



Newsletter 2025

Spring

Christ at the centre, Children at the heart





BISHOP HOGARTH
Catholic Education Trust

Welcome

As we embrace the season of Spring, we welcome a time of renewal, growth, and new beginnings across our Trust.

It has been another incredibly busy and exciting term for our schools, with students travelling to Denmark and the USA as part of the Turing Scheme, broadening their horizons and creating lifelong memories. We've also seen fantastic events and activities taking place across our Trust, showcasing the talent, creativity, and dedication of our pupils and staff.

This year is particularly special as we begin the celebrations for the Jubilee Year, embracing Pope Francis' call to be "Pilgrims of Hope". Together, we will reflect on our shared mission of faith, compassion, and service, walking alongside one another with renewed purpose and a vision for the future.

As we approach the Easter break, may we take time to reflect on the hope and promise of the Resurrection. Easter reminds us of the power of new life and renewal, inspiring us to carry the light of Christ into our daily lives.

It is also a significant time for our students preparing for their upcoming exams in May. To all those sitting GCSEs, A-Levels, and SATs, we are immensely proud of your dedication and resilience. Remember, your hard work and determination will carry you through, and we wish you the very best of luck.

Finally, I would like to thank our staff, parents, and school communities for their unwavering support and commitment. Together, we continue to provide inspiring, nurturing environments where our young people can flourish.

Wishing you all a joyful and blessed Easter.

Stuart McGhee

CEO, Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust



Pilgrims of Hope

This year, as we celebrate the Jubilee Year and embrace our theme as 'Pilgrims of Hope', Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust has come together to share a special Pilgrimage Cross — crafted by students across our schools.

The Cross has already embarked on a meaningful journey through our schools, symbolising our shared faith and unity. It will continue its journey into April and May, carrying with it the hopes and prayers of our entire Trust community. By sharing this pilgrimage, we strengthen the bond that ties us all together, journeying as one towards faith, hope, and renewal.



St. Gregory's



St. Rega's



The English Martyrs



Our Lady & St. Bede



Watch our Trust Holy Year hymn, Grace.



Become a Governor

School governance is a rewarding way to give back to your community, helping to shape the future of education. We warmly invite you to consider becoming a governor within our Trust's family of 35 schools.

Anyone over the age of 18 can become a school governor. No specific knowledge or experience is required, and there is no requirement to be a parent (unless applying to be a Parent Governor). Foundation Governors are required to be practising Catholics.

Governors are at the heart of a successful school community, playing a pivotal role in shaping the lives of young people.

As a member of a school governing board, you'll help ensure that every child has access to an excellent education. Your contribution will go beyond academic outcomes—supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, and personal development as well.

Serving on a local governing committee also provides valuable professional development.

It offers hands-on experience in strategic decision-making and the opportunity to build transferable skills highly valued by employers—such as leadership, financial oversight, and staff recruitment.



Scan or click the QR code to view our videos on current governors, view our information pack and more!



Student Spotlight

Maiya, Year 10 at St. John's – Next-Level Netball

Maiya is a fantastic netball player who showcases her talent as part of the Leeds Rhinos Development Programme. Her dedication to the sport is truly inspiring, as she trains and competes at a high level while also excelling in her academic studies.



Lawrence, Year 11 at St. Michael's – Ice Hockey Talent

Lawrence received the incredible honour of being called up to play for England's U16 ice hockey team! This achievement is a testament to Lawrence's dedication, skill, and hard work in the sport. Representing his country at this level is a remarkable accomplishment!



Kobi, Year 11 at EMS – Karate King in the Making

In January, Kobi found out he had been selected to represent England at the World Karate Championships in Japan for Kata and Kumite. Whilst he is in Japan, Kobi is going to participate in the Japanese National Karate competition in order to prepare for the World Championship tournament. Kobi has also been selected for the prestigious EKF National which draws together talented fighters of England!



George, Year 9 at Carmel – Goalkeeping for England

George has represented England in their recent international fixtures against France & Colombia! This experience has allowed George to showcase his goalkeeping talent. His dedication, talent, and hard work are truly inspiring, and we are excited to see where his football journey takes him next.



Pupil Leaders, An Insight Into Their Role – OLSB

Being a leader has meant so much to us, it has given us an insight into the school that we have never seen before, painting a picture of how the workplace is and how leadership in an establishment actually works. We've learned how to manage responsibilities, work with teachers and students, and set a good example for others. Speaking in assemblies, helping at events, and representing the school has made us more confident public speaking and working with different people. Balancing our studies with the responsibilities of being a Pupil Leaders has taught us how to organise time effectively, a vital skill to take forward into the workplace.





Student Spotlight

Pippa, Year 10 at St. Michael's – A Rising Star in Dance

Pippa is a talented and dedicated performer, she excels in tap, modern, lyrical, ballet and acro! In January, Pippa's hard work and passion shone through when she secured the prestigious Judge's Choice award at a national dance competition in Solihull, where her troupe wowed audiences with a dynamic jazz routine.



Max, Year 11 at St. John's – National Boxing Champion

In February, Max competed in the National Youth Cadets Championships in Sheffield! He won and is now the national champion in the under 57kg 2008 category. From this success, Max is now on the development pathway for England to box for England in the future.

Stephen, Y13 at Carmel College – Advocacy in Action

Stephen is Head Boy at Carmel College and an active member of various clubs, including the Politics Club, Public Speaking Club, and Debate Club. Outside of Carmel, he has a role as Darlington's Member of Youth Parliament, where he had the privilege of delivering a speech in the House of Commons. He recently delivered a speech on Period Dignity in the House of Commons, where he addressed an issue that affects many in our society and advocated for change at a national level.

Stephen quotes:

"Taking on the role of Head Boy has been a significant honour and responsibility. It's afforded me the opportunity to represent my fellow students, voice their concerns, and promote a positive school environment."

"Speaking in the highest seat of national politics was exhilarating, but has reinforced my commitment to championing important causes and the concerns of my peers and those I represent."



Evie, Year 10 at EMS – CrossFit Warrior

Evie is excelling in her studies and her hobbies outside of school. Evie's journey with CrossFit started 7 years ago when she was just 7 years old, she trains religiously six days a week, often attending sessions before school. In December 2024, Evie travelled to Budapest for 5 days to compete as part of Team GB for a 3-day competition. Evie was 1 of 450 athletes to compete and she came 31st which is a massive achievement! In March 2025, Evie travelled to Sheffield for Trials for Team GB 2025 World CrossFit competition which will this year be held in Lithuania. Evie will find out soon if she has qualified.



Turing Scheme



This term, thirty-five pupils from Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust schools embarked on an extraordinary Turing Scheme trip to Billund, Denmark. Themed around the 'Pedagogy of Play,' this fully funded opportunity provided pupils with a unique educational journey exploring the profound connection between play and learning – a concept deeply embedded in Billund's educational philosophy.

Renowned as the birthplace of LEGO, Billund offered an inspiring setting for the pupils. A highlight of the trip was their visit to the International School of Billund, a cutting-edge institution celebrated for its innovative approach to global learning and creativity. There, the pupils explored state-of-the-art classrooms designed to spark imagination and foster collaboration.

The educational experience delved into how LEGO is used as a powerful learning tool to enhance education. One pupil shared, "I really enjoyed seeing how LEGO was used in school and would like to see if we could use it more in our class."

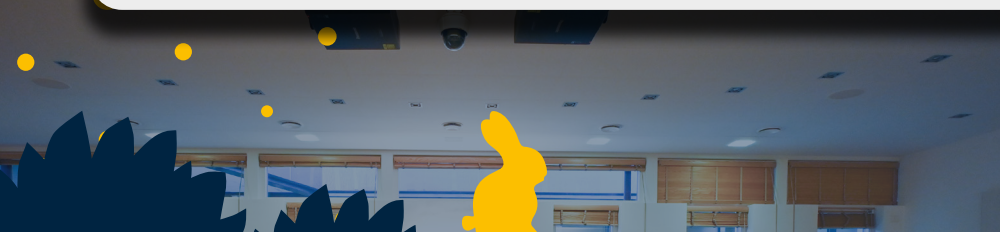
A special moment of the trip was meeting the Mayor of Billund. The pupils engaged in meaningful discussions, shared stories, and asked insightful questions, gaining a deeper understanding of the town's dedication to innovation, creativity, and community building. The trip also included exciting experiences beyond the classroom.

Pupils visited a trampoline park in Kolding and enjoyed activities at Lalandia, including ten-pin bowling and crazy golf. These moments fostered teamwork, strengthened friendships, and created memories filled with laughter and fun.



Watch our Billund video to see all the insights on our trip!

Scan the QR code to find out more!





Turing Scheme

Washington D.C.

Students from St. John's Sixth Form, EMS6, and Carmel College Sixth Form recently returned from an unforgettable trip to Washington, D.C., as part of the Turing Scheme. This exciting international experience gave students the opportunity to explore U.S. politics, history, and higher education, broadening their horizons and offering valuable insights into global leadership and academic opportunities.

