

How St Luke's Primary School brought out the very best in Angela's children - and put smiles on their faces into the bargain



Angela and Geoffrey Ayeni live in Newham with their daughters Eleanor, 12, Chloe, nine and Atarah, four. Chloe and Atarah currently attend St Luke's Primary School and Eleanor has recently left for secondary school.

Something not quite right

Angela and Geoffrey moved to Newham when Eleanor was due to start in her Reception year. Being new to the area they were unfamiliar with the local schools and Angela soon became uncomfortable with their initial choice. "There was just something which didn't work about it for me," she says, "and there were times when Eleanor would come home crying because of something that had happened that day. I couldn't quite put my finger on what was wrong but now I believe that her personality wasn't suited to that particular environment."



St. Luke's
C. of E.
Voluntary Aided
Primary and
Nursery School

The right priorities

Having looked at five or six alternative schools Angela identified St Luke's as somewhere she felt would be more capable of addressing Eleanor's needs and she was prepared to wait until a place became available. "I liked the fact that St Luke's is a Faith school and in fact I attend St Luke's church, but that wasn't my main priority. What I really noticed was how calm the atmosphere was, how well behaved the children were and that it had a very good overall feeling about it. I was certain that this was the right one for Eleanor."

Addressing challenges

Despite a slightly shaky start, Eleanor settled into her new school well and, believes Angela, has benefitted greatly from the fact that St Luke's was able to identify and encourage her strengths. "The first few months were challenging for her as she had to make new friendships and find her feet in a new setting but the teachers listened to my concerns and made sure she was looked after. They paired her up with a 'Buddy' who took Eleanor under her wing, and the Dinner Ladies kept an eye out at playtime to make sure she always had someone to play with. Once she got used to it all, Eleanor began to flourish and we haven't looked back."

New opportunity, new outlook on life

Academically, Eleanor has certainly done extremely well, achieving above average results for her year group, and Chloe is set to do the same. "Although I want my children primarily to be happy at school, obviously I want them to do well in their education, too," she says. "St Luke's seems to bring out the best in them all round, appreciating their own abilities and encouraging them to do well. The after-school activities are a great addition to this by offering the children new opportunities and in Eleanor's case, learning the guitar brought out a completely different side to her and has given her a whole new outlook."



St Lukes Primary and Nursery School

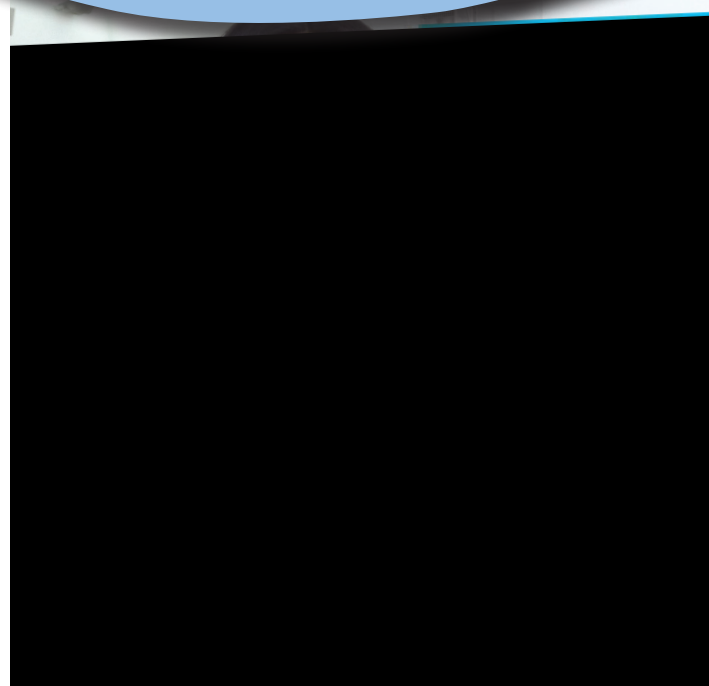
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It is clear that at St Luke's the children come first and that careful thought is given to their individual welfare."

Time for transition

Appreciative as she was by how the school handled Eleanor's initial move there, Angela was therefore not surprised that St Luke's was also very helpful when the time came to transfer to secondary level. "Fairly early in Year 5 we were offered information and advice about choosing a school for the 'Year 6 in waiting' children. Parents were invited to a meeting where we were shown options, given advice about applications and helped to understand what to look for. They didn't try to influence our choice of school but sensibly suggested that we make our own decisions based on individual circumstances, and that we take account of our children's wishes as well and using this strategy, we all feel that we have found Eleanor the right secondary school for her."

Children say:

Eleanor: "Throughout my time in St Luke's, the teachers were what especially made my primary school experience memorable; they helped me whenever I was in need and genuinely cared."

Chloe: "I enjoy St Luke's because I have learnt so many things that I have never known before, and the teachers have been there for me every step of the way."

Atarah: "I like St Luke's because my teacher helps me learn and my friends play with me."