



Billinge St Aidan's C of E Primary School
Small enough to care, big enough to inspire-let your light shine



Welcome to Billinge St Aidan's C of E Primary School



Foreword: Melanie Ravenscroft, Headteacher, says...

It is with great pride that I welcome you to our truly wonderful school. We are a one form entry primary school, so there is a real family atmosphere, allowing all children to thrive. We believe that every child in our school should be treated as if they were our own.

Motto

Our motto, 'small enough to care, big enough to inspire-let your light shine', sums us up. While striving for excellence and inspiring pupils to become lifelong learners, we never lose track of the importance of dedicated care and expert guidance.

Gospel values

We are an outstanding Church of England Primary School (SIAMS 2013). Gospel Values underpin our whole school life, from how our highly experienced and devoted staff work with pupils and parents, to the teaching of the curriculum and development of school policies.

Broad curriculum

We offer a broad, balanced and rich curriculum where all children, of all abilities and faiths, are warmly welcomed. Our curriculum helps and supports all our pupils in achieving their personal best, in all aspects of school life.

Emotional health

We are committed to ensuring the development of children's emotional health and well-being. To support us with this, we employ a fully trained counsellor who works for one day a week speaking to children and supporting them. We want to ensure we empower our pupils to be resilient!

Parent partnership

Another very important part of our school is you, the parent! As you will see, by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, you and your child are very important to us. We also work in partnership with governors, our Church, the parish and the community of Billinge... and other schools. We promote school ownership through teamwork and joint decision-making.

Get in touch

If you are looking for a lively, enthusiastic and well balanced school for your child, we would like to offer you a warm invitation to come and see why we are so proud of Billinge St Aidan's. You won't be disappointed! To make an appointment please email:

staidansb@sthelens.org.uk
or call 01744 678042



School day



School hours

8.50am – Doors open
8.55am – School starts
3.20pm to 3.30pm - Hometime

Wraparound care

Our Breakfast Club runs from 7.30am to 8.50am. A variety of cereals are available, plus toast with jam and a drink of juice or water. Our After School Club runs from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. Children are provided with a small snack and drink and can enjoy a number of indoor and outdoor games including craft activities.

Uniform

We believe that a simple uniform is helpful in establishing good standards of appearance in school and by wearing it the children quickly feel part of the community.

Children throughout the school wear a white polo shirt and dark green jumper/ sweatshirt, grey skirt or trousers. You can buy school uniform items from wherever you wish, but please ensure everything is marked with your child's name.

School meals and snacks

Healthy, hot and tasty school meals are provided every day. Children in Reception, Year 1 and 2 receive a free school meal. The menu is available to view on the school website, and includes desserts, as well as a vegetarian option plus salad items, fruit, yoghurt, water, juice and low fat milk. Children are also welcome to bring in a healthy packed lunch, and we also offer the opportunity for these children to have school lunch on a Friday.



Break-time and drinks

Under the Fruit in School scheme infant children are entitled to a piece of fruit each day free of charge. This is given as a playtime snack. Water is always available during the day. Milk is available for all children up to the year in which they are seven (Year 2). Those children who are entitled to free school meals will also be entitled to milk free of charge.



Making the right moral choice meant that Jason found the perfect school for his children at St Aidan's Church of England Primary School

Jason and Gabriella Ortiz live in Wigan with their son Santiago, nine and daughter Valentina, who is four years old.

An ethical decision

Some things in life are just meant to be, believes Jason, and as far as he and Gabriella are concerned, their children were meant to go to St Aidan's Church of England Primary School. "We hadn't at first considered St Aidan's as it's further away from our home than the local schools," he says. "However, the other options meant that we would have had to declare ourselves as regular attendees of their associated churches and we were not prepared to lie about this. We heard through a friend that a place had unexpectedly become free at St Aidan's at the last minute, and now feel very fortunate that it was offered to Santiago, only days before the start of term."

A family event

Although not weekly churchgoers, Jason and Gabriella are Christians and for that reason are delighted that St Aidan's offers a Sunday School once a month, at which parents are also welcomed. "I often have to work on Sundays but I never miss the Sunday School if I can possibly help it," says Jason. "It is modern, absolutely child-focussed and great fun, and it's much more accessible than a normal church service might be for younger children. I was very keen on getting Santiago involved in playing rugby but as the club plays on Sunday mornings, there is no contest – he would much rather go and have fun at Sunday School!"

An inclusive and welcoming atmosphere

"The staff are all very approachable and maintain a playground presence so that you can always talk to someone if you need to. Everyone is so friendly, and even the older children are happy to mix with the younger ones which makes it feel very inclusive. There is a real community spirit about St Aidan's and

Gabriella and I have made friends there, too, just as much as our children have."

