

# Prospectus



**St Aidan's Catholic Academy**

*'Where excellence is a habit'*

# Headteachers Welcome

**I feel immensely proud to welcome you to St Aidan's Catholic Academy, a school within the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust.**

Our school has a rich history, and like all Catholic schools we provide a nurturing, caring and loving environment where spirituality and Catholic ethos and faith permeate everything we do.

As a learning community we provide all individuals with the opportunity to flourish in a way that is rooted firmly in the values of the Gospel. By placing Christ at the centre of all that we do and recognising learning as the fundamental focus of all our work we are achieving our mission objective to ensure that each child can 'Celebrate life to the full', opening as many doors as possible to allow our pupils to reach the top of their respective mountains.

As a Catholic school we are proud to worship and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. Walking around our school you will 'feel' our Catholic ethos in the air - the way we talk to one another, the way we support and trust each other and the way we are driven to succeed in our mission.

*"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me." Matthew 25*

The staff of St Aidan's promote a dedication to excellence which empowers our pupils to excel and achieve whilst expanding their horizons in a nurturing environment. Our commitment to high-quality teaching, focus on mastery of knowledge and partnerships with parents and the local community provides a richness of experience that enables all to develop their God given talents.

My promise to you is that St Aidan's Catholic Academy will always offer a safe place for boys to take chances, express their emotions and discover and thrive in all subjects. Staff are committed to ensuring you and your families feel loved, comfortable, secure and welcome as part of our school community.

I look forward to serving you all in the coming years, getting to know each and every one of you as individuals and helping you all to fully realise your potential.

God Bless

**Mrs AM Whitten  
Headteacher**



# Our Ethos

**Here at St. Aidan's we recognise that every young persons' journey into adulthood is a journey of faith, one that recognises that true justice, peace and human freedom require, first and foremost, respect for the dignity of human life.**

We fulfil the call to be examples of living out the Gospel values found rooted in The Beatitudes and we aim to enable our pupils to do the same. We unpack and nurture an understanding of these values, supporting pupils to relate them to their lives both at school, at home and in society.

Our aim is to support pupils to develop their gifts and talents: spiritual and social; intellectual and emotional; aesthetic and physical, whilst fostering intellectual curiosity and academic achievement, ultimately motivating our pupils to grow to their full potential.

We truly believe that every individual is capable of excellence and we encourage each individual to work hard, fulfilling their potential to pursue their next steps in life, whether it be their choice of University or a high quality career.

We develop "religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life." (Christ at the centre).



*Equal in the eyes of the Lord; equality through education.*

# Our Community

**At St Aidan's we have our own foodbank. We believe it is important to live out the values of Christ through supporting our community. Pupils get involved through donations, stacking shelves, taking care of inventory and producing and delivering hampers.**

*"The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all."*

**Pope Francis**

We believe that our relationship with God, our neighbours and nature cannot be separated. We are committed to improving our environment. One way in which we do this is through our litter picks in the local park. Another way is our ban on single-use plastics within the academy.

As a Catholic academy we work in partnership with our local parishes. We are very lucky to have such a thriving Catholic community around us who offer such a wealth of opportunities for our pupils.

Our pupils attend retreats, festivals, sacramental courses and Catholic conferences. They get the opportunity to hear speakers from all faiths, from around the world, sharing their own experiences of formation.

The opportunities our young people have to develop their spiritual and emotion wellbeing spread from 11-18. Many of our older pupils successfully achieve the John Paul II Award for actively participating in the life of their Church - in the life of their community and society.

*Students and staff clearly articulate the charism of St Aidan's, which is one of lived Gospel values. All staff work hard to successfully foster a community where equality and diversity are promoted, and forgiveness, reconciliation, and inclusion are the norm.  
CSI OFSTED June 2023*



# Success

**At St Aidan's, we know that a holistic education is about more than academic results, but we are nevertheless very proud of the achievements of our pupils.**

Our pupils' performance at GCSE is consistently outstanding with amongst the highest achievements not just in Sunderland, but in the North East of England. St Aidan's pupils thrive on challenge and sit at least 8 GCSEs or equivalents, before specialising in three subjects at A Level.

The destination list of our leavers is particularly impressive with pupils moving on to a range of Universities, from local ones such as Durham and Newcastle, to ones further afield in Cambridge and Oxford.

A significantly high proportion of our pupils attain the strong pass (5+) in GCSE English and Maths. The remarkable performance of our pupils means that St Aidan's consistently records amongst the highest results of any school in Sunderland and Washington.

Our Sixth Form is housed across our beautiful St Anthony's and St Aidan's campus, with the curriculum offering a wide and diverse range of facilitating subjects to allow pupils to specialise in their preferred field. Pupil performances at A Level are outstanding, with the majority of pupils achieving Grades A\*-B and gaining access to their first choice of Russell Group Universities.



# Our Curriculum

**We have the highest of expectations for every individual, and our practices and routines nurture a strong sense of moral purpose, personal responsibility, integrity, honesty and respect for others within our pupils.**

The curriculum, supported by our mission as a Catholic school, is academically challenging and diverse offering a range of rigorous GCSEs with vocational options available. From commencement of Year 7 and Key Stage 3 our pupils encounter a breadth of experience: from reading the greatest works in English Literature to discussing the most defining moments in World history, and from witnessing the greatest minds of Maths and Science to the joy that comes from playing with an orchestra, or the exhilaration of being part of a team on a sports field. In Key Stage 4 pupils specialise through the EBacc route and developed the independence to make decisions, supported by their teachers and parents, around where they believe their talents lie, with options of Music, Media, Business, ICT, Art, DT, PE and Engineering.



