



**THIS IS HOW WE DO IT HERE**

13<sup>th</sup> March  
2026



## WELCOME FROM HEAD



**Welcome to this edition of our newsletter.**

Dear parents/carers,

It's been a busy and exciting term so far, with pupils engaging in a wide range of trips, activities, and wider curriculum opportunities across the school. This newsletter highlights just some of those moments, as well as sharing a few important updates and reminders to keep everyone informed.

Thank you for your continued support.

With every good wish,

Mrs M Wilkinson

# OUR TRUST MEDIA AMBASSADORS



## Meet Our New School Media Ambassadors

We are delighted to introduce our brand-new School Media Ambassadors: Izzy, Jude and Emily, all talented and enthusiastic pupils in Year 10 who already play an active role in our school community. Each of them brings creativity, confidence and a real passion for sharing the many stories that make our school such a vibrant place to be.

Two of our ambassadors have just returned from an unforgettable visit to Rome as part of our annual pilgrimage—an experience that perfectly reflects the curiosity, leadership and responsibility they will bring to this role.

As Media Ambassadors, they will be representing our school across the Trust's communication channels, capturing key moments from school life and sharing them with parents, carers and our wider community through our newsletter and Trust media platforms. It's a fantastic opportunity for them to develop real-world experience in journalism, communication and digital media—an exciting addition to their CVs and a brilliant platform for their futures.

**We can't wait to see the stories they tell.**



# INTRODUCING ARBOR

Our recent move to the Arbor MIS system marks an important step in improving how we communicate with families and support students' learning.

Arbor gives parents a clearer, more accessible view of key information such as attendance, timetables, and progress, all in one easy-to-use platform.

It allows us to share updates more efficiently, reduce paperwork, and ensure that you have the most accurate information at your fingertips.

As we settle into the new system, we appreciate your patience and engagement, and we are confident that Arbor will strengthen the partnership between home and school by making communication smoother and more transparent. If there is anything you are unsure about as you get started, please let us know so we can support you.

**Please ensure that you have downloaded the Arbor APP from either the App Store or Play Store. This is imperative for key communication items and replaces the MCAS APP.**

## SOME SEND UPDATES

You may have recently seen a lot of discussion in the media and on social platforms about the Government's new Schools White Paper and SEND Reform Consultation. We want to reassure all our families that nothing has changed at this stage. The proposals are currently part of a national consultation, and no new legislation or school-level requirements have been introduced yet. To help parents understand the information being shared nationally, the Department for Education has published a set of clear, parent-friendly guides. You can read these here:

### Parent Information Documents

[🔗](#) What parents of children and young people with SEND need to know (and other supporting documents):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-send-reforms-sheets> [gov.uk]

### Consultation Page

If you wish to read the full consultation or share your views before the deadline, you can access it here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-first> [natsip.org.uk]

### What's happening in our school?

Although no changes are in place yet, we know how important clear communication is for our families. Over the coming months, we will be holding information events in school where we will:

- explain how our current SEND offer works
- outline what the proposed reforms might mean in the future
- answer questions from parents and carers
- signpost ways to participate in the national consultation if you wish

If the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) information sessions continue locally, we will also share those dates and encourage parents to attend for additional support and guidance.

Our aim is to ensure that you feel informed, reassured, and supported throughout the national SEND consultation process.



# Y9 OPTIONS

## WHY DO THEY MATTER?

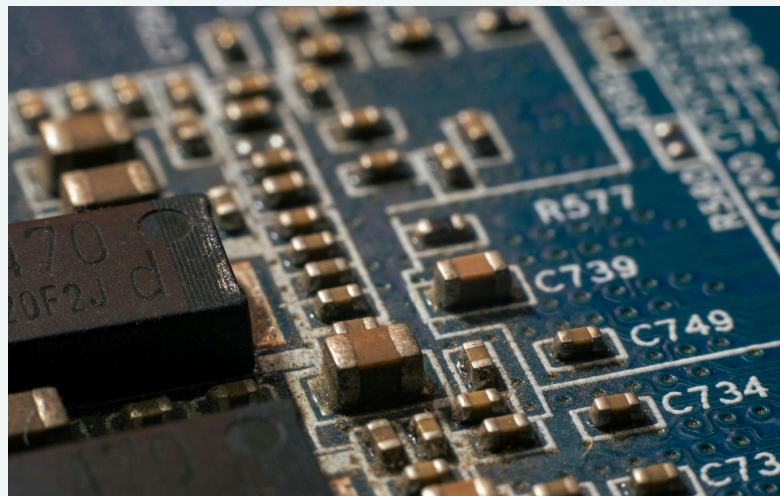
Year 9 options are an important milestone at Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy because they help students begin shaping their future while growing in confidence, independence, and responsibility.