Lovely teachers + fun lessons = happy child

A child's enjoyment of school is often reflected in their academic performance and Jason has no concerns on that score: "Santiago is doing very well, probably because he loves being at school and enjoys lessons. It pleases me that he has had both male and female teachers, all of whom have been wonderful and with whom he gets on very well. Valentina has recently moved into the Reception Class from Nursery and she, too, adores school; she has extremely firm opinions for a little girl and we would be in no doubt at all if she wasn't happy there!"

Children say

Santiago: "I like learning new things and the After School clubs."

Valentina: "I love playing outside with my school friends!"



Curriculum

We believe in providing a broad range of experiences to help children develop a love of learning. Our strong academic results are achieved by inspiring teaching, which makes subjects come alive. Class sizes are small enough to ensure that each child receives as much attention as they need, but also provide children with plenty of opportunity for positive social interaction.

The curriculum is divided into three stages:

Early Years Foundation Stage: from ages 0-5

Key Stage 1: from ages 5-7

Key Stage 2: from ages 7-11

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Reception and Nursery the curriculum is very much based on the children's interests, as well as the usual seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Key Stages 1-2

From Year 1 to Year 6 we run a 'learning challenge' based curriculum, so that subjects such as Science, History and Geography start with a 'Wow' moment, and are linked to what the children want to find out about. Areas of the curriculum are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Art and Design
- Computing
- Design and Technology
- Geography
- History
- Languages
- Music
- Physical Education
- SMSC



Behaviour and Self Development

Reward and praise

St Aidan's is a Church of England Primary School, and we encourage good behaviour and self-discipline in order to achieve a high quality of education for all children. We believe that staff and parents working together is the best way to achieve this. Our aim is to encourage good behaviour through rewards and praise, and sanctions are in place to discourage poor behaviour. Achievements outside school are also celebrated in class and in assembly.

School rules

The school rules are:

Behaviour code

- Move sensibly and quietly around the school.
- Always be polite and considerate.
- Treat everyone and everything with respect.
- Follow instructions from all adults first time and without question.

Safety code

- Never leave school without permission.
- Always ask permission before you leave the classroom.
- Always tuck your chair in and sit on it correctly.
- Be very sensible when entering cloakroom areas.

Playground code

- Obey and respect all adults.
- Show consideration to all children.
- Play safely at all times.
- Take care of playground equipment.
- Stand still and quiet when the whistle is blown.
- Always walk quietly into school.

Extended curriculum: trips and sport

Learning is fun: trips and visits

To extend the curriculum, and make learning even more fun, we offer many trips, residential visits and activities. Trips are organised in relation to the children's interests and learning. Y6 are offered the opportunity to participate in a residential trip which allows them to experience more extreme sports such as canoeing, rock climbing and sea cliff traversing.

Inspiring our pupils

We are always looking for ways to inspire children and bring lessons to life, whether it is by organising a visit from a Japanese linguist or by turning classrooms back a hundred years, dressing in costume and exploring life in Victorian or Roman times.

Sport

As well as following the Physical Education programme of work as set out in the National Curriculum, there are many opportunities for your children to enjoy extracurricular sport and team games. Competition is at the forefront of our thinking and we take part in many local, LEA, regional and national tournaments.

Active Mark

We have received the Active Mark for commitment to PE and sport in school. We also enter a huge amount of competitions, and for the last few years have entered the most competitions compared to other primary schools in St Helens. We also have wonderful grounds which include:

- traversing wall
- mountain bike track
- trim trail
- ...and Infant and Junior play areas.



Reflecting Allie's passionate beliefs in education and a Christian way of living, St Aidan's Church of England Primary School is everything she ever wanted for her children

Allie and Stuart Haggerty live in Billinge with their children Jack, George and Madeline who are 10, seven and five years old respectively.

A twist of fate

There can be few parents more passionate about their children's school than Allie Haggerty. But for a twist of fate she would have sent them elsewhere and thus missed out on what she believes is the very best possible early education a child can have. "I grew up in this area and had planned to send Jack to my old school, which gave me an excellent and happy education," she explains. "However, Jack's birthday is in September and only St Aidan's would take him at three, and I didn't want him to miss a whole year. So we decided to send him there for one year after which we would move him to my first choice but it only took a few weeks for us to change our minds. Once at St Aidan's, it's for the duration and nothing on Earth would now persuade me otherwise."

Strong moral values

The strong Christian ethic at St Aidan's mirrors Allie and Stuart's own values and as practising Christians, they greatly appreciate the way the school has those values at its heart. "St Aidan's is like a loving and supportive family, where children are not only impeccably educated but taught within a framework of morals which will last them a lifetime. The staff team is encouraging, nurturing and extremely caring, and places as much emphasis on kindness as on academic achievement. Both these qualities are rewarded and celebrated, with the result that the children at St Aidan's are caring, well-rounded and confident."

