children we serve.

**This is our vision that nurtures children, enabling them to grow and flourish, preparing them to move forwards in confidence and hope, with dreams of a bright future.**