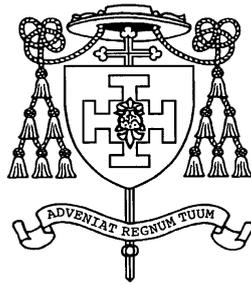


# DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY



## DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

*...committed to encouraging 'fullness of life'*

### SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT:

### **THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School:	St Aidan's Catholic Primary School
Address:	Rackhouse Road Wythenshawe M23 0BW
Tel No:	0161 998 4126
URN:	105519
Headteacher:	Mrs M McGee
Chair of Governors:	Rev M Gannon
Date of Inspection:	3 December 2009
Inspectors:	Mr T McBeath Mr K Toms

**BASIC SCHOOL DATA**

<b>SCHOOL DATA</b>	
Name of School	<b>St Aidan's Catholic Primary School</b>
School email address	head@st-aidans.manchester.sch.uk
Name of Headteacher	Margaret McGee
Name of Chair of Governors	Father Michael Gannon
Name of Parish Priest	Father Michael Gannon
Name of Religious Education Co-ordinator	Mrs Tracy Murphy
<p>St. Aidan's is located in Northern Moor which is a district of Wythenshawe in Manchester. The school serves the amalgamated parishes of St Hilda's and St Aidan's. The number of practising Catholic families is very small. In Key Stage 2 - only 32 Children in the school have made their First Holy Communion, many of these do not practice on a regular basis. In Foundation Stage and Year 1, we have a number of families from Kerala in India, who are practising Catholics. These children will be excellent role models in the future.</p> <p>The school is located in a socially deprived area – 67% of our pupils come from the most deprived circumstances according to FFT data September 2009. Pupils attending the school are mainly from the Northern Moor area, most live in Council property. We now have a mixed intake, we have many more children attending the school who originate from countries all over the world. This gives us the opportunity to celebrate the rich tapestry of experience brought to our school. We have recent experience of Asylum Seeker/Refuge Families, this has broadened our aspects in relation to understanding the difficulties many of these children and their families have experienced in their home countries and the many trials they have experienced in seeking Asylum.</p> <p>There are 218 pupils currently attending the school, ranging in age from 3 to 11 years. The proportion of baptised Catholics is 67% (145/218). We have a number of pupils of other faiths, the largest group being of the Muslim faith (13%).</p> <p>The school site is attractive, safe and secure. There are a number of grassed areas and hard standing, trees provide shade in a number of areas. We have taken advantage of the scope for grounds development - improving the Foundation Stage of Learning External Environment and Key Stage 1 &amp; 2 play/socialization areas. Very few indigenous pupils have direct knowledge of the Catholic faith on entry.</p>	

<b>STAFFING &amp; ORGANISATION</b>	
Number of full-time teachers	10
Number of part-time teachers	1
Number of Catholic teachers	11
Number of teachers from other Christian faiths	0
Number of teachers from other faith backgrounds	0
How many teachers teach Religious Education?	8
Number of teachers with CCRS	4
Number of teachers with other Catholic qualifications (e.g. Theology, leadership)	1

<b>PUPILS / STUDENTS</b>	
Number of pupils on roll	218
Number of classes	8
Organisation of classes	1 form entry
Average class size	27
% of Catholic pupils	67%
% of pupils from other Christian faiths	13%
% of pupils from other faith backgrounds	10%
Number of pupils on SEN register	42
Number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	1

<b>TEACHING TIME FOR R.E. PER WEEK IN -</b>	
Foundation	1-2 hours Dependent upon age group
Key Stage 1	2.5 hours
Key Stage 2	2.5 hours

<b>FINANCIAL DATA – actual expenditure over 2 years</b>	
English	£12000
Mathematics	£2000
Science	£2000
Religious Education	£3000

