**Our Lady & St Thomas Catholic Primary, Willington Nursery**

“You are unique, talented and loved by God”

Head Teacher: Mrs Ruth Veitch

EYFS Teacher: Mrs Alison Brown

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Welcome to OLST Nursery

Our Nursery is school based and staffed by a qualified teacher and teaching assistants. All staff who work alongside the children are highly experienced. We are incredibly proud of the learning environment here at OLST. Nursery pupils are part of an EYFS unit and mix with Reception pupils as well as accessing their own bespoke provision.

Every child is important to us, and we celebrate diversity, therefore ensuring that everyone is included, everyone matters, and all individual needs are met. Together we work hard to ignite the spark each child has, to develop their natural curiosity and create a sense of awe and wonder.

Staff often use natural, new or interesting objects for the children to explore and investigate, which helps to provoke interest and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Our aim is that all children who come here flourish and become independent, confident, caring, and responsible young learners who leave here with a real love of learning.

I hope you find our information booklet useful, and should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the school and we will do our very best to help. We look forward to you joining our school family and sharing in your child’s very special journey.

Mrs. R. Veitch

Early Years Foundation Stage at OLST

Our staff are:

Mrs Alison Brown - Class Teacher & EYFS Lead

Mrs Gillian McKendrick - Teaching Assistant

Miss Ellie Mavin - Teaching Assistant

Miss Emily Wile – Learning Support Assistant

At Our Lady & St Thomas Catholic Primary School we believe that every child is unique, talented and loved by God. We establish from the start how special and cared for each child is and we celebrate their uniqueness. In line with the Department for Education Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) we follow the educational programmes which shape all that we do in relation to our environment, our planning, our curriculum and the experiences we provide for the children.

We teach the children to have their own ideas, to be able to express their opinions, to make independent choices and to play and work well with others. At OLST the adults listen attentively to the children and all pupils have a valued voice. We are incredibly proud of the relationships we build with our children, their families and our local community and we encourage both children and adults to learn from each other and respect the feelings and views of others.

In Nursery we prepare the children for Reception by ensuring they have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding they need for future learning. We ensure that every child is included, supported and cared for equally. Our children feel safe and confident to learn in the nurturing environment that we provide. We are committed to giving every child the skills needed to achieve their potential. Our Ethos at OLST encourages the children to have a positive attitude towards their learning and to show respect for each other.

The information provided here will help prepare yourself and your child for the exciting adventure of starting Nursery. We aim to give you the information you need and some ideas for how you can help prepare your child for school.

We recognise the value of working in partnership with families as working together greatly supports you child’s all-round development and learning. This will result in them becoming a valuable member of our school community and to achieve their potential in the future.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to our school community.

Practical Information

Nursery Sessions

Morning Session – 9am – 12 noon

Afternoon Session – 12 noon – 3pm

Please walk down the school drive to the EYFS classroom door. The EYFS team will be there to say good morning and welcome your child.

Please pick up your child from the same place at the end of the day. If your child finishes/starts Nursery at lunchtime you will drop them off/pick them up from the school office door.

Snacks and Milk

We provide a water bottle that the children have free access to.

We also provide bagels in the mornings and a piece of fruit during the morning.

Children have the option to have milk if parents sign up for this at:   <https://www.coolmilk.com/register>

School lunch

Children will be offered a range of hot meals from the school kitchens. Nursery children will need to pay for this. Children can bring a packed lunch if you prefer.

Uniform

Nursery children should wear the blue school jumper/cardigan and a blue/white polo shirt.

To make toileting easier for the children and to encourage independence nursery children should wear either our school PE jogging bottoms or black leggings/jogging bottoms. However, if you feel that your child would manage wearing grey school trousers or a school skirt/pinafore then we would love to see them in full uniform too.

We ask that all items of clothing, including coats, are **clearly named**. Children should always have a spare set of clothes in school including pants and socks.

There will be days when we need additional items for outdoor adventure, but we will let you know in advance.

Our uniform supplier is: [www.totstoteams.com](http://www.totstoteams.com)

Paid Childcare:

Breakfast Club – 7.45am – 8.30am (£4.00)

After school tea club – 3.15pm – 4.15pm (£5 per hour)

Our Nursery Offer:

Nursery (3-4 year old children)

3 year olds will be able to start a funded nursery place in the September, January or April following their third birthday.

