

# **A CELEBRATION OF LEARNING**

**ST OSWALD'S CE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
250 YEARS**



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published in 2021



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# Foreword

## Sue Bland

I'm incredibly honoured to add my name to the long list of headteachers that have led St Oswald's CE Primary School since it was first founded by John Key in 1771. The school and its pupils will have witnessed many changes - both in education and in the wider world - during its 250 year history, and it will doubtless see many more. Who could have predicted that we would close our doors in 2020 and again in 2021, and educate our pupils remotely during periods of national lockdown? Our teachers and pupils have demonstrated astonishing resilience and determination to succeed during these months of adversity, and I'm so proud of pupils and staff.



Although shocking to us, this isn't the first time in history that the school had to close its doors to pupils. Over a hundred years ago, the influenza pandemic of 1918 and 1919 led to the school closing for several short periods, and it also closed briefly in the autumn at least twice during the 1940s because the boys were required for potato picking. The school didn't close during World War 2, but its running was disrupted by a large influx of evacuees who weren't quite as well behaved as the St Oswald's children!

Despite changes in location and numerous headteachers, the school's place at the heart of the Fulford community has remained steadfast throughout the decades and past pupils young and old talk of it with great pride. As we celebrate the past, let us also look to the future. When it is time for me to pass the baton of leadership at this fabulous school to my successor, I hope that our current pupils will talk of St Oswald's in years to come with the same sense of pride.

This book is a joint enterprise, created with love by people who share a passion for everything that St Oswald's school represents. Our pupils are citizens of the future, and as we prepare them for this unknown future we are building independence, resilience and a 'can do' attitude, and the opportunity for all of the pupils in our diverse community to flourish and be the best that they can be. We encourage our pupils to think creatively, develop ambition and have the confidence to stand by their convictions. We ask a lot of them - because they deserve it!

Sue Bland  
Headteacher of St Oswald's CE Primary School since 2018.

# **THE HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOL**

**This chapter covers the history of our school. We have looked at a range of sources, including old school logbooks, school reports and newspaper articles, as well as previous research carried out by Elizabeth Ankers in 1970 and more recently by members of the Fishergate and Fulford Historical Society. We are grateful to all those who have generously shared their knowledge and photographs, and hope that the stories we have captured help to create a picture of how our school has developed over time.**

## Early beginnings: 1771-1865

Towards the end of the eighteenth century wealthy individuals in England increasingly started to set up charitable free schools to provide education for poor children. People at the time were worried about poverty and education offered children more opportunities to make a living and to be part of society. In Fulford, John Key founded a free school in 1771 and it is this school that eventually evolved into St Oswald's CE Primary School.

There had been a small 'petty' or 'dame' school in Fulford since at least 1743 where a teacher provided some limited lessons in her home for a fee (a little like a childminder today), but John Key's school was the first in Fulford to offer free places to local children from poor families. Key had moved to the area having inherited Water Fulford Hall from his cousin and had an income from a property he owned in Gateshead which allowed him to fund the school. He provided an endowment that paid for 'educating and instructing twenty poor children'. Further children could attend for a fee.

When our school first began, Fulford looked very different to how it looks today. Much of the land was still open



*John Key  
Photo courtesy of Fishergate,  
Fulford and Heslington Local  
History Society,*

countryside and most families were involved in farming or related small-scale industries. Very few children at the time had the opportunity to get an education and those who did were generally from wealthy families and educated by a governess at home or perhaps at a small boarding school. Cavalry barracks were built on Fulford Road in 1795 and infantry barracks were later added. The barracks separated Fulford village from York and have had a long connection with the school, with army children attending from at least the early 1900s.



*The original schoolhouse (27 Main Street)*

The schoolhouse was built on Main Street (at the current number 27) and provided a single school room as well as living accommodation for the school master and his family. The large windows at the front of the building would have brought in valuable daylight at a time when the only artificial light was by candle or oil lamp. Children entered the building via a porch, hanging their coats on pegs on the wall as they came in. In those days there



*Date stone on the original schoolhouse*

were no school meals and children brought lunch from home which they ate in the school room or, on warm, dry days, in the garden sitting around the well.

The first school master that we know about was Thomas Pearson. Thomas was also the parish clerk and lived and taught at the school from at least 1783 until his death in 1823. The parish clerk was selected by the church and carried out a range of duties including organising church services, collecting monies and completing parish records. In small villages like Fulford, the clerk would often take on the role of school master, since both roles required the ability to read and write. Lessons are likely to have included reading, writing, some limited arithmetic and religious education. There may also have been some sewing (particularly for the girls) and singing. There was no government funding available for the school until many years later and materials for lessons had to be covered by the endowment or by other gifts. Mrs Mary Key, the wife of the school's founder, left £100 to the school in her will in 1831, which paid for books for the school and also covered the cost of repairs to the schoolhouse.

It is not clear who became the head of the school after Thomas Pearson but census and parish records show that between 1841 and 1864 there were at least three further school masters: Joseph Giddy, William Whitehouse and Mr Harrison. During Joseph Giddy's time the school began to expand. A local wealthy spinster, Amelia Cholmley, who lived at Fulford Lodge, showed a great deal of interest in the school and particularly in the education of girls. In 1844, Amelia purchased the land behind the old schoolhouse and funded the building of a new school room for infants which was completed in 1846. This building is still visible and is now used as the Scout Hut.



*The new infant school (now the Scout Hut)*

William Whitehouse, who was the schoolmaster from about 1852 until the early 1860s, combined the role with that of sub-postmaster. These were early days for

the post office and presumably William could sort the small number of letters for the rural community of Fulford whilst also running the school. Little is known about Mr Harrison, other than that he was forced to retire in 1864. He had been ill for some time and left the school to be run by pupil teachers. Reports of the school were not good and he was paid a small sum and ordered to leave the schoolhouse by October 1864.

By this point our school had been in existence for almost 100 years. The village had not grown significantly in this time and a map from 1852 shows how rural the area was. Local interest in the school continued but the national government was also starting to get more involved in education and the next period in our school's development would see further growth, government funding and changes to what was taught.

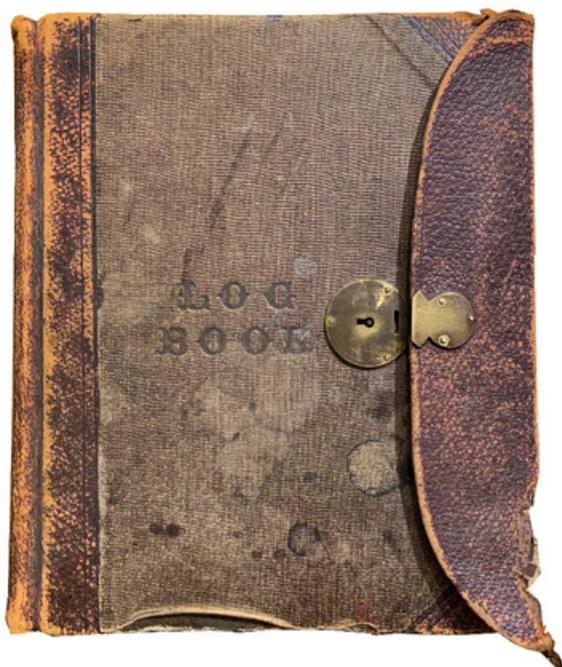


Map of Fulford, 1852  
Image courtesy of Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society,

## Growth and reform: 1865-1914

After Mr Harrison left, finding a new school master was left to the vicar and the two church wardens. Initially, they failed to fill the role, and the vicar was asked to look into how much money should be offered to find a suitably qualified teacher. By this point, the funding for the school was no longer entirely from John Key's initial endowment and the school was run as a charity with a number of local people - not just wealthy individuals but shopkeepers and other business people - paying a regular subscription to fund the school. These subscriptions were increased in order to attract a more qualified school master and, on the 16th January 1865, Mr Oldfield Marshall was appointed.

Oldfield Marshall grew up in Malton where his mother was a schoolmistress and his father worked as a millwright



*The first logbook for the school*

(a specialist carpenter who designed and built mill machinery). Prior to taking up the post in Fulford, Mr Marshall was a schoolmaster in Oswaldkirk, near Helmsley. He had a keen interest in music and as well as being schoolmaster was also the choirmaster in Fulford. His appointment marked a change in the running of the school with processes becoming more formalised and the school being referred to as 'mixed'. There had certainly been both boys and girls there from the beginning, but it seems that in the first half of the 1800s the girls' and boys' schools were run separately.

In addition to the money from subscriptions and a small fee paid by each pupil, national funding was made available to the school following the Education Act of 1862. The school received funding if pupils attended on a regular basis and passed exams. The schoolmaster was required to keep a logbook so that accurate numbers of pupils could be submitted to the authorities and other details of school life recorded. The first known logbook for our school began when Mr Marshall took up the post as head. His earliest entry reads: 'Entered upon the duties this day. School opened by Reverend H. M. Clifford. Attendance 28'. Attendance gradually improved over the years with brief declines over harvest times (when many children would be helping on farms) and around local feast days or religious festivals. Occasionally, severe weather or illness, particularly in the winter months, also led to low

### Examples of behavioural incidents from the school logbook, 1866

6th February	Joseph Laycock punished and reprimanded for truancing
8th February	Joseph Laycock punished for lying
4th October	E. Brown punished for stone throwing
13th November	R. Crossley punished for deliberately lying
5th December	A. Rhymer punished for calling her companions vile names
13th December	Cowper, Moorhouse, Ibbotson and Bateson detained from recreation three days for neglecting their home lessons
19th December	Moorhouse, Scaife, Ibbotson (2) and Crossley punished for ill-treating and throwing stones at an old man on their way home

attendance. On the 28th May 1865 Mr Marshall noted that there were 44 children present – the highest attendance since he had started at the school.

A government inspector's report received in December 1865 stated that 'the order, discipline and attainment of this little school are very fair considering the short time it has been opened and the small room in which it has been held. I am glad to learn that a new school room will soon

be built and I anticipate a considerable advancement in the attainment next year'.

Work began on the new school room in June 1866 and was not without disruption. The school had to move between the old school room and the infants'/girls' room as work progressed and this led to overcrowding and noisy classrooms. Mr Marshall complained bitterly of noise caused by gas workmen which led to the entire class being

### Excerpt from a school inspector report, January 1868

The Master appears to be a painstaking man but he has much to do before his school is in an efficient state as regards Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. The children seem to be very listless when they are questioned and it is very difficult to draw from them the knowledge of Holy Scripture and Catechism they seem to possess. They must be encouraged to give full answers in these subjects. The young children must be more advanced. Some scriptural pictures should be provided for the use of the Infants. The moral influence of the Master on the children seems to be good. He will do well to pay the strictest attention to Elementary subjects, as the children are very backward. The needlework is satisfactory and the singing pleasant to hear.

inattentive. However, on the 27th November, the new room was opened and, despite the desks having not yet arrived, the logbook records that 'a pleasure manifested throughout the school that the comforts of the room were appreciated'. A further inspection report was received shortly after the new room opened. It noted that, although the building works had caused some disruption, the school was 'in a fair state of discipline and attainment'.



*The school in the late 1890s/early 1900s. The man at the right is probably Mr Wilson.  
Photo courtesy of Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society,*

The 'fair state of discipline' must have in part been due to the threat of punishment. The logbook records several incidents that resulted in punishment, with some names appearing more than once. It is likely that there were physical punishments as was common in schools at the time, but punishments also included being made to stay in at break time and being excluded entirely from school for a few days. On some occasions, specific bible stories were taught to the class to try to address behavioural issues, such as the prevalence of lying.

By February 1867 the new desks had all arrived and the school had been split into

four classes. Miss Cholmley who had funded the infants and girls' school room in 1846 was still very involved in the running of the school, visiting regularly with a small group of local ladies and insisting on the girls' sewing class being run in the old girls' school. Attendance continued to rise and the school inspector began to report that if the infant class exceeded 40 pupils it would need a separate trained teacher to receive a grant in its own right.

Although the logbook does not give full details of what was taught, there are frequent mentions of English grammar, spelling, reading, dictation, times tables, arithmetic and scripture (lessons from the bible). The children were grouped into 'standards' and to move between standards each child was required to pass exams in reading, writing and arithmetic. Success in these exams was linked to the amount of money the school received from the government and as a result, much of the school day was focused on the assessed subjects. Scripture lessons were taught and examined separately by the vicar. Geography and history are also briefly mentioned, as are needlework and singing, although for many years there was no separate sewing mistress and sewing was instead taught by the infant mistress.

By September 1878, attendance across the whole school was good, averaging around 100 most weeks but unfortunately the relationship with the church was not going so well. It seems that the vicar had not been into the school to provide any religious instruction between July and November.



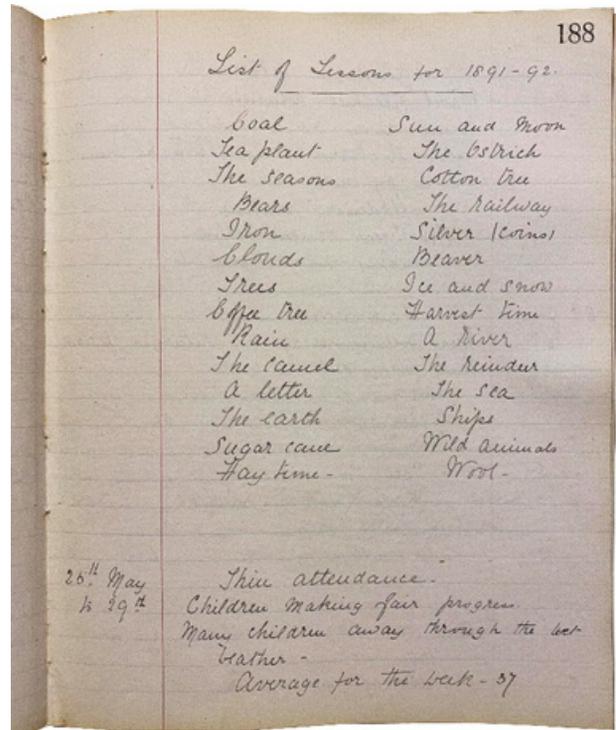
The school in the early 1900s/1910s. Taken outside the old school (now the Scout Hut).