The trip began on Wednesday, 26 March, as students set off from the UK to the U.S. capital, ready for a packed itinerary filled with once-in-a-lifetime experiences. On Thursday, students dove straight into the heart of American politics, visiting some of Washington's most iconic landmarks, including the White House, the Pentagon, the Capitol Building, and the U.S. Navy Yard. These visits provided a unique insight into the institutions that shape both the nation and the world.

Friday saw the group step into the world of higher education with a visit to Georgetown University. Here, they explored the prestigious campus, learned about international study opportunities, and engaged with university life. The day also included a trip to the Supreme Court and National Archives, where they witnessed history in action — seeing the U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence up close.

The trip wasn't just about politics and academics. On Saturday, students enjoyed a day of cultural and recreational experiences, starting with a visit to the National Museum of Natural History. In the evening, they embraced an all-American tradition by attending a Washington Nationals baseball game, where they soaked up the electric atmosphere of U.S. sports.

Before heading home on Sunday, the group took in stunning panoramic views from the Washington Monument Observation Deck — a fitting way to reflect on an incredible journey before making their way back to the UK on Monday.

The Turing Scheme trip provided students with invaluable experiences, inspiring them to think beyond borders and explore future opportunities in international education and careers. A huge thank you goes out to the staff, organisers, and everyone who made this extraordinary experience possible. With memories to last a lifetime, our students have returned home more inspired, ambitious, and globally aware than ever before.



Trust-wide Events



Celebrating a Love for Reading on World Book Day!

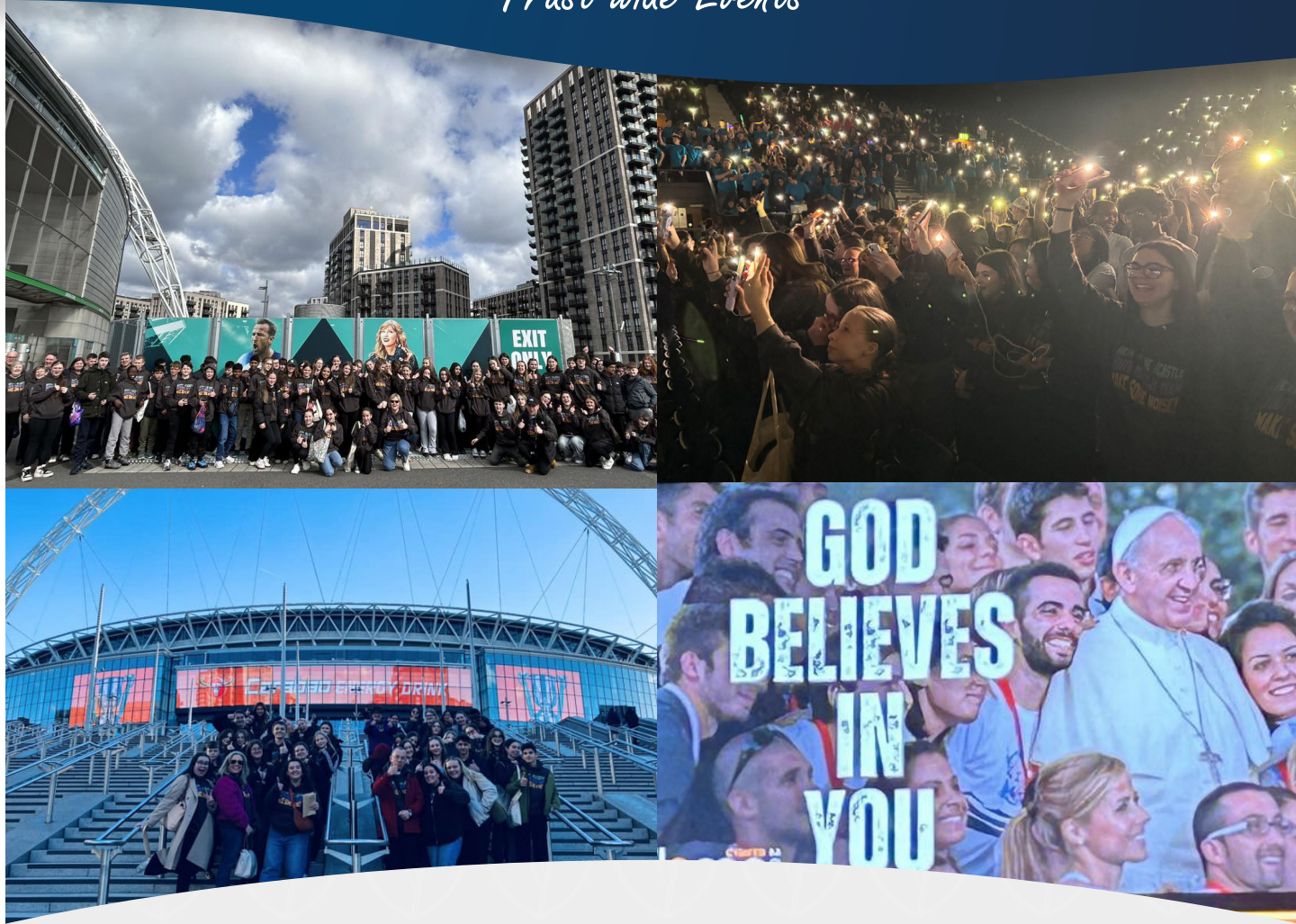
On Thursday, 6 March, our Trust came alive with imagination and creativity as children and staff celebrated World Book Day! From classic literary characters to modern favourites, our schools were filled with fantastic costumes, all in honour of the wonderful world of books.

World Book Day is all about encouraging a love for reading, and throughout the day, pupils took part in a range of exciting activities designed to inspire and engage young readers. From book swaps and storytelling sessions to creative writing challenges and author-inspired workshops, the day was a fantastic opportunity for children to immerse themselves in literature and discover the joy that reading brings.

The celebrations didn't stop at the classroom door – corridors, libraries, and even playgrounds were buzzing with book-themed excitement. Teachers brought stories to life through dramatic readings, and some schools held book-themed quizzes, sparking friendly rivalry and fun. It was a brilliant day that not only celebrated reading but also highlighted the power of stories to ignite imagination, build empathy, and inspire lifelong learning.



Trust-wide Events



Faith in Action at Wembley

FLAME 2025

In March, our secondary school students joined over 10,000 young people at Wembley Arena for Flame 2025 — an unforgettable day of faith, inspiration, and empowerment.

Throughout the day, students heard from incredible speakers, including Bear Grylls, who shared his powerful message: "Faith isn't part of the adventure; it is the adventure!" A special message from Pope Francis also encouraged young people to "fan a flame of hope that is truly unstoppable."

For many of our students, this was their first experience of faith on such a large and vibrant scale. The sense of unity and belonging was powerful, and it was clear that the message of hope resonated deeply.

The atmosphere was electric, filled with music, worship, and moments of deep reflection, leaving our students feeling uplifted, motivated, and ready to make a difference in their communities. Students returned with a renewed sense of purpose and a desire to live out their faith with confidence. They've already marked their calendars for next year's event — Flame 2026 can't come soon enough!



Carmel Teacher Training Partnership

Are you ready to inspire the next generation and make a lasting impact? **Carmel Teacher Training Partnership (CTTP)** is here to guide you on your journey to becoming an exceptional educator. In partnership with St. Mary's University, you can undertake a **teacher training** course that is academically rigorous and firmly rooted in the classroom. With over 25 years of experience, we're proud to offer school-based training in **over 100 partner schools** in urban, semi-rural and rural settings across the **North-East**, from **Alnwick and Tyne and Wear**, to the **Tees Valley and North Yorkshire**.

Why choose CTTP?

- ✓ **Proven success:** Over 90% of our trainees **secure teaching posts**, often in the very schools they trained in or within our partnership.
- ✓ **Personalised support:** Our **tailored programmes** and dedicated mentors ensure every trainee achieves their full potential.
- ✓ **You choose:** With **over 100 partner schools across the North-East**, you can choose a **local** school that is right for you.
- ✓ **Train local to teach local:** Train from day one in schools close to home across our supportive North-East partnership.
- ✓ **Exceptional qualifications:** Earn **PGCE with QTS qualifications** while learning on the job from inspiring professionals.
- ✓ We don't just stop at **Initial Teacher Training (ITT)**. Through our wider links, we'll support you from your **Early Career Teacher (ECT)** phase through to leadership roles like headship and beyond.



Join CTTP today and take the first step towards an exciting and rewarding career in education.

Scan the QR code to find out more!



Celebrating Language and Culture at St. John's

Students from all five secondary schools within the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust came together on Friday, 21 March 2025, at St. John's Catholic School & Sixth Form College for a vibrant celebration of language and culture. The event combined two exciting occasions: the El Camino Project for Spanish students and Francophone Day for French learners.

The day began with a warm welcome featuring hot chocolate, churros, and croissants, setting the tone for a day of collaboration, creativity, and celebration. The El Camino Project marked the culmination of a Spanish language competition held across the Trust's secondary schools. During the prize-giving ceremony, one student from each school was named a winner, each receiving a £50 Amazon voucher in recognition of their outstanding achievements. Following the ceremony, Spanish students participated in engaging language and cultural sessions, exploring the traditions and experiences of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage.