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| --- | --- |
| Birthday on or before 31st August | Autumn Term (September) |
| Birthday on or before 31st December | Spring Term (January) |
| Birthday on or before 31st March | Summer Term (April) |

Your child will be eligible for either:

1. 15 hours free nursery education per week during the school term time

or

1. 30 hours free nursery education per week during the school term time

Attendance at OLST nursery however does not guarantee a place in Reception class when your child is of school age.

The EYFS Curriculum

As stated in the Department for Education Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

There are four overarching principles for the EYFS.

These are:

* Every child is a **unique child** – Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
* Children can learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
* Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents or carers
* **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The Framework covers the education and care of all children in the early years including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning development. All areas are important and interconnected. The prime areas are:

* **Communication and Language**; listening, attention and understanding, speaking.
* **Physical Development**; developing gross motor and fine motor skills.
* **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**; building relationships with others, managing self and self-regulation.

The children are also supported in four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These specific areas are:

* **Literacy**; comprehension, word reading and writing
* **Mathematics**; Number and numerical patterns
* **Understanding the World**; People, Culture and Communities, the natural world, past and present
* **Expressive Arts and Design**; creating with materials, being imaginative and expressive

What will our Curriculum look like in EYFS?

* In Nursery much emphasis is given to personal, social and emotional development, especially across the first term but continually across the year. Children will be nurtured to feel happy, safe and confident in school, ensuring good progress across all areas of learning. They are encouraged in forming good relationships with peers and adults in school and becoming familiar with new routines.

* Our curriculum has been designed to be stimulating and fun and to build upon interests the children already have. Their confidence will quickly develop and they will be supported, stretched and challenged appropriately.
* The children will have access to continuous provision, indoors and outdoors, throughout the day. This will also be enhanced by a range of structured play activities stemming from our topic or children’s interests.

* The children will have regular experiences to develop their social awareness. These will include trips and welcoming visitors to school.

* Children will have daily group times to support maths, pre phonics skills and understanding the world.

* Reading is of high importance in EYFS, and many opportunities will be offered to develop reading skills in Nursery.
* Children in Nursery are lucky enough to attend forest school sessions each Tuesday afternoon. This experience is led by ‘Nikki Noo Noo’ <https://nikkinoonoos.co.uk/> .

The Early Years Environment at OLST

There are many opportunities for learning across our continuous provision, both indoors and outside. Not all learning is structured so the children have opportunity to explore using loose parts and natural resources.

Our areas across the provision are changed and developed regularly in order to embrace the children’s interests and to inspire learning.

Inside the classroom the children will have access to the following areas:

* Reading Zone

A calm space where the children can develop their love of reading.

* Maths Zone

A fun space to develop understanding of number.

* Writing Zone

The place to explore a range of mark making equipment and try some new writing experiences.

* Role Play

Role play where the children can explore their own ideas, develop vocabulary and take on any role they choose.

* Creation Station

A messy area where the children can explore with paints, glue and anything else messy!

* Construction Site

An area for our little engineers.

In our outdoor provision the children will have access to the following areas:

* Water play

 A fun area where children can make a mess with water and explore capacity.

* Writing shed

 A quiet area where children can develop mark making and writing skills outdoors.

* Maths shed

 An area for our little mathematicians.

* Mud Kitchen

 A very messy area to have fun with mud.

* Building zone

 An area for our little engineers to build even bigger projects.

* Invention shed

 A creative space where the children can explore art and design using bigger scale

 resources.

* Theatre

 A creative area to explore singing and dancing and be whoever we want to be.

How can you help prepare your child for Nursery?

These are just a few ideas of how you can help to prepare your child for Nursery. You will be doing lots of these already!

* Share books and stories.
* Go to the public library and share a range of books.
* Sing nursery rhymes with your child.
* Play turn-taking games such as snakes and ladders; make sure your child

 learns how to win and lose as well.

* Have play opportunities with other children, especially over the summer

holidays.

Talk about numbers and teach your child to count objects accurately; you could involve your child in helping around the house by counting out the bowls or spoons needed to lay the table, counting steps up and down the stairs, look at house numbers or numbers on cars or buses as you go for a walk.

* Talk about mathematical concepts such as: taller, shorter, heavier, lighter, full, half-full, empty, less than, more than, higher, lower.
* Let your child handle money and learn to recognise coins.
* Talk about shapes and colours.
* Encourage your child to dress and undress themselves, including using buttons and zips and putting on their own shoes.
* Encourage your child to use the toilet by themselves, including flushing the chain and washing their hands afterwards. We will be encouraging your child to be as independent as possible with this. Please have a chat with us if your child needs any support in this area.