Photo courtesy of Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society,

On the 15th November, the vicar refused permission for Mr Marshall to attend to essential business in town and, despite permission being granted by the other trustees, threatened to close the school if Mr Marshall did not return immediately. Mr Marshall left the school later that month and the vicar recorded in the logbook that he had no pleasure in visiting the school or directing the teaching due to Mr Marshall's 'insolence to him'. We cannot be sure of the full story behind what happened but what we do know is that on the 2nd December Alfred Wilson became the new schoolmaster and would remain in post until 1919.

Alfred Wilson was the son of a farmer from Brickendon, Hertfordshire. He began teaching as a teenage pupil teacher in his own school before completing training at Cheltenham Training College. Initially, he taught at St George's CE Primary School in Hanover Square, London before moving to Fulford shortly after his marriage to Phillis. In time, Phillis would also play a key role at the school, becoming sewing mistress in 1890.

Under Mr Wilson's leadership Anabella Fillingham, who had been running the infant class for some time, was encouraged to take her teaching certificate which she received in August 1879. Anabella was born in Rufforth in 1853 and moved to Main Street as a young child, attending the school first as a pupil before working as an assistant teacher and finally becoming fully qualified. She never married and dedicated her life to the running of the school. Following her certification, the infant school became a separate department with its own logbook. Miss Fillingham was very thorough in completing the logbook and there are various pages which give a detailed insight into the topics taught to the infants from sugar cane to ice and snow; hay time to railways.



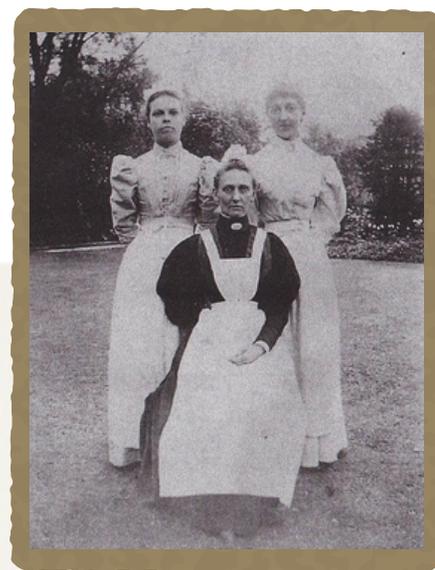
List of infant lesson topics 1891-92 from the Infant School Logbook

## From pupil to teacher

*My name is Elizabeth Anabella Fillingham, although my friends call me Anabella and to the children at school I was always Miss Fillingham. I was born in Rufforth in 1853 but moved to Fulford as a child. My father was a joiner and carpenter and we lived on Main Street with my grandmother.*

*When I was about 15 the first village fete was held - we called it 'Feast Day'. There was much excitement in the village. There were exhibitions of beautiful flowers and vegetables in the school room and children from the school could enter their work in several categories. I won a prize for handwriting and two prizes for sewing.*

*I loved school and I enjoyed helping the younger children to do well. Once I had passed all the standards, I became an assistant teacher. In 1868, the school inspector wrote that 'A. Fillingham being a female cannot be apprenticed to a Master' but I proved him wrong. In August 1879, I completed my teaching certificate and became mistress of the Infants School.*



Anabella Fillingham (centre)  
Photo courtesy of Fishergate,  
Fulford and Heslington Local  
History Society,

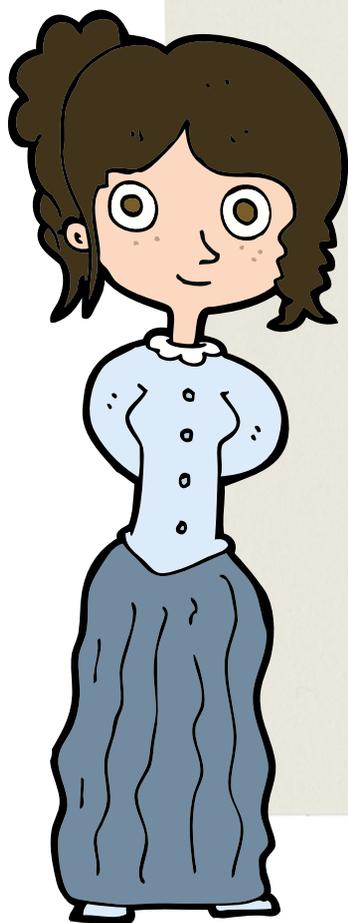
## Life at school in the 1880s

My name is Ada Brown. I went to Fulford Church School in the 1880s. I was born in 1877 in Hull but my father was from Fulford and we moved back when I was very young. Our house was just off Heslington Lane so it was not far to walk to school.

The headmaster was Mr. Wilson and his wife, Mrs. Wilson, was the sewing mistress. I was good at knitting and needlework. At just five I could knit a fine sample piece and sew beautifully neat seams.

From the age of about seven we were examined every year to see if we had completed the required standard of learning. If we had we were given a beautiful certificate. I was proud of my certificates and kept them my whole life.

After I left school aged about twelve I kept sewing and by 1901 I was working in Hull as a dressmaker.





Ada Brown's school certificates and examples of knitting and sewing, aged 5



Nationally, the debate about education continued. In the 1870s, Parliament passed several Education Acts. These Acts established 'Local School Boards' to build and manage local board schools where they were needed. Unlike our school, which was attached to the Church of England, board schools were broadly Christian but did not follow the teaching of a particular denomination. Following concerns about child labour, it became a legal requirement for parents to ensure that their children were educated and, from 1880, the Local School Boards were required to make sure that all children from the ages of 5 to 10 years were in school and had reached the required standard of education before starting work. Numbers at our school increased during this time and in 1882 another classroom was added.

In 1891 the government finally passed an Act which introduced free education for primary aged children by providing state payment of school fees of up to ten shillings per child. The Local School Board began to investigate building a new board school in the area to accommodate the increased number of children requiring school places and in 1895 Fishergate Board School was opened. Several local church schools were worried about the opening of Fishergate School, fearing that they would lose pupils to the new school with its modern facilities. The biggest impact, however, was felt by schools further into the city. St Lawrence's School initially lost over 100 pupils to Fishergate but with its slightly more rural catchment, the impact on St Oswald's School was limited.

The 1891 Education Act also affected what was taught in schools. As literacy rates improved, the government began to recognise that the focus on reading, writing and arithmetic was too narrow and grants were given for additional subjects, including drawing, singing, geography and needlework. In February 1898, physical exercise was also added to the timetable at St Oswald's, with a quarter of an hour allocated on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

The late 1800s and early 1900s were a time of significant growth in Fulford. A new tram service (initially horse drawn and then electric from 1910) running along Fulford Road allowed people to live in Fulford and work in York or even beyond, by connecting to the city's substantial railway links. New houses were built along Fulford Road and the town end of Heslington Lane and the population increased. As a result, numbers at our once little school continued to rise and by the start of the First World War there were about 130 children on the register.



*Tramcar at the Fulford Terminus (opposite the Plough Inn), about 1910.*

*Photo courtesy of Ashley Birch.*

## Goats and knitting in 1900

*My name is Margaret Guy. My father was canon Guy, the vicar of Fulford.*

*The vicarage was a big roomy house. As I remember the household as a child there were my parents and the four boys – they were older and were away at school – and we three girls. The servants were the cook, a parlour maid and a 'between' maid.*

*After breakfast we had lessons in the schoolroom – we didn't go to school. Our governess came every day from York on a very tall bicycle known as 'Goliath'.*

*About eleven we had milk and then went for a walk with our dog, Kim and our pet goat. We could never understand why people didn't like it when he butted them! We used to meet little parties of children from Fulford School and they would drop little curtsies for our benefit. They would be knitting as they walked schoolward – stockings in very fine black wool, beautifully done in ribbing stitch and very long in the leg, poor children!*

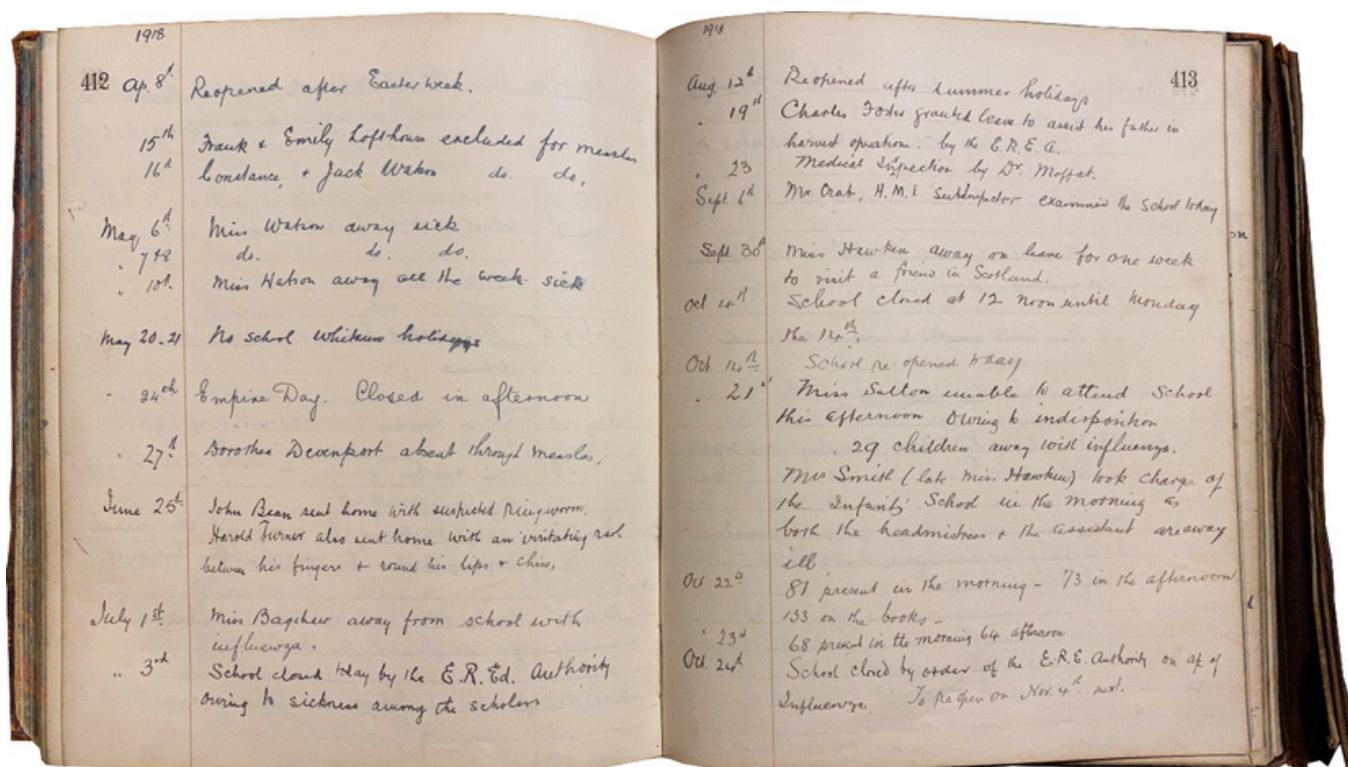


## The Great War, sickness and reconstruction: 1914-1930

In early August 1914, Fishergate and Fulford schools were temporarily used by the War Office for the initial mobilisation of troops. However, the school opened as normal for the term, so either the mobilisation was swift or it coexisted with the school for a short time. The logbook for the war years is very brief and there is no mention at all of the war until the 25th September 1917 when the entry reads 'only 96 present this morning after air-raid warning during the night and early morning. 116 present yesterday morning'. There were over fifty separate Zeppelin (a large German airship) bombing raids in the UK during the First World War. In 1916, a raid over York killed nine people, so when the air-raid warning was sounded in Fulford a year later people would have been

afraid. The impact of the war on individual families was no doubt significant but its effect on the school is not recorded.

As the war drew to a close, a pandemic began to take hold across the world, and this had a much more direct impact on the school than the war itself had had. There had been outbreaks of illness in the school before, some of which had resulted in limited closures. In 1874, the school was shut for a month due to measles in the village. Scarlet fever outbreaks also caused limited closures in 1881, 1884 and 1897. These closures were generally due to the low numbers of children present rather than concerns about infection.



Pages from the school logbook showing the impact of the 'flu pandemic in 1918

The first cases of the new influenza ('flu) virus in the UK were in Glasgow in spring 1918. By May 1918, the logbook for our school began to note one or two teachers off sick but no cause is given. Then, on the 1st July, Miss Bagshaw was away with influenza and two days later the East Riding Education Authority closed all York schools one week early for the summer 'owing to sickness among the scholars'. There was no countrywide closure of schools like there has been during the 2020/21 COVID-19 pandemic, but education authorities did make local closures where pupil or staff numbers were low, or where they were concerned that infection was spreading through schools.

The school reopened successfully in mid-August 1918 after the summer holidays but by mid-October, following the autumn break, several staff and pupils were off sick. On the morning of the 22nd October, the head recorded that only 83 out of 133 children were present, by the afternoon a further 10 were off sick and by the afternoon of the following day attendance was down to 64 (less than 50%). On Thursday 24th October, the local education authority issued an order to close the school due to the ongoing 'flu pandemic with the intention of reopening on the 4th November.



