



'Learning and Growing Together'

January 2026 Newsletter

Happy New Year to everyone. I hope that the Christmas break was good and that you have had a good start to 2026.

Our school had some special times sharing festive music last month. The children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 performed Mend the Manger and the carols in St Oswald's Church on the last day were a wonderful way to bring in the joy of Christmas. Y6 sang carols at Elliot Lodge, and Y5 sang at the Leys Residential Home. Y5 played the handbells too and the staff and residents joined in with the singing.

Our ukulele group, led by Mrs Clark, played carols in the library on the Saturday before Christmas, in a collaboration with TimeSwap. This organisation supports individuals and groups helping one another out, and they earn 'hours of time' rather than cash. St. Oswald's School is a member of TimeSwap. The ukulele players were led very ably by Ellie, and new players from Y4 joined the established players from Y5 and Y6. Thanks to everyone who came to enjoy the music and share refreshments

Thank you to all who supported our fundraising events last term. The Christmas Fair raised over £700.00 which will be spent on school and learning resources.

Please look out for future events and please join in with Friends of the School who really would like your help to organise and fundraise for the school.

The School Day

Doors will open at 8.45 am Children will be able to come into school at 8.45am.

Children in classes in the annex (Year 4, 5 and 6) will come to school via the 'Kissing Gate' near the new play area where a member of staff will greet them, and they will be able to walk to their class independently. This will be either Mr Armstrong our caretaker or myself.

Children in year 3 will enter school via the blue door on the playground which leads into the main school building.

Infant children will go in via their classroom doors and parents can still bring their children onto the playground and collect at the end of the day.

All doors and Playground gates will close at 8.55am. Registers will be taken between 8.55 and 9am. If your child comes in after 8.55 am they need to be taken to Miss Simons in the school Office. Learning will begin at 9am. The end of the day is 3.15pm

We would advise that due to congestion on the playground and the sheer number of pupils we have that you remain considerate and patient around the school gates. If you have a child in Key Stage 2 you may continue with the arrangement of meeting near the church as this also gives your child independence when leaving school. If waiting by the church please ensure you are visible to the class teacher and wave or make eye contact. Once they see you and let your child go, the parent is then responsible for ensuring the child crosses the road safely.

Children in year 5 and 6 can walk home on their own (or walk to a chosen meeting place) if this is going to happen, we will need confirmation on the MS Teams form that was sent out at the beginning of the academic year in relation to this.

We would suggest that when picking up your child you pick up your youngest child first.

We have an Open Door Policy, if you have any queries or would like to speak to your child's class teacher then there is more time at the end of the day; alternatively, you can make an appointment with your child's class teacher, or Mrs Wood, to discuss anything confidentially.

Contacting Staff: Staff will respond to emails between 8am and 5pm. Please allow 24 hours for an email response. If you wish to contact a member of staff or arrange an appointment, please contact the school office who will arrange with the class teacher for a convenient time to meet.

Uniform:

Uniform is available to purchase in school. Please ensure you label everything!!!!

Our expectation is that you wear the full school uniform- no black skirts, shorts or trousers. Boots are not to be worn to school.

PE Kits- Our expectation is that the school PE Kit is worn to school- No colourful leggings, football shorts or other sports gear. If pupils do not come in the correct kit, we will provide spares and ask them to change.

We do have a range of pre-loved clothes which we can provide for families if you require.

Please do not allow your child to wear jewellery to school. They will be asked to remove jewellery and place it in an envelope for safe keeping. If a child has their ears pierced and they are in KS2 studs can be worn, if they are in KS1 or EYFS no piercings are permitted.

Boots; At this time of the year the weather is getting cold and wet- we are aware that children are wearing boots to walk to school. Please can you ensure they have their school shoes so that they can change into them when they get to school.

Safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at St Oswald's is Mrs Wood; Mrs Mansfield is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. If you have any concerns that a child is suffering or at risk, then please call Starting Point on 01629 533190/01629 535353

Online Safety

Please click on this link for information on how to set up parental controls on your broadband at home.

QEG's are holding an Online Safety Evening where Primary School families have been invited to attend.

This will be a really useful evening which lots of information about new technologies and how to keep abreast of keeping your child safe online.

We are pleased to invite you to our Online Safety Information Evening, which will take place on Monday 26th January 5 – 6pm at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, The Green Road, Ashbourne, DE6 1EP.

This event has been designed specifically for parents and carers of children currently in primary education. As our children increasingly engage with the digital world, understanding how to support them in staying safe online is more important than ever. The evening will cover key aspects of online safety that are part of the national agenda for all secondary school settings, including managing online behaviour, recognising potential risks, and promoting healthy, responsible digital habits.

Please note that all parents are welcome, including those who may not be planning to send their child to our school. We believe these topics are of broad importance, and we are committed to supporting families across our wider community.

Tea and coffee will be provided, and there will be an opportunity to ask questions and speak with members of our safeguarding and pastoral team.

