

PROSPECTUS



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Our School
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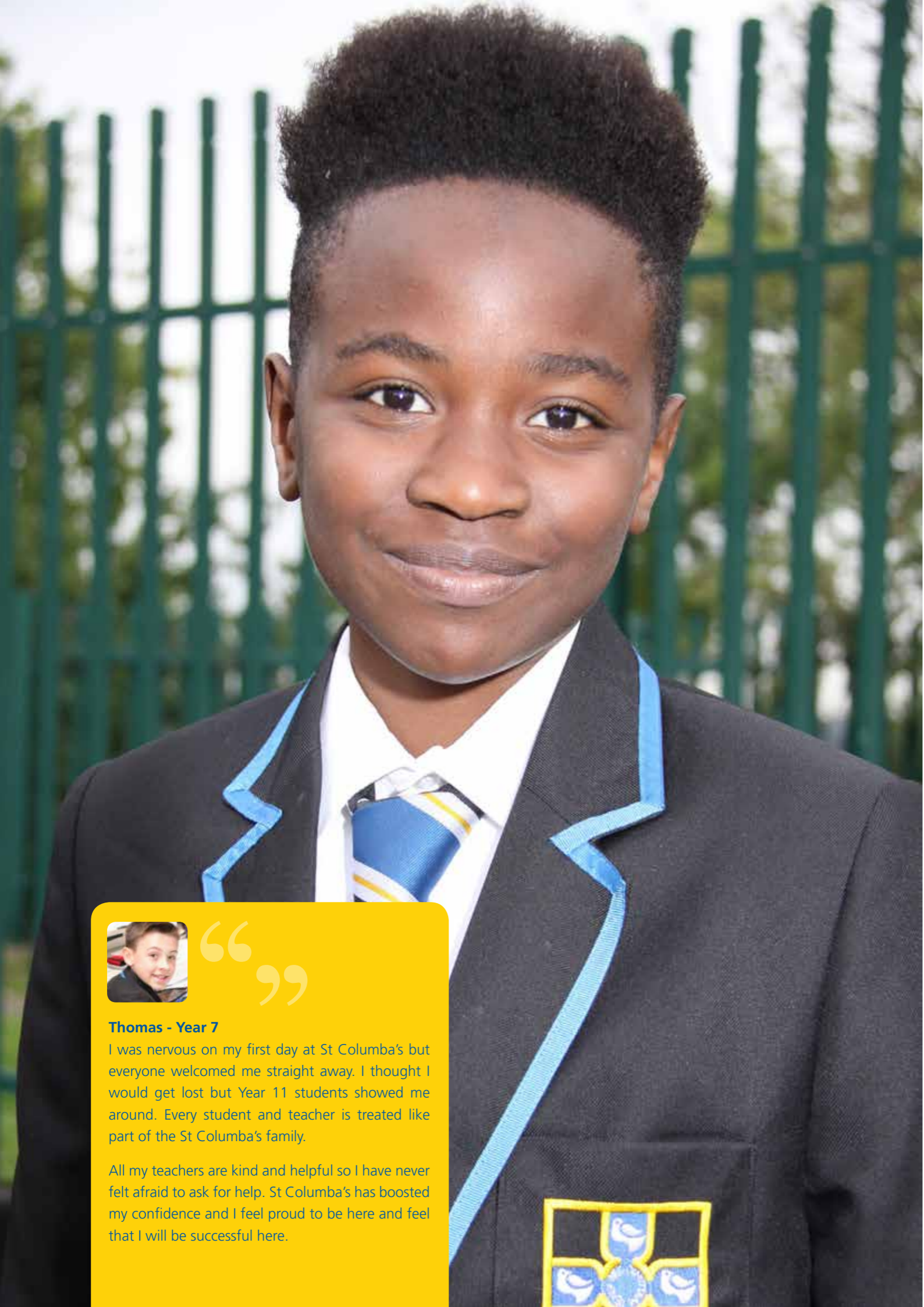
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St Columba's
Catholic Boys' School



INSPIRING A LIFETIME OF ACHIEVEMENT

A warm welcome to a Christian community where everyone has the right to be happy, safe and achieve...