At the same time, French students took part in Francophone Day, celebrating the diverse cultures and traditions of the French-speaking world. Throughout the morning, they engaged in interactive workshops designed to enhance their language skills and deepen their cultural understanding.

The event concluded with a themed MFL lunch, where students and staff enjoyed a delicious selection of international cuisine, rounding off the day with a celebration of food, friendship, and shared experiences.

The El Camino Project and Francophone Day highlighted our Trust's commitment to promoting language learning and fostering cultural appreciation. Events like these not only enrich students' linguistic skills but also inspire them to embrace global perspectives.





Trust-wide Events



Upcoming Trust-wide Events

BHCET Swimming Gala

Date: 30th May 2025

Students from across our schools will come together for this year's Swimming Gala — a showcase of skill, determination, and sportsmanship in the pool. They will be joined by accomplished athletes who will inspire the next generation as they compete in a range of events throughout the day.

BHCET Athletics Day

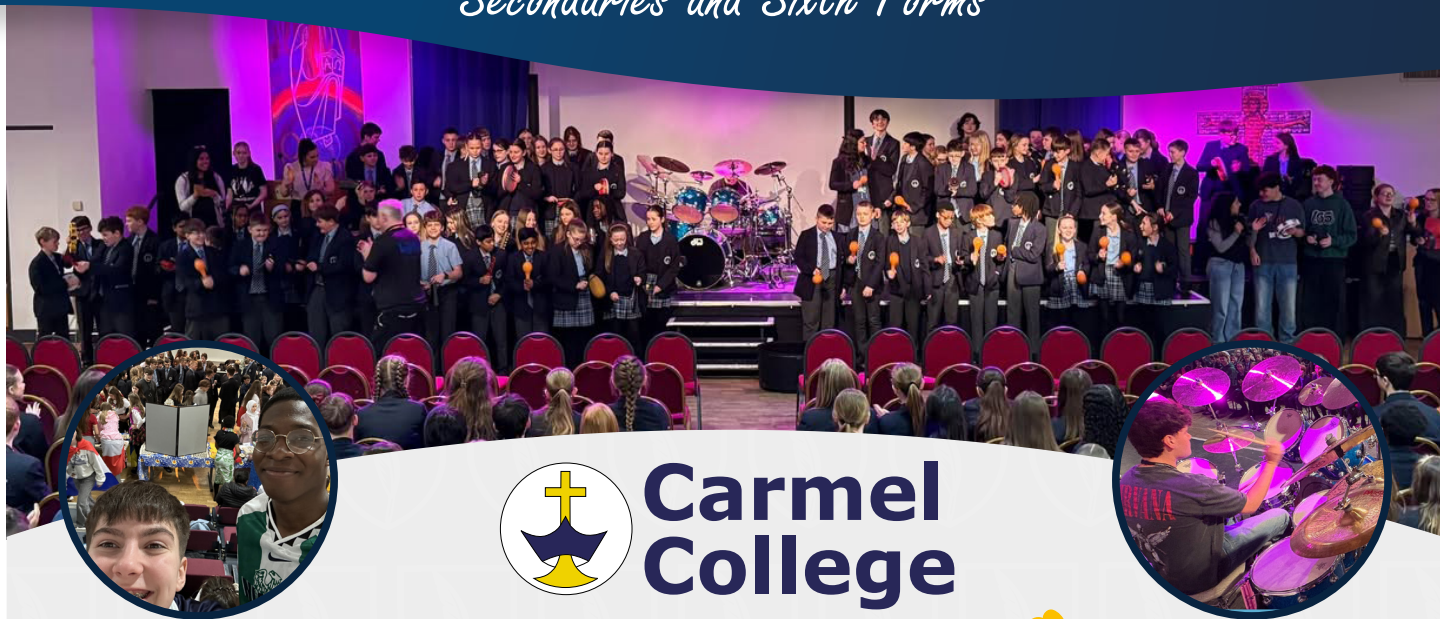
Date: 10th July 2025

Our third annual Athletics Competition brings together students from all five of our secondary schools for a day of sporting excellence and friendly competition. This much-anticipated event celebrates teamwork, perseverance, and school spirit within our wider community.





Secondaries and Sixth Forms



Carmel College

Status Quo's Jeff Rich Inspires Carmel Students

Carmel College recently welcomed legendary Status Quo drummer Jeff Rich for an exciting drumming workshop. Students had the opportunity to participate in hands-on drumming, gain valuable music insights, and engage in teamwork activities, leaving the hall filled with confident beats and smiles. Jeff's visit not only introduced students to the power of rhythm but also emphasised the importance of creativity and collaboration. The experience boosted student wellbeing and will undoubtedly be remembered as one of the school's highlights.



Culture Festival 2025 A Celebration of Diversity

Carmel College's Culture Festival 2025 was a vibrant celebration of music, dance, and traditions. Students shared their heritage through food, performances, and displays, with highlights including an Afrobeats-Indian dance mash-up. The festival beautifully reflected Carmel's welcoming, diverse community, leaving attendees feeling proud and inspired. From dazzling decorations to heartfelt performances, the event brought everyone together in a joyful celebration of unity and cultural pride.

A Year 10 student summed it up, saying, "It was amazing to see everyone's cultures come to life — the colours, the music, the food, everything. It made me feel proud of who we are."

The Happiest Secondary School in Darlington

Carmel College has been named the happiest secondary school in Darlington, based on Ofsted Parent View data. Principal Melanie Kane celebrated this achievement, highlighting the school's joyful and safe environment. With 94% of parents stating that their child is happy at the school, this recognition underscores the strong sense of community and support at Carmel. Events like the Culture Festival, along with various enrichment opportunities, showcase Carmel's commitment to student wellbeing and success, ensuring every student thrives.





Secondaries and Sixth Forms



The English Martyrs



NHS Foundation Trust

English Martyrs Sixth Form students put their faith into action by answering the call from North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, creating drain bags for cancer patients. It was a privilege to meet the patients and staff on Ward D and to present the handmade items. Thank you for making us feel so welcome.

Durham County Cricket Champions

A string of phenomenal performances from our girls' cricket team paved the way for a fantastic victory as they were crowned county champions. This super-talented team now moves on to the regional finals, which will take place in Bolton. A superb achievement!



History Trips

This term, students enjoyed two fantastic opportunities to explore historical cities with our history department. A trip to Edinburgh included visits to the Royal Yacht Britannia, Edinburgh Castle, an underground ghost tour of the old vaults, and the Edinburgh Dungeons. Meanwhile, another group journeyed to the capital to explore the sights of London. They learned about the city's rich history while visiting the London Dungeons, the London Eye, the Tower of London, and other iconic landmarks. The trip was topped off with a special treat—seeing former EMS student Charlotte Coggin perform in the Back to the Future West End show. Two wonderful trips filled with unforgettable experiences!

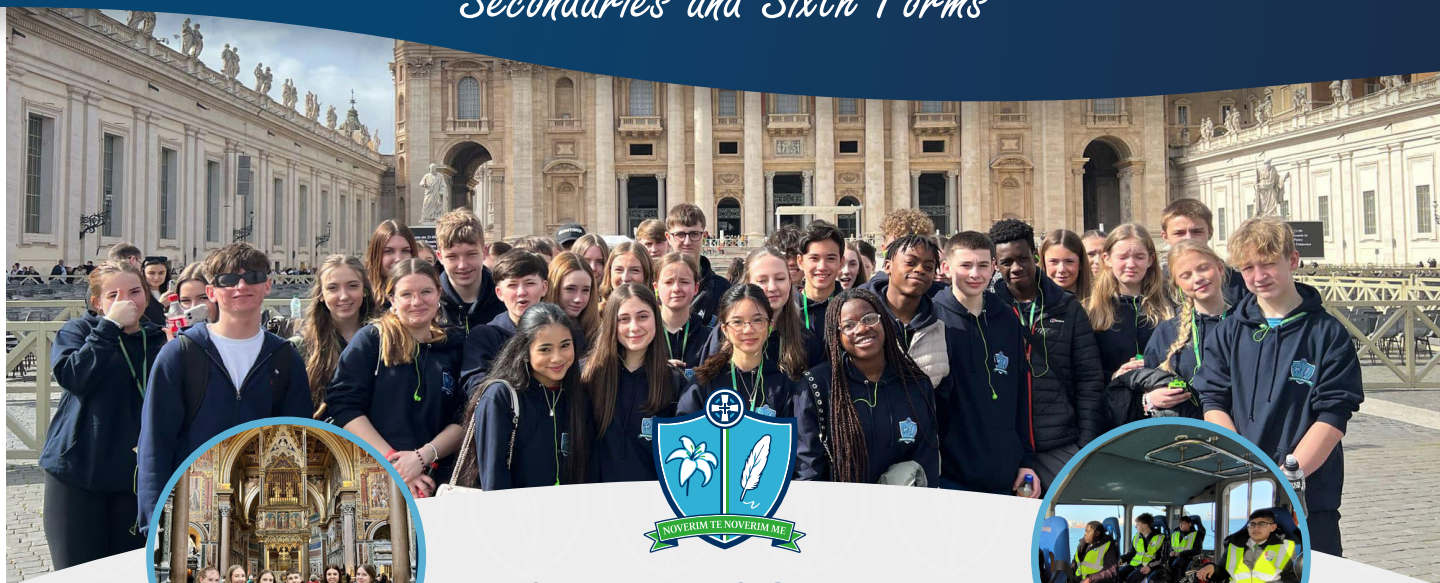
National Space Academy Masterclass

Some of our Year 7 and Year 10 students took part in space masterclasses delivered by the National Space Academy. They had great fun designing and developing rockets, and even trying on astronaut suits! The sessions were thoroughly enjoyed by all.





