



**Omar and his two daughters Imaan and Eliza feel their lives are enriched by their multi-cultural community at St Mary's Church of England School.**

### Whole person approach

Building confidence and strengthening children's sense of self is an important part of life at St Mary's. "They provide leadership opportunities for different things, ambassador roles are available for the children to take on. My youngest is Cultural Ambassador for her class and she's got a couple of other roles that provide a very wholesome approach to her life at school. She's enjoying that leadership experience," says Omar.

### Christian values

"It's a Church of England school and we're Muslim. The Christian ethos of the school feels inclusive and is very much in line with our values and principles. The children enjoy learning about different religions, and I think it adds a valuable perspective to their outlook on life. People have their own opinions, but I think the way school provides knowledge and perspective about different things in the world helps the children build their own values and helps them to see we're all very similar in some ways. During the Euro's, they used it as a way to teach the children about different countries and traditions, so whether it's religiously based or not it all feels very inclusive," says Omar.

### Moving on

Imaan started her journey at St Mary's in the nursery and has just finished year 6. "Imaan is excited to be starting secondary school, she's moving to a good school so we're very pleased. It's a case of mixed feelings as she's moving to be with new people in a new place but that's just part of life. School have been great at supporting the transition. They've made the last few weeks very memorable, there has been a church service and a leavers' party, and there was shirt signing on the last day. They made it as special as possible," says Omar.

### Favourite activities

Both girls enjoy school and have their individual favourite lessons. "Imaan enjoys learning religious education and Eliza likes PE and drama. The girls' football team has done very well and there is a whole host of extra-curricular activities and clubs that they can get involved with. Sports day is a huge event on the school calendar, everyone looks forward to it. One of the things we benefit from and have the privilege to do, is to visit the big museums and make trips into London, school take advantage of what's nearby," says Omar.

### International community

Being in North London St Mary's attracts families that have moved to the area from all over the world. "I would say to new families moving to the area that St Mary's is probably one of the best schools in Barnet. It's got a very traditional feel and has an international community, lots of ex-pats are here in North London from all over the globe. It wasn't something I experienced as part of primary school journey but we value it for the girls," says Omar.

### A traditional London primary school

"St Mary's is traditional in the sense of its Christian and British values. It's very important from an identity perspective. The children are all well behaved and the teaching staff really care and go above and beyond. I couldn't recommend it highly enough. If I had any friends ask as to where to send their children, I'd say this is the one definitely" says Omar.

### Children say:

**Imaan says:** "I'm happy I went to St Mary's."

**Eliza says:** "I enjoy playing games with my friends."