

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back after the Christmas break and Happy New Year to you all! A big thank you from all the Reception staff for your kind holiday messages, cards and gifts. We hope that you had a relaxing break. The children had a wonderful first term at school during the Autumn and are going to continue to build on this super start this half term. Our learning will be based on a winter theme allowing the children to explore how the world around them changes at this time of year and to begin to explore places in the wider world such as Antarctica. This overview will outline what the children will cover in the different areas of the curriculum this half term. If you have any concerns or problems, please do not hesitate to contact me. Kind regards, Miss Morris.

Catholic life of the school

We will begin 2026 by joining with the whole school for a Mass, to celebrate the Epiphany on Tuesday 6th January. It is a special date to celebrate how a star led the Magi to visit the baby Jesus after he had been born.

This half term the children will be joining their Prayer Buddies for a class Mass. The children enjoy having reflective time with their Year 6 buddies and look forward to meeting up with them.

The children will be given the opportunity to take home our 'Ordinary Time' Prayer Bag this half term to share with their families at home. The bag will go home on Mondays and Thursdays.

The Wednesday Word is available online for each child, every Wednesday. Please look out for this on the school app or website and share it with your child.

This term we hope to achieve our Live Simply award. We continue to work hard to look after God's creation and each other, by reducing waste and recycling and supporting those in the world less fortunate than we are, as requested by Pope Francis in Laudato Si.

Reception Class Key Dates

6th January 2026: Whole School Mass, 9.15am.

19th—23rd January 2026: Big School Garden Bird Watch

29th January 2026: Individual School photographs

29th January 2026: Mystery Readers begin (each Thursday 2:45pm—more information to follow on the class blog)

10th February 2026: Safer internet day

13th February 2026: Close for half term.



Reading at St. Oswald's

This half term we will be continuing our Phonics and reading learning and routines. We completed our Phase 2 learning and now will be moving on to Phase 3 Phonics. Phase 3 decodable words and tricky words will be added to reading folders every Thursday along with the diagraphs (sounds) that have been taught that week. Below is a reminder of the books your child will bring home, the days that they will be changed and the school reading expectations.

The children will bring home:

* One **decodable book** on a **Thursday**, to be returned the following **Monday**. **This book will have been read with an adult during reading practice sessions during that week.** Please ensure that the decodable book is returned to school on time as other children will be relying on using the book, the following week. (A cost will be incurred for any books that are lost or damaged).

* One **sharing book** (library book) on a **Monday**, to be returned the following **Monday**.

Some children will take home **one additional decodable book on a **Monday** to be returned on a Thursday. This book will not have been previously shared with an adult in school.

Supporting your child with reading

Although your child will be taught to read at school, you can have a huge impact on their reading journey by continuing their practice at home. There are two types of reading book that your child may bring home:

* **A reading practice book (Decodable phonic book):** This book has been carefully matched to your child's current reading level. If your child is reading it with little help, please don't worry that it's too easy - your child needs to develop fluency and confidence in reading. Listen to them read the book. Remember to give them lots of praise - celebrate their success! If they can't read a word, encourage them to have a go and then read it to them. After they have finished, talk about the book together and fill in their reading record.

* **A sharing book (library book):** In order to encourage your child to develop their vocabulary and to become a lifelong reader, it is important that they learn to read for pleasure. The sharing book is a book they have chosen for you to enjoy together. Please remember that you shouldn't expect your child to read this alone. Read it to or with them. Discuss the pictures, enjoy the story, predict what might happen next, use different voices for the characters, explore the facts in a non-fiction book. The main thing is that you have fun! Please remember to write your comments in your child's reading record.

Reading at home expectations

We ask that all children share/read a book with an adult each evening for 10 minutes. This can be reading a book and/or reading sounds and key words sent home in the reading folder. It is important for your child to have reading time with you so that they can gain further confidence in their reading skills from you and also helps you to keep up to date with how they are doing with their learning.

You can visit 'Little Wandles' website (our accredited Phonics scheme) for more information and look at the parent section, which will show videos of how the children will be taught to pronounce the different letters and sounds.

The website is www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents.



Religious Education



Religious Education Directory 'To know you more clearly'

Branch 3: Galilee to Jerusalem

The children will hear different pieces of Scripture. (The visit of the Magi, Jesus blesses the little children, Feeding of five thousand) and immerse themselves in activities to help them know and understand these stories.

They will learn about:

- The Magi visiting Jesus with gifts and how Jesus' birth is celebrated at Christmas.
- Jesus is God's son and came for everyone, showing God's love and welcoming everyone.
- The Church praying 'The Glory Be' as a response to the coming of Jesus.

The children will begin to understand that we welcome and show love to everyone in our words and actions as Jesus does and we are called to help the poor and hungry.

Please see the RE newsletter on the school website for more information.

Healthy School Initiative



As part of the healthy school initiative, we continue to encourage the children to be active at playtimes and improve their fitness by completing the 'Daily Mile'. This is done from a walking pace to a jogging/running pace as each child increases in speed and ability.

Children will be encouraged to drink water throughout the day. We have a Water Station in our classroom that is easily accessible for the children and has fresh drinking water available for the children to independently pour into the own cup at any point during the day.