Choosing subjects allows pupils to think carefully about their strengths, interests, and aspirations, and it marks the moment they start taking greater ownership of their learning.

In a Catholic school, this process is also rooted in our values: we encourage students to make thoughtful, well-informed decisions that will help them flourish academically, personally, and spiritually.

The options pathway ensures that every child is supported to choose a balanced curriculum that keeps doors open and prepares them for success in Key Stage 4 and beyond.

**Find out more about our curriculum [here](#).**



# ATTENDANCE MATTERS

## A Shared Responsibility

Regular attendance is vital for every child's learning, wellbeing and future opportunities. Our updated Attendance Policy reinforces this and sets out the support we offer as soon as we notice any emerging pattern of absence.

When a child's attendance begins to fall, we will always get in touch so we can understand the reasons, work with you to overcome any barriers and help your child return to a positive, consistent routine.

If your child is absent, please contact us at the start of the morning session. If we do not hear from a parent or carer, we will continue to call all listed contact numbers, and where appropriate, a home visit may be carried out. This is an essential part of our safeguarding duty and helps ensure every child is safe.

## Key Reminders

A punctual start helps pupils settle, receive key information for the day and begin learning calmly. If lateness becomes a pattern, we will follow up quickly so it can be resolved. It is essential that pupils are in school by 8.40am so they can get their morning attendance mark.

Where possible, all medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours. If time off is required, parents must provide advance notice with a medical card and/or letter. Time away from school should be kept to a minimum, pupils should not miss an entire day, morning, or afternoon for an appointment, if a medical appointment in school time is unavoidable the pupil must attend school before/ after the appointment.



# STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOUR

## Look smart. Be Focused. Stay prepared

At Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy, our uniform plays a key role in promoting unity, pride, and a strong sense of belonging among pupils. A smart and consistent appearance helps reduce distractions and supports pupils in staying focused on their learning, while also preparing them for the expectations they will meet in future educational and professional settings.



We would like to remind families that trainers, leggings, and jewellery—apart from one pair of studs worn at the same level in each lobe—are not part of the approved uniform. We are proud of our pupils' smart presentation and grateful for the continued support of parents and carers in upholding our high standards.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we work together to maintain a smart, respectful, and united school community.

If any family requires support with uniform, we encourage you to contact the school, where we will be more than happy to offer guidance and assistance in a discreet and supportive manner.

## New Uniform Supplier Announced

We are pleased to share that the approved Our Lady & St Bede school uniform is now available exclusively through our new designated supplier, Michael Sehgal and Sons Ltd. Families can place orders directly via the link below.

To support parents and carers, sample uniform items will be available to try on in school from 25th June. The company has also provided a guarantee that any orders placed by the deadline of 31st July will be delivered in time for the start of the September term. In addition, free delivery is available on all orders over £40, offering a convenient and cost-effective service.

Visit us at...

**UNIT 17  
AIRPORT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE  
KINGSTON PARK  
NEWCASTLE  
NE3 2EF**

We are just off the A1. At the Kingston Park turn off, take signs for the Airport Industrial Estate. Opposite Nandos, next to the Tesco Superstore. Also easily accessible by bus or metro (250 meters from Kingston Park metro station).

Michael Sehgal & Sons Ltd

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW TO SEND THE ADDRESS TO YOUR PHONE

Opening times vary so it is very important that you make an appointment online before making a trip to visit our store! Just scan the code on the left!

# CATHOLIC LIFE

## Fratelli Tutti: Living as Brothers and Sisters

Pupils have been exploring the message of Fratelli Tutti and the legacy of Pope Francis in their RE lessons.

