

Fiona's three children have all thrived in the friendly atmosphere of St Aidan's Catholic Primary Academy

Fiona and Mario Palumbo live in Newbury Park, Ilford with their three children, Nancy, 12, Giuseppe, 10, and Elsie, six.



Good mix of families

Fiona Palumbo sat outside the gates of St Aidan's Catholic Primary Academy and watched the children coming out with their parents before she made the final decision to send her eldest child, Nancy, to the school. "I was lucky that St Aidan's had been recommended to me by my church as the first choice primary school to go to and I had also heard from another parent that the school catered for a good mix of people. But it was only after I had sat outside the gates and watched the families coming out looking so happy that I knew it was the right school for my children," says Fiona.



**St Aidan's
Catholic Primary Academy**

Success built by staff

Fiona likes the fact that St Aidan's is a small school with just a two-form entry. "It is a very cosy, friendly place with plenty of good staff who take the trouble to get to know all the children. I think the success of the school lies in its history of recruiting good teachers and then managing to hold on to them and the staff all benefit from good leadership from the head teacher," Fiona says.

Children receive broad education

Although St Aidan's is a Catholic school it is attended by children from a lot of other faiths and ethnicities. "The diverse mix of children in the school is representative of the local population that it serves," Fiona says. "This gives all the children a broad knowledge of the world and will help them to grow up celebrating and accepting diversity."

Good start to learning

Fiona's experience has been that academic standards remain consistently high at St Aidan's and she thinks that all children receive a good start to their education at the school. "My daughter Nancy got on particularly well and she was in the top six per cent in the country in Maths when she left St Aidan's to go on to secondary school," says Fiona.

Pupils treated as individuals

St Aidan's has also recognised that all three of my children are very different," says Fiona. "Giuseppe is very easy going and nothing worries him. He is clever but he is currently struggling with his writing, so his teacher is giving him extra writing work at the moment.

"I am impressed with the way Elsie's teacher understands her and has learnt how to get the best out of her. She has realised Elsie likes to be active and allows her to go out for a run if she feels she needs it. I am pleased to say that all three of my children have been very happy at the school."

Choice of after school activities

Fiona thinks that St Aidan's provides very good after school clubs for the children. "I think it is great that the teachers volunteer their time to run the clubs," says Fiona. "Giuseppe loves chess and Elsie enjoys doing keep fit after school."

School delivers what it promises

"I would definitely recommend St Aidan's to other parents because I firmly believe that the school has looked after all three of my children well. You enter into a contract with the school as parents and, if you are good parents and carry out your part of the bargain, then the school more than holds their end up."



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Children say

Nancy says: "When I was at St Aidan's I really liked the after school clubs, such as netball and choir. There was always loads of stuff to do. I loved the fact that the whole school was like a community and that everyone knew each other and I am pleased that I came out of it with very good results in the SATs."