Secondaries and Sixth Forms



OUR LADY & ST. BEDE CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Maritime Careers Week

Twelve of our fantastic Year 9 students had an incredible week exploring the world of maritime careers right here on Teesside, thanks to the amazing High Tide Foundation! From Taiwan to Teesside, they followed the journey of mobile phones and met the people who make it all happen! Day 1: Kicked off at PD Ports TeesPort with a tour of the massive docks! They even cruised the River Tees on a Tees pilot launch, just like the pros! Day 2: Off to Svitzer tug boats and Casper shipping agents, where they explored a real tug boat! Day 3: A trip to the harbour master's office, where they watched an oil tanker guided in live on CCTV! Big thanks to River Pilots Al & Albert for sharing their wisdom! Day 4: The PD ports conservancy team showed off their £23 million hybrid dredger! Pupils learned how they keep the river safe and clean! Day 5: Finished strong at Middlesbrough College, diving into warehousing and logistics before presenting everything they learned about the incredible world of maritime!

What a week! So many fantastic career opportunities right on our doorstep!

Lent Bake Sale

We've raised an amazing £400 for CAFOD, helping those in need around the world. Your generosity has made a real difference. Well done, everyone!



Rome Trip

We had a fantastic time in Rome! We began our Roman adventure with a breathtaking visit to the Colosseum, taking in its fascinating history and sheer grandeur. From there, we explored the Roman Forum and Palatine Hill, walking in the footsteps of emperors and legends. We soaked up the atmosphere at the Spanish Steps and made our wishes at the Trevi Fountain. Our students were a credit to our school, shining as true ambassadors with their curiosity, respect, and enthusiasm.

Year 8 Take the Stage with the NHS

Year 8 pupils were treated to an exciting theatrical experience designed to inspire the next generation of NHS heroes! Through powerful storytelling, real-life scenarios, and engaging performances, they explored the endless career opportunities in healthcare — from doctors and nurses to paramedics and lab scientists!





Secondaries and Sixth Forms



St John's

Catholic School & Sixth Form College



Watch our
school tour
here!

Top Ten School!

We're thrilled to be recognised as one of County Durham's Top Ten secondary schools, based on Ofsted ratings and exam results! This achievement reflects the hard work and dedication of our staff, students, and supportive parents—thank you all!

St. John's Awarded Artsmark Gold!

We are thrilled to announce that St. John's has been awarded the prestigious Artsmark Gold Award, recognising our commitment to embedding the arts and creativity into school life!



**Artsmark
Gold Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England

The Artsmark assessor praised our broad and inclusive arts programme, highlighting our efforts to make creative opportunities accessible for all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and with SEN. From music masterclasses and Macbeth workshops to our Arts fundraising, which ensures all students can participate, our arts provision continues to grow.

A huge thank you to our staff, students, and community for making this achievement possible. We look forward to building on this success and inspiring even more creativity in the future!



Jaquie Holloway Prize for Performing Arts

Our third annual Jaquie Holloway Prize showcased incredible talent in singing, music, gymnastics, and theatre. Huge congratulations to our winners.

The audience also enjoyed performances from our choirs, orchestra, and a sneak peek of Frozen! A massive thank you to our guest judges and the Performing Arts team for an unforgettable evening.

St. John's Goes Greener!

In February, our Year 7 council and environmental awareness club took part in a net zero accelerator workshop, exploring ways to make our school more energy efficient. Using specialist equipment, students measured energy use, CO2 levels, light, and heat loss, then presented their findings and developed an action plan to reduce energy consumption.

Our students were fantastic ambassadors, showing curiosity, confidence, and maturity in tackling this vital issue.



Secondaries and Sixth Forms



Watch our
3G pitch
video here!



Ski Trip

In January, we had an unforgettable adventure as students swapped the classroom for the crisp mountain air on their exciting ski trip to the French Alps!

From day one on the slopes, the excitement snowballed. Whether mastering the bunny hills or carving out their first turns on the bigger runs, our students threw themselves into the experience with enthusiasm, determination, and team spirit.

Beyond skiing, the trip was all about building confidence, independence, and creating lasting memories. With breathtaking alpine views, fresh snow underfoot, and laughter echoing down the mountainside, it was a week filled with new challenges, new friendships, and non-stop adventure.

We were incredibly proud of how the students embraced every moment – and we're sure they'll be talking about their time on the slopes for years to come!

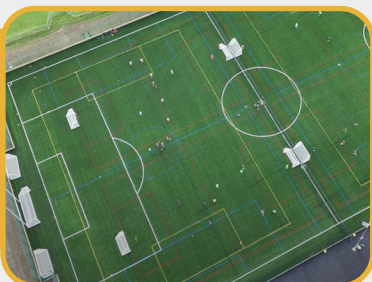


St. Michael's Got Talent

On Monday 2nd April, we hosted our annual 'St. Michael's Got Talent'! We had a fantastic evening being wowed by our talented students. It took a lot of courage to stand up and share their talents, and we are incredibly proud of everyone who took part. A massive congratulations to Ellie, who was awarded first place! Well done to Nathan, who came second, and Caleb, who took third place.

Outward Bound

Our students had an unforgettable experience at the Outward Bound Ullswater Centre this March. Through a variety of exciting outdoor activities, they built confidence, resilience, self-belief, and teamwork. This year's trip also focused on Generation Green – a brilliant initiative that encourages young people to care for and protect the environment. Highlights of the week included stargazing under clear night skies, toasting marshmallows around campfires, and learning to cook outdoors – memories they won't forget any time soon!



3G Pitch

This state-of-the-art pitch means our students can enjoy sport and PE all year round, no matter the weather – and they've already been loving every minute on it! From football to fitness sessions, it's been a brilliant addition to school life.



Primaries



Blessed John Duckett

Catholic Primary School

TOW LAW

The Tempest

Class 3 has embarked on a thrilling adventure, creating a performance based on Shakespeare's renowned play *The Tempest*. Collaborating with the Royal Shakespeare Company, our students have been honing their skills and techniques to bring the story to life. Through this partnership, they have transformed into directors — taking charge of their performance and infusing it with their unique interpretations. Embracing Shakespearean language in both their acting and written work, they have delved deep into the world of *The Tempest*. Our young performers have described the mystical island setting and crafted poems about the intriguing character Caliban. This creative process has been immensely enjoyable, and the students are eagerly anticipating their upcoming performance at English Martyrs. We are incredibly proud of their dedication and creativity, and we can't wait to see their hard work come to fruition on stage!



Forest School

This term, Year 5 and 6 have had a fantastic time at Forest School and in the garden! They've learned essential fire safety skills, including how to light fires correctly, and enjoyed toasting marshmallows over the campfire. The students have also been busy making dens and whittling sticks, honing their outdoor skills. In the garden, they've been hard at work digging, weeding, and tidying up in preparation for sowing our spring seeds. Their enthusiasm and dedication are truly inspiring!



Primaries



Holy Family

Catholic Primary School
DARLINGTON



Outstanding CSI

Holy Family Catholic Primary School in Darlington has been awarded an 'Outstanding' rating in its recent Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI) report. This remarkable achievement highlights the school's exceptional commitment to fostering a strong Catholic identity, spiritual development, and values-driven education. The report praised Holy Family for its clear and shared values, which are evident in the daily life of the school community. Inspectors recognised the school's deep-rooted Catholic ethos, where pupils are encouraged to reflect on their responsibilities in society and their ability to make a meaningful difference.

Swimming Gala

Holy Family's swimming team took part in Darlington's small schools swimming gala in March, held at the Dolphin Centre, with every team member giving their absolute best in the pool. Their hard work and dedication paid off, as each swimmer earned at least one medal. It was an incredible display of determination, and we couldn't be more proud of them!



Mini Police

Our children in Year 5 have been taking part in the Mini Police project. The scheme is a joint initiative between Durham Agency Against Crime (DAAC) and Durham Constabulary to introduce young people to policing and good citizenship.

Nursery Helping Hands

The children in nursery had a lovely time helping with some jobs in Holy Family church. They were very busy, and they loved helping out!





Primaries



Watch our school video here!



Our Lady of the most Holy Rosary

Catholic Academy
BILLINGHAM

Theatre Trip: Room on the Broom

In March, our children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 took a trip to the Billingham Forum Theatre to see a production of Room on the Broom! The children were fantastic, singing to the songs, interacting with the cast and showing how much they enjoy a Julia Donaldson story.