Dear prospective parents and students



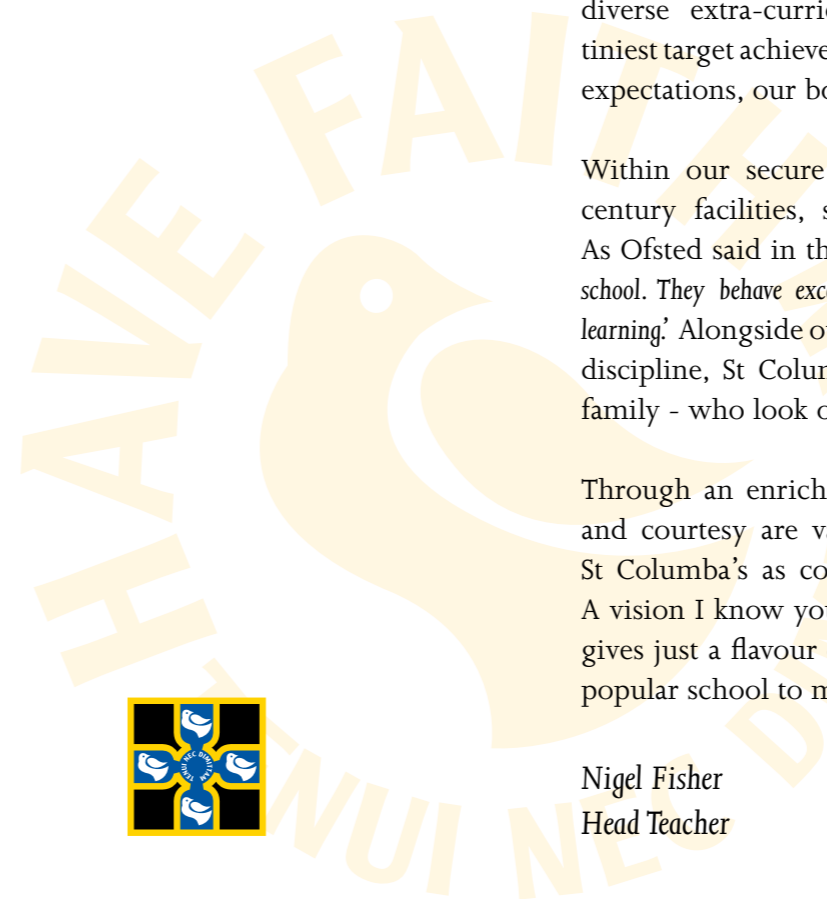
We believe St Columba's is not just a popular, high-achieving school, it is a family. Our Vision Statement says 'Our school is an inclusive place of learning that celebrates and welcomes diversity. Every member of our community is a unique and special creation of God and is known, cared for and valued for the contribution they make. Every student is challenged and supported to achieve his best.' These words underpin everything we do and a 'Wordle' based on our vision can be found throughout the school. We are a Catholic school and our faith informs everything we do. However, you do not need to be a Catholic for your son to join our community and benefit from our approach.

We translate our motto *Tenui Nec Dimittam* to mean *Have Faith*. We have faith in God who loves and supports us. But we also have faith in our boys that they can do wonderful things. We are very experienced in getting the absolute best out of our boys. Our dedicated staff work tirelessly to offer personalised learning, diverse extra-curricular opportunities and celebrate even the tiniest target achieved. By setting the highest learning and behaviour expectations, our boys accomplish remarkable feats.

