



Governors' school report 2023/24

At the start of each academic year, we take the opportunity to look back at the previous one - to remind ourselves about our achievements and challenges; to reflect on our progress and to remember special events that have taken place.

Last year was a particularly busy one, topped off by an Ofsted inspection in July. We were thrilled with the outcome and about what the inspectors said about St Aidan's. If you haven't read the full report, you can access it here: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/102132>

I hope you find this report interesting and that it helps to increase your knowledge of what goes on in your school.

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Chair of Governors
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1 Summary of achievements

Our most significant achievement was to be judged, again, as Outstanding by Ofsted - perhaps not surprising given the range of good practice and achievements you will find scattered throughout this report. We are incredibly proud of the positive feedback we received – here are some highlights:

- *“Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school, demonstrating very positive attitudes to their learning.”*
- *“Pupils achieve highly in reading and are thoroughly prepared for secondary school.”*
- *“Pupils have many opportunities to learn inside and outside the classroom. They engage positively in learning in lessons, at lunchtimes and after school.”*
- *“Pupils with SEND are well supported to apply and connect their learning across the curriculum and build a depth of knowledge and understanding.”*
- *“Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and state that their children are happy to attend.”*

Take a look at how the school has met the priorities set out in our School Development Plan, the ways in which school staff have ensured that all our children make progress, the range of additional opportunities children are offered and how we have been so hugely supported by our Parent School Association.

2 The role of governors

The role of governors is to support, advise and challenge the school's leadership team. The St Aidan's Governing Body meets twice each term and governors also sit on at least one of three committees, each of which is focused on a different aspect of school life:

Standards, which covers teaching and learning; **Resources**, dealing with finance and site; **Care and Communication**, concerned with the wellbeing of children and staff and with communication.

- The **Standards Committee** worked with the School's leadership team to draw up the School Development Plan (SDP) for the academic year, critique the School's Self Evaluation document (SEF) and prepare for Ofsted. This committee also regularly reviewed pupil progress and performance, to ensure children got the support they needed.
- The **Resources Committee** scrutinised school finances regularly, which remained very challenging. They agreed spending priorities for the year aligned to the SDP and set the budget for the new financial year. Like many schools, our tight budget meant that we had to focus on maintaining the school site, rather than on site improvements. So, we were delighted that the Local Authority agreed to fund a new playground surface and that the PSA led a wonderful Crowdfunder campaign to fund new playground equipment, both of which will benefit children for many years to come.
- The **Care and Communication Committee** reviewed numerous policies, amending them as appropriate to keep up-to-date and compliant. It monitored the wellbeing of pupils and staff and was responsible for overseeing the annual children, staff and parent surveys and following up some of the suggestions made.
- A team of Governors responsible for the religious character of the school also meets to review this aspect of provision to pupils.
- Alongside their various committee responsibilities, our two clergy Governors lead religious assemblies and support the staff team with the delivery of religious education at school.
- Each class teacher and governor has a lead responsibility for a particular curriculum area. This enables governors to find out more about the school's approach to the subject and

evaluate its provision and progress against the SDP. Governors also take part in site walks, book scrutiny and meetings with School Council members.

3 Our school development plan (SDP)

Each year we set priorities in our SDP. The draft plan is scrutinised by the Standards Committee and then approved by all Governors in October. Progress against the plan is kept under regular review by the Governing Body. The priorities for 2023/24 were:

- To raise the school attendance to be at least 97% during the academic year with a particular focus on persistent absence.
- Ensure St. Aidan's has highly effective curriculum provision through ongoing review.
- Develop outstanding practitioners by evolving research to evolve our thinking and best practice.
- Continue to ensure excellent delivery of early reading through continuous professional development.
- Continue to develop excellent leadership and teaching and learning in EYFS to ensure all pupils make excellent progress.

4 Our teaching philosophy

4.1 Quality teaching

We are committed to ensuring that every teacher has the skills to deliver quality teaching, the best way to help children learn. Staff training has always been a priority.

- During 2023/2024, particular emphasis was placed on ensuring a whole-school approach to early reading. Ways of teaching reading are now more aligned and consistent across the school.

