

2021 marks the 250th birthday of St Oswald's CE Primary School, Fulford. A day of celebrations will be led by the Archbishop of York on 16th
coming together for the first time in over a year and a half.



A highlight of the event will be the unveiling of the newly restored original foundation stones of the school from 1771 and 1846, which will be proudly displayed in a new heritage seating space, designed by parent and architect, Ian Hayton. The new seating area features stunning wildlife-themed ceramic tiles created by pupils with the help of a local artist, and is nestled in a newly planted garden area. As part of the unveiling ceremony, a time capsule filled with artefacts created by children to represent current times will be sealed into the bench.

Children have been working on a history project about the school and their work has been incorporated into a book of history and memories. The book, which has been written by a group of parents with support from Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society, will also be presented to the school.

A lunchtime street party for the children will be held, with help from the City of York Town Crier, after which a recorded birthday message from the Lord Mayor of York will be played to children by video. During the afternoon, the Archbishop will lead a celebration assembly and unveil the new seating area. After school, a festival for families and wider community members will be held. The after school event will see children showcasing their talents to parents and carers, for the first time since Covid changed our world. Students from Key Stage 1 will be showing off their moves with some glorious dance routines, whilst older students will sing in the choir. However, perhaps the most hotly anticipated number will be when the whole school comes together to joyously belt out one of its inspirational daily songs.

Sue Bland, Headteacher at St Oswald's School, says "We are thrilled to be able to celebrate 250 years of our school and I am 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's place at the heart of the Fulford community has remained steadfast throughout the decades and past pupils young and old talk of the school with great pride. The children are central to everything we do and they have really enjoyed working on this project - we hope to give them a really special day. We are hugely grateful to the many people who have donated time, materials or funds to support the celebratory projects - they have helped breathe life into our ideas and it is wonderful to see them brought to fruition."

The school is extremely grateful for the support and generosity of local businesses, trades people and community members who were instrumental in the development of the project, in particular: Branniff Joinery, Chris Utley Ceramics, Dreadnought Tiles, EY, Ferrey & Mennim, Fulford and Heslington Ward, Fulford Parish Council, GRAHAM Construction, Martins of York, Moortown Group, Pinnacle Conservation, Sewell Education (York), Sewell Facilities Management, TCL Brickwork, TSYS and York Handmade Brick Co Ltd. The school is also grateful to the abundance of generosity from local residents, both with and without children at the school who donated through a crowdfunding scheme.

Beginning its life as a Free School for the poor, upon an endowment from John Key in 1771, the school initially supported just 20 pupils. Several new buildings and two and a half centuries later, it has stayed true to its compassionate roots and continues to provide a supportive and nurturing environment, encouraging all of the children in our diverse community to flourish and be the best that they can be.

The school's core virtues of respect, compassion, friendship, service, trust and justice remain at the heart of all the relationships that exist in our community.



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