



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

REPORT ON THE MONITORING INSPECTION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School:	St Aidan's Catholic Primary School
Address:	Rackhouse Road Northern Moor Wythenshawe Manchester M23 0BW
Tel No:	0161 998 4126
URN:	105519
Headteacher:	Mrs Margaret McGee
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Janet Mudd
Date of Inspection:	1 December 2015
Inspector:	Mrs Eileen Robb Mrs Julie Johnson

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School continues to provide an outstanding Catholic education.

This welcoming, vibrant, happy school places Christ at the centre of all that is done in relationships, learning and play. The Mission Statement, which is shortened for the children to "Love God, Love One Another", underpins all that the school sets out to achieve. St Aidan's school reaches out to the community beyond the school gates, and shows a special warmth and care for those members of the community who may be vulnerable.

The inspirational Headteacher is known and respected throughout the community and provides an oasis where calm and support can be found, whatever the upset or concern. This is a fundamental foundation of St Aidan's; all are valued and cared for, no problem is insurmountable. This is truly a school where the message of the Gospel prevails and lives.

The Headteacher leads a strong, committed, enthusiastic and experienced leadership team, who present a shared vision and strong message to staff, children and families. Staffing levels are excellent and highly effective teaching assistants work closely alongside teachers to maximise learning opportunities, so that all children can experience success.

Continued professional development for all staff is a key feature in this successful school. There are strong links with the Diocese and in-service training includes Chaplaincy, Creative Religious Education and sessions outlining the Catholic Church's Social Teaching.

There is no room for complacency in this school, and all staff continually seek ways to enhance and enrich the learning opportunities for children in and outside the classrooms. As soon as the children enter the school in Nursery, they experience an environment where their emotional, social, personal and spiritual needs are recognised and catered for.

The Learning Walk provided an opportunity to visit all classrooms, where the broad, balanced and enriched creative curriculum provides the children with opportunities to become independent learners, to take responsibility for their own progress and to become equipped with strategies to be resilient when faced with challenges. The high standard of work in class displays and work books, the learning and working walls and the productive use of the excellent resources enhances this provision further. Well established routines are evident in the classrooms and provide a security for children to settle easily into a 'work-like' frame of mind. Children take a great pride in their work and can confidently articulate their thoughts and opinions to teachers and visitors alike. The children are reflective learners, inquisitive and obviously enjoying their learning. The school environment is exciting, well resourced and offers the children a range of exciting opportunities which are structured to support and challenge all to achieve their potential. It is clearly evident that there is a commitment to promoting the high standards expected of all children.

The children are happy, friendly and their behaviour is excellent. They are proud of their backgrounds and beliefs, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender or disability. This is manifested in the regular and planned Cultural Celebration Days where the children learn about other cultural and faith aspects of the groups of children who attend St. Aidan's. These Celebration Days end in a concert and a Shared Plate, for example, celebration of an African Day and an Indian Day. As a result of celebrating differences, tolerance, respect and understanding are promoted not just in school but in the wider community

The governors are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development. They are totally committed to the mission of the school and offer challenge and support for the senior management and for all aspects of school life. They contribute to the full life of the school and attend many events which enable them to witness the culture, ethos and standards exhibited throughout school. The Religious Education Governor meets regularly with the Religious Education Co-ordinator. She is supportive of the excellent work initiated by this committed hardworking lead professional, whose vision and focus contribute to high quality learning opportunities for all. The Parish Priest, who is

also a governor, often visits school and is proud of all St Aidan's sets out to achieve, not just in school but also in the parish and wider community.

The children enjoy, and participate in, acts of Collective Worship and are encouraged to be as independent as possible in planning and delivering these. The recently developed Children's Chaplaincy group gives children the opportunity to take a more active role in planning, leading and evaluating Collective Worship. The children are respectful and reverent during prayer times. The Peace Room, one of the sacred spaces, is used to excellent effect in giving children opportunities to experience prayer, reflection, or just being in a quiet place.

There are a number of children's groups in school who actively work at contributing to the life of the school in a variety of ways, for example, Mini Vinnies, School Council, Pupil Voice, Chaplains and Rosary Group. The children are also involved in Church in Action work, which involves raising funds for local and the wider community charities, for example, the Wood Street Mission and Operation Christmas Child.

There is overwhelming support from parents for the school. One parent talked about the way in which she and others always feel welcomed and valued and described the exciting African and Indian days of celebration, which are always well attended. Another parent stated that she wouldn't want her child in any other school. Parents recognise and are appreciative of all that the school does to achieve the best possible outcomes for all of their children.

The outstanding Catholic education provided by St. Aidan's Catholic Primary school is enshrined in Gospel values, lives the message of the Gospel and is the mission of the school. "Love God, Love One Another."

Areas of outstanding practice

Outcomes for pupils

Collective Worship is central to the life of St Aidan's school and the children have a clear understanding that Collective Worship remembers and celebrates God's presence in their lives.

Leaders, Governors and Managers

Leaders and managers have a secure understanding of the school's many strengths and areas for development. They are fully committed to promoting the Catholic mission of the Church.

Provision

All children have access to excellent learning opportunities, which are well planned and well resourced, and challenge and support learning both inside and outside the classroom.