



# OUR LADY & SAINT THOMAS

## Catholic Primary School

# PROSPECTUS

## 2023-24

**'YOU ARE UNIQUE, TALENTED AND LOVED BY GOD'**



A Proud Member of  
**BISHOP  
HOGARTH**  
Catholic Education Trust



# WELCOME

## RUTH VEITCH – HEAD TEACHER

Welcome to Our Lady and St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Willington. We are a small and friendly mainstream school which is part of the wider family of schools within the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust. This website will allow you to find out more about our school and is complemented by our social media Facebook page where the weekly life of the school is shared and celebrated.

OLST prides itself on ensuring your child receives an outstanding education and that every child thrives during their time here. We know your family will enjoy being part of our warm and welcoming school community.

I am extremely proud to be the Head teacher of this exceptional school. We have an amazing team of staff to support your child in their learning journey and a vibrant and innovative curriculum to enjoy. Our highly experienced team are all talented, hardworking and dedicated individuals who are committed to ensuring the very best for your child in partnership with you as parents.

We are a happy and positive school where diversity is celebrated. This school is a special place where we are very ambitious and strive to provide the best educational experiences for all of our pupils.

OLST is a successful and popular school with Wrap Around Care and a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Please take the opportunity to visit us by making an appointment with our office. I would be delighted to show you around school where you can meet our exceptional children and who are extremely proud of their school. In their words *"We are the best school in County Durham!"*



# INTRODUCTION



The Catholic faith is at the heart of everything we do here at OLST and a deep sense of spirituality and belonging is encouraged. Children know they are loved by God and we all live out our Mission statement every day.

OLST is part of a small, close-knit community and is recognised as playing a strong part in many community events. We actively support the Local Food bank and work closely with Council Leaders, local churches and other schools on projects which enhance and improve our community for the good of all.

We are incredibly proud of the pastoral support we give to all our pupils and families and believe that this is what

makes us so unique as a school. We have a reputation for being a caring school with exceptionally high standards of behaviour. This is because our children know they are valued and treated fairly and respectfully. They understand that they have a responsibility to themselves and others and that there are times when they need support. All staff at OLST nurture our pupils and there are designated staff who provide deeper support when needed.

OLST has excellent relationships with outside agencies in order to ensure the best support for our children whether this is at a very simple level or whether we require help to deal with more complex issues. Wellbeing is at the top of our agenda here at OLST and we have regular mindfulness and relaxation sessions with access to a support health worker on a weekly basis if required. Our children are encouraged to be positive about their talents and to develop their skills to be the best they can be. All are treated equally and given equal opportunities. The safety, happiness and well-being of our children is at the centre of every decision we make and our children thrive in an atmosphere of mutual respect and positivity.