4.2 SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) provision

Many children with special educational needs have Pupil Profiles drawn up by the inclusion manager, Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), the children themselves and their parents. These describe in general terms what they can do, what they find difficult, and what support works for them.

- 27 children also had Learning Support Plans (LSPs) which are reviewed termly with their parents, staff and the inclusion manager.
- 14 children with significant long-term needs had statutory Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). All these Plans are reviewed annually.
- All this requires knowledge, dedication and understanding for everything to work well. Luckily, Sarah Shaughnessy was able to step in with the necessary skills until Lucy returned from maternity leave in April 2024. Our thanks to Sarah for ensuring things ran so smoothly in Lucy's absence.

4.3 Pupil Premium

Nationally, the progress of children receiving free school meals is not as good as those who do not. Schools receive additional money, known as the Pupil Premium (PP), to help close the gap. Additional money is also available for children in Care and adopted children (PP+). The progress of all these children, their levels of attainment and the use of this funding are all carefully monitored by senior leaders and governors. Most of the PP is used to provide additional support for learning, to provide free places in after-school clubs and ensure that all children attend school trips.

- The government has also recognised the links between academic achievement and emotional and social wellbeing, so some funding has been used to help children develop their social and emotional literacy skills. We have two trained ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants), a counsellor and a new intervention aimed at developing friendship skills for children who need this.

4.4 **Ethnic Groups which are a priority for the school (PEG)**

Nationally and locally, there is concern about the underachievement of certain groups of children. In Haringey, this is particularly evident in Afro-Caribbean and Turkish children. Despite making progress, these pupils' attainment often lags behind their peers and it is difficult for them to make the exceptional progress needed to catch up. There are 22 PEG children in KS1 and KS2 at St Aidan's.

- The PP grant has been used to pay for four Afro-Caribbean pupils to attend the Nia Academy Saturday school where they have made good progress.
- In 2021/22 we set up a working party, made up of governors, staff and parents from our PEG, to help us address some of the issues. Now known as the Racism Awareness Group (RAG), this group, open to all parents, meets termly and discusses a wide range of issues. The discussion always includes the steps the school is taking to help children from all backgrounds to feel included e.g. in 2023/24, reviewing pupil representation on the School's Council, raising parents' awareness of changes to the curriculum e.g. RE; and, from parents' perspective, raising the school's awareness of issues like colourism which may lead to unconscious bias.

4.5 **More able children**

Each year teachers identify children performing particularly well at a subject level as well as those with talents in broader areas such as music and sport. Provision for these children is delivered in two ways: through adapted teaching in class to ensure they are challenged in their learning whatever the subject; and through broader opportunities for enrichment.

- In 2023/24 we sought opportunities to broaden our pupil's horizons and skills through inter-school competitions in football and cycling; as well as cultural trips, for example to the theatre and music concerts. At school there are opportunities for free musical tuition for some instrumentalists and our able coders were invited to an after-school club to further develop their skills.
- Our more able pupil register is reviewed regularly by teachers and covers all subject areas, as we recognise that children develop their talents at different rates.

5 Pupil well-being

A major focus during 2023/24 at St Aidan's was the mental health and well-being of the children. We have increased the amount of mental health support offered to children by having a trained counsellor once a week and two trained ELSA staff delivering sessions.

- Trailblazers (a mentoring organisation) is also working in our school and has been able to offer both 1:1 and small group work with children and support for parents. They have also run some assemblies for children.
- Individual and small group support for children with social and/or emotional difficulties has continued to be a priority. We identify such children termly and set up programmes of support for them such as friendship skills and Mindfulness workshop sessions for year 4 children in which they learnt relaxation techniques to help with anxiety.
- Older children, including some with special educational needs, continued to apply to be trained as Playground Buddies to befriend others. This popular training is met with keen



engagement by participants. New zones have opened to the children at lunchtime including a quiet, sensory zone and use of the garden.