Mutual respect

Allie is closely involved with the Parent Teacher Association which is, she says, very well supported by parents and staff in equal measure. "Many people want to make a contribution because the school is so highly thought of," she says. "Everyone is prepared to give up their time to help where they can

because they feel so strongly about it. Teachers and support staff frequently work after hours voluntarily to run clubs and events because they genuinely care about the children, and this attitude flows through the school, where there is mutual respect between teachers and students. The children behave the same outside school as they do during the day, bringing home the manners that have been instilled in them."

Priceless qualities

"It would be impossible to put a price on what they offer the children. Nothing is too much trouble and everything they do seems to me to come from the heart. Whether it is appropriate academic support, pastoral care or personal guidance, it is given willingly, effectively and kindly, and it includes the whole family."

Core values to nurture every child

Whilst Allie would not for a second denigrate other schools in the area, for her and her family St Aidan's offers everything they could want, expect or need. "So much of our children's lives is spent at school in the care of people we must trust with their welfare. Knowing that their moral and spiritual development is given just as much importance as their academic education means a great deal to me and St Aidan's is giving my children the compassion, care, acceptance and love I want for them. These are the core Gospel values we wish to pass on and I feel blessed that in this regard, as in others, we found the right school for our children."

Children say

Jack: "The staff are approachable and caring and I really enjoy all the lessons and clubs."

George: "We get to listen to the experiences of lots of great visitors."

Inclusion: a curriculum for all

Special Educational Needs

We are committed to a broad and balanced curriculum for all our pupils. Our Special Needs Co-ordinator ensures that the school provides the best support possible for children identified as having special needs. Any child may have special educational needs at sometime during their time in school and a variety of strategies are available to help them thrive, make good progress and achieve high standards. We will discuss any support plans with parents and provide regular feedback on progress. External agencies may need to be consulted on some occasions, but only with prior consent from parents.

Access

Children with a physical disability are fully supported in accessing all parts of the school.

Gifted and talented children

We recognise that all children are individuals with their own specific needs, gifts and talents. Children who are identified as being exceptionally able or talented, are monitored and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons appropriate to their needs.

Cinderella



Worship



Daily collective worship

The daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of our school life. It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements together.

Parents invited

Most Fridays we have a whole school worship, which is led by the Headteacher. This is a 'celebration of talents' assembly, when family and friends are invited to join us.

St Aidan's Church

We have a very strong partnership with St Aidan's Church. Reverend Alan Overend regularly leads worship in school, and members of the congregation are kept informed about the work of the school. We were delighted to work in partnership with St Aidan's Church to achieve The Church/School Partnership Award which recognises the strong relationship between our school and church. We also uphold the Gospel Values and our pupils can win awards by demonstrating that they are adhering to our Gospel Values.

Clubs

Wide variety

Children can enjoy a wide variety of afterschool clubs. These include:

- Mad science
- Touch rugby
- Street dance
- Netball
- Football
- Homework club
- Church choir
- 5 Note Band

Performing Arts

The Key Stage 2 Performing Arts Team put on two shows a year, and the Key Stage 1 Performing Arts Team put on a show at Easter.



Fiona believes that a school should be able to bring out the best in each and every child, and St Aidan's Church of England Primary School is doing just that for her own daughters

Fiona and Paul Thomas live in Billinge with their daughters Isabel, nine and Freya, seven.

Outstanding

Fiona says: "We were impressed with the school's academic performance but even more with its warm, welcoming atmosphere. It felt so positive, caring and buzzing with life! No question; it was the one for our children."

A rewarding experience

During the subsequent years Fiona's good opinion of St Aidan's has only increased, and she is pleased to be able to make her own contribution in her role as a Foundation Governor because of her association with the church. "Part of my remit is to support the management and teaching staff and it is very rewarding to work closely with such a great team. Seeing how the school works from the inside has made me realise how dedicated every single member of staff is to the academic and personal welfare of the children, and I admire the huge effort everyone makes; effort which is not always apparent except from behind the scenes."

Early intervention

Fiona has a particular reason to appreciate the professionalism of her children's teachers as, with a family history of dyslexia, she and Paul were aware that Isabel was showing signs of the condition. "St Aidan's arranged for Isabel to be screened and the early intervention has made a huge difference," she says. "With special measures put in place to support her, she has made wonderful progress in both her academic performance and in confidence. Before the diagnosis Isabel found school work frustrating and felt that she couldn't achieve what she wanted, struggling to keep up with reading and writing. But after the diagnosis she understood the reason why she had difficulties and the support has enabled Isabel to flourish."