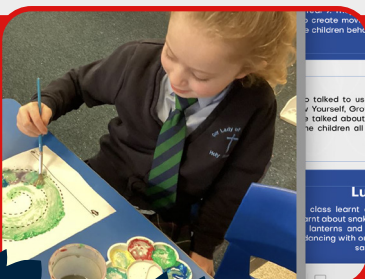
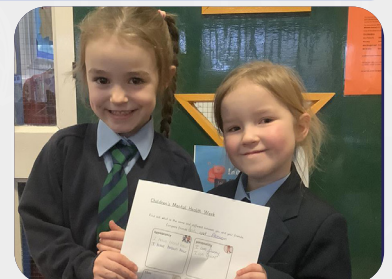


St. Michael's Taster Day

Pupils had the amazing opportunity to visit St. Michael's, getting ready for their transition into Year 7. They spent time in the computing department, where they learned how to create moving robots using Lego. We then raced them against each other. The children behaved fantastically and received many compliments!

Children's Mental Health Week

In February, we had a special visitor from Alliance who talked to us about Children's Mental Health Week. The theme for this week was 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself,' which was supported by the characters from Inside Out 2. We talked about our feelings and emotions and how to understand ourselves both inside and out. The children completed some beautiful work all about themselves.



Lunar New Year

Our Reception class learned about the celebration of Lunar New Year. We've created and learned about snakes, as 2025 is the Year of the Snake! We tasted fortune cookies, made lanterns, and created our own paper chain dragons. We also celebrated by dancing with our giant dragon to Chinese music and learned how to say 'good luck' in Chinese.



Primaries



Our Lady & St. Thomas

Catholic Primary School
WILLINGTON

British Science Week

Pupils at Our Lady & St. Thomas Catholic Primary School enjoyed an exciting British Science Week, packed with hands-on STEM activities designed to spark curiosity and creativity. Years 5 and 6 worked towards their STEM passports, tackling challenges such as an AI sustainability lesson, where they designed eco-friendly inventions, and a LEGO structural challenge focused on stability and teamwork. Class 4 explored the human immune system and researched animal adaptations, while Class 3 conducted shadow experiments through fair testing. Class 1 embraced their dinosaur adventures, expanding their knowledge of prehistoric creatures, and Nursery children explored the world of stick insects, bravely handling the fascinating creatures.



Lego Club

After an exciting and inspiring trip to Billund, Xander and Joe have launched their very first Lego Club! Drawing from the incredible lessons and experiences they gained during their visit, they are now sharing their knowledge and creativity with their peers. We are incredibly proud of Xander and Joe for using their experience to inspire and educate others, fostering teamwork, problem-solving, and innovation through Lego.



Primaries



Watch our school video here!



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School HARTLEPOOL

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Girls' Football Team for Year 5 and Year 6

A huge congratulations to our girls' football team, who have successfully competed with schools across the North East in the National League Trust Trophy to become the overall winners, as well as in a further tournament, representing Hartlepool Town in the Tees Valley finals. The latter competition saw 380 schools from the group stages competing, and Sacred Heart, representing Hartlepool Town, won overall.

The girls' determination and superb skill have seen them shine in the National League Trust Trophy (The Road to Wembley). They began by winning the town finals and progressing further in the competition. The girls went on to represent Hartlepool in the North East stages and took first place, coming away as North East champions. They will now go to York to represent the North East in the Northern League, and if successful, will progress to the finals at Wembley. An amazing achievement! The whole school community is so proud and rooting for them. One step closer to Wembley! Come on, girls!



Learning About Health and Safety



Our Nursery class has had a fantastic time learning about how to stay healthy and safe. One of the highlights of our topic was welcoming visitors from outside the school who help keep us safe. We had a special visit from Alex, an advanced practitioner who works for the ambulance service. She drives a fast response car and shared information about her important job. Brian, the lollipop man, visited to explain his role and the importance of road safety. We practiced crossing the road with Brian and learned how to do it safely. Firefighters from 'Blue Watch' came to talk about their job and gave us a tour of their engine. The best part was when we had the chance to fire the hose! We were also visited by PC Coggy and PC Mia, who informed us about the crucial work the police do to keep us safe.



Primaries



Watch our
school video
here!



St. Augustine's

Catholic Primary School
DARLINGTON

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

It has been a busy term at St. Augustine's. We have celebrated Neurodiversity Celebration Week, which had the theme "Everybody's brain is a little bit different". Children across the school enjoyed exploring this concept in a range of creative ways, thinking about their own unique and special brain.



Mayor's Song Contest

Our school choir came joint 3rd in the Darlington Mayor's song contest with their brilliant singing and choreography of 'Singing in the Rain' making everybody smile.

Science Week

We marked Science Week with members of our school community who work in the STEM industry, talking to us all about their roles and careers. There were lots of scientific enquiries that took place across the school, as well as a whole-school competition to 'be a desert island survivor' and learn how to change contaminated water into clean water.





Primaries



St. Bede's Catholic Primary School DARLINGTON

Darlington FC Visit

Pupils from St. Bede's were invited for a pitch-side experience watching Darlington FC play against Rushall Olympic. They took part in various activities, including training on the pitch, sitting in the dugout, waving flags to welcome the team, and even taking a penalty at half-time. Despite the weather, the children cheered and celebrated a 2-2 draw. A big thank you to Darlington FC for having us!



Swimming Gala

A huge well done to our swimming gala team, who showed sheer determination and courage. It was a nerve-wracking and tense competition, but they gave their all, returning with medals and certificates. We could not be prouder!

Lent

Our Reception children have been learning about Lent. The children thought of ways they could be kind, caring and loving like Jesus. They each drew a picture representing this and we have displayed them in a cross on our prayer space. The children were so thoughtful and considerate during the lesson!



Primaries



ST. BEDE'S



CATHOLIC ACADEMY

STOCKTON

Drumming Workshop with Jeff Rich from Status Quo

What a fantastic morning we had! Learning about the origins of different drums, how to play them and joining in with some amazing beats. We also discovered we have two talented drummers among us!

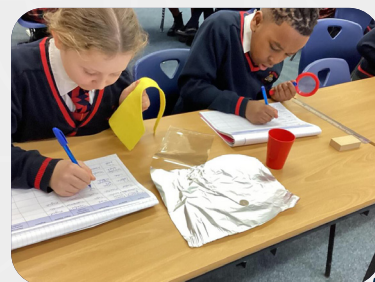


Stockton Children's Book of the Year

Stockton Children's Book of the Year (SCBY) involves children, teachers, parents, authors, and library staff in the promotion and celebration of children's literature. Every year, between November and March, over 500 children aged 9 to 11 (Year 5 and 6) choose the best book of the year, culminating in the SCBY Celebration Day. Alongside announcing the winning author of Stockton Children's Book of the Year, book prizes are awarded to pupils for Best Book Review and Outstanding Effort. For St. Bede's, Neana won Best Effort for engaging with the programme the best, and Iris won Best Book Review for an outstanding review! Both girls then attended the award ceremony, and we had an author visit our school.

Materials Topic

In science, we kicked off our new topic on materials with an exciting exploration of their different properties. We examined a variety of everyday objects and worked together to identify what they were made of. Then, we grouped the materials based on characteristics such as whether they were hard or soft, shiny or dull, flexible or rigid. It was a hands-on lesson that got us thinking like real scientists!





Primaries



Watch our school video here!

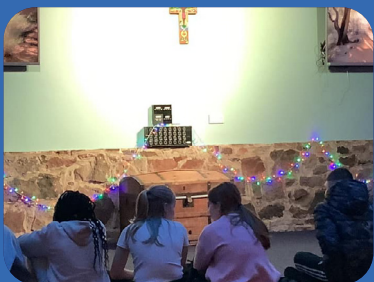


St. Bega's

Catholic Primary School
HARTLEPOOL

Emmaus Youth Village

Our Year 5 pupils journeyed to the Emmaus Youth Village, where they took time to reflect, pray, and grow in their faith. Through guided activities, discussions, and moments of quiet contemplation, they strengthened friendships and developed a deeper understanding of their faith in action.



Residential Trip to Peat Rigg!

Meanwhile, our adventurous Year 6 pupils embraced the great outdoors on their outward-bound residential trip to Peat Rigg! They pushed themselves out of their comfort zones and discovered just how resilient they can be. Peat Rigg gave them a chance to explore physical perseverance, leadership skills, and working together to overcome obstacles.

Stay and Pray

We have started our stay and pray sessions for the year and have welcomed parents, carers and grandparents into the school to join us as we pause, reflect and share a moment of prayer.



Rockstar Day

This term, we also celebrated NSPCC National Number Day by holding a Rockstar Day. Our children dressed as rockstars, and we took part in maths games and competitions across the day. Well done to everyone who took part!



Primaries



Watch our
school video
here!



St. Chad's

Catholic Primary School
WITTON PARK

Dear Greenpeace

This term, we have focused on the world around us. During our topic, Key Stage 1 read the book *Dear Greenpeace* and researched whales. To find out more about these animals, the children wrote their own letters to Greenpeace. They were very excited to receive a reply from Syed at Greenpeace, who answered all their questions and provided lots of information about whales. The children were thrilled to receive the reply!