A **healthy snack** needs to be brought into school each day and the children will be given the opportunity to eat their snack during morning snack time. **Please do not include any food containing nuts.** A piece of fruit will be offered to every child in Key Stage 1 at afternoon playtime.

How you can help to support your child

Below are a few little tips that you can help to support your child in school this half term:

- Share books each night, encourage them to talk about the books and help them to learn their letter sounds and tricky words (located in the Reading Folders).
- Talk to your child during daily routines, modelling good sentences and explaining new vocabulary.
- Encourage your child to talk to you using clear sentences (e.g. I need the toilet) rather than pointing or saying one word (e.g. toilet).
- Discuss any new vocabulary you come across at home, talk about its meaning and model using it.
- Encourage them to attempt to do some things themselves with adult support e.g. pouring a drink, tidying away toys, opening a wrapper, putting on shoes, putting on a coat.
- Encourage them to share and play appropriately—turn taking when playing a game, how to handle toys carefully so they don't break.
- Talk about numbers and use the language of more and less when comparing items e.g. Who has less sweets me or you?

Thank you for your support in helping your child to learn. Any extra help you can give is very much appreciated!

Labelling

Please ensure that all uniforms, PE kits, book bags, wellies, shoes and snacks are clearly labelled with your child's name. All the children are wearing the same school uniform so it is easy to get personal items mixed up. It is also important to label your child's snack so that do not become distressed if they can't find it.

Reading Records

The Reading Record (located in your child's reading folder) is an excellent way of letting me know how your child copes with their reading book. It would be very helpful if you could make a brief comment about your child's reading. These comments could be about: if they enjoyed the book, their favourite characters, the words/sounds they recognised, if they could re-tell the story/main facts and say what they think may happen next, are very useful.

We recommend your child reads each night for approximately 10 minutes. This can include talking about what might happen in the book, talking about the illustrations, reading words, spotting known letter sounds, discussing events, characters and facts.



PE

This half term, we will be doing PE on Mondays and Fridays. Please ensure your child has the correct kit in school for these sessions. Please take out earrings on PE days.

PE Uniform: white plain t-shirt, royal blue shorts and black trainers.

Cold weather - navy plain tracksuit tops (**no hoods or zips**), jogging pants and black trainers will be needed.

The correct PE uniform as above must be worn on both PE days. If you have any issues with this, please let me know.

Reception Half Termly Topic Web

2025/2026 - Spring 1



Winter



Literacy

Quality Book Focus: 'The Storm Whale in Winter', 'Hello Penguin'

Reading: Word Reading and Comprehension

- * Continue to develop phonological awareness - rhythm & rhyme; oral blending and segmenting.
- * Begin to use and understand some recently introduced vocabulary.
- * Talk about the events in a fiction book and anticipate the next event.
- * Engage with non fiction texts and talk about their features.
- * Know where the beginning and of a sentence is.
- * Become aware of full stops at the end of sentences when reading.
- * Know the names of letters of the alphabet.
- * Begin to match lower case letter and capital letters.
- * Begin to read letter groups that represent one sound and say the sounds correctly.
- * Blend sounds into words to read simple words containing known Phase 3 graphemes.
- * Read some common exception words - Phase 3 (e.g. was, you).
- * Read simple phrases / sentences - known Phase 3.

Writing

- * Form most lowercase letters with the correct formation.
- * Begin to form capital letters correctly.
- * Orally segment CVC words with consonant digraphs, long vowel phonemes and some adjacent consonants.
- * Spell Phase 2 common exception words.
- * Spell words by identifying the sounds and then writing the sound with letter/s, using Phase 2 GPCs.
- * Orally rehearse caption or sentence before writing.

Phonics focus: Phase 3 graphemes, oral segmenting and blending, read sentences containing Phase 3 graphemes.

Further parent support for Phonics: www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development Focus learning : My Dreams and Wishes

My Happy Mind Focus: Appreciate

Self-Regulation:

- * Express feelings and consider the feelings of others—school rules, choices and consequences.
- * Set own goals and show resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- * Identify and moderate own feelings socially and emotionally.
- * Think about the perspectives of others.

Managing Self:

- * Manage own self-care needs - own coats (fasten), accessories.
- * Know and talk about the different factors that support their overall health and wellbeing: - regular physical activity, toothbrushing, online safety.

Building Relationships:

- * See self as a valuable individual—share the things we are good at.
- * Build constructive and respectful relationships—investigating that everyone is different using Elmer stories and books about the clothes people wear.

Mathematics

Numerical Pattern and Number

- * Recite numbers to 20 from zero.
- * Count amounts to 10.
- * Subitise 0-5.
- * Match numerals and amounts to 10.
- * Compare quantities up to 10.
- * Find pairs (odd and even numbers).
- * Know 'one more/less than' to 10.
- * Begin to confidently find number bonds to 5.
- * Combine two amounts to find a total.
- * Represent and compose 6,7,8.
- * Double amounts to 8.
- * Form numbers 1-5.