*Fulford village in the early 1900s.*

On the 11th November, the school attempted to reopen but by the time the gates closed after the morning bell only 22 children were present. The head contacted the local authority and the children were sent home at 9.40am. At least two members of staff were also off sick. The decision was taken to keep the school closed for at least one further week and the doors were not opened again until Monday 18th November. Supply teachers were brought in from Beverley to cover staff absence and the school managed to remain open until the two-week Christmas holiday began on the 20th December. At the start of the new term in January, some teachers were still either ill or unable to work due to caring responsibilities. Pupil numbers are not noted and the school managed to stay open throughout the spring and summer terms, with just one additional week of summer holiday granted by the education authority. There were significant pupil absences in November 1919 and some staff were off sick with 'flu in January 1920 but there were no further school closures. In total the school was closed for five weeks, although many children no doubt missed additional weeks due to illness. Unlike the recent pandemic, it's highly unlikely that the children did much home learning during these times. The aftermath of the war and the impact of the 'flu meant that there were shortages of workers for farms and children from farming families who were not themselves ill may well have been called on to help.

The interruptions to education seem to have had some effect on the children's learning. In December 1919, the logbook notes that although 'the general character of the work in the school is

much improved', 'in history insufficient ground has been covered' and 'the work was greatly handicapped at the beginning of the year by inability (of most of the children) to read.' This difficult period also affected the health of the school's headmaster, Mr Wilson, who had several periods of illness over 1918/19 and eventually resigned from his position at the end of April 1919.

The new head, Frederick William Pay, was the son of two teachers. His father, Frederick Albert Pay, had worked at Dunnington School before taking on the role of headmaster at Heslington School. Fred W. Pay, who had worked alongside his parents as a pupil teacher in Dunnington, had his first headship in Dishforth near Thirsk before moving to Fulford in 1919. His wife, Hannah, also worked in the school. During the early 1920s, Mr Pay developed the curriculum in line with wider changes in education. Needlework continued but cooking was now also mentioned as part of the timetable and the older girls joined a class in housewifery at the larger Fishergate Council School. There were trips to see Shakespearean plays at York Theatre Royal and Yorkshire Choral Competitions began to take place at the school with some success for St Oswald's in singing and folk dancing, including in 1921 when 'in competition with large town schools Fulford School obtained the only First Class awarded'. The success of the school choir must have been, at least in part, down to the fact that Mr Pay was very musical and played the organ.

More emphasis was given to organised sports with one hour a week devoted to P.E. for the older children from May 1920 and cricket games played in a league with



*Mr Fred Albert Pay with his wife Elizabeth Pay (centre) and two other school staff outside Heslington School*

other local schools. The school also took part in football and hockey leagues, with the girls' hockey team winning the York and District Schools League Hockey Shield for three years running. York City F.C. opened their football stadium off Heslington Lane in late 1922 (in the area between Heslington Lane and what is now Eastward Avenue and Fulfordgate) and this is likely to have increased enthusiasm for the game among local children.

Some of the curriculum changes reflected the fact that a further education Act in 1918 required children to stay at school until at least the age of 14. This meant that school numbers continued to rise and that the timetable had to be adapted to meet the needs of older children. The authorities were also getting stricter in making sure all children went to school, employing an enforcement officer to visit families. A new 'wagonette' (a small horse-drawn vehicle) service was provided from Crockey Hill to support children in this rural community to attend the school. The head complained that many of these children were 'extremely backward and much too old for their standard' having had very limited previous education. By August 1921, there were over 200 children on the school roll.

There were certainly challenges in teaching the mixed abilities and ages across the school but the inspectors' reports throughout the 1920s were broadly positive. In 1923, for example, the inspector wrote that 'much satisfactory work is being done in the various classes in this school. Lessons are usually well illustrated and effectively given by the teachers and the children are responsive and interested in their work.' It was, however, noted that arithmetic was weak, particularly in the top classes. Perhaps this improved over time because in 1927 seven out of eight eligible children managed to obtain secondary school scholarships.

Although the school was doing well in many respects, concern was increasing that the buildings, some of which had been in continuous use by this point for almost 160 years, were no longer fit for purpose. In addition to a substantial increase in numbers causing overcrowding, ideas about education – and therefore the spaces required by a modern school – had moved on. In May 1927, the school buildings were visited by Her Majesty's Inspectorate and a representative of the diocesan committee. The inspection report recommended that a new school to accommodate 280 children be built. Initial sketches were drawn up to explore the option of expanding the infant school but the school managers found that this would not result in the necessary improvements and the matter was left with the York Diocesan Education Committee to resolve.

Eventually, a piece of land at the junction of Back Lane (now School Lane) and Heslington Lane was purchased but the committee still had the challenging job of raising money to pay for construction. At the time it was

***Description of the new school from  
the Yorkshire Post and Leeds  
Intelligencer,  
Wednesday 19 March 1930***

Each block is connected with the others by means of an open glass veranda. All the windows of the rooms are capable of being thrown open to the veranda, so as to furnish the conditions of an open-air school. Each classroom is divided from its fellows by removable screens, and in this way they can be converted into one long room.

Accommodation is provided for about 350 children: 120 seniors, 120 juniors and 100 infants, though the buildings have been designed to make extension possible without spoiling the general plan. A head master's and staff rooms have also been provided.

The site of the school and grounds is about one acre. The building has a pleasant appearance with a good elevation to Heslington Lane, is of red brick and the roof is covered with warm red tiles. Sufficient land surrounds the buildings for children's gardens, and horticultural education will be given as opportunity occurs.

becoming increasingly difficult to fund church schools and many were being handed over to the local education authorities. Following the Education Acts in the late 1800s, Church schools had only a small grant to cover basic maintenance and were not able to access government funding for new buildings. The vicar, Rev. S. W. Key (a descendent of the original founder of the school) chaired the school management and was determined to raise the required sum to ensure that the school could remain under the control of the existing managers. The total cost was £7000 of which £3000 had been raised by the time the building work was finished, including a £1000 grant from the Diocesan committee and £1000 from a fundraising fete at the church. The rest of the cost was borrowed from the bank and slowly paid off by selling off the old buildings and from further fundraising.



*Photo of the new building (taken in the 1990s)*

Building work began in 1929 and the new school was completed in March 1930. The modern design created flexible classroom spaces that allowed for fresh air and ventilation. Outside there was a playground, grass playing fields and space for gardening lessons.

The school was formally opened on the 19th March by the Archbishop of York who was presented with a ceremonial gold key by a young pupil, Nancy Taylor. Afterwards, the Archbishop thanked the community for supporting the school and explained that Christian values were 'not a subject like geography or chemistry, which could be taught in a period of its own alongside other subjects' but pervaded 'all that was done throughout the school life' and was 'something very much more and deeper than the addition of religious instruction'. It is this embedding of values that is still important in our school today.

The next period of history would bring further challenges but the school was now in a strong position to be part of a developing local education system.



*Newspaper clipping about the opening of the school in 1930*

## Older children, the Second World War and evacuees: 1930-1945

From this point, our school was known as 'The Water Fulford St Oswald's CE School' – the first time that 'St Oswald's' was used in the name. The name was perhaps a little long though as the school continued to be known locally as 'Fulford School', 'Fulford Church School' or, occasionally, the more familiar

'St Oswald's'. It took a few months for all classes to settle into the new building but on the 19th June 1930 the head finally received a letter to confirm that, following the opening of the new premises, the school had been removed from the 'list of Public Elementary Schools with defective premises'.

### Who was St Oswald?

St Oswald was born in 604 to King Ethelfrith of Bernicia (an Anglo-Saxon kingdom in what is now south eastern Scotland and north eastern England) and his wife, Acha. When he was 13 his father was killed and the family had to flee to Scotland. Whilst there Oswald was baptised as a Christian. Years later he returned to England and, in 634, was proclaimed King of Northumbria. Northumbria was a large kingdom north of the Humber, whose capital was York.

Oswald was responsible for spreading Christianity throughout the north of England. He travelled with St Aidan, talking to people about his faith and translating between Gaelic and English.

Oswald was killed in battle against the pagan King Penda in 642. As he died, he prayed for his enemies and the souls of those fallen - a testament to his strong Christian faith and why he was a martyr and became a saint. The details are gruesome: his head was cut off and impaled on a stake and his body dismembered. The parts were recovered and revered as holy relics.

The cult of St Oswald spread far and wide and there are hundreds of churches named after him in the UK and Europe.



*St Oswald as depicted in a stained glass window in St Oswald's Church Fulford*

The excitement of the new building gave Mr Pay an opportunity to further develop the school and he began to plan changes with great enthusiasm. From the 17th January 1931, hot dinners were offered, with an average take-up of 82 children in the first month. Mr Pay had a working knowledge of French and one of the teachers had taken advanced French, so together they began to explore the option of offering language instruction and this started in February 1931.

There were challenges with the curriculum for the older children. The majority of children who were eligible for the exam to enter secondary schools got in and this meant that the pupils who remained at the school were rarely academic. Mr Pay proposed a three-year course for the senior children (roughly 11-14) with an extra year for higher performing ones. The focus was on preparing the young people for work and adult life. At the time, there was a huge gender divide in the opportunities available to girls and boys after school and this was reflected in the options open to them at school. In addition to academic subjects, the girls focused on cooking, needlework and 'housecraft'. Shorthand (a method of taking notes very quickly), which had been taught as an out-of-school activity for several years, was formally added to the curriculum in February 1931, to prepare girls for secretarial work. For boys, the focus was on gardening and woodwork. These lessons were much more advanced than the sewing and gardening done in our school today. A report in 1936 mentioned that in gardening the boys had carried out

several experiments and were familiar with 'budding, grafting and other methods of propagation'. They were also working on constructing rockeries and flower beds from scratch using their woodwork skills. The girls were being trained to sew neatly, do embroidery and plan and make items of clothing themselves.

Physical punishment of children who misbehaved continued, as it did across the country at the time. The logbook for 1935 mentions an incident when a child named Harry Barnes 'became giddy and fell off his seat catching his head on the corner of the radiator' after being punished with a cane. The headmaster was called at once and recorded that Harry 'looked pale and distressed but showed no signs of excessive punishment'. His head wound was washed and cleaned, and he was taken home by an older child. Harry's mother called into the school later to say that Harry had required two stitches. She was upset but apparently satisfied that Mr Pay had looked after Harry after the fall and would be reporting the incident to the authority. Mr Pay notes in the logbook that no serious harm could have come from the punishment, the cane being 'only' 18 inches long (46cm) and about 3/16 of an inch (0.5cm) thick.

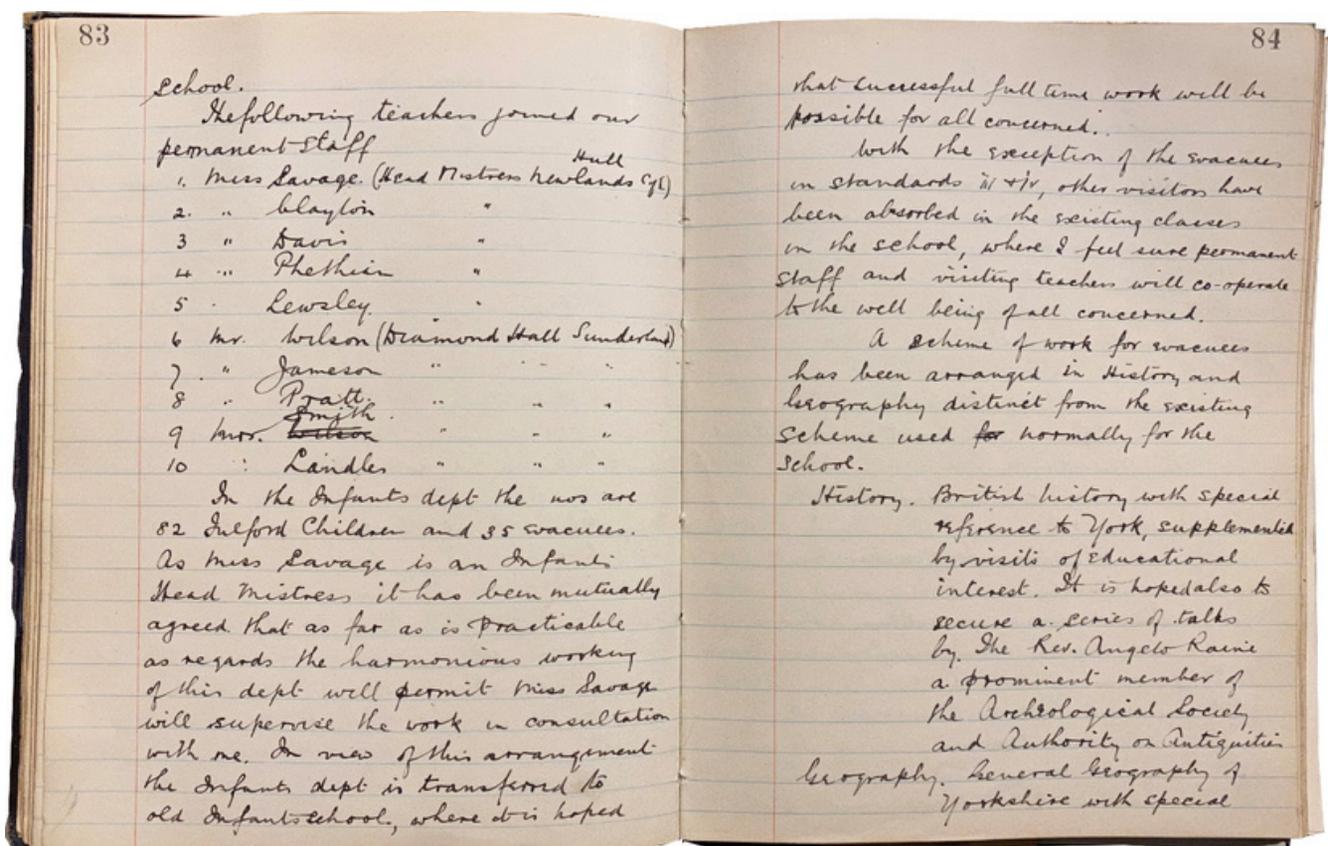
Despite the brand-new building, there were problems accommodating all the lessons from the very beginning. In part this was due to the rapidly changing provision for the older children. The new building did not have a woodwork room and initially the cooking room had to be used for this activity which was not beneficial to either lesson. Later,

woodwork and 'housecraft' were carried out in the same room. This was still not ideal - the room was cluttered with old furniture and woodwork paraphernalia and there was very limited storage for materials. In the early years of the new building there was also some disruption from the nearby York City F.C. stadium. The school was now closer to the stadium and matches were attracting bigger crowds than in the past. On the 14th December 1931, the school was closed for the day on police advice when York played an FA Cup match against Sheffield, attracting crowds of about 15,000 spectators. York City F.C. moved to Bootham Crescent in 1932 and the football crowds no longer affected the school.