Within our secure and extensive grounds equipped with 21st century facilities, students have the space to learn and grow. As Ofsted said in their 2014 report, our boys 'take great pride in their school. They behave exceptionally well and have very positive attitudes to their learning.' Alongside our strong academic tradition blending care with discipline, St Columba's is a close multicultural community - a family - who look out for each other and the world around them.

Through an enriched education, where compassion, forgiveness and courtesy are valued alongside academic success, boys leave St Columba's as confident young men, prepared for the future. A vision I know you share for your son too. Since this prospectus gives just a flavour of school life, I warmly invite you to visit our popular school to meet its worthy ambassadors - our boys.

Nigel Fisher
Head Teacher

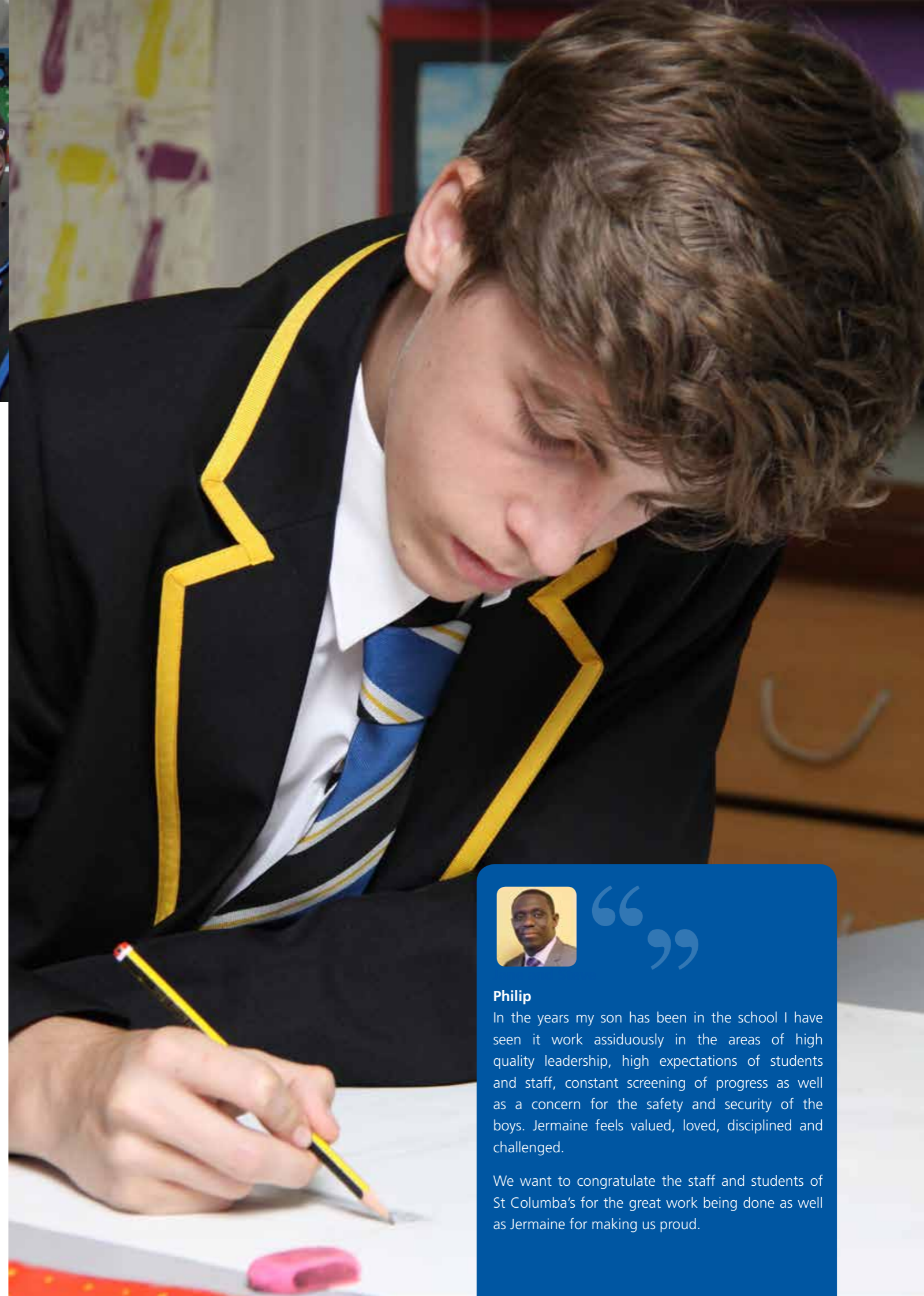


Thomas - Year 7

I was nervous on my first day at St Columba's but everyone welcomed me straight away. I thought I would get lost but Year 11 students showed me around. Every student and teacher is treated like part of the St Columba's family.

All my teachers are kind and helpful so I have never felt afraid to ask for help. St Columba's has boosted my confidence and I feel proud to be here and feel that I will be successful here.





MOTIVATING BOYS TO LEARN

As experts in boys' education, we use active learning and inspiring teaching to engage every student.

Why do we have consistently high attendance? Simple. Boys love learning here. In their report, Ofsted said 'Attendance is very high because boys enjoy being at school. They value the support they are given which helps them to achieve well'. With specialist understanding of how boys learn best, our experienced teaching team nurture every boy's strengths whilst supporting personal targets. Getting to know each boy as an individual means we adapt lessons to suit their needs. No matter what their skills or ability, we cherish our boys' differences so they feel empowered to achieve anything.