By Key Stage 5 pupils experience the choice of a competitive range of qualifications to high quality A level subjects and relevant vocational subjects to enable them to climb to their next step of University or career.

We believe that the curriculum at St Aidan's is the best vehicle for preparing pupils for the next phase of education, employment and life. The curriculum focusses relentlessly and unapologetically on the key concepts that underpin each subject and supports pupils in climbing their mountain to University or a real alternative.



# Pastoral Support

**Our very strong and experienced pastoral team are relentless in their approach to supporting pupils through transition and beyond.**

All members of the team are highly trained to deal with friendships, mental health and bereavement.

We work closely with external agencies to provide 1-1 counselling, risk and resilience support and any intervention that we cannot provide in house.

Safeguarding our boys is at the heart of everything that we do. Every member of staff is vigilant and helps the pastoral team in planning the appropriate support for each and every pupil.

Our school nursing team are on hand to support for health related questions from pupils with weekly stalls at lunchtime.



# Enrichment

We run a diverse range of before and after school activities and clubs to afford our pupils the ability to explore their interests outside the classroom in a friendly, supportive and familiar environment. The experiences offer something for everyone's taste whether it be skiing, crafts, fishing, Lego, chess or Science.

## **Educational Visits**

Educational visits play a vital role in our pupils' academic and personal development. We offer a wide range of local, national and international experiences.

Year 7 pupils experience climbing their first Lake District mountain on arrival at St Aidan's. Pupils continue to climb academically, spiritually and personally and complement this journey by climbing more challenging mountains in Years 8 and 9. In addition to the many local visits we offer to all year groups, one of the most popular international trips is to the battlefields of Northern France and Belgium. This is an opportunity for our Year 9 history pupils to witness the scale of the World Wars to complement the classroom experience. In recent years, our pupils have also had the opportunity to experience life and perspective changing charitable trips to Nepal, China, Ecuador and India.

## **Careers Education and Information, Advice and Guidance**

We aim to develop pupils who are employable, confident and ambitious with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their chosen career'. We deliver a careers programme that supports the aspirations of all our pupils; it allows exploration and reflection so that informed decisions are made at key transition points. We believe that effective careers education and guidance not only contributes to the wellbeing of individuals but also to the wellbeing of their families, the communities to which they belong, wider society, businesses and the economy.

We work with our partners in the community to offer a range of exciting employers talks, work place visits and experiences of work in a range of industries, this will help to introduce you to the world of work and build your knowledge of the local labour market. Partners from Higher education, Further education and local training providers all contribute towards the careers programme in school, as well as exploring careers each year within PDE lessons. Career Guidance meetings are scheduled for all pupils at key transition points with the schools careers advisor, drop in appointments can be made as and when throughout the year.





# Enrichment

*Our expansive enrichment programme allows all pupils at the Academy to participate in a wide range of activities*

## Sports

Here at St Aidan's we have a strong and successful sporting tradition and all pupils have the opportunity to participate in competitive sport. With both team and individual sporting activities on offer, we try to make sure there is a sport to suit every pupil from squash and table- tennis to cricket and football.

The dedication, enthusiasm and hard work of our pupils and staff mean that we are strongly represented in all of the regional competitions with our neighbouring schools. It is through this hard work that we have a rich history of sporting success. Some of our most recent success stories:

## Football

U16 Football league champions

U14 Football league champions

U15 Football league cup winners

Rugby - County shield winners

Cricket - KS4 Sunderland Schools Kwik Cricket Champions

Rowing - Top 5 finish in the regional finals



Throughout the academic year there are frequent opportunities to participate in a range of inter-house sports competitions: 5-a-side football, table tennis, rugby and cricket, to name a few. Additionally, during the penultimate week of each academic year, Houses compete against one another in a week long series of sporting events to see which House is crowned overall champions.

The entrance to our Upper Room hosts our "Hall of Fame" where the sporting accolades of former pupils are celebrated. These sporting alumni include Steve Howey and Lee Howey, Ian Bloomfield & Mike Kearns: Mike held the 1500m British record as a young athlete and Ian captained the GB Marathon team.

# Our Sixth Form

**St. Anthony's & St. Aidan's Catholic Academies have provided first-rate education for generations of Sunderland's young people.**

We are a vibrant, diverse and exciting community with a wealth of experience in helping to guide students through to their next stage. St. Anthony's has had a Sixth Form since 1921.

St. Aidan's has been educating young men since 1928. After many years of working together, the relationship was recently strengthened with joint facilities and lessons, allowing for the provision of over 30 A level and BTEC subjects, giving students an unparalleled range of subjects and combinations to choose from.

What makes St. Aidan's & St. Anthony's Sixth Form so special is our many years of experience. The quality of teaching, the level of pastoral encouragement, support and guidance and the strength of our Catholic ethos. All of this helps our students to develop into well rounded individuals who are prepared to face the adult world with confidence.

[www.aaasixthform.com](http://www.aaasixthform.com)







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**Bishop Chadwick**  
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