



# *Children & Families Minister*

Parish Profile,  
Job Description and  
Person Specification



## From the Vicar

Thank you for your interest in the post of Children and Families Minister. This is a key appointment in the life of Ascension, to work alongside the Vicar.



Children and families are at the heart of Ascension. Our area has a high percentage of families with children and we see a huge missional opportunity to reach out to these children, youth and families through our newly launched Ascension Cafe and Community Hub - Parish Coffee.

Our vision is for church to be fun and engaging for children (as well as for adults!) so that they will meet Jesus and grow in faith. We long for this faith to be something that is shared and nurtured within their families as well.

The children's work at Ascension has been very high quality over the years. This new role will build on and develop the existing children's work as well as having a greater focus on reaching out to families.

We are looking for someone who is passionate about Jesus and passionate about children, who will join us to help develop our ministry in this exciting new chapter of the church's life.

I have been vicar of Ascension since September 2013 and am excited by what God is already doing here and the potential for even more. If you'd like to chat informally about the post please do not hesitate to contact me through the church office, 020 8675 8626.

Revd Marcus Gibbs



# Parish Profile

## Our Mission

To grow up, join in and spread out with the love of God in Balham and Beyond.

## Our Vibe

Ascension can be described as an Charismatic Evangelical Anglican Church, welcoming to all. Ascension is a church community based near Clapham South tube station in London. At Ascension you will find a real mix of people from a variety of places, age groups and backgrounds and with all kinds of different interests and quirks. We are driven by the conviction that God loves every human being and together we try our best to share this love in and around our community. Whoever you are and whatever you believe, you are welcome at our Church. Please come exactly as you are.

We place a high value on prayer and practical action, not just Sunday services, and our preaching aims to be engaging and relevant to London life today. We hope those who come will also experience a warm, informal welcome and a community feel.

It's hard to describe what walking into Ascension for the first time is like. Many people are surprised at how informal and fun it is, others are struck by the church building and the space to meditate and think. More than anything else however, people describe Ascension Church as being like a family. From young professionals to retirees, new parents to established families, students to teachers and lecturers, you'll meet all sorts of different people here.



## Our Neighbourhood

The parish is in the northern part of Balham with a population of about 8,000. It is mainly residential with a few shops, bars and food outlets clustered around Clapham South station.

50% of the population in the parish is aged 20-44, which is much higher than the national average, as is the birth rate. The area is sometimes nicknamed 'nappy valley' because of the incredible number of babies and toddlers in the area. A high proportion of the population are white affluent professionals.

Figures for those over 65 include a large Jewish old people's home. Some social deprivation exists in social housing in low rise blocks of flats, and there is also a unit for families awaiting allocation to permanent local authority housing.

Home ownership is fairly high but many properties are rented, reflecting the fact that 15% of the population moves every year. There is a state primary school, Alderbrook, which is round the corner from the Ascension where we have regular involvement through assemblies and church visits.

Directly opposite Ascension is a Roman Catholic Foundation Sixth Form College. There is also a RC Primary School and two independent primary schools nearby.

## Our Past, Present & Future

Ascension Church (or 'The Church of Ascension' as it was known at the time) was built by Arthur Cawston between 1883 and 1890, in response to the rapid population growth in the area south of Clapham. The church has been through many changes during the intervening years. Ascension Balham in its more recent form is the product of a 1993 church graft, when around fifty members of a church called St. Mark's



Battersea Rise came to join a similar number of people who then made up the congregation at Ascension Balham. In September 2013, the church welcomed its current vicar, Reverend Marcus Gibbs.

The church launched a Balham Community Hub and Church Cafe in 2019 called Parish Coffee to provide a launchpad for missional activities and outreach. Given the demographic of the area it is anticipated that there will be a large opportunity in and through the cafe with young families and youth. We are excited to see what God will do and who He will bring to help lead these fresh expressions.

In addition we are called as an urban church to equip, empower and enable our congregation to be ambassadors for Christ wherever they are in the workplace, with family, friends or neighbours for the 167 hours a week that they are not at church. As part of this we are passionate about releasing, encouraging and equipping parents to disciple their own children outside of the regular Sunday slot. We are excited to see how this can become even more a reality.

## Our Sunday Services

### **10.30am - Morning Worship (circa 100 adults and 40 children)**

For those with children or those who enjoy mixing with a vibrant group of people of all ages, with modern music and a flexible structure. There are separate children's groups provided part-way through, except on the last Sunday of each month, when the whole time is designed with all ages in mind. Personal prayer is available following the services.

### **5.00pm - Dwell**

An informal experience including worship and plenty of opportunity to be still with God or be prayed for.



## Our Children & Youth Work

At our Sunday morning service we provide a space in which kids delight in playing with friends, know they are loved by God, learn how to follow Jesus every day and experience the Holy Spirit. We also think it's important for children and young people to have time worshipping together with the whole Church family after which they go into groups. We also have a crèche for the under 3s and all our children's workers (around 30 of them) are fully DBS checked to ensure maximum child safety in all our activities. As of September we will have around 20 young people at the younger end of secondary school age.

