



# Saint Mary's Church of England Primary School Visit the Centre

## *An Imam and a Vicar stand at a lectern...!*

...No, it's not preamble to a trite joke; but rather a much welcomed sight at the [Lewisham Islamic Centre](#) on the 23rd of March 2015. The Imam, Shakeel Begg of the Centre; the Vicar, Reverend Steve Hall of Saint Mary's Parish Church; their audience, Year Two children and staff of Saint Mary's Church of England Primary School located at Lewisham High Street on yet another school visit to the Centre.

In a climate of Islamophobia fuelled by media sensationalism and much government untruths, it was heartening and reassuring to see Reverend Steve Hall, a respected member of the Christian community, which is often portrayed in direct opposition to Islam, standing side by side with Imam Shakeel Begg, and together presenting the Islamic concept of One God and its message of peace to an ever attentive group of children. They spoke well about the close similarities between the Islamic and Christian Faiths, both of which have central to their teachings the practise of tolerance, compassion and neighbourliness.



Events such as these are especially regarded by the Lewisham Islamic Centre, not least because our children are the future and as "charity begins at home", so too does community cohesion, tolerance and understanding begin with the youth. It is hoped that the understanding that has blossomed into a mutual friendship between Reverend Steve Hall and Imam Shakeel Begg will rub off as a good and practical example for the children and their teachers, for the Centre is always open and keen to foster better relations with the various communities within the London Borough of Lewisham and beyond.

The Lewisham Islamic Centre extends its warmest gratitude to Mrs Judith Nwezre (Year Two Class Teacher), Reverend Steve Hall and our newest friends, the children of Saint Mary's Primary School.

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