



# 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

Telephone: 01388 746336  
Website: [www.olst.org.uk](http://www.olst.org.uk)

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## May 2021

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Dear Parents and Carers,



The Summer Term is upon us and although we have had some glimpses of the sunshine - rain, hail and shine were the order of the Bank Holiday! Please ensure your child brings a coat each day as the weather is so changeable. We have lots of lovely things planned for the children in the coming weeks and hopefully lots of brighter times ahead for our school community.

As restrictions are beginning to lift across the UK and children's activities and clubs re-open with increased mixing, we are mindful of taking precautions as a school so that our classes can remain open. Please continue to keep your child off school if they are unwell. We are extremely lucky with how we have managed the pandemic to date and are taking things slowly in the hope that school will be fully back to normal from September.

### Academy Update for Parents



The process for our conversion is well underway with a completion date of 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

Unfortunately, once in the Trust we will no longer be able to use ParentPay. The new company for payment of School Meals, Brakfast Club etc is called **SCOPAY**. This system will be live from 3<sup>rd</sup> June – further details to follow shortly.

### Parent's Evenings

The children have all coped so well with a difficult year and are a credit to all our families. We have delayed Parent Consultations so that the class teachers had time to assess each pupil once again following Lockdown 3. The fantastic teaching staff of OLST have worked tirelessly with Remote Teaching and using Google Classroom however, nothing replaces face to face lessons and time in school as a class learning alongside their friends. We are to hold Parent Consultations the week commencing **17<sup>th</sup> May 2021**. The office will be in touch to organise your appointment. They will once again be virtual/telephone but hopefully can be in person in the Autumn term. .



Parents  
Evening

### Wrap Around Offer



We are formulating plans to offer Wrap around Care in addition to Breakfast Club from September 2021, when we are finally out of restrictions and school life returns to normal.

The viability study already carried out was pre-lockdown. The numbers presented to the Governors were very low and therefore not financially viable. Governors wished to look at this again post Covid. OLST will be conducting a further study to ascertain any changes that mean a Tea Club would be used. I am mindful that once parents working patterns return to normal then there may be more need for this provision. Please look out for a further communication about this in the next few weeks via Google forms.

We are provisionally looking at 3.30pm-5.30pm. We are also looking at ways we can subsidise this provision initially from our resources so that even if the numbers remain low, this provision can still operate. We are also having minor building works over the summer to install a separate entry/egress point directly into our school hall. Clubs could then become self-sufficient without involving the use of the rest of the school building.

### **OLST Nursery**

Many thanks to those who responded to the possibility of provision for 3 year olds at OLST. This gave us the data required to formulate a plan. Our intake for September 2021 is higher than originally anticipated therefore this means that unfortunately we cannot accommodate this for this year. We would require an extension to our existing building and significant investment. The Diocese and the new Trust are aware of our grand plans so fingers crossed plans will be approved in the future!

### **May Half term Holiday Club**

If there is sufficient interest, Craig's Coaching will run a one day Sport, Fun and Games Holiday Club on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at OLST. This will be run by Craig and his staff and does not involve staff from OLST School. Craig's Coaching has an excellent reputation as an external provider and his holiday clubs are very popular in central Durham. The relationships Craig has established with our pupils as part of our staff each week are first class, so why not take advantage of this offer. Cost of the day is just £12. We are hoping if this is successful it will become a regular feature at OLST in the holidays.

If you are interested in your child attending something you wish to try then please fill in the Google form.

### **Sacraments 2021**

Congratulations to our Year 5 and 6 pupils who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation in school recently. We pray for Erin, Niamh, Nell, Kitty, Lily, Millie and John and wish them well with their preparations for their big day on **Sat 26<sup>th</sup> June at 10.30am in Church.**

### **Friends of OLST**

**APPEAL** – we need to formally constitute a Friends this as well as some volunteers to meet once a



of OLST and need some key people to run term. As part of a large Multi-Academy

Trust, this is the only way we can fundraise for our school. Following the huge success of our technology drive, we were able to fund all KS2 pupils to have their own Google Chrome book or laptop. We are now turning our attention to improving the outdoor play area for all pupils. We currently only have a basic trim trail and small climbing wall for the children to use. We would love some larger outdoor play equipment and some outdoor gym style pieces for our older pupils. This is an expensive project which we can save towards. Mrs Graham is busy gathering quotes so we know what we are aiming for.

If you are interested please email [head@olstlearning.net](mailto:head@olstlearning.net) or [office@olstlearning.net](mailto:office@olstlearning.net) by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May – we would be delighted to hear from you!

### **Holidays**

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that school finishes for the May holidays on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May** and Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May is a PD Day (children not required in school).

<b>Holiday:</b>	<b>Closing date:</b>	<b>Date re-opens:</b>
Summer half-term	<b>Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May</b>	<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June</b>
Summer 2021	<b>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September</b>

Also, please note that our summer holidays are different to Durham County Council but in line with St John's Catholic Academy and Sixth Form and our new Trust. This is because of our conversion date and the fact we are moving away from Durham Local Authority. The Diocese aims to have all Catholic schools across our region in line with each other for 2022-23, as they appreciate that the varying holiday dates across schools is a problem for families with children in different schools. School Holiday dates for 21-22 are attached.