Toddlers at Ascension happens every Thursday during term time from 9.30-11:30am (around 50 children and 50 parents / carers). It is a great opportunity for parents or carers to play with their little ones and connect with other adults in a fun and friendly environment. There are lots of toys and singing for the children, with tea and coffee and a chance to chat for the adults. Toddlers is led by a lovely, friendly team of staff and volunteers from Ascension who will keep you supplied with refreshments and lead the singing time. They are also available to chat and pray with anyone who would like this. We have a Bible Story slot at 11am. This extra 20 minute session has more singing, a bible story and appearances from our ever popular puppets. We work on a first come first serve basis.

Dads & Kids is a monthly playgroup for under-5s and their dads. It includes toys, bacon rolls, coffee and newspapers on the second Saturday of each month from 10am to 11.30am.

## Some of our other activities

Our activities as a church are all centred around our mission to spread the love of God to Balham and beyond. We run the Alpha Course and Marriage Course. We have mid-week Connect Groups. We have run the



CAP Money Course, a spiritual spinning class called SoulFit and several other activities. Please visit the website to get even more of a taste of what we are up to at [www.ascensionbalham.org](http://www.ascensionbalham.org).

## Our Staff

**Marcus** is our Vicar

**Tom** is our Curate

**Dan** is our Operations Manager

**Dorothy** is our Non Stipendiary Minister

**Luke** is our Ordinand in training at St Mellitus College

**Sam** is our Worship Ministry Assistant



# Children and Families Minister

## Purpose

To lead, grow and resource our work amongst children and families within the church, the Parish Coffee cafe, the community and the local primary schools, so that children and families are formed and transformed even more by the love of God.

## Main Duties and Responsibilities

### Vision and Strategy

- Develop, communicate and implement a clear vision and strategy for working with children and families at Ascension, in Balham and beyond

### Sunday Mornings

- Develop and oversee the rotas, material and session structure for our Sunday school groups
- Oversee the recruitment, training and development of Sunday school teams and volunteers
- Work with the vicar, service leaders and worship leaders to develop appropriate children's worship and all-age services within the main Sunday morning services

### Families

- Enable and equip parents to feel confident enough to be able to nurture their child's faith at home
- Run parenting courses as appropriate
- Look for opportunities to develop links with parents outside our main services, and enable opportunities to engage with the Christian faith
- Offer appropriate support and pastoral care to families



### **Work with local schools**

- Develop further our links with local schools and seek opportunities to share the good news of Jesus, for example on school visits to the church or in school assemblies

### **Ascension Cafe & Community Hub & Fresh Expressions**

- Develop new outreach initiatives / fresh expressions within Parish Coffee the recently launched Church Community Hub and Church Cafe aimed at children & families outside the church

### **Other Ministry Duties**

- Organise special children's services / events when appropriate
- Organise social activities for children and families as appropriate
- Work with other Balham Churches to restart our after school clubs as appropriate
- Establish midweek discipleship groups for children as appropriate
- Attend (when running), actively participate in and build relationships with attendees at: Toddlers, SoulFit, Dads & Kids
- Encourage, support and liaise with other existing Ascension ministry leaders for children and families (e.g. Dads and Kids, Toddlers) to help with vision, strategy and sustainability.

### **General**

- Play a full part as a member of the staff team including working collaboratively on shared goals and supporting wider ministries of the church as appropriate
- Facilitate a children's voice and represent children and their families within the church reporting regularly to the Parochial Church Council
- Maintain up to date information on the website and database
- Manage the finance and administration for the ministry and keep records as appropriate
- Ensure a culture of safeguarding excellence is embedded in all our activities



## Person Specification

We are looking for a committed Christian who is passionate and experienced in working with children and families and is able to take a significant leadership role in developing this area of our church's life.

### Personal Qualities and Characteristics

- A committed Christian open to the traditions of the Church of England
- A personal vibrant relationship with Jesus and a love of God's word
- A love for children and their families and a vision to see them grow in their Christian faith
- Servant hearted leader
- Strong interpersonal skills, self-starter, discreet, team player

### Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- Experience of teaching at KS1 and KS2 or Degree in Children's / Youth Work / Theology is desirable
- Ability to communicate effectively in writing and verbally to a variety of audiences
- Able to recognise and develop gifts and skills in others
- Experience of working with children in a church setting
- Ability to share the Christian faith with children in vibrant, challenging and relevant ways
- Able to lead and motivate others
- Previous experience of pioneering new missional activities in a church / community setting
- Previous experience of sharing the Gospel in a church / community setting
- Good IT / Microsoft Office skills



# Main Terms and Condition

**Reporting to:** The Vicar

**Hours:** 40 hours per week to be worked flexibly, including significant Sunday work and some evening work, as agreed with line manager. We will consider 32 hours per week (80%) in line with a reduction in salary.

**Holiday:** Five weeks per annum plus Bank Holidays. It would be expected that the majority of this holiday would be taken during school holidays.

**Salary:** Up to £30k depending on experience

**Office:** Office space, including the use of a computer, is provided

**Training:** We would support the Children and Families Minister to seek opportunities for ongoing training and development

**Pension:** Pension provision is provided

**Notes:** There is a genuine occupational requirement that the post-holder is a Christian. The post is subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure

## APPLICATIONS

All applications are welcome

Apply by emailing a covering letter explaining why you would be a strong candidate for the job, your C.V. and the application form to [office@ascensionbalham.org](mailto:office@ascensionbalham.org) ASAP

Application deadline: Midnight 16 June 2019

Interview date: Thursday 20 June 2019