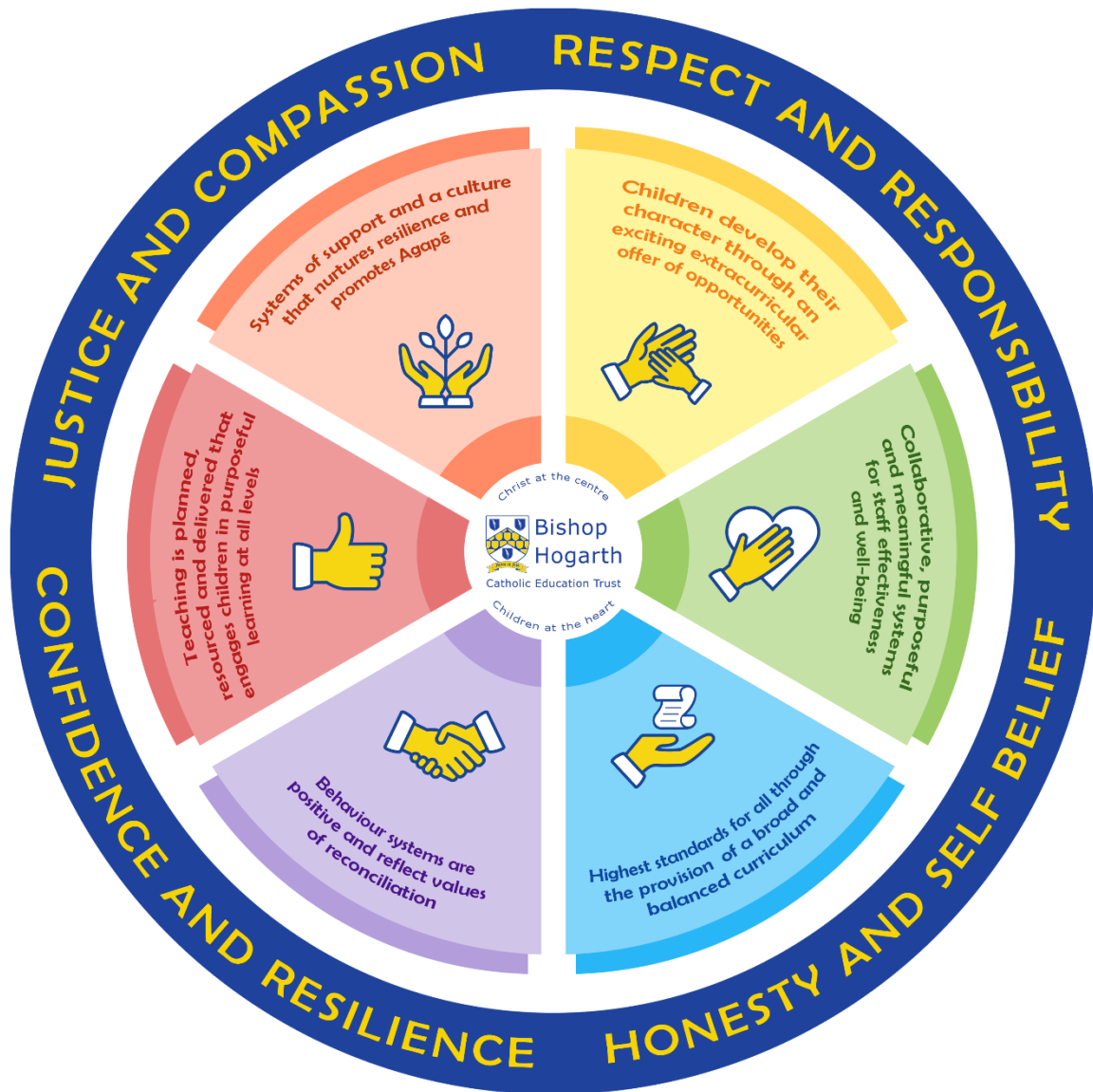
# VISION



We are committed to enabling all of our children to achieve their very best in order to become global citizens of the future. We endeavour to help them see that they have a place in the world where they can and should make a difference. We maintain high expectations in all areas of learning and deliver an exciting, broad and well-balanced curriculum. Through our enriched provision and extracurricular activities, we encourage our children to find their talents and share their strengths with others. As part of the Bishop Hogarth Trust we share common values which are embedded in every aspect of school life.



# VALUES



As part of the Bishop Hogarth Trust we share common values which are embedded in every aspect of school life. We aim to live out these values through our relationship with God, ourselves and others and strive to put into action, the faith on which our school is built.

Our values are: justice and compassion, respect and responsibility, honesty and self-belief and confidence and resilience.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

At OLST, we aim to develop within our young people, a sense of self-discipline and an acceptance of responsibility for their own actions. Children are encouraged to see themselves as part of a community in which everyone needs to work together to maintain a happy space.

Our staff are positive in their approach, and expectations of both children and staff are high.

We pride ourselves on our relationships with parents and operate an open door policy where parents are encouraged to speak with staff about any concerns or ideas they may have. Staff will always be respectful of children and parents and we would request the same in return.





# RELATIONSHIPS



At OLST, we pride ourselves on the relationships we build with our pupils. We believe that this is what creates such a happy, vibrant environment built on mutual respect and love. Pupil voice is strong at OLST and children know that they are listened to and their opinions are valued and acted upon. They know they are loved and that they have a role to play in their school, wider community and the world.