It starts with sparking their imagination, opening new doors of opportunity. At St Columba's, lessons are dynamically brought to life using a range of teaching styles, innovative technologies and impressive facilities.

Touchscreen TVs or interactive smart boards in every classroom engage boys in hands-on learning, whilst subject ICT suites offer boys the chance to independently extend their studies. To stretch learning at home and help you, as parents, stay up-to-speed with the latest information, everyone has access to on-line learning via the school website.

Whether active learning in the classroom or releasing their natural energies across our extensive playing fields, we inspire every boy to shine. As you would expect, sport is a much-loved feature of school life here, especially our renowned basketball and football teams. With diverse sports on offer, boys learn teamwork, as well as leadership skills - and crucially, celebrate each other's success together. As a small close-knit community, St Columba's is the perfect environment for your son to thrive.



Philip

In the years my son has been in the school I have seen it work assiduously in the areas of high quality leadership, high expectations of students and staff, constant screening of progress as well as a concern for the safety and security of the boys. Jermaine feels valued, loved, disciplined and challenged.

We want to congratulate the staff and students of St Columba's for the great work being done as well as Jermaine for making us proud.



PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

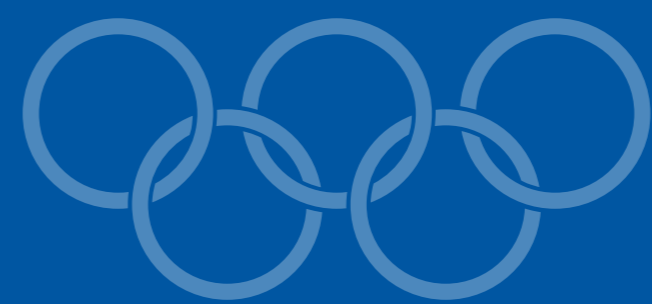
Through an enriched curriculum, boys discover a world of opportunity full of challenge and achievement.

All you want for your son is the very best start in life, so he can make his mark on the world, live his dreams and be happy. We don't just share your hopes, we guide boys through a broad, well-balanced education designed to help every child achieve. Whilst nurturing individual talent, staff constantly track and measure progress, as well as stretch all abilities. To this end, both homework and personal targets are regularly set, with built-in support when needed.