- The St Aidan's behaviour lead continued her training with Tracey Campbell, a behaviour-in-schools specialist, and implemented our new behaviour policy, which is based on the Anchor Approach. All staff received training in this. The StAR system has been incorporated into everyday life at St Aidan's and is constantly used in conversations with children.
- Staff also had training on Zones of Regulation, a way of helping children recognise, express and control their feelings.
- All staff had safeguarding training which this year focused on areas such as peer-on-peer abuse and online safety including filtering systems. E-safety workshops were delivered to all children in KS1 and KS2. Our year 6 cohort attended a police workshop on knife crime.
- All staff received training in 'race awareness', which has helped to re-shape our Curriculum and led to more diverse resources and books being available.

6 Pupil-inspired innovations

We have a long-established School Council, run by the children with help from the staff, which we feel is a valuable way for the children to work to improve their school. Two children from each of the Years 1 to 6 are chosen as representatives and changed every year. They listen to other children in their class and represent their views to staff. They organise special assemblies such as Anti-bullying week and produced an interactive display in the school. Minutes from the meetings are shared with the rest of the school and published in Headlines.

- Children continued to come up with innovative ways of raising money for a variety of charities, events such as dressing up in their pyjamas for the day to raise money for BookTrust; a sponsored Walk Around the World and cake sales. They contributed to the cost of a defibrillator and continued to support a 14-year-old child in Burkina Faso through Plan-UK.
- They also came up with ideas for lunchtime clubs. For example, a group in year 4 created an inclusive art club that ran for a term.
- The student council reps have helped improve play-times for all children by suggesting new and exciting playground equipment and developing the gazebo into a 'Reading Hut'. The children also suggested improving the safety surface in the ball court and re-named this the 'Multi-Sports Court'.
- They have also played a big part in the design of the banks, the amphitheatre and the new playground ideas due to start in October half-term.
- Most recently, the student council reps have found ways to enhance lunch-times. This has included playing music during lunch-times and suggestions to improve and develop the school menu. The children have also asked for changes to the timings of classes going to lunch and this has been put into place.
- They came up with the idea of a shared reading experience across the school. The children made posters to advertise this event and they named it 'The Super Bonderful Read'. The event involved the children from older years being paired with a younger child and then sharing and enjoying their favourite books together. This was hugely successful and the student council was singled out for praise for this event in our recent Ofsted inspection report (July 2024).



7 Activities, events and trips

St Aidan's strives to provide all children with a range of experiences and opportunities to allow them to try new things and to foster and sustain interests in different areas. We do this through a mixture of in-school activities and events, school visits, after-school clubs and inter-school competitions and sporting trips. Some fabulous pictures from this year's events were shared with parents through Headlines - here's a summary of the highlights from 2023/24.

- All Year 4 and some Year 5 pupils learnt to play either trumpet or clarinet, taught by specialist teachers from Haringey music service. Children had the chance to perform in concerts at various points in the year to demonstrate their progress. In-person music events ranged from WCIT concerts; a joyful KS1 nativity; a guitar concert; the choir performing in a concert at Holy Trinity and, of course, the Year 6 production - this year was Alice in Wonderland!
- Children really enjoy starting the day with some exercise - Boxercise! Children from Years 1-6 have a session at the start of the day on a rota basis of this high energy boost!
- After-school clubs offered pupils the opportunity to take part in football; street dance; choir; boxing; chess; cooking; arts & crafts; Lego; multi-sports; drumming; performing arts; youth club and Spanish.
- Children in upper KS2 had weekly swimming sessions at South Haringay School.
- Pupils from across the school took part in several sporting events in Haringey including a dance festival, a cycling league, football tournaments and athletics events.
- Languages morning in January was a great event, with parents, staff and older pupils who speak other languages, providing children with taster sessions. Each class was introduced to two languages from a range of Polish, German, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, Italian, Danish, Dutch, Hungarian and Greek.
- Literature was celebrated on World Book Day with some amazing costumes, showcased on the St Aidan's catwalk. Children in all year groups also enjoyed the book 'Caged' by Duncan Annand and produced writing based on different viewpoints of the characters in the story.
- Bring-a-parent-to-school morning in October was a great success. Children shared their learning with parents and there was a fantastic buzz around the school. The feedback we received was lovely.
- STEM day in July saw children enjoy a huge range of activities focused on different aspects of STEM, with lots of experiments and engineering involved!
- Pupils in Year 5 took part in the Haringey art project, creating Owlbert, which was hosted at Hornsey School for Girls.
- Children enjoyed the enrichment London has to offer with visits to the Science Museum, the London Aquarium, local libraries, the Finsbury Park Mosque and the Winter Experience. Year 5 had a great day trip to Paris, with the chance to practise speaking French, ordering their crepes!
- Year 6 enjoyed a variety of events ranging from their residential week at Pendarren in Wales in November, a day out in Southend and a visit to the Ben Kinsella knife crime trust.