In addition to the limitations with the building, there were ongoing challenges in meeting the needs of the mixed abilities of the children and in working

with army families who moved in and out of the area. No additional resources were provided to support army children at the time and their education was often very disrupted by frequent moves. There were also still many children from rural backgrounds whose education had started late and been disrupted by the need to help with farming work during busy harvest times. These challenges, however, were insignificant compared to what was about to happen in our school as the Second World War began.

The government was afraid that air raids in big cities could cause the deaths of thousands of ordinary people and an operation to evacuate children and mothers with infants to more rural places began immediately after the outbreak of war. St Oswald's School opened as normal on the 28th August



Pages from the school logbook in September 1939 describing arrangements made to accommodate the evacuees

1939 but after just three days it was closed for the reception of evacuees. When the school reopened on the 18th September, 110 evacuees had been added to the register. They came from two inner city schools: Newlands Church of England School in Hull and Diamond Hall School in Sunderland. Ten teachers (five from each school) came with the children and joined the staff of St Oswald's. The increased number of pupils required huge reorganisation to ensure that full-time schooling could be provided for everyone. The old infants' school (the scout hut) was reoccupied by the infant classes, which now included 82 Fulford children and 35 evacuees. All other additional children (with the exception of the evacuees in standards three and four) were absorbed into existing classes and teaching staff from St Oswald's and the visiting schools worked together.

As well as considering the space and staff for the increased pupil numbers, Mr Pay also gave a lot of thought to what should be taught to the evacuees so that they could learn about the geography and history of the area they had been evacuated to. The British history taught would give special focus to the history of York with local visits of educational interest and the possibility of talks from the York Archaeological Society. Geography lessons would focus on the geography of Yorkshire and the contrasts between the local area and the areas where the evacuees came from.

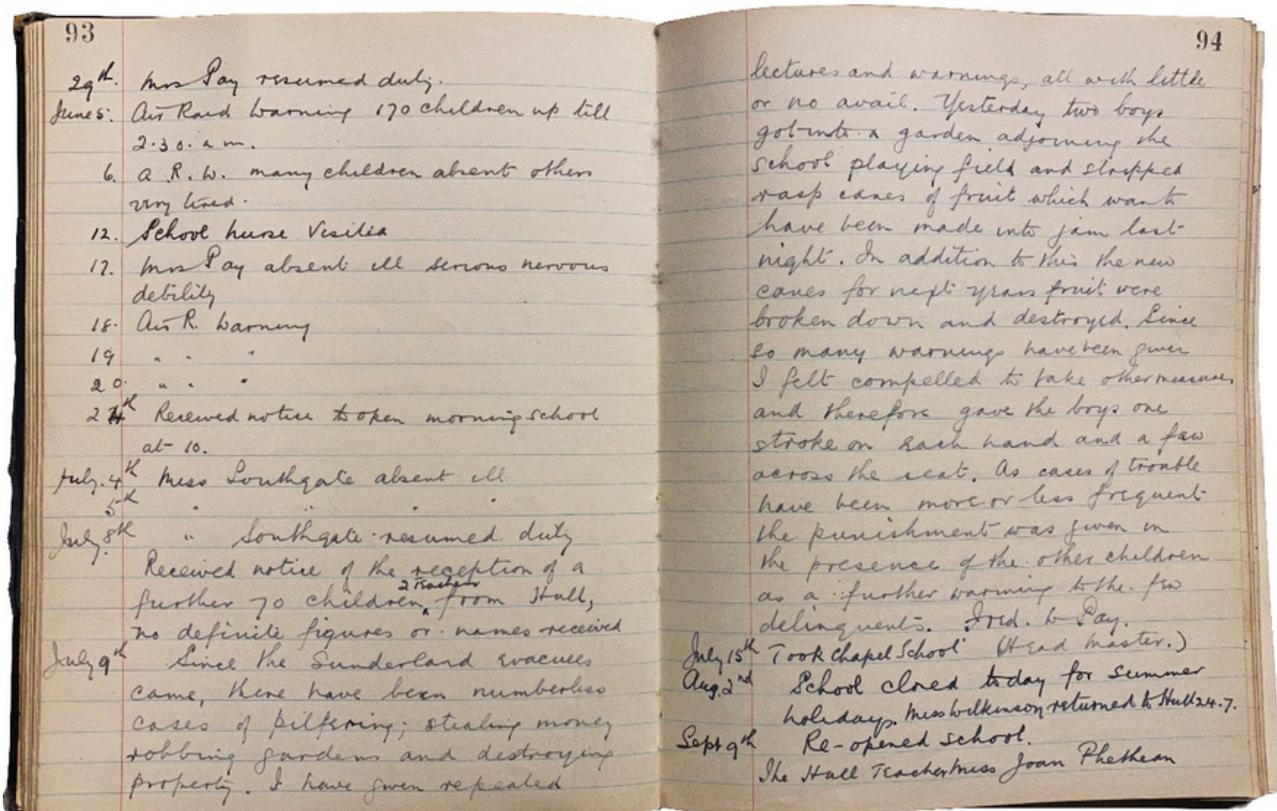
In November, a survey of parents and guardians was carried out to find out where children would go if there was an air raid during school time. The results showed that 192 children planned to go



*Civil Defence Motorbike Unit, taken outside the school*

home, 45 would go to a friend's shelter and 149 would stay at school. This information allowed the school to plan for protecting the children and air raid shelters to house children and staff were constructed on the school field. By early December, three of the visiting teachers had returned home. The feared bombing raids were yet to happen and nationally, by January 1940, almost half of evacuees had returned home. The cold weather and issues with heating at the school did not help. On the 15th January, the highest temperature in the school was 39 degrees Fahrenheit (less than 4°C) and the head teacher received permission from the local education authority to close the school. It took until the 23rd January for the caretaker and plumbers to manage to free the toilets and drains from ice, but the supply pipes remained frozen. When the school finally reopened the following day the numbers of evacuees were so much lower that significant reorganisation of the school was required.

The cold weather also led to illness. Attendance throughout late January and early February was between 50 and 70% and four teachers were off sick.



Pages from the school logbook in 1940, describing an incident involving evacuee children

The caretaker, Mr Young, who had worked hard in freezing conditions, was also taken ill and sadly died on the 12th February. There was no one available to replace him, so a local man came in twice a day to help attend to the fires and boilers. The substantial glazing and draughty rooms meant that the temperature rarely reached above 12°C. The toilet pipes were still frozen, and toilets could only be flushed by using a bucket of water. Without a caretaker, cleaning had to be done by some of the older children and as a result school closing time was brought forward to 3.30pm. In mid-February, a temporary caretaker started work which made things a little easier, although his work cleaning the school in the late afternoon after dark was hindered by having to stick to black-out rules.

By spring, the school was more fully staffed. Teaching was a reserved

profession so teachers were not automatically required to join the military. Many teachers did however take on local roles to support the war effort. Mr Clegg (who would later become head), joined the civil defence and was put in charge of the motorbike unit. A photograph of him with the unit shows the school windows taped to protect people from flying glass if the windows were to shatter during an air raid. In June 1940, there were several air raid warnings in Fulford which caused disruption to teaching at the school. On the 5th June, an air raid warning kept 170 children up until 2.30am the following morning. Many children were absent the following day and those that did turn up were too tired to learn. A couple of weeks later, after three consecutive nights of air raid warnings, the local education authority notified the school that they could open at the later time of 10am.

The air raids in June 1940 were false alarms for York but bombs were falling 40 miles away in Hull. On the 8th July, Mr Pay received notice that 70 further Hull children and two teachers would be joining St Oswald's. The fluctuating numbers meant that much of Mr Pay's time was taken up with organising and reorganising classes around the school site. There were also behavioural problems with some of the evacuee children. It was not easy for the evacuees being so far from home and having to try and fit into a new school. In July, Mr Pay decided to make an example of two boys who had stolen fruit and caused damage in a local garden. The logbook contains full details of the escapade.

When the new term started in September 1940, pressure on space had increased due to the growing numbers of evacuees as air raids in urban areas increased. The old infants' school was already in use and the additional part of the old school (now the social hall), which had been sold to a builder in 1930 and then rented out to a printing works, had been put into use as an ambulance station and local first aid centre. It seems that an agreement was made with the Methodist chapel on Main Street to use their building as an overflow space. Initially, this was occupied by the evacuee infants and children up to 10 years but the noise of the younger children interfered with the work of the older evacuees and things were reorganised so that the chapel was used by the fourth standard class. Scripture lessons were held in the church. Having tried admirably to integrate the evacuee children in 1939,

Mr Pay tried a new strategy of keeping them with their own teachers and classmates for consistency. This did not last as, at the end of the school year, the school inspector advised merging the local and evacuee classes, and classes were reorganised yet again from the start of September 1941. School numbers had increased so substantially by this point that when a national day of prayer was held, it was no longer possible to get all the children together in any of the school spaces.



*Rural studies class, circa 1940s  
Photo courtesy of Fishergate, Fulford and  
Heslington Local History Society,*

The rural catchment of the school meant that there had long been issues with a small number of absences over harvest times, when children would help out on family farms. In the war years, this was made worse by the reduced number of local men available to work and the increased need to ensure successful harvests. On the 30th September 1940, 30 boys from the top class were required for potato picking and the authority ordered the school to close at noon for one week so that the children could support the harvest activities. The potato harvest closure was repeated every year of the war. In 1941, it lasted for three weeks but by

1944 it was referred to as the 'autumn break' and became a standard two weeks (although some children were granted extra time). The school also supported the country's efforts to grow food by using a large area of the school grounds to grow fruit and vegetables. These were tended to by the gardening class and their teacher, with others helping out as needed. Whilst the school was able to source seeds and materials for gardening, there were challenges with getting materials for needlework due to war time restrictions and work had to focus on knitting instead.

In the early hours of Tuesday 29th April 1942, York suffered its worst bombing raid of the war. Across the city 92 people were killed and hundreds were injured. The nearest bombs to our school were in the Crosslands Road/Grants Avenue area where several bombs fell, damaging a gas main and causing a fire. Two people died and five others were injured. Four bombs also fell at the cavalry barracks in Fulford. The logbook for the school is surprisingly blank for the following day. It's likely that numbers at the school were so low that a short temporary closure was agreed with the education authority. The next logbook entry is on Monday the following week.

From 1943, the entries in the logbook become shorter. The war was dragging on and Mr Pay, who was approaching 60, had started to suffer from ill health. In January 1944, he was off sick for a month, having undergone a serious operation. He returned in February but retired four months later on the 30th June after 25 years as head

of our school. Mr Clegg, who had taught at the school since 1927 and covered for Mr Pay during his illness, became acting head before being formally appointed to the role. The final year of the war passed without event. The school was closed on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th May in honour of VE day and many children celebrated at local street parties.

Over the summer most evacuees who were still in Fulford returned home. For some this was a joyful reunion, for others who had lost homes and family members it was an extended period of confusion and difficulty. Normality slowly began to return but it took a while before the challenges of the war years were forgotten.

## Secondary education and beyond: 1945-1993

The late 1940s and 1950s were a period of growth for the school. Suburban York continued to expand and further housing was built in Fulford. The area around our school was no longer truly rural, although many pupils still travelled in from small farming communities. By early 1947, there were 300 children on the register. In April 1947, the school leaving age was extended to 15 and this led to further development of the curriculum to meet the needs of the older pupils. The '11-plus' exam which had started in 1944 gave more academic children access to grammar school places whilst other children stayed at the school to take a mixture of basic academic learning and more practical courses like rural studies and domestic science. A report from 1955 gives an idea of what children did after they left school.

In the late 1940s, Mr Clegg began to put his own stamp on the curriculum, experimenting with local study and outdoor work. Topics were assigned to each class, including the history of the school and church, local bird life, the

farming year and root crops of the district. Mr Clegg also introduced rural studies and developed a three-year course in science for the older children which covered the impact of science on modern life and the scientific basis of things seen and experienced in everyday life. The intention of these changes was to encourage children who were not interested in academic study by showing them the history and science in the everyday world around them. School trips included the docks in Hull, York railway station, the Kirk Museum (now the Castle Museum) and local nature rambles.

The existing gardening facilities provided space for introducing rural studies and further physical changes were slowly made to the school site to improve the resources available. In 1948, a new canteen and dining hall was opened and a woodwork room and H.O.R.S.A. classroom were also added. H.O.R.S.A. stood for 'Hutting Operation for the Raising of the School-Leaving Age' and these classrooms were part of a national post-war scheme to quickly

<b>Destination of leavers aged 15 in 1953 and 1954</b>	
<b>Further education</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>28 (all boys)</b>
<b>Industry</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Distributive Trades</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Clerical work</b>	<b>11 (all girls)</b>
<b>Domestic work</b>	<b>8 (all girls)</b>
<b>Others</b>	<b>2</b>

add space to schools for older children. In 1949, the school was given the use of the Social Hall for four hours a day and the logbook also mentions rehearsals for a musical performance taking place at a venue on Alma Terrace. Some religious instruction continued to be provided in the church and children also attended the church with the school for key services, including Remembrance Day.