British Science Week

British Science Week took place between 7-16 March 2025. This year's theme explored change and adaptation. At St. Chad's, we celebrated British Science Week by completing the RSPB Wild Challenge Schools' award. So far, children have built bird boxes, hedgehog feeding stations, completed a bird watch, visited a local farm for a Spring watch, created bird feeders, built a mini-pond, a log habitat, an amphibian habitat, and a bug hotel, among other activities. We also look forward to completing our gold award with a whole-school trip to Low Barnes.

A Visit from Sam Rushworth

In February, we were visited by Sam Rushworth, our local MP. We enjoyed learning about being an MP and what happens in Parliament. He described what he does during a day in Parliament and how he works long hours. He explained how he is involved in debates, votes on laws, and represents the views of his constituents.





Primaries



Watch our
school video
here!



St. Charles'

Catholic Primary School
SPENNYMOOR

Andy Toozy Visits St. Charles!

Andy Tooze visited St. Charles to share the power of words and ignite the imagination of the children. His visit aimed to encourage creative writing and further develop a love for poetry in the children. Andy, who has published hundreds of poems, began the day by meeting the children in an assembly. They were given the opportunity to share any poetry they had prepared for his visit before he delivered workshops with each year group.

Across the day, Andy visited each class from Nursery to Year 6, leading interactive workshops where the children created their own poems. The children were truly inspired and discovered how to include humour, emotions, and nature in their poems. The workshops demonstrated that poetry can be accessible and fun—it isn't just for experts but for anyone with a passion for words.

At the end of the day, the children gathered to share their poems, performing them and proudly displaying their creative works. As a result of Andy's visit, the children continued to write their own poems, even at home with their parents!



Year 6 Visit the Lake District

Year 6 had a fantastic residential at Derwent Hill in the Lake District. The setting was beautiful, surrounded by snow-capped mountains. They enjoyed three fun-filled days of activities, including mountaineering, gorge-walking, mine exploring, canoeing on Derwentwater, high swings (very high!), team-building activities, and much more.

Across the three days, they all displayed a positive attitude and a willingness to try new challenges, which was truly inspiring. It was amazing to watch them grow, support each other, and take on new experiences with such enthusiasm and resilience.



Primaries



St. Cuthbert's
Catholic Primary School
CROOK

St. Cuthbert's children are continuing their ASPIRE mission!

ACHIEVE

Children are achieving their best through our new writing curriculum; they are thoroughly enjoying their new texts and are using persuasive language and rhetorical questions to produce excellent pieces of writing!

SHINE

Our whole school family have been shining Jesus' light with our Lenten efforts to support our local foodbank. Our sports squad ensure that we shine during our lunchtimes by including everyone in our wide variety of games and activities.

PERSEVERE

We have shown our perseverance through making and flipping pancakes, creating our very own Haka and attending tennis and dance festivals!

INSPIRE

We have inspired our new staff members with our excellent attitudes to learning. We have engaged with explorer stations as we mimicked the life of Captain James Cook, learning how to communicate history!

RISE

World book day provided us with the opportunity to rise together to make our new library space an idyllic place to sit and become immersed in stories! Our walls display our fantastic story spoons and our reading squad are doing a wonderful job of keeping it a very calm space to be!

EXCEL

Our whole school ASPIRE days ensure that we are developing the skills we need to be the best that we can be, during our last ASPIRE day we learnt about many of the career opportunities that we can aspire to.



Primaries



St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School HARTLEPOOL

St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School brings Shakespeare to Hartlepool with The Tempest

On Thursday, 20 February, St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School proudly welcomed The First Encounters: Shakespeare for Younger Audiences (RSC) to perform an 80-minute version of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, marking a significant milestone in its journey as a lead associate school within the Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) Associate Schools Programme. This prestigious event, granted to only a select few schools, highlighted St. Cuthbert's dedication to making Shakespeare accessible to young learners and the wider community.

Since joining the Associate Schools Programme in 2017 as part of the Archibold cluster in Middlesbrough, the school has cultivated a deep appreciation for Shakespeare. His works are now an integral part of the Key Stage 2 curriculum, allowing children to explore language, drama, and performance over four years.



Imogen and Kitty

Hi, we are Imogen and Kitty, we are Year 6's from St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary school, in Hartlepool. The Royal Shakespeare company visited our school to perform 'The Tempest', it was magical and exhilarating! Our amazing day began by them setting up scenery linked to the story; it included vines hanging down from palm trees and an island in the middle of the stage covered in different shades of fabric, it created a magical island presence. We tried to contain our excitement as we hastily finished our packed lunches. The hustle and bustle in the hall slowly increased with a buzz of anticipation, as we waited for the performance to begin. It began with a tempest (a terrible storm), the face of the actors was filled with fear, dread and foreboding, their actions were pure drama.

Imogen: "My favourite part was when Miranda and Ferdinand were playing cards because they loved each other, despite Prospero preventing their relationship."

Kitty: "My favourite character was Stephano and Trinculo because they brought humour to stage, and they were extremely entertaining. My favourite part was the actors improvising and making funny noises."





Primaries



St. Cuthbert's
Catholic Primary School
STOCKTON

Jubilee Launch Day

At St. Cuthbert's, we enjoyed a joyful Jubilee launch day. Children across the school engaged in various activities that helped them better understand the history behind a Jubilee Year, this year's theme, 'Pilgrims of Hope,' the significance of the Jubilee logo, and the journey they will take to bring hope to others. The children learned all about the 'Door of Hope' and designed and decorated their own classroom 'Doors of Hope.' The highlight of the day was when Canon Cooper attended our whole-school Celebration of the Word and officially opened our very own 'Door of Hope.'



Faith in Action

Our Year 6 Faith in Action children have been supporting the work of Nitelight CIC. They attended a workshop that taught them how to use recycled crisp packets to make blankets and sleeping bags, which will provide comfort to those who are homeless on the streets of Teesside. After the training, they held crisp sales in school and set up recycling stations to collect crisp packets. They are now working hard to make as many blankets as possible, which will be handed over to the charity for use next winter. We are very proud of how they have stood in solidarity and lived out the Catholic Social Teaching principle of Preferential Option for the Poor.

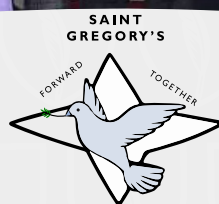
Mini Vinnies & School Council

This term, members of the School Council and Mini Vinnies eagerly engaged in a local initiative to plant trees in green spaces with Stockton Borough Council. Together, they planted 120 trees! They demonstrated the Catholic Social Teaching Principle of Stewardship by caring for our planet.





Primaries



St. Gregory's
Catholic Academy
STOCKTON

Stockton Fire Service Visit

On Monday, 31 March, officers from Stockton Fire Service visited St. Gregory's. We discussed the importance of firefighters and their role in society, and the officers explained the variety of duties they undertake, including extinguishing fires, rescuing people and animals, and providing emergency medical services. As well as learning fire safety tips and how to prevent fires, we also discovered that if we want to become firefighters when we grow up, we need to be physically fit and have strong teamwork skills. While Key Stage 2 learned about how to become a firefighter, our younger children gathered around the fire engine for a memorable experience that combined learning with a big adventure!

Holocaust Memorial Day

In January, four of our Year 6 children attended a Holocaust Memorial service at St. Michael's Catholic Academy in Billingham. They joined other secondary and primary schools from across the town to pay their respects to the victims of the Holocaust. As part of the service, the children placed our stone in the Holocaust remembrance garden. The children represented St. Gregory's beautifully with the words: "Kind hearts can light up the world, making it bright and peaceful for all."





Primaries



Watch our school video here!



St. John the Evangelist

Catholic Primary School
BILLINGHAM

Times Table Rockstars

St. John's 'rocked' the school during Rockstars Day! They spent the day developing their times tables and basic number skills, battling one another on TTRS and even battling their teachers! Lots of fun was had by all.



Judo Day

Each year group had a chance to take part in a judo session ran by a local FIJ judo school. The children had a fantastic time and we definitely spotted some hidden talent!

Chef's Celebration Day

We had a special 'Chef's Celebration' during lunchtime. Every child who had a school dinner had the chance to win a mystery prize if, when they collected their tray, it had a surprise star on it! The excitement in the dinner hall was at fever pitch as the children enjoyed their food.



Year 2 Preparing to write instructions

Our Year 1/2 children made porridge in preparation for their instruction writing. They were inspired to write instructions for Goldilocks to prevent her from stealing from the bears.



Primaries



St. John Vianney Catholic Primary School HARTLEPOOL

Pilgrims of Hope

Pilgrims travel to sacred sites to feel a closer connection with God. These locations are often places where the divine presence is especially strong. Pilgrimages are a way of showing devotion and demonstrating faith through physical effort. Physically, our pilgrimage was a walk from our school to St. Joseph's Church in the centre of Hartlepool, where the Holy Door has been opened for this Jubilee Year. Spiritually, each step of the journey provided us with opportunities to grow closer to Jesus and to each other. As we walked along, we were guided to reflect upon different aspects of the life of Jesus, with a prayer suggested for each section of the walk. Our Companions in school had prepared this Pilgrim Guide to support the pilgrims on their journey: to follow the Jesus Way. Parents and parishioners joined us as fellow pilgrims and, like us, made it part of their Lenten spiritual exercises. All pilgrims were sustained by two refreshment stations providing a 'morsel and cup' along the way. Once the pilgrims had passed through the Holy Door, they enjoyed visiting a series of prayer stations inside St. Joseph's Church, prepared by the parish. When all groups had arrived, the pilgrims shared in Vespers: Evening Prayer of the Church, in joyful expression of their physical worship, and received a commemorative medal. We are each pilgrims of hope in a world in desperate need of such certainty.