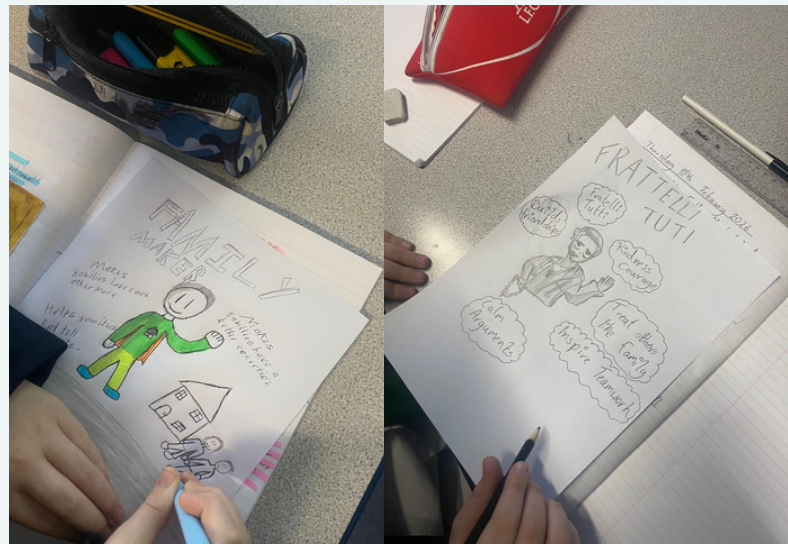
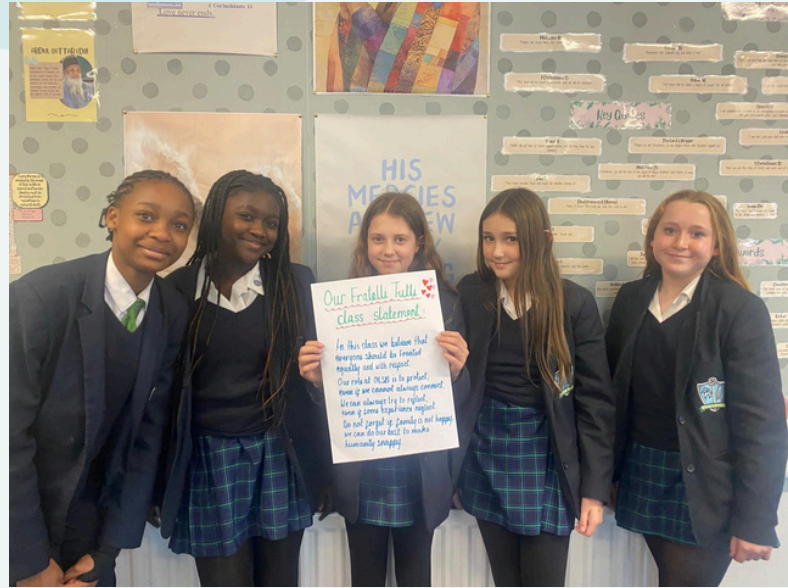
They reflected on what it truly means to live as brothers and sisters, inspired by Pope Francis' reminder that:

"We are called to live as brothers and sisters, without anyone being excluded."

Through creative and thoughtful classwork, pupils considered themes of compassion, respect and justice, recognising that faith is something lived out in our daily choices.

Pope Francis also reminds us that:

"No one can face life in isolation... we need a community that supports and helps us."



## The Source Meeting at St Mary's Cathedral

We were delighted to attend the February Source gathering at St Mary's Cathedral. Pupils and staff heard inspiring testimonies from Grace and Anne, two young leaders involved in the Youth Council and Lourdes Youth. Bishop Stephen led a beautiful time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, with music provided by the Festival Band.

It was an uplifting and faith-filled experience for all who attended.



# TRIPS/ENRICHMENT

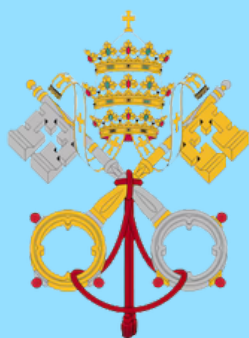
## Y10 RE Rome Pilgrimage

Our Year 10 pupils have returned from an incredible RE pilgrimage to Rome, bringing their learning and faith to life in the heart of the Catholic Church.