*The playground around 1955. The fence divided the playground into separate areas for boys and girls.*

As well as developing the curriculum and facilities, Mr Clegg introduced a house system into the school in 1948. The houses were given locally related names – Danum, Ebor, Fulford and Derwent – and the Britton Cup was given to the house with the most points at the end of the year. A level of competition was also encouraged for sporting activities, with the F. W. Pay Cup (in honour of the previous head) and Higgins trophies awarded to individual boys and girls sports champions. There were also cross country and athletics cups. Regular fun events that we might recognise from our own school days were introduced. There were Christmas parties, a Christmas pantomime and other performances, an annual garden fete and also – perhaps most excitingly – film shows after the Church Trustees bought a film projector in 1953.

The enhanced facilities began to attract older children from other schools that were struggling to provide an appropriate offer for the senior children in their area. In 1952, the senior children from Stamford Bridge were transferred to Fulford School. Older children also came to Fulford from Elvington, Heslington, Naburn and many other villages. Buses were provided to bring children from further away into the school. Places were available to a wider catchment in the senior classes because by the early 1950s about a third of Fulford children passed the exam to go to grammar school and many of those who did not moved to a new secondary modern school in York at the age of 11. St Oswald's continued to develop the timetable, seeking input from Bishop Burton College on rural studies and starting to run residential trips. There was even an exciting day trip to London by plane! By the early 1960s, there were about 400 children on the register and it had not been possible to get the whole school together in one space for some time.

The popularity of the school for older children meant it was outgrowing the site and, as part of wider plans for education in York, a new 'secondary modern' for 400 children was opened in 1963 on Fulfordgate. In all, 123 children of secondary age were transferred from St Oswald's to the new secondary school and when our school opened its doors after the summer holidays it was once again a primary school. The Old School (now the scout hut) and Social Hall which had been hired by the school to provide extra space were no longer needed and the entire school was accommodated on

the main site. It was even possible to start holding daily morning assemblies for the entire school in a hall created by the vacating of a previous classroom. Some staff moved to the new secondary, leaving seven teachers at St Oswald's, including the head, Mr Clegg, and the new deputy head, Mr Robson. There were 173 children on the register, split into four junior classes and three infant classes.

The next few decades were a period of relative stability for our school. Mr Clegg led the school through its first five years as a primary school. Swimming lessons started at St George's Baths and new technologies began to appear within the school, with cassette tapes for French lessons and a television installed in the hall. Mr Clegg retired in April 1968. His entire teaching career of 41 years had been at St Oswald's and he had seen our school through wartime, the development of secondary teaching and the redevelopment of the school as a primary.

After the Easter break, a new head, Mr Asquith, started at the school. As with other head teachers, Mr Asquith began with great enthusiasm. He had a particular interest in modern languages and met with the head at the secondary school to consider how they could work together. Arrangements were made for a German Youth Orchestra that was visiting the secondary school to visit St Oswald's. Mr Asquith also began to talk to Professor Harry Ree at the recently opened York University to consider how they could work more closely together. Professor Ree had previously been a headmaster at a grammar school and had an interest in comprehensive education. He offered an opportunity for some of the St Oswald's children to go and watch a film show at the University and may have supported the development of a French exchange scheme which began in May 1969. Some 22 children took part in the exchange and stayed at the homes of French families in Arras, who were received in Fulford in June.



*Newspaper clipping from the logbook about a school trip to London by plane. Date unknown.*

Mr Asquith was already approaching retirement when he became head and he retired in 1973. During his time at St Oswald's our school celebrated its 200th anniversary. A service was held in the church and attended by the Lord Bishop of Selby, local civic leaders and teachers and pupils both past and present. A small exhibition of items relating to the history of the school was held in the church hall and the school was presented with a scroll from the National Society for Promoting Religious Education.

At the start of the school year in 1973, Tony Hagyard took over as headmaster. He had a rather dramatic first day as at 10am a pipe burst in the canteen and part of the canteen ceiling fell down. The building had been maintained as well as possible, but problems were starting to emerge, not least due to the continued increase in numbers as further housing was built in the area. In Mr Hagyard's first week he was faced with a petition from parents about 'alleged overcrowding' in the Infant room. This had been an issue on and off over the past decade. In April 1974, an additional temporary reception teacher was added to the staff and a spare classroom put into use. It would be a further two years before plans to extend the school were approved and building work finally started on the 1st September 1976.

By this point local education authority (LEA) boundaries had changed and the school was now under the North Riding LEA rather than the East Riding. The new LEA asked Mr Hagyard to set up a 'special unit' at the school to support children with specific learning difficulties from other



*French Exchange newspaper clipping from the logbook. 1969.*

schools. A specialist teacher was appointed to support up to 11 pupils. The children joined in with games and PE but stayed with the specialist teacher for other lessons. This unit was the beginnings of what is now the Dyslexia Centre – still an important part of our school today.

The timetable remained broadly the same as it had been under Mr Asquith, although music classes were added. The French exchange that Mr Asquith had been so passionate about had to be postponed in 1974 due to the massively increased fuel costs as a result of the oil crisis. Other local visits continued, including performances at the Theatre Royal and the Joseph Rowntree Theatre and trips to the Castle Museum, Clifford Street and Flamingo Park Zoo. There was even a four-day residential trip for the junior four children (year 6) to Carberry Tower near Edinburgh, which became an annual trip for many years.

Mr Hagyard retired in 1993, having been headmaster for twenty years. He had managed to extend the school to meet the needs of the growing population, but the building was still far from perfect. The next period of our school's growth would need a much bigger project to develop it for the future.

## Building for the future: 1993-2021... and beyond

Paul Marks was the next headteacher at our school. He had been a teacher at St Oswald's since 1979 and was well aware of the challenges the school faced. By the time he became head it was becoming increasingly apparent that the building was no longer fit for purpose. There was some minimal refurbishment in the early 1990s, including of the cold, damp toilet block, but what was really needed was a full-scale redevelopment. In October 2000, the Yorkshire Evening Press reported that children were being taught in cramped classrooms and that the canteen was so run down it did not meet environmental health regulations. At the time, the government had announced funding for refurbishing British schools but the council had applied four times over two years to access the cash for projects across York without success.



*Newspaper clipping from the school logbook showing the old toilet blocks*



*The old dining hall*



*Aerial photograph of the school site prior to the new build. Original 1930 building in bottom right.*

The fifth application was successful and in March 2001 it was announced that a new school would be built using money from a government Private Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme that would be paid back over 30 years. The debate about the new build rumbled on for several years after the successful application. There was a shortfall of funding which had to be met and because the application covered several other schools in the city details for all the schemes had to be agreed before the scheme could go ahead. The parish council also struggled to agree a plan in relation to the social hall. It was proposed that community facilities would be included in the new school and that the social hall would be sold to contribute to the funding shortfall. The issue was eventually resolved in June 2003 by a poll of Fulford villagers who

opted overwhelmingly to retain the social hall as a community facility.

In January 2005, work on the new school finally started but before the foundations were laid an archaeological dig took place on the site. Finds included pottery, clay tobacco pipes, glass, iron, lead alloy and coal. Archaeologists were able to use the finds to discover more about the site of our school. It seems that there was a rural Roman settlement on the site, but this ended before the 4th century. The land was then used as open farm fields throughout the medieval period. A small collection of objects associated with the Civil War was also discovered, including a glass lens, a lead pistol and musket shot and an iron axe head. The dig gave children at the school the opportunity to handle archaeological finds and learn about history first-hand.

## CAN YOU GUESS THE FINDS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG?



1



2



3

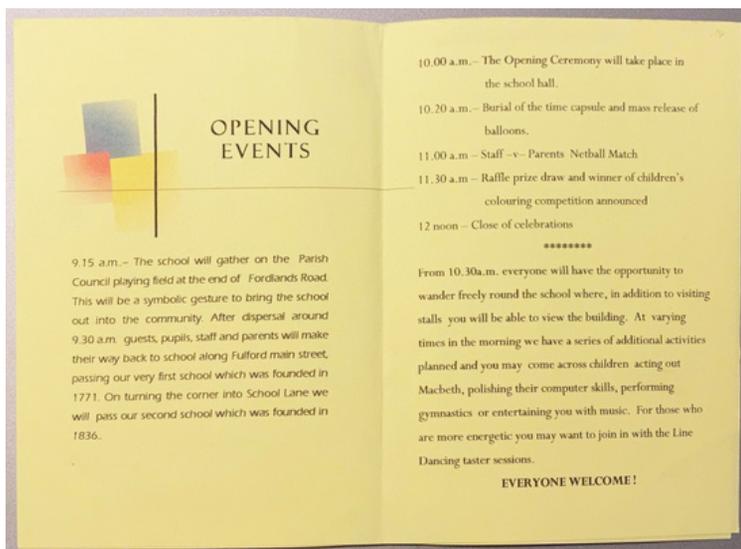
- a. Civil war telescope lens
- b. Victorian clay pipes
- c. Roman glass



*Solution: 1-c, 2-a, 3-b*



*"The carved owl at the front of school I obtained through a friend who worked for an electricity distribution company. When chopping down trees to make way for power lines they paid for a chainsaw artist to produce items for charitable purposes."  
Paul Marks*



*Programme for the opening events for the new school, 13th May 2006*



*The new school building - front*



*The new school building – aerial view from the back  
Source: Google Maps*

## HEADTEACHERS OF ST OSWALD'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thomas Pearson	early 1770s-1823
Joseph Giddy	1830s/40s
William Whitehouse	early 1850s-early 1860s
Mr Harrison	early 1860s-1864
Oldfield Marshall	1865-1878
Alfred Wilson	1878-1919
Frederick W. Pay	1919-1944
Horace Clegg	1944-1968
Thomas Asquith	1968-1973
Anthony Hagyard	1973-1993
Paul Marks	1993-2008
Rupert Griffiths	2008-2018
Sue Bland	2018-

The new building was set back from Heslington Lane, which allowed the school to stay open in the old building during the one-year construction project. In January 2006, the new £4 million building was ready and, in a ceremony reminiscent of the one in 1930, two eight-year-old pupils, Melissa Hill and Asim Gurung, handed the old school key to Mr Marks. A further joint opening ceremony and summer fair were held in May. The new building included a pre-school, a dyslexia centre and a community library as well as specialist IT provision and more spacious modern classrooms with interactive whiteboards.

Mr Marks oversaw the first few years in the new building before retiring in 2008.

Since then, there have been two further head teachers – Rupert Griffiths and the current head, Sue Bland, who joined the school in 2018. Although there was a female head of the Infants School at one time, Sue Bland is the first female head teacher of the whole school. Mrs Bland has given her own reflections in the foreword and there are recollections from other past head teachers, including Mr Griffiths, in the 'Memories' chapter.

Over the past decade there has been a significant focus on further developing and embedding strong values at the school. This was recognised by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) report in 2017, after the school was inspected and graded 'Outstanding'. The inspector wrote

that 'St Oswald's vision and values are woven throughout the whole curriculum... Pupils' behaviour is exemplary with sincere and respectful relationships the norm...St Oswald's is a school which welcomes everybody.'

The strong sense of values and ethos continues today. The most recent Ofsted report (2019) stated that: 'Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are highly self-confident, respectful and caring individuals. They value the friendly and inclusive ethos in the school... The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective... The many pupils who join the school at different times, including those from service families, are supported very well to settle in quickly.'

The link with service families goes back over a century and continues to be a defining feature of our school. About 20% of pupils are from service families attached to Imphal Barracks. A squadron of the Queen's Gurkha Signals has been based in Fulford for many decades and we will be sad to see most of our Nepalese families leave when the squadron moves on from York in 2021. The link to the Gurkhas has given children the opportunity to be part of a diverse community and this diversity is another defining feature of our school. The success of the nearby University of York has attracted a large number of international students and staff, and as a result our school now welcomes children from all over the world. At present, there are 22 different languages spoken at the school and the school community includes children with links to 19 different countries.

It has been a tumultuous 18 months for our school, as it has been for schools across the country. The global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the government closing all schools on the 20th March 2020. For many children school did not reopen until September and there was then a further period of closure in January 2021. Children, families and teachers have had to rapidly adapt to provide home learning and to support each other through this difficult time. The disruption has been more significant than that caused by previous pandemics but there have also been new tools to help – laptops, video calls and online classrooms. It has not been easy but then as a school St Oswald's has been through a lot over the past 250 years. We have a long history of adapting to change and an exciting future to look forward to.



*Armed forces day assembly*



*Military truck visit*

# St Oswald's School walking trail

**1** Old St Oswald's church, St Oswald's road

Now a private residence, this was the original St Oswald's church which was linked to the school. It was replaced in 1866 by a large new building in Main Street, where you see St Oswald's church today. John Key, founder of the school, was buried at the old St Oswald's church in 1778.

**2** St Oswald's church, Main Street

School logbooks show that the school and the church have always been closely linked from the very outset.

Can you spot the memorial to Amelia Cholmley? Look above the organ!

**3** Fulford Lodge, Heslington Lane

Home to Amelia Cholmley who funded the second school site.

**4** Current site of St Oswald's CE Primary School, School Lane

The school moved to its present site in 1930 and was rebuilt in 2006. In 2021 as part of the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, a bench and garden area was built to showcase the original school foundation stones from 1771 and 1846.

**5** Scout Hut and Social Hall, School Lane

The second site for the school. Additional buildings for girls and infants were built in 1844 and 1846 respectively on what is now School Lane and is still used as Fulford Scout Hut. The school buildings were added to in 1866 and one building is still in use as the village Social Hall.

**6** Old School House, No 27 Fulford Main Street

The original site for the school, founded in 1771 by John Key of Water Fulford Hall. In 1835 it educated 26 boys and 6 girls. The two large arches may once have been windows, flooding daylight in to the classroom.

Can you spot the dedication stone to the school?

**7** Water Fulford Hall, Naburn Lane

John Key inherited the property from his cousin. In those days, Fulford was two villages; Fulford Gate and Water Fulford and John Key became Lord of the Manor of both. He used some of his wealth to found the first free school in Fulford, which would later become St Oswald's CE Primary School.