Year 5's Inspiring Encounter with Helen Sharman!

Year 5 had the incredible opportunity to join a Zoom call with Helen Sharman, the first British astronaut. It was fascinating to hear about her early education, the path that led her to space, and her experiences and observations! The pupils also had the chance to ask Helen some questions. Who knows? Perhaps she has inspired some future astronauts among us!



Primaries



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School BILLINGHAM



London Trip

Our Year 6 children had a truly fantastic trip to London this term. From exploring iconic landmarks such as Leicester Square, Trafalgar Square, Buckingham Palace, China Town, the London Eye, the River Thames, and St. James' Park, to the fun of the LEGO and M&M stores — what an adventure we had! We also visited the Outernet immersive entertainment district, which brings together breathtaking arts, culture, and music — what an incredible experience it was.

The highlight of the day was visiting the Houses of Parliament and sitting in the viewing gallery to watch debates in both the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The children were fortunate to meet our local MP, Chris Macdonald, and learn firsthand about his role. Chris was so impressed with the children's questions and knowledge that he even mentioned us in Parliament the following day!

We are beyond proud of our children for embracing these wonderful opportunities and creating fantastic memories!

Reindeer Run



We were proud to present a cheque for £1,963.24 to the Butterwick Hospice. Thanks to the amazing efforts and the generosity of our school community in raising sponsorship money. Your kindness is appreciated, and this donation will make a real difference. Thank you to everyone who took part and supported us.

Year 4 Musicians

Guided by Mr. Harbisher, our music teacher, the Year 4 children have done a brilliant job learning to play the xylophone.

Not only have they learned to play individual notes, but also to combine them into melodies. The children have shown great perseverance in learning an instrument that requires focus and discipline. Keep up the amazing work, and may your love for music continue to grow.





Primaries



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School COUNDON

New Prayer Room

We were honoured to have Father Tony bless and officially open our new prayer room, a special space created to commemorate the Pilgrims of Hope year. This serene and peaceful room offers a quiet refuge for prayer, reflection, and moments of solitude, providing a sanctuary for anyone in need of time away from the busyness of the classroom and school life. Children have access to the room during playtime and lunchtimes, as well as during lesson time if they are feeling overwhelmed. The room will also host our 'Butterflies' intervention, a programme dedicated to supporting children coping with loss and bereavement, and it will be used by groups when planning liturgies. This space serves as a reminder of hope, faith, and the journey we all share, offering comfort and support to our entire school community.



Year 3 and 4 Tennis Festival

Our Year 3 and 4 children enjoyed taking part in the Tennis Festival at Bishop Auckland College. They developed their tennis skills and had fun working together as a team. As always, their behaviour was fantastic, and they did a great job representing St. Joseph's. Well done to all!

Anti-bullying Workshop

Thank you to Janette from Bishop Auckland Police for delivering a workshop on bullying, racism, and general unkindness. She provided us with valuable insights into the laws and legalities surrounding these issues, as well as the impact they can have on victims. Her session was eye-opening and encouraged discussions about respect, compassion, and accountability. We appreciate Janette's time and expertise in helping to create a safer and more inclusive environment for all. We look forward to our next visit!



Primaries



Watch our school video here!



St. Joseph's

Catholic Primary School
HARTLEPOOL



Wellbeing Garden

Our wellbeing project is now well underway. The garden has new raised beds, a new shed/greenhouse, and plenty of gardening equipment for the children to use. At the start of the project, the children made lists of the plants they would like to grow, which include fruit and vegetables, flowers to attract bees, as well as yellow roses for the front car park and a special flower bed outside the hall.

The children have truly embraced our Catholic social teaching of caring for the environment. They even requested large compost bins to collect fruit peelings from snack time.

In the coming weeks, each classroom will have windowsills full of seedlings, which will eventually be planted outside. We are bringing our science lessons to life while giving the children the opportunity to experience the benefits of gardening.

The children also filled planters at the front of the school, next to the Holy Door, with spring bulbs and flowers. If you visit our school in the summer, these planters will be filled with beautiful summer flowers grown by the children.



Shildon Railway Museum

Our Year 1 and 2 enjoyed travelling by train to get to Shildon Locomotion Museum. They took part in a George Stephenson workshop and re-enacted the first journey of Locomotive 1!



Valentine's Day Maths Workshop

To celebrate Valentine's Day and Maths, Year 6 attended the "My First Love Maths: Valentine's Day Workshop." They met Dr. Herb Daly, a computer scientist, and completed various maths challenges. We were one of hundreds of schools participating and had the exciting opportunity to speak directly with him and ask questions! It was a lot of fun!

Judo Sessions

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 enjoyed their judo taster session with lots of fun, games and learning new judo moves.



Primaries



Watch our school video here!



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School NEWTON AYCLIFFE

Year 6 Adventure at Derwent Hill!

Our Year 6 children recently embarked on an unforgettable three-day adventure at Derwent Hill in the Lake District. Set against the stunning backdrop of snow-capped mountains, they participated in a variety of exciting activities, including mountaineering, gorge walking, mine exploring, canoeing, high swings, and team-building challenges.

Throughout the trip, the children demonstrated remarkable bravery and determination, stepping outside their comfort zones, working as a team, and supporting one another. Their positive attitude and resilience were truly inspiring!



St. Joseph's Visit London!

Our children had an incredible trip to London, filled with exciting experiences and unforgettable sights! A highlight of the visit was exploring the Houses of Parliament, where they got a glimpse into the heart of British democracy. They also enjoyed seeing iconic landmarks, including Buckingham Palace and Big Ben, while taking in the history and grandeur of the capital. It was a fantastic opportunity for learning, adventure, and creating lasting memories!

World Poetry Day at St. Joseph's

On March 21, St. Joseph's celebrated World Poetry Day with a special visit from poet Andy Tooze, who brought poetry to life through interactive sessions. The children explored creativity, rhythm, and rhyme, crafting their own nature-inspired poems. The day concluded with a fantastic poetry showcase, where students confidently shared their work with enthusiasm. Andy's visit left everyone inspired and excited about the power of words!



Jubilee Year Launch and Bishop's Visit

The Holy Father has declared 2025 as a year of Jubilee, which occurs every 25 years. The theme for this Jubilee is "Pilgrims of Hope." On Wednesday, 22 January 2025, we were privileged to welcome Bishop Stephen Wright, who celebrated Mass and blessed our Holy Door. After Mass, he visited each class to answer our questions.



Primaries



St. Joseph's
Catholic Academy
NORTON



Outdoor Learning & Wild Classroom

Our EYFS children have embraced the 'Wild Classroom' with great enthusiasm, engaging in outdoor activities such as den building, scavenger hunts, and tree climbing. Inspired by stories like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, these experiences enhance teamwork, communication, and resilience. Outdoor learning fosters independence, physical development, and creativity while also strengthening emotional wellbeing.



Youth Ministry Team (YMT)

The Youth Ministry Team's visit launched our Jubilee Year—Pilgrims of Hope—with reflective workshops, drama, music, and craft sessions exploring faith, hope, and community. Guided by our school chaplains, pupils created our Holy Doors, symbolising our spiritual journey. The event concluded with a heartwarming celebration at St. Joseph's Church, reinforcing our collective identity.

Technology & Devices

We've enhanced learning with Chromebooks for Years 2–6 and new touchscreen boards, supporting digital skills, academic confidence, and future readiness.

Rock Kidz

The Rock Kidz workshop brought high-energy music and powerful PSHE messages on confidence, self-esteem, and anti-bullying. A lively mini-concert capped off the day, leaving pupils inspired and uplifted.





Primaries



Watch our
Peer Mentors
video here!



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School BARNARD CASTLE

Developing Writing through Oracy at St. Mary's

At St. Mary's, we believe that oracy is a vital part of a rich and empowering curriculum. By developing high-quality speaking and listening skills, our pupils are learning not only how to talk but also how to think, collaborate, and express themselves with confidence. This strong foundation in spoken language is having a remarkable impact on their independent writing.

Recently, our Robins and Larks classes showcased their impressive skills by producing fantastic pieces of writing, inspired by carefully planned sequences of talk and role play. Using their oracy skills, they worked together as a classroom community, sharing ideas and refining their vocabulary through meaningful discussions.



Valentine's Coffee Morning

A big thank you to everyone who came along to support our Valentine's coffee morning. It was wonderful to see so many of you there—the hall was full!

It's always a pleasure to take some time to chat with our parents and grandparents, and to meet other family members too. We are so fortunate to have such supportive parents involved in the wider life of the school.