During the trip they explored some of the most famous historical and religious sites in the world, including the Colosseum, Roman Forum, Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, the Catacombs of St Callixtus, and the beautiful basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore, St Paul Outside the Walls, and St Peter's Basilica in Vatican City. A visit to the Vatican Museums and the breathtaking Sistine Chapel was a real highlight.

Beyond the history and culture, the pilgrimage was a powerful opportunity for prayer, reflection and deepening faith. Our pupils were an absolute credit to the school throughout – showing respect, curiosity and enthusiasm at every stage.

A truly memorable pilgrimage. 🇮🇹 ✨



# TRIPS/ENRICHMENT

## Bormio Ski Trip

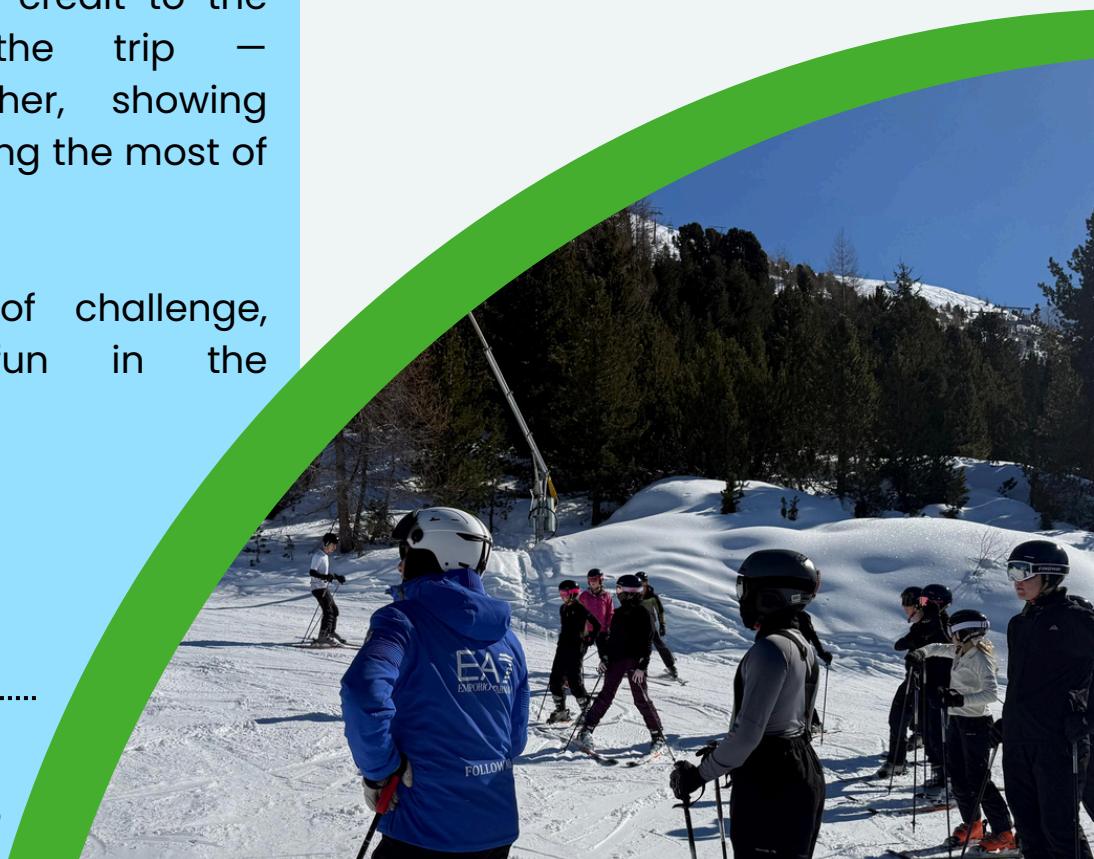
Our pupils have returned from an amazing ski trip to Bormio, Italy, and what a fantastic week it was!

Throughout the trip, pupils showed great confidence, resilience and determination as they developed their skiing skills and challenged themselves on the slopes. It was brilliant to see their progress each day, with all pupils successfully making it onto the main slopes and growing in skill and confidence.

Evenings were packed with fun activities including quizzes and karaoke, giving everyone the chance to relax, laugh and enjoy time together after a busy day skiing.

The pupils were a real credit to the school throughout the trip – supporting one another, showing great attitude and making the most of every opportunity.