Education at St Columba's is not solely shaped by academic success. What makes learning extra special here is our popular range of extra-curricular activities which inspires boys to get sporty or creative. As well as traditional favourites - basketball, football, rugby and athletics - exciting opportunities await for boys to further showcase their diverse talents. From rowing, trampolining and table tennis, to Master Chef, chess and art, there's something for every boy here to join in and have fun.

Every boy's progress is celebrated here - not just the more academically able. Through a challenging curriculum, we stretch minds, imaginations and horizons.

Boys relish the chance to connect with the world beyond, to think outside of the box. So we organise stimulating talks and visits to widen their outlook, or themed activities across the curriculum such as Rugby Week during the Six Nations Championship. Rewarding boys for Olympian values of courage, determination and inspiration, gives them a real sense of belonging and pride.



Jane and Steve

We are so pleased that our son Joseph goes to St Columba's. After viewing the school we all had a good, positive feeling. We were also impressed with how quickly he settled in and made new friends.

He enjoys the variety of lessons and the whole atmosphere of secondary school and we are very grateful to the dedication of the staff, teachers and older students who have helped make the transition from primary to secondary school so smooth for us. We are lucky to have such a lovely Catholic school in the area.



CARING COMMUNITY & RESPONSIBILITY

Whether entrusting students with responsibility or welcoming them into our family, we help every boy stand tall in their school, local and global community.

Moving from primary to secondary can feel daunting sometimes. Not at St Columba's. Taster days give you the chance to experience our wonderful school for yourself. And when boys first arrive, we help them settle into their new environment. With a separate playground and mentors offering advice with a smile, we do everything to help your son find his feet. Along with a supportive pastoral network of tutors and Heads of Year, we are also blessed with a popular onsite Chaplain always ready to listen.

Developing your son's initiative, integrity and community spirit plays a central part in their education at St Columba's. For example, students are entrusted to share responsibility in peer leadership roles. When elected to the prestigious Student Council, boys represent their peers with pride. The student voice really counts, which is why we believe in our students to make thoughtful decisions for the good of the school. Elected student mentors even help younger boys at homework club, or in our fantastic learning support unit.

We have a Resourced Provision called the St Ambrose Suite (or SAS) where the Local Authority entrust us with boys who have more profound special needs. The SAS is an integral part of school life and the boys are completely accepted by the whole community.

Giving something back, kindness and helping each other: these values define us. Teaching boys to show compassion for global humanity is one of our finest strengths. In raising thousands of pounds every year, our boys proudly make a difference to people in need. Your son can play his part too. Through supporting the annual Lenten appeal, CAFOD, the Balamorie charity and our local Bexley & Greenwich Community Hospice, boys here learn one of life's greatest skills: how to be selfless citizens with empathy for others.



Nikki and Surrinder

Coming from a different background and faith we were concerned how our son would fit in. To our delight, Tarundeep has blossomed both academically and socially. St Columba's has given him the best start to secondary school life and has put our minds at peace knowing our son is well looked after and encouraged to do well in all subjects - as well as having fun.

The staff have high expectations of Tarundeep and take a keen interest in developing him into a good student and a sensible young man. We are very happy and would recommend the school to other parents looking for a school that takes their child's learning and whole development seriously.

POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS WORKING TOGETHER

Through teamwork, communication and educational partnerships, we support our children on their journey.

Working together makes such a difference, especially to our boys. Inspiring them to rise to any challenge means we must show them how much their progress matters. Boys develop personal study skills through weekly homework, recorded in student planners. And if your own English and Maths skills are rusty, we host a popular literacy and numeracy evening - full of fun - early in Year 7 to share homework help tips.

Parents are a key part of the St Columba's community. Contacting subject teachers or senior staff is easy via email. Clear, frequent communication between school and home helps you as a family best support your son, and allows staff to proactively handle any concern. One reason boys exceed expectations here, is due to our family-friendly community where we get to know your son as a person in his own right. Nurturing his sense of well-being is a task we will gladly share with you.