We hope you will join us for this informative and valuable session. To assist with planning, we kindly ask that you confirm your attendance by completing the form (please click on the link) Online Safety Talk at QEGS 26th January 2026 – Fill in form [Online Safety Talk at QEGS 26th January 2026](#)



Mobile Phones: Governors have requested that the school Playground becomes a mobile free zone. Whilst you are on the school playground, please refrain from using your mobile phone.

Please do not take any photos of children on the school site or at school events. This is to protect our children across the school.

Cold Weather Alert;

Derbyshire have offered guidance;



Keeping children safe in the cold weather

Are you aware that children are more vulnerable to the cold? Children's bodies are smaller and they lose heat quicker than adults so here are some top tips to keep children warm and safe in the cold weather.

Be prepared!

Think about signing up to the [Met office alerts](#), and watch the weather forecast to help you prepare for colder weather.

Ensure you are aware of the procedures that your child's nursery or school has in place in case of bad weather. This will help you to avoid unnecessary travel. It would help to have a plan in place in case of school closures.

Living in a cold home has negative impacts on a child's health and wellbeing.

Many families are facing the rising costs of heating bills and it is **important to be aware of the available support.**

Clothing - think layers

Make sure children are layered up. Start with a vest and then a t-shirt and another layer on top. These can be taken off throughout the day

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/staywellthiswinter



Keeping warm

Dress children warmly in winter coats, gloves and hats.

Remember as children play and learn outside, to provide your child with a warm coat they can move around in.

It's always handy to have pockets to put a glove in each to keep them from disappearing!

Staying safe outside

Keep an eye on children playing outside in the cold weather - if they are not moving around much or start to shiver, bring them inside to warm up.

Watch out for symptoms of hypothermia such as shivering, lips going blue, slurred speech and lack of coordination.

Introducing active games such as obstacle courses, jumping, and riding bikes can encourage movement and keep children warm.

Adults also need to remember to stay warm and layer your clothes too!



Look out for others by checking in on older neighbours or relatives - especially those who live alone or who have serious illnesses, to make sure they are safe, warm, and well.

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/staywellthiswinter

The cold weather can cause problems for some people. So we've put together some useful information about how to keep you and your family well during winter.

Be prepared!

If you are not on mains gas or electricity, make sure you have a good supply of heating oil or LPG or solid fuels, so you don't run out of fuel over winter

Ensure all heating and cooking appliances are checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer

Stock up on tinned and frozen food to avoid going out when it's cold or icy

Watch the weather forecast and prepare for the colder weather. You can sign up for cold weather alerts on the Met office website at www.metoffice.gov.uk

Contact your water and power suppliers to see if you are eligible to be on the Priority Services Register. Find out more at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/priorityservicesregister

Try to prevent any trips, slips and falls as these are one of the biggest causes of hospital admissions for older and more vulnerable people.

Find out more about falls prevention at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/falls and contact Age UK Derby and Derbyshire for information about falls prevention classes

Get winter tyres fitted to your car and keep items such as jump leads, warm clothing and a blanket in your car in case of break downs.

Medications

- Take up any winter vaccines you are offered to help you stay well this winter.
- Make sure you have enough medication at home in case you are unable to go out due to bad weather
- If you want more advice about protecting your health during the winter visit www.nhs.uk/keep-warm

Keep your home warm

- Heat your home to at least 18°C
- Draw your curtains at dusk to help keep the heat generated inside your room
- Insulate and draft proof your home
- Check if there are any grants or benefits available to you to help with bills and/or energy efficiency
- There's lots of advice at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/staywarmwinter

Keep yourself warm

- Make sure you are layered up with lots of thin layers of clothing made from wool, cotton, or fleecy material
- Always wear socks and good fitting slippers with good grips when inside and change into shoes with a good grip when heading outside to prevent trips, slips and falls.
- If you use an electric blanket always use it as instructed. Get it tested for safety every three years. Don't use it with a hot water bottle
- Have plenty of hot food and drinks throughout the day.

Keep moving

Exercising can help you keep warm - if possible, move around at least once an hour.

If it is difficult to move about then stretching your arms and legs can also help you keep warm

If you have a health concern then please speak to your GP before starting any exercise plans.

Watch out for symptoms of hypothermia such as shivering, lips going blue, slurred speech and unusual clumsiness. Find out more at www.nhs.uk/conditions/hypothermia



Keep in touch with neighbours, family and friends in cold weather. Make sure you let someone know if you need some practical help, are feeling unwell or if you just want a chat

Other useful information

If you are struggling to pay your energy bills then we recommend that you talk to your energy supplier as early as possible. Ofgem rules state that your supplier has to help. This will usually be by negotiating a payment plan with you. In addition some suppliers have financial help funds.