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
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<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>St Aidan's offers an outstanding Catholic education.</p> <p>The school is deeply embedded within the community it serves, giving outstanding support to all, but particularly to the vulnerable pupils and their families. This mission is realised within a strong faith and personal commitment of all the staff and governing body. The energy and enthusiasm of both the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher ensure that St Aidan's will continue to develop its strong Catholic ethos.</p> <p><b><u>What the school could do to improve further</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have Religious education as an agenda item at all meetings of the full Governing Body.</li> <li>• Continue to develop the links between families and the parish churches</li> </ul>	

<b>THE CATHOLIC LIFE AND ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>There is a real sense of the presence of God at the centre of all that St Aidan's is trying to achieve. This is reflected in the strong prayer life of the school, in which the every day events of daily life, within school and family, are supported and celebrated. The school demonstrates its living of the Gospel values in many different ways – the classroom and corridor displays, the classroom focus tables, the reflective moments in times of prayer, the celebration of their liturgies but most of all in the way in which the individual is respected. The school lives out Christ's command to support, to the very best of its ability, the vulnerable within its community. It empowers them to stand up for themselves with confidence.</p>	

<b>COLLECTIVE WORSHIP</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>Collective worship is of a very high quality and relevant to the lives of the pupils. There are many opportunities for the pupils to pray. Prayers are said at the beginning and end of the day and also before lunch in the classroom. The school uses set prayers, but there are times for pupils to bring their own requests to prayer. Assemblies are well planned and evaluated by staff. All, including the pupils, participate in these times and have opportunities to lead. These are spiritual moments, time of reflection, celebration, support and praise. Scripture is interpreted at a level of the pupils' understanding and is related to their daily lives. Messages from these assemblies are referred to and evaluated in the light of the behaviour, of individuals and class groups, throughout the day. Prayer is a central element to all the school achieves.</p>	

<b>SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND OVERALL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>There is a strong respect for the dignity of the human person, at St Aidan's, which is based upon the understanding that each individual is created in the image and likeness of God. The staff, led by an energetic and dynamic Headteacher, work hard to ensure justice for all. They instil into the pupils a sense of worth and self respect. This enables them to develop a respect and concern for others. There are many instances of children supporting each other in their classroom work and around the school. They are also developing an awareness of the needs of others outside their school community and this is illustrated by the response to the many charitable appeals; Shoe Box, Children's Society, Harvest Festival and Indian School. The parents described their relationship with the school as being in an extended family.</p>	

<b>PARTNERSHIP: PUPILS, PARENTS, PARISH(ES) AND WIDER COMMUNITY</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>The exemplary relationship which St Aidan's has developed with the whole of its community is outstanding.</p> <p>The pupils feel valued and respected. They are able to discuss clearly what the school has achieved and the part they have played in these achievements. They are also clear about what they would like to see further developed. They feel, through their elected school council, they have a voice which is listened to carefully by the school authorities.</p> <p>The pupils were able to describe the responsibilities they have within the school – for example the 'Buddy System' – and they take these responsibilities very seriously. The pupils are very confident about taking any difficulties they may have to the teachers and that these would be dealt with effectively.</p> <p>The school works extremely closely with the parents in developing not only social justice but also developing a spiritual and moral approach to these matters. The school acts as a link between the parents/carers and the parish churches and outside agencies. Parents feel welcomed in the school and they are invited to join in school celebrations, social occasions, liturgies and times of prayer. Parents value the school describing it in family terms; one parent likened the school to an extended family.</p> <p>The parish priest, who is also the Chair of Governors, is very knowledgeable about the areas of strength and the areas of development. He has developed a very close working partnership with the school which can be illustrated by the way the sacramental programme is constantly being reviewed and developed so as to make it more accessible to parents and more meaningful to the pupils. The Parish priest works hard to link the school to the two parishes of St Hilda's and St Aidan. There is an excellent working partnership that tries to engage the school community fully in the life of the church.</p> <p>The school is deeply embedded in the community having close links with many agencies – particularly the Catholic's Children's Society. St Aidan's manages to combine the issues of social justice with the spiritual development of the school.</p> <p>St Aidan's has close links with neighbouring schools – such as the Northern Moor School network, which raises the achievement of pupils, links with a contrasting primary school in Shropshire and links with a school in Mumbai, India. They support many charities.</p>	