OLST understands and values the vital role that Parents play in their child's education. We work closely with parents and have very positive relationships which benefit our children wholeheartedly.

In many cases, parents have been OLST pupils themselves and the sense of community that surrounds OLST is palpable. Those

who join us are welcomed into our school family and parents are supportive of the school and each other.



# ADMISSIONS



## VISITING THE SCHOOL

We appreciate that choosing the right school for your child is important and we strongly encourage parents to make an appointment to visit the school before making their decision. You will be offered a short tour and meet with the Headteacher, who will be happy to answer your questions.

## ADMISSIONS PROCESS

OLST admits up to 18 pupils in September whose 5th birthday falls between 1st September and 31st August of that academic year. For further details please visit [?????](#)

## RECEIVING A PLACE AT OLST

If your application is successful, you will be invited to attend a Parent's meeting where you will meet our Foundation Stage staff and the Headteacher. At the meeting, you will be able to visit the EYFS space, tour the rest of the school and be given an information pack containing documents to be completed and returned to school on your next visit.

## INDUCTION SESSIONS

You will be invited to come to school for a number of morning or afternoon sessions before the summer holidays. This helps your child become familiar with their new environment, meet their new teachers and get to know each other before they come to school in September. Details of these visits will be shared with you at the Parent's meeting.

## IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS





# SCHOOL LIFE

## THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

OLST is fortunate to have beautiful grounds which include a recently extended playground, a school field, with newly developed running track, a school garden and various quiet spaces for children to sit in, as well as a dedicated outdoor learning space for our EYFS children which offers the opportunity for stimulating outdoor provision. Within our school building we have a large hall which serves as a gym and dining hall as well as providing space for school concerts and weekly Collective Worship and assemblies. We have five classrooms and more recently have developed a small quiet space which houses a library and storytelling space and a chill out zone for those times when classroom life may get a little overwhelming. We also have various learning nooks where small group work can take place throughout the school day.

## OUR SCHOOL DAY

<b>7.45 - 8.40</b> <b>Breakfast Club</b>	(This is a provision for those who require it and has an attached cost)
<b>08.40 - 8.55</b>	School starts for everyone
<b>8.55</b>	registration and morning reflection
<b>9.00</b>	Beginning of lessons
<b>12:00 - 1.00</b>	Lunchtime
<b>3.10</b>	EYFS and KS1 end of school day
<b>3.15</b>	KS2 end of school day
<b>3.15-5.30 Tea Club</b>	(This is a provision for those who require it and has an attached cost)



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP & MASS

As a Catholic school, our Collective Worship is rooted within the Gospel tradition of our faith. However, we respect and learn about other faiths and our worship is more often than not, non-denominational. We attend Mass on a regular basis and our children are familiar with our Parish Priest Father Dennis and our Priest in Residence, Father Brian who are regular visitors in school.



## RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS

Our Catholic children are invited to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion in Year 4. This is truly one of the most special times of our school year and the whole school celebrates with these children.

## MOBILE PHONES

Y6 pupils who walk home alone are permitted a phone but this is handed in at the beginning of the school day and kept safely until home time.



# HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT



Schools are now required to ask parents and pupils to join with them in a Home School Agreement. This is a simple agreement where each of the three parties concerned knows what is expected of them and, in return, what may reasonably be expected from others. We would urge you to take this agreement seriously, as children who take their own progress seriously, that have the support of their parents and the school, tend to do better than those who do not. The Home School Agreement will be included in the information pack provided at the parents' meeting.

## INCLUSION

It is our aim that every child knows their worth and achieves their best at OLST. Quality teaching by the class teacher ensures that every child can access the curriculum through learning tasks pitched at the right level of challenge for them. For those children with additional needs, support falls into 3 main categories:

### **More Able**

To ensure that our highest achievers are stretched and extended, children with the potential to achieve above age related expectations are identified early and given additional challenge through an appropriately differentiated curriculum.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Where an additional need is identified, the class teacher will work with parents and an intervention is developed to help children learn. This may be a short term burst or a longer, ongoing form of support. Plans and interventions are reviewed termly.