## St Oswald's School Walking Trail



# CHURCH AND SCHOOL



*In this chapter, vicars past and present share their thoughts about working together with our school. We have always had a strong relationship with St Oswald's Church and as a Church of England school we feel immensely privileged to have the support of the local church community. Although school visits have been restricted due to the pandemic, historically, the Vicar of St Oswald's has always been a regular visitor to school and members of the congregation regularly hear children read in school. Pupils enjoy their trips to explore St Oswald's church and older children demonstrate our core value of 'service' by volunteering at the church cafe. Christian values are embedded within the school and we enjoy collective worship both in school and, on special occasions, in the church.*

## **Reflections from the current vicar, Rev Canon Sue Sheriff**

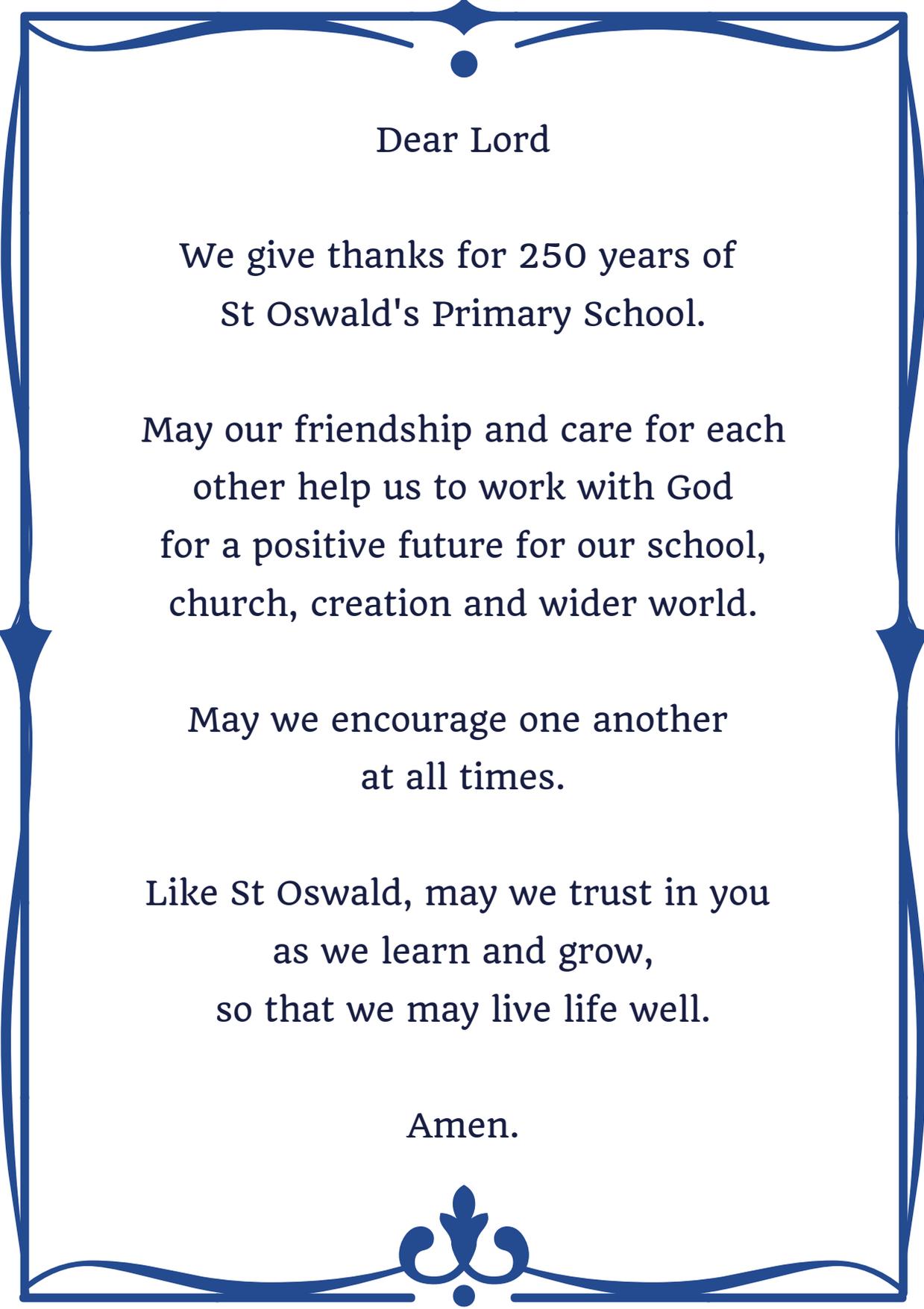


St Oswald's Church and St Oswald's Primary School have always had a really close relationship. Some of the pupils and parents from St Oswald's School attend the church

now, and many of the members of St Oswald's Church and their children attended the school when they were young.

I arrived to work with St Oswald's Church during the pandemic in 2020 so do not have lots of memories to share but I do know the relationship between school and church has always been close. In this last year the children have really lived up to their school motto by providing decorations for the church windows at harvest, as well as masses of food and household products to help us care for the vulnerable. The church provided the school with some DIY Christingles and the school provided the church with video clips of carols and Christingles for our online Christmas services. The pupils of St Oswald's school then brightened church up for Easter with cheerful handmade daffodils on every windowsill.

So I would like to offer you this prayer for your 250th Anniversary celebrations...



Dear Lord

We give thanks for 250 years of  
St Oswald's Primary School.

May our friendship and care for each  
other help us to work with God  
for a positive future for our school,  
church, creation and wider world.

May we encourage one another  
at all times.

Like St Oswald, may we trust in you  
as we learn and grow,  
so that we may live life well.

Amen.

# Memories and thoughts from Rev Terence McDonough, Vicar of St Oswald's from 2011 until very recently

## School and Church

St Oswald's Church is very much blessed having a Church School. From the warm welcome I received on my first visit by the then headteacher, Mr Griffiths, it was clear there was a vital partnership to develop. Over the coming years I witnessed the Collective Worship assemblies come into their own and there was no better way for me to start a week than to share in this lively act of worship. The enthusiasm and knowledge of the pupils was impressive. An exciting development was that of a Worship Group which embedded worship into the life of the school. A number of pupils would develop a theme, or a 'big question' would be tackled, and then deliver the results through the collective worship. Each occasion encouraged a high level of participation and fun and came with a clear message to be taken into the days and week ahead.

## School and Church Services

I will always remember the school end of term services and the festival celebrations which were held in St Oswald's Church and also the Harvest Festival Services when members of the school contributed to our Sunday morning service. The end of term service began with a final rehearsal taking place in church before the service and, until the full school had arrived, one of my responsibilities was holding back the wave of eager parents and family members who wanted to secure



*Children visiting the church*



*Learning about our school values on a visit to the church*

their seat. The service never failed to meet the need, be it simply a great celebration, marking pupils moving onto senior school, or helping children and staff mark a particular challenge or sadness.

## School and Time Out

Time Out is a monthly meeting at St Oswald's for senior members of the community. Each session would include some entertainment for the

guests and the school choir would regularly be invited. I mention this not because of the choir's contribution, that was always excellent, but because of the way the children mingled so freely with the guests. It was humbling to watch the children, with great sensitivity, approaching and talking with the people. For me this clearly demonstrated that the school does a wonderful job in preparing rounded, considerate and sensitive young people.

### **School, Church and Imphal Barracks**

When I arrived in Fulford the school already had an important and special relationship with soldiers and their families from Imphal Barracks. Further links were encouraged through the partnership with St Oswald's and the Padre of 2 Signal Regiment - first Padre Jason S. Clarke and then Padre Nia C. Williams. I still remember the assembly when Padre Jason spoke about 'Respect' (one of the school's core values) by teaching a group of children how to salute.

### **School, Church and Royal British Legion (RBL) Fulford Branch**

The Vicar of St Oswald's is Padre to the RBL Fulford Branch and with the RBL introduced a very special Remembrance Day Assembly. The RBL provided Standard Bearers and helped lead a short act of remembrance. In addition the RBL introduced a writing competition around the theme of 'Remembrance' providing individual trophies and the shields for Key Stage 1 & 2.



*Remembrance assembly*



*St Oswald's school children attending the church's Christmas tree festival with the Rev Terence McDonough and City of York Councillor Keith Aspden*



# MEMORIES



# 1930s and 1940s



**Mr Horace Clegg,  
Headteacher from  
1936 to 1963, with  
school staff**

**Source: Rosemary Clegg**

"My father, Horace H Clegg was appointed as a rural studies teacher at Fulford school in 1927, this was his first teaching post. He was employed as teacher for 17 years and then was appointed Headmaster for 24 years."

"I started attending the school around 1948/49... We had desks in twos with lift up lids and ink wells on one corner. With bench seats to sit on. To be an ink monitor was a sought-after post. The ink was kept in a large bottle with a tube coming out of it, this tube was placed in the ink wells so the ink didn't spill."

John Clegg



*"In the spirit of war-time self-sufficiency two of our regular lessons were gardening and knitting (boys and girls). We grew vegetables in the narrow borders of soil around the school buildings and we were all taught to knit (endless long scarves). This resulted in one mother withdrawing her son from school because she thought it was not something a boy should be doing."*

Ron Clark



"I remember Mr Fleming the dentist coming with a caravan to use as a surgery to check the children's teeth. He parked it near the canteen.... We also had a school Fete held in a large garden over the road from the church. I think the house was called 'The White House'. We had Maypole dancing and one year one of the ribbons had torn and the highlight of the fete was Mr Clegg shining up the pole to repair it."

John Clegg

"I was a milk monitor, the bottles held one third of a pint of milk and we transported them from class to class on a small trolley."

John Clegg

*Ron Clark remembers that during the Second World War all the school windows had tape on them to prevent glass splintering if bombs fell. "Which of course they did in April 1942, five high explosive bombs falling on houses just off Grants Avenue, 100 yards from the school - killing two people and injuring five....only one pupil in our class reported for school the following morning".*



**Infant 2, 1946 - 1947**

**Source: Adrian Fletcher**

# 1950s and 1960s



**St Oswald's school,  
Infant 2 with teacher,  
Miss Midgley, 1954**

**Source: Richard Wells**

"I remember doing pottery with Mr Clegg. We used to have ink wells in those days; left and right-handed nibs and blotting paper. The decimal system came in and I remember the confusion it caused initially. We used to save ship half pennies for school funds."

John Bulmer



"In 1956 Mrs James was the Infant 1 teacher. She was a delightful lady, mum from mum! In her classroom was a large green tubular steel rocking horse with a seat rather like that of an old fashioned high chair. It was a real treat to have a ride on that. One day a pupil got stuck in it!"

Barbara King





**Junior 4 class photo, 1957**

**The teacher is Mr Robson, Sharon Gibson is 5th from the left in the middle row.**

**Source: Sharon Gibson**



*"I was there around '67. Miss Lockwood was my first teacher. I loved her. We were allowed to sit on her knee on a Friday for story time."*

*Jayne Brown*

**St Oswald's school, teacher, Miss Robinson, approx. 1956**

**Source: Richard Wells**





For the Queen's coronation in 1953:  
"We didn't have a television so we went  
to a neighbour's house to watch it. In  
the afternoon we went to school for tea,  
then races and a fancy dress  
competition. We were all given a  
coronation mug".

Carole Hill

**Coronation party on school  
grounds, 1953**

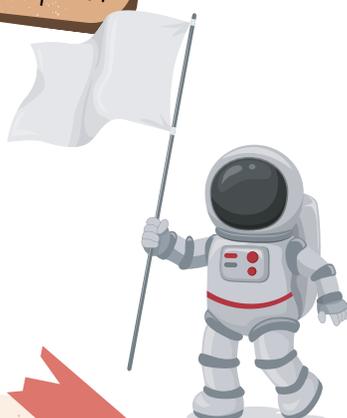
**Source: Fishergate, Fulford and  
Heslington Local History Society**



**Fancy dress competition for  
the coronation taken outside  
the dining block, 1953**

**Source: Fishergate, Fulford and  
Heslington Local History Society**

"I remember...watching the moon landings outside junior 1 classroom; a real treat."  
 Russell Philip Sampson



**Mr Thomas Asquith**  
**Headteacher**  
**from 1968 to 1973**  
*Source: Angela Bullock*

"I was there from 1955 to 1963... if you misbehaved... you had the choice of shoe sole or heel on the bum (only a soft slap) as punishment."  
 Peter Douglas

*"Mr Johnson's favourite call to the team 'face the ball Fulford' and 'give it a good toe ender'... remember it well!"*  
 Jeff Kane



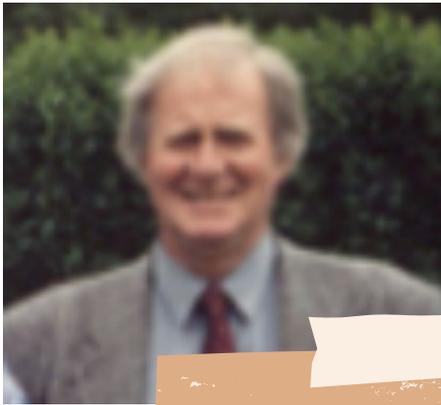
**Fulford Junior School**  
**football squad, 1968**

Teachers are Mr Johnstone and Mr Asquith, Phil Gray is 3rd from the left in the back row.

*Source: Phil Gray*



# 1970s and 1980s



**Mr Tony Hagyard  
Headteacher during  
the 1970s and 1980s**

**Source: Fishergate, Fulford and  
Heslington History Society**

"I used to be a milk monitor. Delivering the bottles of milks to each class."

John Bulmer

"We loved the chocolate and mint custard pud - and the shortcake and orange syrup one."