"It is a wonderful school. There is always such a community feel to these events; they are lovely!" — Grandparents of a Year 2 pupil.

Down at the Farm!

- Our EYFS children had a fabulous day at Hall Hill Farm as part of their Spring topic. They had 'the best day ever' seeing all the animals and even having a ride on the tractor.





Primaries



Watch our school video here!



St. Mary's

Catholic Primary School
NEWTON AYCLIFFE

Trees for Children Project!

At St. Mary's, we are excited to share the success of our whole-school project focused on planting as many trees as possible to promote sustainability and environmental learning. We are "Called by God to care for our common home" ('Laudato Si').

Trees for Children is a partnership project delivered by OASES and the Durham County Council Woodland Creations scheme. Our pupils have been learning about the special role trees play in combating climate change. Thanks to OASES, we've received the Trees for Children Education Pack, which contains valuable resources explaining the importance of woodlands in mitigating the effects of climate change and the vital role trees play in our local environment.

A special shout-out to the Year 3 pupils and parents, led by Mr. Darby, who have taken the lead on this project. With the support of the OASES team, we've been able to apply our knowledge from geography (on flooding) and science (on how living things grow and thrive) to this initiative.

Community spirit was strong as parents, grandparents, and younger siblings all came together to help with the event. Your hard work and dedication are truly making a difference!

A Visit from Dr. Bill Scott

As part of our school's focus on careers, we were thrilled to welcome Dr. Bill Scott OBE, CEO of Wilton Engineering, to speak with Year 5 and 6 about his life and career, inspiring any potential engineers at St. Mary's. Bill shared how he was awarded his OBE for services to the offshore wind farming industry and also spoke to the Eco Team. He judged an engineering competition set by Mr. Carter and Mr. Smith, with the winners facing a 'Dragons' Den'-style interview with a real-life entrepreneur, gaining valuable insights on how to pursue a career in engineering. As a token of appreciation, we presented Bill with one of our 'Pilgrims of Hope' badges as a memento of his visit.



Year 2 Learn About Jewish Culture

Year 2 had a wonderful time learning about Shabbat! They explored how Jewish families prepare for this special day of rest and even set up their own Shabbat table. They discovered the significance of the blessings and challah bread. To mark the end of Shabbat, the children learned about the Havdalah ceremony, using a candle and spice box to welcome the new week. The highlight was creating their own Havdalah candles and spice boxes!



Primaries



St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School STOCKTON

Bishop Stephen Visit

On Wednesday, 12 March, we were very blessed to have Bishop Stephen visit our school. The children met him in the school hall and asked him some brilliant questions before we attended Mass together. After Mass, some of our children performed an interpretive dance in the church hall with the help of 'More than Dance'. We had a brilliant morning with Bishop Stephen, and we all found him truly inspirational!



World Down Syndrome Day

March 21 is World Down Syndrome Day! To celebrate and raise awareness, some of our staff and pupils wore odd socks. In Reception and Year 1, we discussed the significance of the day and designed our own odd socks. We had lots of fun while raising awareness for Down syndrome!

Rocksteady Concert

Our children held a Rocksteady concert for parents, followed by a second concert for the school. The children were absolutely brilliant and thoroughly enjoyed themselves! Well done, everyone!





Primaries



St. Paul's Catholic Primary School BILLINGHAM

Netball Competition

We were delighted that three of our netball teams had a chance to compete in the Billingham Netball Competition. Well done to all of you for your excellent behaviour and teamwork.



Sport Festival

Reception class had a great time at the EYFS sport festival. They took part in many different activities from yoga to kick boxing. Thank you Stockton Schools Sport Partnership for organising this event!

STEM Passport Scheme

In November 2023, we were invited to take part in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) activities in partnership with the North East STEM Foundation and Yarm School. Taking part in STEM learning opened up many opportunities for our staff and older pupils, who enjoyed a full STEM day at Yarm School and benefitted from specialised teaching within our own school, focusing on Micro Bits and Virtual Reality.

After our first year of partnership, NE STEM and RTC North provided the opportunity to engage in a STEM Passport Scheme. Each pupil in Year 5 and Year 6 now has a structured way to engage with STEM through a variety of activities. These include attending a STEM event, meeting a STEM ambassador, reading STEM-related books, and participating in STEM competitions. By marking off each activity in their passport, pupils can track their progress and reflect on their learning journey. This not only encourages active participation in STEM subjects but also fosters a sense of accomplishment and excitement about STEM.

We've seen a significant increase in engagement, and the children thoroughly enjoy the hands-on learning experiences. This collaboration has been a fantastic opportunity to inspire the next generation of scientists and innovators.





Primaries



St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School DARLINGTON

St. Teresa's Support MNDA Charity

As part of their Lenten efforts, the St. Teresa's school family has been raising funds for the Motor Neurone Disease Association charity in memory of a former Headteacher. Mr. Mike Buckle served as Headteacher of St. Teresa's from 1971 to 1990 and is very fondly remembered.

On Tuesday, 25 March, children completed a set challenge of between 1 and 5 miles, with staff joining them in their fundraising efforts. Together, they are running a marathon! Initial sponsor money suggests we have raised nearly £4,000. A very big thank you to everyone who has supported such a great cause!



Dancing Talent

A talented group of children from Lower Key Stage 2 proudly took to the stage at Darlington Hippodrome as part of the Darlington Dance Festival, performing alongside other primary schools from across the town. In preparation for this special event, they dedicated weeks to after-school rehearsals with a professional dance coach and participated in various dance workshops to refine their skills.

Their performance, themed around life, featured a dynamic routine set to a selection of songs from *The Greatest Showman*. The children worked exceptionally hard, showcasing not only their creativity and passion for dance but also their commitment to teamwork and perseverance. Their enthusiasm and dedication shone through as they performed in front of a live audience, creating a truly memorable experience.

The event was a wonderful celebration of dance, bringing together young performers from different schools to showcase their talent and hard work on a professional stage.



Primaries



St. Teresa's

Catholic Primary School
HARTLEPOOL

Robotics Success

Our pupils achieved incredible success at a national robotics competition, placing in the top 10 teams in the UK and bringing home the Teamwork 2nd Place Trophy! Led by Computing Lead Mr. Ellis and supported by Acting Headteacher Mrs. Leonard, the team dedicated countless hours of hard work. After strong performances at regional heats in Sunderland and Newcastle, they earned a spot at the National Finals in Telford.

In a dramatic final, St. Teresa's narrowly missed out on the UK Champion title by just one goal but impressed everyone with their resilience, teamwork, and sportsmanship. A huge thank you to Imagination Village for their support—and congratulations to our brilliant young engineers!

We are thrilled to announce that our team has been invited to represent the United Kingdom at the VEX Robotics World Championships in Dallas, Texas, this May! This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our students to compete on the world stage, gain invaluable STEM experience, and inspire the next generation of engineers and innovators.

We were honoured to have MP Jonathan Brash visit our school to present the talented Teresa's Tech Team with their well-deserved award during assembly.



Girls' Football

An amazing effort from our girls' football team as they took part in the Town Cup at Brierton! The team played with passion, determination, and displayed fantastic sportsmanship and teamwork throughout the tournament. We're incredibly proud of their hard work, positive attitude, and the way they supported each other during every match.



Primaries



St. Wilfrid's

Catholic Primary School
BISHOP AUCKLAND

Believe Homes

Believe Homes has provided us with five weeks of Forest Bathing, led by Josh from Oasis. Our sessions take place in the wild areas of our school grounds, where we explore how spending time in nature can support our wellbeing.



World Book Day

We celebrated World Book Day this year by having workshops in school from the West End in School company. The focus was the story of George's Marvellous Medicine, everyone from Reception to Year 6 had an amazing day!

More Than Dance

We had two fabulous days with Danielle and Emily from 'More Than Dance.' Children in Years 3-6 learned signs and movements to some inspirational songs. Our performances at the end of each day were supported by parents and carers. Our pupils had a fantastic experience!





Primaries



Watch our school video here!



St. William's Catholic Academy TRIMDON

London Trip

Mrs. Heale and Mrs. Curtis, along with the school council, have been helping to ensure that British Values have an important place at St. William's. They arranged a visit to the Houses of Parliament, where children had the opportunity to participate in educational workshops within the Palace of Westminster, take a tour of the palace, and even watch debates taking place. We enjoyed a meal in London and even got to visit Platform 9^{3/4} on the way home!



Singing Festival

Children from Year 5 and 6 attended a singing workshop led by Aga Serugo-Lugo through Durham Music Service as part of their Singing Festival. This was a fantastic opportunity for the children to showcase their singing skills, learn vocal techniques, and have fun! They had an amazing morning!

Oriental Museum Trip

Class 5 had an amazing day at the Oriental Museum in Durham. They have enjoyed a range of activities including dressing up in festival wear, learning a festival dance, learning different languages, practiced Kintsugi art and have enjoyed a Japanese tea.





BISHOP HOGARTH
Catholic Education Trust



Watch our video **here!**

Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust
The Headlands, Darlington, Co. Durham DL3 8RW

Telephone: (01325) 254525 Email: admin@bhcet.org.uk



www.bhcet.org.uk

Socialise with us