Every stage of your son's educational journey is supported whether through close links with feeder schools or further education colleges. Indeed, as part of the Corpus Christi Partnership, your son is entitled to continue post-16 studies at Christ the King: St Mary's - a first class sixth form college. Although we don't have a sixth form here, we treat Christ the King: St Mary's as our 'off-site sixth form'. Seeing boys flourish and move onto future success is always a proud moment.



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Pauline

Choosing St Columba's for Nick has to be one of the best decisions we as his parents have made. He has thrived academically, morally and socially. We never anticipated Nick's enthusiasm for learning in secondary school. Nor did we hope he would be as happy and nurtured.

The constant feedback from the school on his progress and the acknowledgement of his efforts and good behaviour is so refreshing and rewarding. We are so grateful for the opportunities our son is being given, in such a safe, positive and well-structured school environment.

We would highly recommend the school to any parent looking for a place where their son will thrive and turn in to a well-educated, well-mannered young man, truly happy and confident in his ability to achieve his personal life goals.



OPPORTUNITY BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

A rich programme of sporting opportunity opens doors to individual and team success, fantastic fun and new friends.

Beyond the classroom door, boys unlock another world of excitement: sport. Every boy is encouraged to get involved in physical activity whether as part of a team or developing individual talent. Healthy bodies create strong minds and positive attitudes. So a crucial aspect of sport here is teaching boys teamwork, a healthy sense of competitive and enjoyment in fitness. As a result, sports provision is one our most impressive strengths, filling boys with immense pride.

Of course, it's not just about winning or being the absolute best. Boys enjoy letting off steam positively, supporting each other and simply having fun. Interhouse competitions are hugely popular events during the school year, culminating in a celebration of achievement at our annual sports day. Even tug-of-war and chess stars join in.

For those studying sport academically, consistently high results reflect the commitment of both boys and staff. Ultimately, sharing success is what our school is all about.

Superb onsite facilities include a huge multi-purpose sports hall, fitness suite with rowing machines and vast playing fields featuring football, athletics and training pitches. Whether your son is a table tennis enthusiast, or aspires to be the next David Beckham, opportunity abounds at St Columba's. Our basketball and football teams enjoy considerable success at local, regional and national level. Since 2013, our boys have appeared in twenty three finals for six different sports.

For a small secondary school, we have earned a worthy reputation - with some boys going on to pursue professional sports careers; in 2015 we had two boys awarded contracts with professional football clubs.



Nicola and Keith

When it came to choosing a secondary school for our son, we visited all the schools in the area. From the first moment we visited we felt that it was the school for Matthew.

Being the only boy in the family transferring from a small primary to secondary school, we had concerns as to how Matthew would fit in. From day one, he has been made to feel a valued member of the school community. Staff recognise effort as well as academic success which we feel is important. We have always been welcome as a family when we visit the school.



ASPIRATION & SUCCESS

By unlocking potential in every child, boys leave St Columba's as responsible young men ready to meet 21st century challenges.

In choosing where to entrust your son's education, it is important to keep an eye on the future. You want your son to embrace change, to grow as a person and be the absolute best he can be. At St Columba's, we share your aspirations.

With stimulating facilities, devoted staff and choice of opportunities on offer, your son's individual talents can truly shine. Also as an inclusive community, we respect each other's strengths and differences, always blending discipline with care.

Proud of our students and their incredible achievements, we look forward to your son being part of our unique community and exciting future. We hope this prospectus inspires you to visit; you can expect a friendly welcome as you find out for yourself why so many families make St Columba's their first choice school.



Beau - Year 8

I was very nervous about secondary school when I was in Year 6; when I visited on a Taster Day the school seemed gigantic along with the people in it! It was hard leaving my primary school but the teachers made a good first impression on me which helped a lot.

St Columba's doesn't tolerate misbehaviour because we wouldn't all get a good education. I would say to boys don't worry it will come naturally and you will be learning new things every day.