Marc Rennard

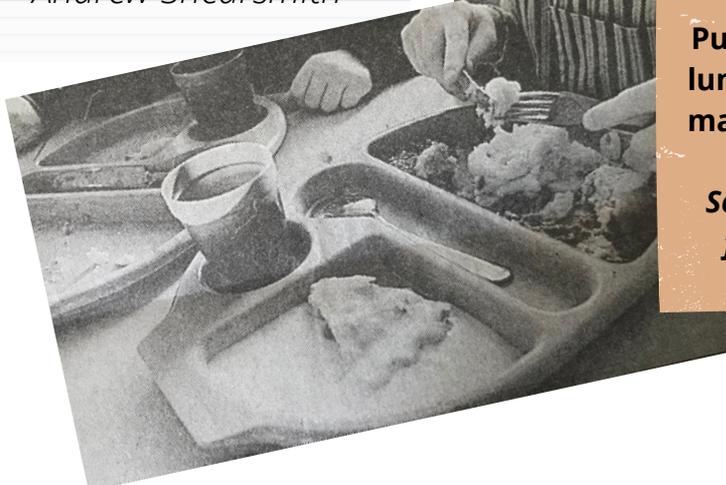
"I was there from 73 to 78. Mr Hagyard was headmaster. Mrs Harris was one of the dinner ladies and I was a server on her table. I loved the school dinners there. Atzern pilaf, chocolate shortbread with mint custard, orange shortbread with orange sauce."

Andrew Shearsmith



**Pupils tucking into a school lunch of mince cobbler with mash, followed by apple pie**

**Source: Newspaper cutting  
from the school logbook**



"Our 2 daughters...went to St Oswald's between 1972 & 1979-----  
when Mr Hagyard was headmaster,  
he was a really nice man."  
Kath Parkinson



"I loved being head of St Oswald's. I once said to my wife, Florence, 'going into school each day is like putting on a warm coat.'"  
Tony Hagyard



Adjudicating the sack race at school sports day, approx. 1970s  
Source: Roger Walton



**Staff in 1981**

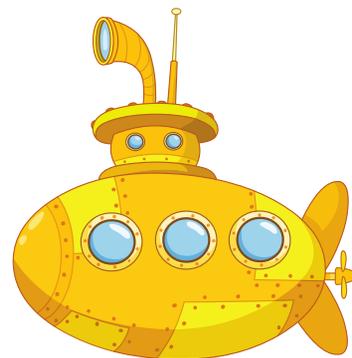
**Back row: Tony Hagyard (Head), Alan Dibb (Deputy), Ken Monkman, Paul Marks, Ian Parker**

**Front row: Ann Humphrey, Kathy Western, Margaret Fletcher, Joan Pennell, Mary Hodgson (Office), Nancy Thomas, Sue Dodgson**

**Many former pupils have mentioned the unforgettable pattern on the curtains that appear in this photo!**

"We used to go over the road to the hall on School Lane for assembly. Mrs Thomas used to thump out the hymns/songs on the piano. I can always hear her shouting "YELLOOOOW" during Yellow Submarine as we always used to sing "we all live in a yellow submarine, a yellow submarine, a yellow submarine, a yellow submarine" much to her annoyance. The last 2 shouldn't have "a" before them...."

Andrew Shearsmith



"We had children from other countries at the school. I had two Japanese children whose father was studying at York University. I am still in touch with their family. We had a Norwegian boy too. We welcomed all who formed part of the school."

Tony Hagyard



**Tony Hagyard's 1987 painting of the mill at Derwent, currently housed in the University of York art collection**

**Source: Paul Shields, University of York**

"I was there when Mr Hagyard was head. He painted beautiful wildlife pictures to show in assembly and played a record we all loved - Captain Beaky"

Nova Nolan

"I used to go into school regularly after I retired to paint pictures with the children and I was always made to feel very welcome."

Tony Hagyard

Summer circa 78/79 production of the Horse of Wood and the famous purple tunic costumes

Source: Ken Monkman



# 1990s and 2000s



1990 School Photo with  
class teacher, Anne  
Smith and Headteacher,  
Tony Hagyard

Source: Barbara King

*"I remember being sent home  
the day that Freddie Mercury  
died, as my teacher was too  
upset to teach."*

Rachel Hewitt



*"I remember the  
outside toilets!"*

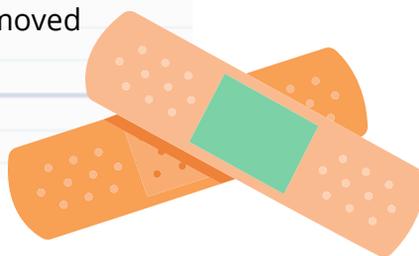
Jill Britton

"I was Headteacher at St. Oswald's from 1993 until my retirement in 2008. I actually started there as a teacher in 1979 and so my connection spans 29 happy years. A direct descendant of John Key attended St Oswald's when I started there. Football fans may be interested to know that York City played for two seasons on the site of this school way back in their history. Another building closely associated with the school is St. Oswald's Church and I have two stories to tell which I hope will amuse you.

## Paul Marks' memories

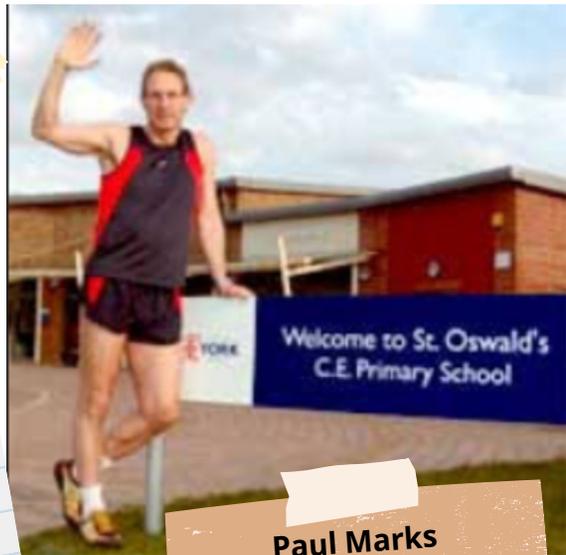
"The second follows similar lines and sounds like we needed a new Health and Safety Policy. At a School Service held in church a parent had come with her pre-school child to watch her older daughter take part. At some point her young son had wriggled underneath the pew and managed to push his head through a hole which surrounded a very large central heating pipe. Ears flatten on the way in but stick up on the way out and he was stuck. Having tried all ways to get the child's head out the vicar at the time, Robert Hall, said he would go to fetch a saw. I should mention that the children taking the service carried on valiantly. Robert arrived with a Swiss army knife with multiple blades and I spent the next 5 minutes sawing a panel out from the pew. When the child was out the parents behind gave me a round of applause. It really makes you wonder how the church is still standing with me having been in charge. It did at one time have a spire which following a fire had to be removed as it was unsafe, please note I had nothing to do with that."

"The first involved a pupil who was in the building during a practice for an end of term service. Whilst sat in the choir stalls he stuck his finger in one of the holes which I think at one time held candle holders. Yes, you have probably guessed, he couldn't get it out again. I was called from school to assist and took the trusty Fairy Liquid to help lubricate the hole, it didn't work. By this time his finger had swollen quite badly and all I could think was call the fire brigade. I stood outside waiting for them to arrive and it wasn't long before I could see them hurtling up Fulford Road with blue lights flashing and siren blaring. Unfortunately, they decided to turn off down St. Oswald's Road to the old St Oswald's Church by mistake. I sprinted down there as fast as I could and gasping for breath told them they had the wrong place. They instructed me to jump on board and I am sure to wind me up put every flashing light and siren on and set off. They were able to remove the child's finger from the hole but not before they had sawn a large slot through the beautiful old timber. Having gathered up courage I told the Vicar who retold the story in his Sunday Service. Luckily for me there had been a master cabinet maker in the congregation who being so amused by the story said he would repair it for free. You can still spot the repair if you look closely!



In 2008 Paul Marks, then headteacher at St Oswald's, raised about £3,000 for the school by running a 151-mile marathon in the Sahara Desert

Source: *The York Press*, 22nd April, 2008



Paul Marks

Source: *Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington History Society*



*"St Oswald's has always been very dear to my heart. I have very fond memories of the community, parents, staff and children. In putting these thoughts together it reminds me of just how important it was to me and I hope others. When you think about the 250 year history of the school and the stories that preceded it, St Oswald's really is a special place."*

*Paul Marks*

## Young boffins at science fair



Paul Marks with pupils at a science fair at the University of York, early 1990s

Source: *Newspaper clipping from the school logbook*

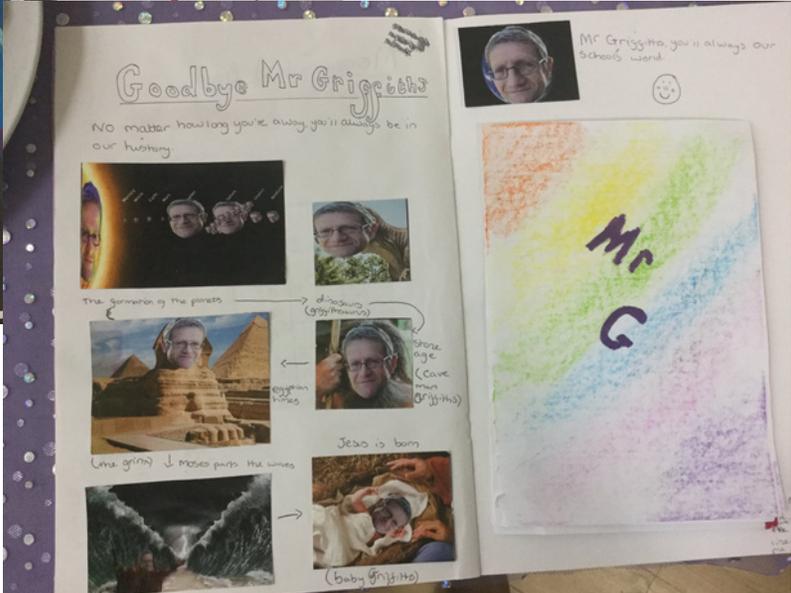
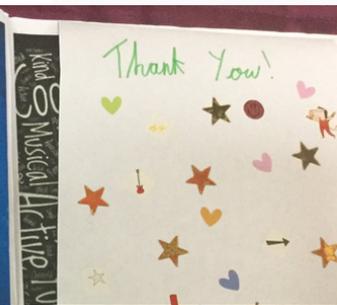
# More recent times



**Rupert Griffiths**  
**Source: Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington History Society**

"I feel very lucky to have spent the last ten years of my teaching career as Head at St Oswald's. For me the greatest strengths of the school were all based around relationships: the strong positive ethos shared by staff and pupils; the diversity of the school's intake, mainly due to our proximity to Fulford Barracks; the enriching links with the community and St Oswald's Church; the outstanding learning environment provided and maintained by Sewell Education. It was truly a privilege and a source of great personal pride to be part of such a special place!"

Rupert Griffiths



"I did not attend the school but my two grandchildren did. I enjoyed their time there, especially the nativity plays and sports days. Mr Griffiths was a welcoming head teacher, who always had the children's interest at heart, followed closely by that of the staff, parents and families. My wife and I are particularly liked the mixed backgrounds of the pupils and their families. To have Gurkhas there was a special bonus, we always felt."

Clive Goodhead

St Oswald's appreciates the challenges a military family can face, and offers support when it is needed, to ensure that schooling and education isn't impacted by the military lifestyle, helping to maintain family unity.

Sarah Walker

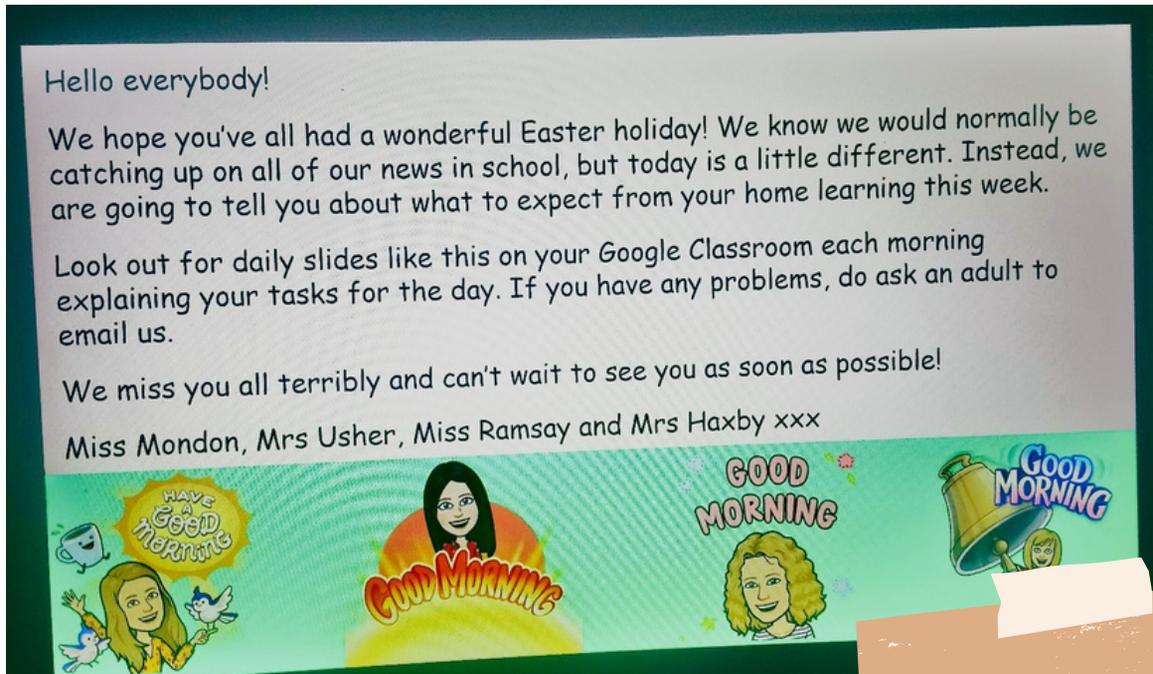
"St Oswald's primary school means a second home for my daughter where she is provided with an opportunity to learn not only the curriculum material but also the most important skills such as social skills, discipline and self-confidence. As a Gurkha service family I am so proud and happy as a mother and pleased with my daughter's good behaviour and discipline, which I am sure she learnt from St Oswald's. I would like to thank all the friendly school staff for their dedicated work even in this time of pandemic, from the bottom of my heart."

