



Our Lady & St Thomas Primary School

You are unique, talented and loved by God

Head teacher: Mrs R. Veitch
Deputy Head teacher: Mrs M. Fulton
Chair of Governors: Mrs A. Aisbitt

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March 2021 - Welcome back everyone!

Dear Parents and Carers,

A warm welcome back to OLST from the Staff and Governors. The children have settled really well back into school life and we are delighted to see them all and are marvelling at how much they have all grown! Although we are operating in bubbles and following Covid safety protocols in school, the building is once again full of happy children, excited to be with their friends and teachers once again. We do appreciate you bearing with us over the timings of the day as we try to ensure social distancing around the school building is adhered to and our bubbles are kept separate from each other.



I am sure this will evolve further over time as restrictions begin to lift following the Government roadmap out of Lockdown. We have almost reached one year since the Covid Pandemic shut our school for the first time. Who would have thought how large the loss of life would be and how much our lives would change? We are indeed very blessed to have managed so well as a school community throughout and our thoughts go out to those who have not been so lucky.

Cars Parking issues

Single yellow line Parking restrictions apply in Cumberland Terrace between 8am - 9am and 3pm - 4pm. We ask when dropping/collecting pupils you avoid parking on these lines, unless you have an appropriate waiver such as a Blue Disability Badge.

We have also received complaints about cars parking in and turning at the back of High Street, directly opposite the school. At the end of the school day cars pull in and reverse out whilst parents are standing on the pavement. Occasionally mounting the kerb outside the office window to try and turn. It only takes a foot to slip off the pedal for a serious accident to occur.

Father Murphy has asked us to remind parents that he would be grateful if parents did not park in the Churchyard.

PCSO's will be in attendance in the coming weeks and I would hate for anyone to be fined.

Many thanks to those who do park away from school and then walk up to school. If anyone needs support in connection with parking, please let us know and we will do our best to help find a solution.

Academy Update for Parents



The process for our conversion is well underway with a completion date of 1st June 2021. We anticipate that this continues to go smoothly and OLST will become known as

Our Lady and St Thomas RC Primary School, Willington.

The only change here is the removal of VA which stood for Voluntary Aided and the inclusion of our exact location.

Timings of the Day

Catch Up Booster Sessions are taking place first thing in school, so a prompt start is essential so your child does not miss out on these vital sessions. Some children have missed a few of their sessions this week and have also missed the start of their day. Please ensure your child arrives at the allocated time – listed below.

CLASS	Start Time	Finish Time	Location
Class 1	8.40am	2.55pm	Drop Off – Class 1 Door Pick Up - Main Entrance door to school
Class 2	8.50am	3.05pm	Main Gates
Class 3	9.00am	3.15pm	Main entrance to school
Class 4	9.00am	3.15pm	Main Gates
Class 5	8.50am	3.05pm	Class 5 gate
Family Groups	8.45am	3.00pm	Main Gates

Breakfast club can support this if it helps families, so please get in touch if this is something you wish to access. There is support for those who need it at the discretion of the school and all circumstances will be treated confidentially by the School Office.

Breakfast Club

Has worked well throughout Lockdown and continues to operate successfully. We are hoping to increase our numbers safely and aim to enhance the provision initially on a Friday after the Easter holidays with the offer of Craig Thorn, (Craig's Coaching) running socially distanced games and exercise to address the lack of being active for many of us including our children over this period. This could be increased if take-up allows. If you wish to send your child to Breakfast Club on these or any other days, please book in with the office so we can make arrangements in the bubble set up that has worked so well. The time continues to be arrival between 7.45 and 8am at the main door where a member of staff is on hand to meet and greet and sign your child in.

After School Clubs

We are hoping to re-commence our wider provision for Clubs in a Covid-safe way after the Easter holidays. Mrs Graham is busy planning a programme for pupils to once again enjoy. There will be at least one night per week for each class bubble and the club focus will rotate. Further information to follow and how to book your child a place.

School Uniform

We understand that there are some issues around purchasing new school uniform with only supermarkets with limited supplies being open at present. As well as lots of children having had a growth spurt!! Of course School carries a stock of uniform and PE kit should you wish to purchase from school with the logo on (forms on website or email office@olstlearning.net) or, why not hand down any good quality second hand uniform to others? Ventilation is a requirement in all classrooms so please be aware of this as children do need layers that they can take on or off across the day.

First Holy Communion

We aim to work with the pupils in Year 5 and 6 who have missed out on their Sacramental Preparation due to lockdown. Parents of children in those classes were sent a message from the office to confirm if you are willing to allow your child to participate after the Easter holidays. Please confirm by Thursday 25th if you have not already done so. Fr Tindall is working with school to ensure the children are well prepared and this can go ahead in a Covid safe way in July this year.

Next year, the current Year 4 together with the current Year 3 will have the opportunity to undertake their Sacramental Preparation as a double cohort.

Nursery Provision – Feasibility Study

A Google Form has been sent to parental emails regarding the possibility of developing a Nursery for 3 year olds as part of our Early Years Unit. This feasibility study is to gauge if there is a demand amongst our current families at OLST and what your requirements would be.

Friends of OLST

I am delighted to inform you that OLST has achieved its target of ensuring every single pupil in Key Stage 2 has access to their own Chrome book both in school and in a Remote Learning situation. The School Lottery Fund, which many of you contribute to, bought 20 laptops, the DFE Laptop scheme provided 17 and a generous donation of three laptops from a group of local benefactors. It just goes to show what can be achieved.

We need parents to create and lead a new Friends of OLST Group. This group will have its own bank account and have joint signatories of / parents and staff. Any school fundraising will be added to this account and put towards School projects. I know a great deal is not possible at present but the School Lottery success set up by Mrs Frame is testament to what can be achieved. We can think creatively about Virtual Fundraisers for the benefit of the children of OLST.

Please drop an email to either myself head@olstlearning.net or office@olstlearning.net and we can arrange a meeting either socially distanced or virtually after the Easter holidays.

Holiday Dates



We thought it would be useful to share with you the dates for the rest of this academic year for a time when you can plan holidays again – we can but dream! The Diocese intends to bring all Catholic schools in line with holidays from 2022-23 which would be useful as parents often find that Primary and Secondary holidays do not match especially across authorities. You will be delighted to know that this

Summer there is a seven week break.

The Government may shake things up completely as suggested in the press, but for the time being we hope you find this helpful for planning.

Holiday:	Closing date:	Date re-opens:
Easter 2021	Friday 26th March	Monday 12th April
May Day 2021	Friday 30th April	Tuesday 4th May
Summer half-term	Thursday 27th May (Fri 28 th PD Day)	Monday 7th June
Summer 2021	Friday 16th July (Mon 19 th , Tues 20 th PD Days)	Tuesday 7th September (Mon 6 th PD Day)

As always, we are always here to help. Please contact us in the usual way or use the class email system to get a message to your child's class teacher.

Regards,

Mrs Veitch,

Head Teacher