Shape, Space and Measure

- * Measure, describe and compare the capacity of objects.
- * Measure, describe and compare the mass of objects.
- * Use time related language to describe when things happen.

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- * Listen carefully to and learn rhymes, poems and songs.
- * Listen to and talk about stories with increasing attention, demonstrated through good understanding.
- * Increasingly engage in non-fiction books and learn new vocabulary linked e.g. non fiction texts - label, caption, contents, photo.
- * Begin to listen to and talk about non-fiction books, developing a familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary.
- * Learn and use new vocabulary.

Speaking

- * Use new vocabulary in different contexts.
- * Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them - how and why questions.
- * Articulate their ideas & thoughts in well-formed sentences.
- * Connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives e.g. because, and, then, so.
- * Describe events in some detail using some sequencing vocabulary (before, after, yesterday) - sharing of holiday and weekend experiences.
- * Use talk to help work out problems, organise thinking & activities explain how things work/why things happen.
- * Develop and use social phrases with confidence e.g. I am sorry, Please can you pass me...?
- * Retell a simple story that they are familiar with.

RSE (Journey in love)

'The wonder of being special and unique'

Physical Focus: To recognise that we are all different and unique.

Reception Half Termly Topic Web

2025/2026 - Spring 1



Winter



Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

*Continue to refine the fundamental movement skills they have already acquired: - rolling - crawling - walking - jumping - running - hopping - skipping - climbing.

*Begin to progress towards a more fluent style of moving, with developing control and grace.

*Continue to develop overall body-strength, balance, co-ordination and agility - developing upper body strength, balance, upper arm movements, crossing the midline. bilateral coordination—animal movements.

*Use their core muscle strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at a table or sitting on the floor

*Combine different movements with ease and fluency—dragon dancing.

*Confidently and safely use a range of large and small apparatus indoors and outside, alone and in a group.

*Further develop and refine a range of ball skills including: *passing, batting and aiming*—using a catcher and bat, throwing into a net.

Fine Motor Skills

*Develop small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently e.g. pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons—threading and weaving, opening and closing lids, twisting pipe cleaners.

*Begin to develop a handwriting style - lower case and upper case letters - using formation rhymes, developing speed and accuracy.

PE : Dance

To copy, repeat and explore actions in response to a theme.

To explore and remember actions considering level, shape and direction.

To move with control and co-ordination, expressing ideas through movement.

To remember and repeat actions moving in time with the music.

Computing

Programming: All about instructions

- To know that being able to follow and give simple instructions is important in computing.
- To understand that it is important for instructions to be in the right order.
- To understand why a set of instructions may have gone wrong.

Understanding of the World

Past and Present

*Name and describe people who are familiar to them - exploring the occupation of Mr Moran (school maintenance officer) and how we equip ourselves for outdoor occupations in the winter. Read Percy the Park Keeper.

* Learn about a significant person from the past— Ernest Shackleton - Antarctica explorer.

People, Culture & Communities

*Understand that some places are special to members of their community—celebrations and gatherings in Church.

*Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this country and other countries—investigate Antarctica.

*Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live—icy environments, settings by the sea.

*Explore a range of maps, images and videos to support comparison of Warrington and Antarctica.

Natural World

*Explore the natural world around them and describe the season of winter - storms and snowstorms.

*Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them—compare the trees to Autumn, animal hibernation for winter, bird watching - feeding, warmth.

*Observe and interact with natural processes—melting ice cubes investigation,, explore what we can freeze.

*Explore different species of whales using non-fiction texts.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

*Explore and use a variety of artistic effects to express their ideas—finger painting, using thick and thin paintbrushes to create a winter picture based on a Claude Monet painting, natural paintbrushes, colour mixing to create the colour of the sky during different weather events.

*Build on their previous learning, refining ideas and developing their ability to represent them—draw penguins with different tools (e.g. chalk, charcoal, paint), building homes, nests.

*Create collaboratively sharing ideas, resources and skills.- create landscape collages in the style of Megan Coyle.

Being Imaginative & Expressive

*Listen attentively, move to and talk about music, expressing their feelings and responses—whale music, penguin music.

*Watch and talk about dance and performance art, expressing their feelings and responses - role play Noi and the storm whale.

*Explore and engage in music making and group dance—Penguin dance.

*Develop storylines in their pretend play—role play home corner—fix it theme, outdoor—boats.

Charanga Music: Everyone

*Listen to new music, express thoughts and move in different ways to express your feelings e.g. *We are family* (Sister Sledge, Thula Baba - a South African Lullaby).

*Explore finding the pulse in different ways using nursery rhymes.

*Explore high and low (pitch and improvisation using voices).

*Create own sounds (improvisation and composition with voices and instruments).

*Learn nursery rhymes e.g. *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star, If you're happy and you know it, Five little monkeys*, by listening, singing along and doing actions. Add instruments such as bells and shakers.

Early Learning Goals—Page 1

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the **RECEPTION** is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs) as set out on this page.

The Prime Areas of Learning

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing - using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Literacy

Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.

Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

Early Learning Goals—Page 2

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the **RECEPTION** is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs) as set out on this page.

The Specific Areas of Learning

Understanding of the World

Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.

The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.