### **English as an Additional Language**

OLST welcomes families from a range of cultural backgrounds and supports those children for whom English is an Additional Language.



## RSHE

Taught within the beliefs of the Catholic Church and delivered through The 'Life to the Full' programme, our Relationships, Health and Education Policy provides children with an understanding of the working of their bodies and knowledge of human reproduction in the context of family life, loving relationships and respect for others. It is easy to understand, relevant and appropriate to the



age and maturity of the children. Our programme is enhanced by visits from the school nurse in Year 5 and 6. Parents are kept informed and the programme is available to view along with all curriculum subjects.

## THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

The purpose of the School Council is for class representatives to work together to ensure that our pupils have a voice which is heard and acted upon. We pride ourselves on listening to our children and they are involved in the majority of major decisions made within school. It allows children to have an understanding of the democratic process.

## SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are operated through the Bishop Hogarth Trust. Parents are able to choose lunch for their child using an online booking system. For those that prefer, packed lunches can also be brought into school.



## SCHOOL UNIFORM/PE KIT

School Uniform is symbolic of a community to which we all belong and children are encouraged to feel pride to wear it. Our royal blue jumpers are easily identifiable and represent Our Lady to whom the school is dedicated. Uniform embroidered with the school badged can be ordered through the school office but is not compulsory. We request that all uniform is labelled with your child's name.

- Blue cardigan or jumper
- White or pale blue polo shirt or school shirt
- Grey / black skirt or trousers

### PE Kit

- Pale blue or white t shirt
- Royal blue / black shorts
- School hoodie and tracksuit (not compulsory but most children have it)
- Suitable footwear

Our PE is outdoors as often as possible and so it is advised that children wear trainers. On designated PE days, children come dressed in their kit so that changing is not needed on school premises.

### Jewellery

We prefer that children do not wear jewellery for school as it presents a Health and safety issue. They may wear a watch but we would ask that they do not wear expensive electronic devices.





## BREAKFAST CLUB

The Breakfast Club operates from Monday to Friday 07:45 - 08:30. Breakfast is served until 08:15. F

## AFTER SCHOOL TEA CLUB



Our Tea Club is available from 3.15 - 5.15 PM Monday to Friday. Children participate in a range of activities and are provided with a snack.

For costs and details of how to book places at either club, please contact the school office.

## AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

***\*Please note that after-school clubs are separate to our Tea Club, although a child may attend both.***

We offer a range of after school clubs covering activities such as sport, cooking, book club or arts and crafts. Some of these clubs are delivered by outside providers and some by school staff. There is usually a minimal charge for these clubs.





# COMMUNICATION

Regular Communication Takes place via:

1. Information meeting for parents of new starters
2. SATs information evenings Y2 and Y6
3. Parent Information Sessions x2 per year
4. Dedicated class emails where parents can communicate regularly with teachers
5. Termly Reports
6. Newsletters
7. Texts and phone calls
8. Family afternoons
9. Facebook
10. Our website



Other strategies to ensure smooth communication between ourselves and others include:

1. Induction programmes for our new starters
2. Transition meetings with Secondary school colleagues for Y6
3. Transition days for Y6 pupils
4. Regular meetings with parents / carers of children with SEND

Detailed information on the school and our curriculum can be accessed on our school website [ADD IN HERE](#)



# STATEMENT OF CURRICULUM AIMS

## Our School Curriculum will:

Be enjoyable, engaging, exciting and memorable.

Give children the knowledge and skills to be successful learners and to be curious about the world around them.

Teach about different traditions and cultures and respect for one's self and one another.

Provide challenge and promote resilience.

Teach empathy and encourage well-being.







# CURRICULUM

At OLST, we aim to deliver the National Curriculum to all our pupils through engaging and exciting lessons, supplemented and enhanced with a range of enrichment activities which take learning beyond the classroom. As part of the Bishop Hogarth Trust, we follow common planning in most foundation areas, adapting and personalising schemes to meet the needs of our pupils.

RE: As a Catholic school, we follow the Come and See scheme of work as recommended by our Diocese.