Think Which Service
Get the right healthcare advice, support and treatment as quickly as possible. Visit: go.nhs.uk/which-service

Welfare Rights
Our Welfare Rights team can check you're claiming all the benefits you're entitled to. Call: 01629 531535. Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/welfarebenefits

Marches Energy Agency
Warmer Derbyshire (MEA) can give advice on energy costs. Call: 0800 6771332. Email: god@mea.co.uk

Affordable Credit Team
Find out about safe, lower cost borrowing options with Credit Unions and Community banks. Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/creditunions

Citizens Advice
Citizens Advice can offer support and information around debt and energy costs. Find your nearest branch at www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Mental health support
If you find yourself feeling isolated or overwhelmed over the winter months you can reach out for support. Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/mentalhealth

Travelling to school



The beginning and end of the school days are extremely busy on Mayfield Road outside school. Please think very carefully where you park. It is safer to arrive 5 minutes early and park away from the school gates and walk the last 5 minutes to school. You will have noticed that there are signs outside school restricting parking, and this will be monitored by the Traffic Warden. Our motto is '**Park Away Stride Today!**' Where possible please walk, scoot or cycle to school. You can park in the carparks in Ashbourne for free after 2pm with your Derbyshire dales parking disc displayed.

Cars Idling: Please can we ask you to think when you park and turn off your car engines and not have them idling. The pollution from the fumes in the air is not good for our children's health as they walk to school and wait on the playground. It is impacting on our local climate. Thank you.

Attendance

The register is taken at 8.55am. If your child comes to school after this time they will be marked as late 'L'. If your child arrives after 9am they will be given a 'U' mark and this will go against their attendance.

Attendance at school is crucial- every day your child misses equate to lost learning. If your child is unwell then please contact the school office on the first day of absence. The phones will be manned from 8am. Please email the

school office if your child is unwell not the class teacher; info@st-oswalds.derbyshire.sch.uk

If Miss Simons or Mrs Waring have not heard from you regarding your child's absence by 9.00am then they will call you. The Attendance policy is on the school website. Holidays are not permitted during term time. Attendance is rewarded with certificates monthly; these rewards are detailed on the school website.

Leave of absence (this could be a pre-arranged appointment) needs to be requested. A leave of absence form can be requested at the school office. The DfE have provided updates on school attendance which can be found here; [DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk) Our attendance policy reflects the changes.

Parent Pay:

Please check your child's Parent Pay account and ensure any outstanding bills are paid. Miss Simons and Mrs Waring are looking at what outstanding payments are on parent pay and will be in contact over the next few weeks.

Fruit in school



Fruit in school is free for Key Stage 1 children. We ask that children try the fruit and have a single piece if they are not keen. In Key Stage 2 the children can bring in a healthy snack to school- fresh fruit/vegetables, etc. (**No nuts due to allergies and no pepperoni sticks, no items wrapped in wrappers, etc.**) We are a health promoting school and we have pupils who have allergies therefore we need to be mindful of what we bring into school

Governors

Reading and Homework

Children are on their reading journey now and are collecting their stars in preparation for their first reading award of a Bronze badge. Children are now on their journey to getting Bronze badges- well done all- super reading.

Helping in school

If you would be interested in helping in school; listening to children read helping in lessons and supporting the school in any way then please drop us an email or pop and see Mrs Wood or one of the class teachers. If you are interested in helping or you have a relative that is interested in helping then we would love to have you be part of the team.

Our Golden Rules and Classroom Values

We have extremely high expectations of behaviour within the school. We expect every child to follow the Golden Rules and our classroom values. We have updated our Behaviour Policy and Exclusion Policy which are on the school website.

Values Corner

This half term our Value will be focused on building a Strong Community; Values which we held dear- friendship, trust and mutual encouragement are important for building a strong community

Music Opportunities

Extra-curricular Music is now up-and-running:

1. Ukelele group for Y5-Y6 on Tuesday lunchtimes. Free. Run by Mrs Clarke. Y4 welcome to join after Christmas.
2. Recorder group for Y2-Y6 on Monday lunchtimes. £2. Run by Miss Light
3. Instrument tuition available: piano, recorder, sax, flute, oboe, clarinet.

Dates for the term ahead;

Spring Term 2026

Monday 5 th January	Return to school
27 th January	Mrs Foster's last day in Year 5
30 th January	Year 5 visit Jorvick
2 nd February	Miss Birt returns to Year 5 History Van in school bringing the past to life for Year 1 and Year 4

3 rd February	Sports Hall Athletics Year 5 and 6
6 th February	Friends of the School Disco 3.15- 5pm Infant pupils 6-7.30 KS2 Pupils
Wk commencing 9 th February	Parents Evenings this week
10 th February	Sports Hall Athletics Year 3 & 4
12 th February	Shrovetide Lunch and mini game Last day of the half term
13 th February	INSET Day
February Half Term	
Monday 23 rd February	Return to school
Friday 13 th March	9am Mother's day service in St Oswald's Church
Tuesday 17 th March	Year 5 in St Oswald's 2pm Hi 5 Netball Yr 5 & 6
Wednesday 17 th	Primary Dance workshop
Tuesday 24 th	Year 5 in St Oswald's 2pm Hi 5 Netball Yr 3 & 4
Friday 27 th March	Easter Service in St Oswald's 9am Last Day of the term
Easter Holidays	
Return to school Monday 13 th April 2026	