A memorable week of challenge, achievement and fun in the mountains!



# CAREERS VISITS

## Our Y9 Skills for Success Programme Is Underway.

We're thrilled to launch Skills for Success, an inspiring five-week programme delivered in partnership with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council—designed to help Year 9 students build confidence, discover new opportunities, and connect classroom learning with the real world.

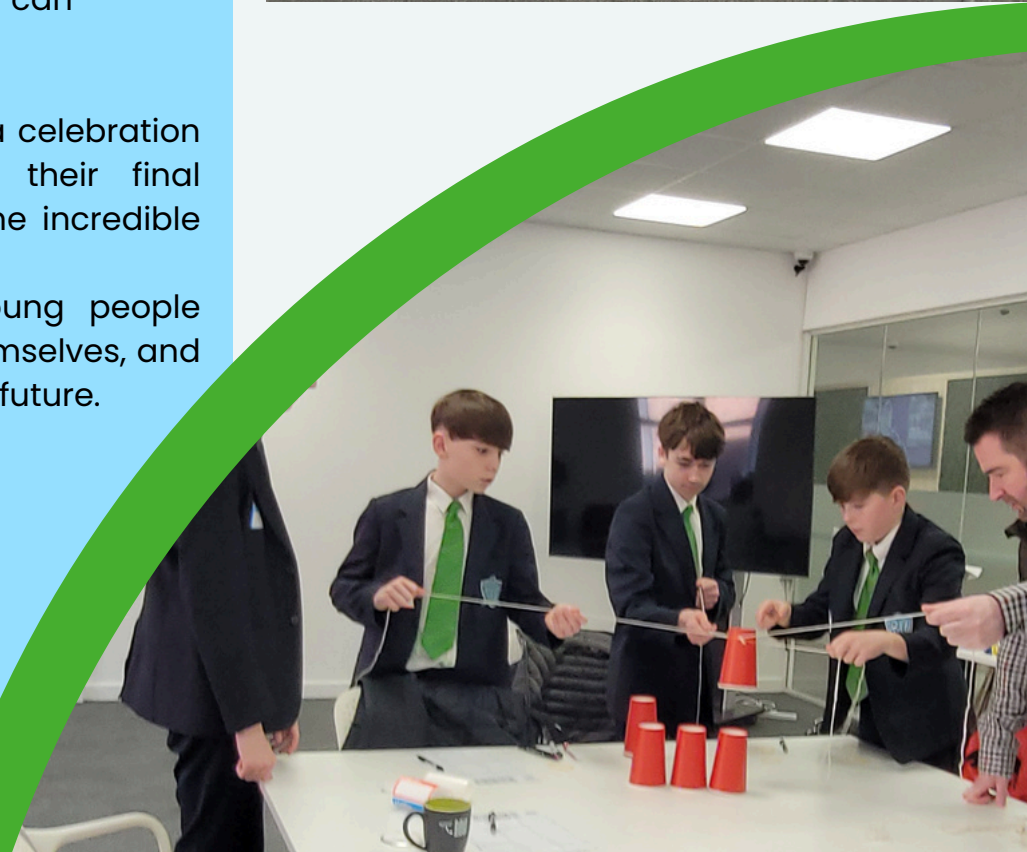
Across sector-focused workshops, industry visits, and hands-on challenges, students develop essential skills such as teamwork, communication, resilience, problem-solving, leadership and oracy. From Health & Social Care to Digital & Games, Maritime & Logistics, Green Energy, and the Creative sector, students gain meaningful insights into Stockton's growth industries and the futures they can lead within them.

Each week, students:

- Explore a new career sector
- Build a toolkit of transferable skills
- Meet real professionals
- Grow their belief in what they can achieve

The programme culminates in a celebration event where students share their final elevator pitches—showcasing the incredible progress they've made.

We can't wait to see our young people continue to grow, challenge themselves, and take powerful steps toward their future.



# IMPORTANT LINKS



**OUR WEBSITE**

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE HERE](#)



**OUR FAITH**

[VISIT OUR PAGE HERE](#)



**OUR CURRICULUM**

[VISIT OUR PAGE HERE](#)



**OUR POLICIES**

[VISIT OUR PAGE HERE](#)



*This is how we do it here*