Physical and emotional welfare

Isabel was also offered support from the school's Counsellor, who is on hand for children who may be experiencing any personal difficulties such as coming to terms with a disability, family problems or bereavement. St Aidan's takes the physical and emotional welfare of the students just as seriously as their academic achievement, and as Fiona explains, the Kidsafe Programme is another example of this: "The Programme is delivered to each year group in a fun and age-appropriate way and is designed to help the children recognise personal boundaries. This may be in terms of any behaviour which makes someone feel uncomfortable, so they learn to respect one another and know that if they are worried about something, there is someone they can talk to in confidence."

Aiming high

Fiona believes that the wide range of After School Clubs is another important asset to St Aidan's, with something to appeal to every child. "The Clubs cover so many areas of interest, whether the child is sporty, creative, musical or arty, and many of them are provided at little or no cost. Freya loves street dance and wants to join the 5 Note Band. I feel that these opportunities don't just provide exercise and entertainment, but they encourage teamwork, promote good relationships and address the fact that education is about much more than academic achievement. The philosophy at St Aidan's is that every area of a child's development should be addressed, in order for them to reach their highest potential."

Children say

Freya: "I like the maths games we play during lessons: they help us learn and they are really fun!"

Isabel: "I think our science experiments are exciting and I love Treasured Time on Friday afternoons because we get to choose from lots of activities. I like doing craft."

Admissions

Parents who are thinking of applying for a place at our nursery or school are invited to visit and look around at any time.

Nursery

We have an onsite Nursery provision which can accommodate 24 children. Children can start Nursery after their third birthday. Our Nursery is an integral part of our school and the children wear uniform, take part in worship and other school activities. Staff are highly skilled and have a lot of experience of working with Nursery aged children.

Sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am and then 12.30 to 3.30pm. We also offer wrap around care between 11.45am and 12.30pm and Nursery children can also access Breakfast and After School Club.

Your child may be granted 5 free sessions so please get in contact to find out more information

School

Children start at Billinge St Aidan's in the autumn term of the academic year in which they will have their fifth birthday. A meeting for all parents of children starting school in September will be held in the summer term. This will offer parents the opportunity to meet the Reception teachers and obtain important information regarding the school's organisation.

Applications

Parents who wish to put their child's name down to start school can do so by making an appointment with either the Head or the Deputy Head. Our Admissions Policy is thirty children in each school year. We welcome children from all faiths. St Helens Council deals with all new admissions to Billinge St Aidan's. Contact details for the Council's School Admissions Team are:

Tel: 01744 671030

Email: schooladmissions@sthelens.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/admissions>



Getting involved

Moving on to secondary school

We are very proud of the standard of education that we offer, and of our excellent academic results. When our pupils leave us to go on to secondary school, they are enthusiastic and confident, with a zest for learning and are well prepared for the move to a larger school. They also carry with them very happy memories of their early school years. Children go on to some of the best performing schools in the area including Rainford High, Up Holland High and The Deanery.

Communicating with parents

Your child's achievements

We let you know how your child is progressing at regular intervals. We also invite parents and children each term to come into to school talk to teachers to discuss pupil's progress. Parents are welcome to speak to the school at any time if they have any concerns. We have an 'open door' policy so parents are always welcome. Celebration

assemblies of children's achievements are held regularly. We will send out a text to parents if their child is due to receive a certificate, but all parents are welcome join us for this assembly.

School News

Parents are updated with school news via the school website and regular newsletters. You can also follow the school on Twitter: @staidansb

PTA

We have a superb Parent Teachers Association (PTA) at St Aidan's, which is run by our parents, and the Chairperson. The PTA Committee work extremely hard to raise a lot of money for the school. This is put towards excellent resources for all the children, to enhance their learning experiences. They put on many entertaining events during the year, including events such as, family quizzes and bingo, cabaret evenings, plus summer and Christmas fairs, BBQs, and many other events.

Do you want to join the PTA?

We are always on the lookout for new members to join our PTA and bring fresh ideas and assistance. If you can help in any way please come along and join us. You can contact the PTA by emailing: staidansptawn5@gmail.com or telephone 01744 678042.

Governorship

Our school governors manage the school with the Headteacher. Our Governing Body is made up of Foundation Governors (elected by The Diocese), elected parents, members appointed by the Local Education Authority (LEA), co-opted governors, teacher representatives and the Headteacher who has the option of being a governor. Members are elected for period of four years. A full list of members of the school's Governing Body is available on the school website.

Do you want to be a Governor?

Our parent governors give parents a voice in decision making. They are elected by parents through a ballot. If you are interested in becoming a school governor, please contact the school office.



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