<b>ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>The standards of achievement are very high given the pupils' capabilities and starting points. Work is of a very high standard and well presented; there is a great pride in the work they produce. They use the same literacy skills as for English and this ensures that the expectations over standards are consistent.</p> <p>The school delivers a broad religious curriculum with the pupils having opportunities to interpret scripture, create their own psalms and prayers in interesting and creative ways. All work is planned so that pupils of all abilities make good progress</p> <p>The curriculum also includes the relevant study of other faiths.</p>	

<b>QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>The standard of teaching is outstanding.</p> <p>Work is well planned and provision is made for pupils of all abilities. The curriculum is presented in interesting and enjoyable ways so that the pupils not only make significant progress but also enjoy what they doing. High standards of work are ensured by rigorous assessment procedures and staff peer group moderation. This ensures that standards are consistently judged throughout the whole school.</p> <p>All teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and display an energetic and creative approach to their teaching. The teachers are very well supported by an equally committed group of teaching assistants, who themselves make a significant impact on pupil learning and progress.</p> <p>Resources were very well used including the effective use of IT.</p> <p>St Aidan's meets all the Diocesan requirements regarding time, content and the use of 'Here I Am'.</p>	

<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING THE CATHOLIC LIFE AND ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>The school's Catholic mission is lived and is at the centre of its community work. This focus is ensured by a leadership team that is deeply committed to this mission. Protecting the weak and vulnerable is a high priority, as well as giving pupils the best start in life possible. They do this by empowering and supporting the pupils and their families.</p> <p>The professional and spiritual development of all staff is well provided for. Senior management and the Co-ordinator attend all the Diocesan training and the school sends other staff, like NQTs, to other training provided by the Diocese. The school also use 'Before you Begin ' sessions at the start of topic and joins with other Catholic primary schools for joint In-service training. The Headteacher has an excellent understanding of the needs of her staff and tries to ensure these are met by school and church.</p> <p>The Governing Body manages to challenge as well as being supportive. The membership of the governing body contains many professional skills that are used effectively in continually developing and challenging the school. They met regularly in committees and as a full Governing Body. They are frequent visitors to the school attending many school functions. Some Governors accompany pupils on school trips. They are well informed through discussions with the Headteacher, senior management team and members of staff and receive regular written reports. They attend training and make a significant contribution to the shaping of the vision and direction of the school.</p>	

<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>There is a very clear understanding and vision in St Aidan's as to the role of religious education in the school. The Headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She is energetic and very enthusiastic in providing the future needs of the school. She is well supported by an equally outstanding Senior Management Team and Governing Body who share the Headteacher's vision and commitment. There is a real team approach to the leadership and management of St Aidan's.</p> <p>In supporting vulnerable groups in the school community the Headteacher works tirelessly to link them with appropriate agencies. Inclusion is a fundamental aspect of the school. There is a very high standard of care and support.</p> <p>School resources are very well used and the school provides a 'Prayer Garden' and also a 'Prayer Room'. Both places provide havens of quiet and reflection within a purposeful school. IT and religious resources are very well used.</p>	

## **PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Number of questionnaires distributed: 210

Number of questionnaires returned: 78

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys school	59	18			
2	I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	54	23			
3	I am made to feel welcome in school	57	21			
4	The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their suggestions and concerns	48	29			1
5	The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	34	35	1		6
6	The school enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	46	26	1		4
7	The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	37	32	1		7

78 responses were received but where the numbers do not match 78 it is because some responses did not enter an answer to that particular question.