8 Parental and community involvement

We keep our parents informed about what happens at the school and with their children via the school website, email, text, the Headlines fortnightly newsletter (using SWAY), school notice boards and twice-yearly parent consultations. Parent class reps also communicate with parents via WhatsApp groups.



There are numerous examples throughout this report of how parents and the wider community are involved in enhancing our children's experience, which included an invitation to join a maths lesson with their children.

- Events run by our wonderful PSA included the leavers' BBQ and leavers' play, a curry evening, quiz and chili evening, children's disco and summer and Winter fairs. The money they raised paid, amongst other things, for a weekly counsellor, the WCIT music tuition for every Y4 pupil and the refurbishment of toilets in Orange class.
- The PSA organised a Crowdfunder which raised over £20,000 for refurbishing equipment in the school playground and buying new playground equipment for the nursery.
- The ever-popular Gardening Club, run by parent volunteers, helped each child plant a bulb which matched the colour of their class and created a 'Rainbow of Bulbs' in the spring - a calm, colourful outdoor place where children could talk about their concerns, engage with nature, and, if they were struggling, helped them settle gently into school.
- Children and parents enjoyed services at Holy Trinity Church at Christmas, Easter and to celebrate our Year 6 leavers.
- Donations from the Harvest Festival were distributed to our local food bank and Haringey churches' Winter Night Shelter.

9 Our sustainable school

9.1 Travel and Transport

St Aidan's continues to put children's health, air quality and care for the environment and climate at the heart of its sustainability drive. In June, the whole school recognised Clean Air Day and took part in an assembly on air pollution, its sources, health effects, and solutions.

- The children had lots of ideas on how to improve air quality and reduce pollution, including walking, cycling and using public transport. So, we encouraged children to walk, scooter and cycle to school, held an active travel assembly, and took part in Walk to School Week in the summer of 2024.
- Pupils from different year groups also joined other schools to develop their cycling skills and confidence in the Haringey Cycling League. Races were held throughout the year in indoor and outdoor facilities.
- Parents at St Aidan's organised a Play Street on Stapleton Hall Road in the summer term. Children were encouraged to bring their bikes along and enjoy the safety of the road closed to traffic while developing their skills and confidence in active travel. To support this, Haringey provided a bike mechanic to help children repair their bikes rather than buy new ones.
- With all these activities, St Aidan's once again retained the Gold level accreditation on the Transport for London Stars Sustainable Travel Programme.

9.2 Waste and Recycling

Following on from last year's successful Book Swap, the school held another Big St Aidan's Book Swap in the Spring, with children bringing in their pre-loved books, donating them to help replenish our school library, swapping with other children and taking books home to enjoy, and giving the rest to charity.

- This year we held not two, but three 'Pass on your Uniform' sales. Parents paid a small fee or gave a donation to help reduce clothing waste. Kind to people, purse and planet!
- Christmas at St Aidan's has become ever more sustainable – over the years we have ditched single-use disposable crackers and hats, and now the children enjoy making their own. This year, they also made their own lovely Christmas decorations in craft sessions with their parents at school.

10 Where our Year 6 pupils go when they leave

At St Aidan's, we work very hard to ensure that Year 6 children are well prepared for transition to their secondary schools. The 27 pupils who left St Aidan's at the end of Year 6 in 2024 got places at the following secondary schools:

<u>Haringey maintained schools</u>	
Alexandra Park School	1
Greig City Academy	3
Hornsey School for Girls	3
Highgate Wood Secondary School	11
<u>Others</u>	
Bishop Douglas	1
Camden School for Girls	1
Fortismere School	1
Heartlands	1
Highgate School	1
The Latymer School	1
Mulberry Academy Woodside	1
St Mary Magdalene Academy	1
Westminster School	1