Sujan Lama



Source: Sujan Lama

From March 2020 to the time of writing, St Oswald's school has been heavily impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, which meant school had to close to most pupils twice during national lockdowns. Children adapted to home learning, online assemblies and bedtime stories recorded on video by staff.



Home learning message for KS 2 pupils, April 2020.

Source: School Twitter page

Anna in year 6 won the York Designer Outlet design a mask competition for St Oswald's. Her design was made into real masks and went on sale with all proceeds going to school!

Source: School Twitter page



Every evening during lockdown, school staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, caretaker and governors, took turns to read bedtime stories via video for the children.



"The worst thing about lockdown was that I missed my friends and we couldn't go to the park. I liked zoom meetings with my class, especially when we did show and tell."

Fraser Sinclair, Year 2

"It was really fun hearing all the adults from St Oswald's read bedtime stories. I especially liked Mrs Usher's cute bear story. One day the teachers dressed up in disguises on our Google Classroom and we had to guess who they were. There was also a hint video if you were stuck."

Beth Hayton, Year 3

"I liked having my Chromebook at home and we played fun games in our class Google meets. Sometimes, coronavirus made me worry a lot. When we went back to school I felt happy."

Sandy Sinclair, Year 3

When children returned after the first lockdown, they found a beautiful rainbow in the hall, made by our wonderful cleaning staff, ready for each child to sign.

Source: School Twitter page





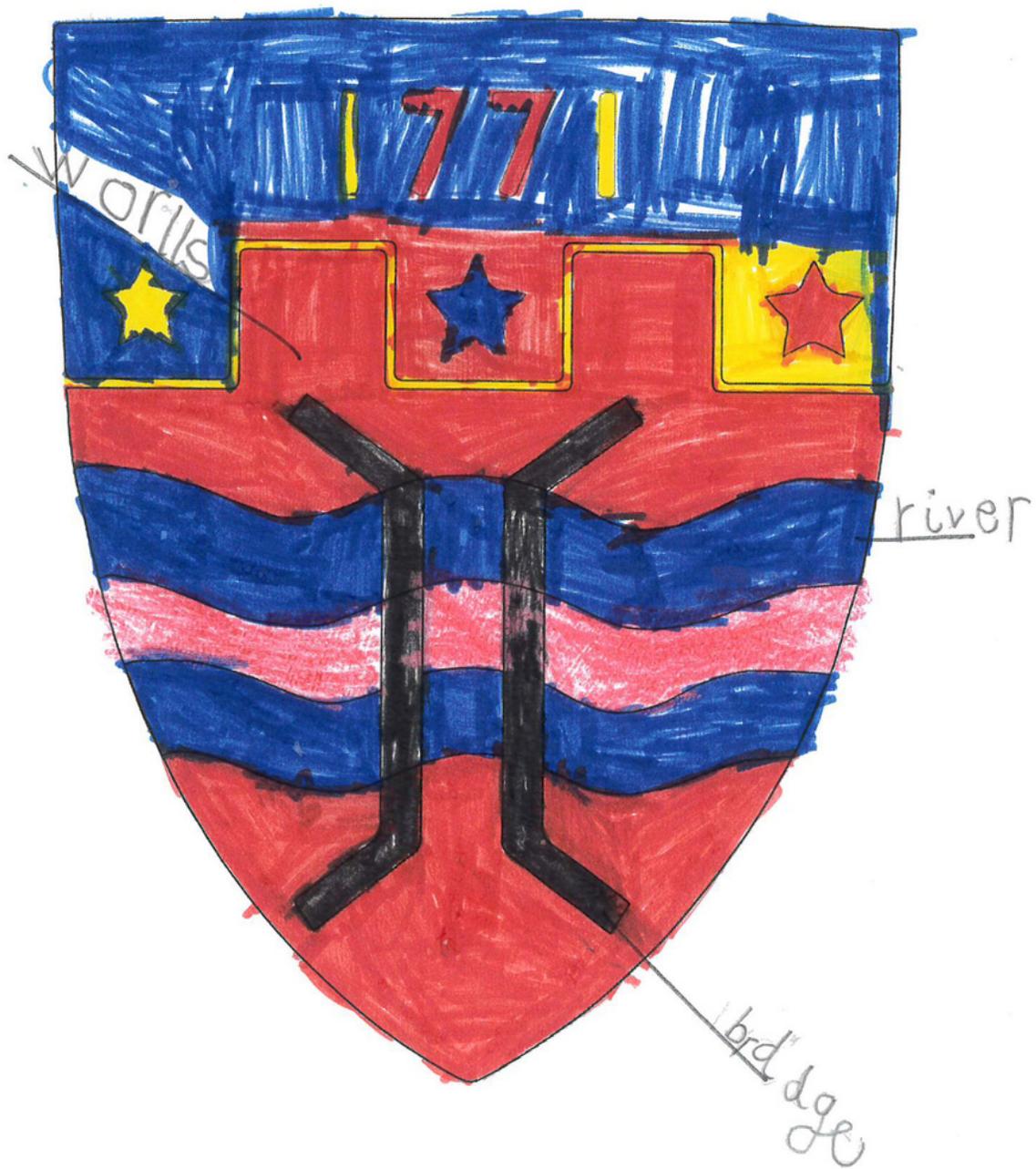
**Staff lockdown message for children**  
*Source: School Twitter page*

# **OUR WORK**

**The children have been very busy learning about the history of our school and getting ready to celebrate the school's big birthday with a collaborative art project. Here are some examples of their work.**

The school is big.

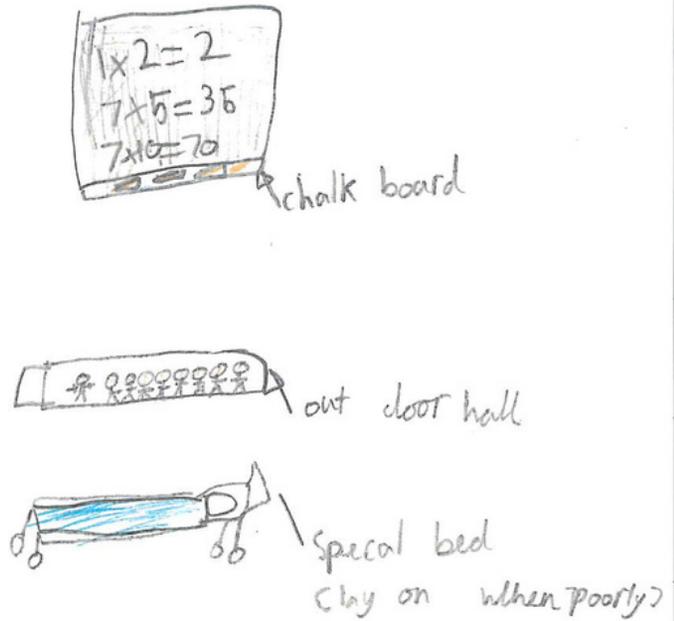
Early Years pupils have been looking at the symbols within our school badge design. Five-year-old Hannah has labelled the walls, river and bridge.



Now



Then



Mrs Bland is headteacher • no uniform

School uniforms

Smartboards

Owl stamps

house points

Over £300 children

new building

• chalk boards

• outdoor corridors

• hoods checked if clean

• Dinner hall in different

in school building

• no MSA, year 6 helped

• when poorly, laid ~~on~~ on a special bed.

Children in Key Stage 1 interviewed some past pupils to find out how the school has changed in more recent times. Romilly, aged 7, has compared St Oswald's as it is now with how it was in the past.

18th November 1771

Dear Diary

This morning I got woken up by the hens next door and realised I had to get up and wash my face in cold water. Once I had done that I grabbed a chunk of bread, I was pretty lucky because I got a potato before my brother Edward did. Edward goes to school with me but my other three sisters don't ~~the~~ they stay home and help ~~at~~ around our very small house.

Asst me and my brother walk down the worn out road like we do six days a week. A cart went quickly past it was being drawn by two brown spotted horses. The puddles had frozen up because it was so cold and all the plants were dead and sad. We walked past fields and fields to get there.

When we got there we were a bit late but we rushed in hoping nobody would notice. We sat down and picked up our slates, Maths was our first ~~subject~~ subject. I really do not like maths.

even though we only do simple sums it seems like everything is so hard. We have to do that all morning and that is four hours straight.

Once the maths marathon was finished it was finally time for lunch.

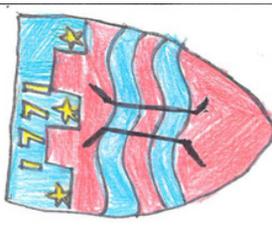
What I had for lunch was a baked potato and a piece of bread

It was raining so I went back to the house and ate my lunch there.

It was time for our next lesson ~~grammar~~ grammar and learning the alphabet. I already know the alphabet but like learn off repetition so we have to do it. After that bore of words from Mr Wilson our teacher we went home. Mr Wilson is super strict but I can deal with him. When me and my brother got home we helped make a dinner of vegetable stew, not the best but it's alright. I will ~~get~~ go to bed now

Pupils in Years 3 and 4 researched how life would have been for the first children at St Oswald's school. Nine year old Ada has written a diary entry as though she attended the school in 1771.

# History of St Oswald's



School 1  
1771

It housed 14 poor boys and 6 poor girls. They were taught Reading, writing and arithmetic.

1781 The first headmaster/teacher was a Mr Wilson.

1781 Mrs Mary Key left some money to buy school books, desks and repairs for the school.

1783 Thomas Pearson became teacher.

1823 Mr Harrison became a teacher.

School 2  
1844

1865-1878 Schoolmaster: Mr Oldfield, Marshall.

1851 Schoolmaster: Mr William Whitehouse. Whitehouse.

1846 Schoolmaster: Amelia Cholmondeley founded infant school.

1841 Schoolmaster: Mr Joseph Giddy house until 1865.

Boys remain in current Scout Hut (only for girls)



School 3  
1910

1936-1967 Headmaster: Mr Horace H Clegg.

2 infant classes, 3 junior and 3 senior classes. Learning age 14.

1963 Fulford Secondary school built.

1948 Canteen and kitchen built.

1967 Mr & Mrs Squit 1995 Mr Paul Marks.



School 1  
School 2  
School 3  
School 4

250 YEARS OLD

2018 Mrs Bland

2018 Miss Ramsay.

2008 Mr Griffiths

School 4  
2006



Our oldest pupils have researched the history of St Oswald's CE Primary School. They have compiled a timeline plotting the different headteachers and significant events across the last 250 years. Millie, aged 10, has added photographs of the different school buildings to her timeline.

One of our celebratory projects is to restore the original foundation stones of the school from 1771 and 1846. The stones will be displayed in a new seating space designed by Ian Hayton of Ferrey and Mennim Architects. The bench will also incorporate a new stone carved for the 250th anniversary, a time capsule and nature-inspired tiles designed by the children with local potter, Chris Utley.

Here are some pictures of the tiles that will go onto the bench. We can't wait to see the finished project which will be unveiled by the Archbishop of York in September!







*The design for the new heritage seating space - west view*



*Bench building in progress in September 2021*

## Acknowledgements

Once upon a time (about a year or so ago) a curious little boy named Fraser noticed something unusual about his school jumper. He knew the golden writing glittered with the name of his school but he had never spotted the numbers on the crest before. A one? Maybe a seven? It was hard to tell upside down. "Mummy," he said, "what are these numbers on my jumper?" "I'm not sure," she replied, thinking on her feet, "1771...I imagine it's the year St Oswald's School was founded." "How long ago was that?" "249 years ago, nearly 250."

And that was how this story began. Fraser's curiosity about the world around him kickstarted a conversation about how to celebrate the approaching 250th anniversary. Early on, Amy Harker, the chair of the Friends of St Oswald's School Fulford (FOSOSF), suggested the idea of a book of memories. As we learnt more about the school, this evolved into something that would cover the school's history as well as capturing more recent recollections and contributions from the children. A small group of parents was formed to produce the book - Helen Hayton (chief writer and historian), Claire Sinclair (researcher extraordinaire) and Heni Sampson (designer and creative genius). We have worked hard to create something that the school and community can treasure but it wouldn't have been possible without the help of a huge number of people.

We are particularly thankful to:

- Sue Bland, the current head at the school, for her support for the project, and all staff and pupils at the school who have worked with such enthusiasm on the school history project
- David Norman for providing access to the school archive
- Andrew Webster who kindly allowed children to visit his home, the Old School House
- Tony Hagyard, Paul Marks and Rupert Griffiths who have contributed their recollections as past heads of the school, as well as John Clegg and Angela Bullock whose fathers were past head teachers
- Rev Canon Sue Sheriff for her heartfelt prayer and ongoing support of the school, and Rev Terence McDonough for his past work and recollections
- Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society, especially Barbara King for information about the history of the school and Louise Wheatley for the history of St Oswald
- Sean Sampson for his editing skills
- Ian Hayton who provided the sketches for the map
- FOSOSF for funding the printed copies of the book
- And all members of the wider community who provided memories and photographs

Happy birthday St Oswald's! Here's to many more happy years of learning!



*Authors Helen Hayton,  
Claire Sinclair and  
Henrietta Sampson  
next to Oswald the Owl*



*Fraser, proudly wearing his  
St Oswald's school uniform*





*'Let us encourage one another' - Hebrews 10.25*

## **St Oswald's CE Primary School: Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future.**

In 1771 John Key founded a free school in Fulford for 20 children who otherwise would have had little or no access to education. Founded on principles that included justice, respect and compassion, this marked the beginnings of the St Oswald's primary school that we know and love today.

This book explores 250 years of this remarkable school against the backdrop of English history, through world wars, pandemics and more. Written with love and pride, incorporating memories and reflections from staff, pupils and the wider Fulford community, past and present, the authors hope this record will offer interesting and useful insights for pupils and Fulfordians of the future.