## **PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE (Y2)**

		Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
1	Do you like being at this school?	23	2		1
2	Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?	22	1	1	2
3	Are your Religious Education lessons interesting and fun?	20	3	2	1
4	Do you get help when you are stuck?	21		3	2
5	Do you have to work hard?	22	1	1	1
6	Do teachers show you how to make your work better?	24	1	1	
7	Do other children behave well?	10	11	3	2
8	Are teachers fair to you?	26			
9	Do teachers listen to your ideas?	20		6	
10	Are you trusted to do things on your own?	14	6	5	1
11	Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?	23	1	2	

26 pupil responses

Some pupils did not respond to all the questions.

## **PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE (Y6)**

		Yes	Mostly	Sometimes	No
1	Do you like being at this school?	22	2	1	
2	Do you find out new things in Religious Education lessons?	14	10	1	
3	Are your Religious Education lessons interesting and fun?	5	8	12	
4	Do you get help when you are stuck?	19	6		
5	Do you have to work hard?	18	6	1	
6	Do teachers show you how to make your work better?	16	3	5	
7	Do other children behave well?	5	12	8	
8	Are teachers fair to you?	25			
9	Do teachers listen to your ideas?	10	11	4	
10	Are you trusted to do things on your own?	16	7	2	
11	Do you enjoy your times of prayer together?	17	4	1	

25 pupil responses

Some pupils did not respond to all the questions.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate	Judgement
<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
The effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of Catholic education in meeting the needs of pupils.	1
Steps taken to improve the provision further.	1
The capacity of the school to make further improvements.	1
<b>THE CATHOLIC LIFE AND ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
The Mission Statement reflects the Gospel and the Catholic purpose of the school.	1
Pupils have an understanding of the school's mission and appreciate its ethos.	1
<b>COLLECTIVE WORSHIP</b>	<b>1</b>
The school provides frequent and high quality opportunities for prayer, collective worship and liturgical celebrations.	1
Staff and pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in prayer, worship and liturgy.	1
Collective worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.	1
<b>SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND OVERALL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS</b>	<b>1</b>
There are whole school policies for spiritual and moral development.	1
The school contributes to spiritual and moral development through the whole curriculum and life of the school.	1
The behaviour of pupils	1
The school contributes to the social and cultural development of all pupils.	1
<b>PARTNERSHIP: PUPILS, PARENTS, PARISH(ES) AND WIDER COMMUNITY</b>	<b>1</b>
Pupils consider themselves to be valued and respected and recognise the responsibilities that this involves.	1
Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school and to participate in service within the wider community.	1
Pupils make a contribution to the community in and beyond the school.	1
Parents are informed about the school's mission as a Catholic school and are encouraged to participate and contribute.	1
The school fosters effective links with the local parish(es). Priests and parishioners are invited and welcomed to some school events.	1
The school has good links with other schools.	1
The school contributes to the life of the wider community.	1
<b>ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>	<b>1</b>
All pupils make progress taking into account variations between pupils and groups of pupils.	1
<b>QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>	<b>1</b>
The effectiveness of teaching and learning in meeting the needs of all pupils.	1
The appropriate use and rigour of assessment.	1
Pupils enjoy their work.	1
The extent of parents'/carers' involvement in their children's learning.	2
The curriculum meets Diocesan requirements.	1

<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING THE CATHOLIC LIFE AND ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
The school has taken effective steps to promote improvement since the last inspection.	1
Strategic planning reflects and promotes the school's mission.	1
There are opportunities for professional and spiritual development, which assist all staff to understand and contribute to the Catholic mission of the school.	1
The school undertakes rigorous self-evaluation of all aspects of its Catholic life.	1
The school is effective in achieving full inclusion of all its pupils regardless of faith background.	1
The Governing Body helps shape the vision and direction of the Catholic life of the school.	1
The Governing Body has a good understanding of the strengths and developmental needs of the school as a Catholic school; it supports and challenges the leadership team.	1

<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>	<b>1</b>
The R.E. Co-ordinator leads and supports staff.	1
Performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-evaluation.	1
The adequacy of resources and accommodation.	1
Resources are used to achieve high standards.	1