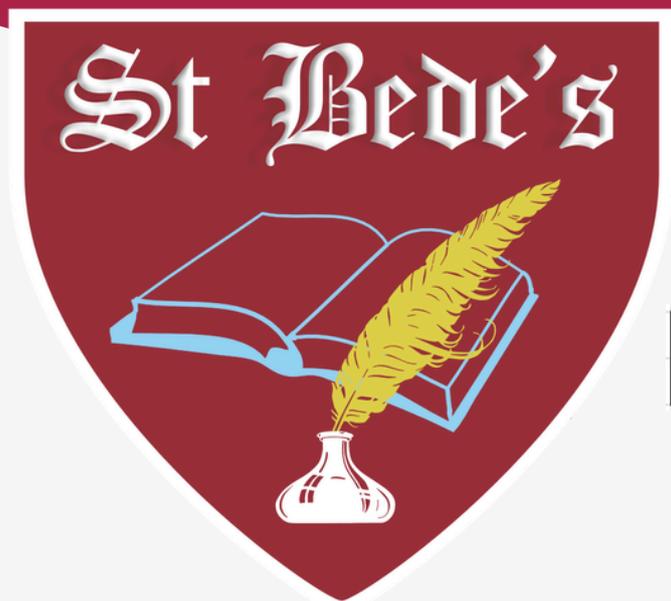


St Bede's Newsletter

Welcome to St Bede's...



Attendance up to 20/02/26

Y1	Y1/2	Y2	Y3	Y3/4	Y4	Y5	Y5/6	Y6
96.80	94.9	94.8	95.6	95.00	96.70	96.40	96.7	92.60

Coming soon...

Monday 9th Mar

- Y6 SATS Booster (moved from Wed 11th)
- Y5 Bikeability

Tuesday 10th Mar

Y5 Bikeability

Wednesday 11th Mar

House Football Tournament (in school)

Thursday 12th Mar

Y5/6 Girl's Football Cup

This week...

Wednesday 4th Mar

Y6 SATS Booster

Thursday 5th Mar

- School photographs
- Y5&6 Football Cup

Friday 6th Mar

- Mayor's Song Contest Dolphin Centre
- World Book Day (dress as favourite character)

Our Safeguarding Focus This Week...

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ZEPETO

FOR SALE **AGE RESTRICTION 14+**

ZEPETO is a fast-growing app blending social networking with a virtual world experience – attracting around 20 million monthly users, with 15% from Europe. Players create 3D avatars to explore immersive environments, play games and interact with others; however, with minimal safety controls, anonymous chat and monetised content, ZEPETO poses a number of online safety concerns that parents and educators should be aware of.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- NO PARENTAL CONTROLS**
Although ZEPETO is intended for users aged 14 and up, it lacks built-in parental controls or age verification, instead relying on safety features on the device it's played on. This lack of a parental controls feature raises concerns about whom children may be interacting with on the platform.
- INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**
As a mix between a virtual world and a social media platform, ZEPETO features a wide range of user-generated content. Some areas may reference mature themes, such as TV series aimed at adults, or include inappropriate material created by other users – all of which children may stumble across without warning.
- STRANGER DANGER**
By default, users can message and interact with anyone else. This open communication creates an environment where predatory individuals can pose as peers to gain trust, potentially leading to grooming, scams, and exploitation, such as blackmail.
- CYBERBULLYING RISKS**
As with many social platforms, children can be targeted for bullying, harassment or exclusion by both strangers and their peers. Unfiltered chat and avatar-based interaction can allow bullying and other forms of harassment to continue, impacting children's wellbeing and mental health.
- ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY**
Daily log-in rewards, such as coins, and in-game incentives can encourage compulsive behaviour, with some users feeling pressure to check in constantly to avoid missing out. This can lead to excessive screen time and conflict with schoolwork or offline hobbies or commitments.
- SPENDING REAL MONEY**
While the game is free to play, ZEPETO includes a store offering virtual clothing and accessories for avatars. These items are bought with 'ZEMs' – a paid currency – and the appeal of exclusive items or branded collaborations can make it easy for children to overspend.

Advice for Parents & Educators

- ENABLE PRIVACY SETTINGS**
Visit the child's profile settings to restrict who can send messages – options include Everyone, Followers Only, or No-one. Encourage children to avoid sharing any personal information on their profile, as this is visible even on private accounts.
- CONTROL SPENDING**
To prevent accidental purchases, set up purchase approval systems such as Apple's Ask to Buy or Google's Purchase Approvals. Alternatively, consider removing payment methods or using pre-paid cards with set budgets.
- LIMIT IN-APP TIME**
Use parental controls on Android (Google Family Link) or iOS (Screen Time) to restrict app usage by setting hours or daily limits. Encouraging breaks can help children develop healthier habits and reduce app dependency.
- HAVE REGULAR CONVERSATIONS**
Talk openly with children about whom they interact with online and the kinds of things they see or experience. Encourage them to speak up if someone makes them uncomfortable or if they come across inappropriate content. Teach them how to recognise red-flag behaviours such as asking for secrets, giving gifts, or requesting personal information.

Meet Our Expert
Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.

#WakeUpWednesday
The National College

Keep up to date with upcoming events via our school calendar

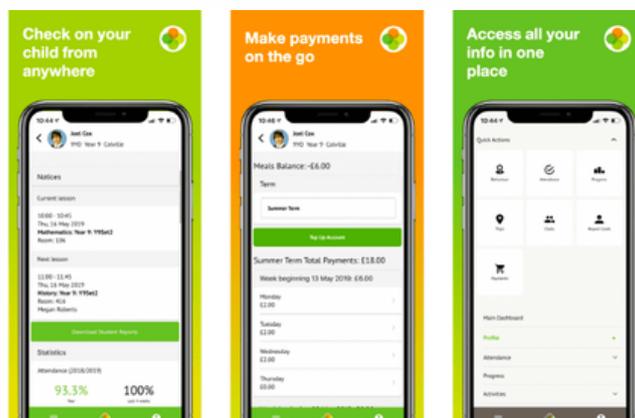
<https://stbedesdarlington.bhcet.org.uk/calendar>



Arbor

We have successfully migrated to Arbor!

- Note we are no longer able to communicate with parents via text message
- Parents are responsible for checking in-app messages and emails regularly



Please make sure you have activated Arbor!

Here are some useful parent guides

[Communications and In-app Messages](#)

[Signing my child up for a club](#)

[Signing my child up for a trip](#)

[Checking accounts balances](#)

[Topping up accounts](#)

Our school has always aimed to offer flexibility with payments, but to manage resources responsibly we now need to ensure all accounts remain in credit. Children will only be able to have a school meal or attend wraparound care if the relevant account has a positive balance. The only exception is for families using childcare vouchers – Arbor now allows voucher users to pre-book, and their account may go into a small agreed temporary debt while payments are processed.

Thank you for your support.



World Book Day!



Friday 6th March 2026

(due to Individual photos on the **5th March 2026**)

This year, World Book Day 2026 is all about promoting the Love of Reading and Reading for Pleasure.

For this, all children are invited to dress as their favourite **fictional** book character. We will be spending the day celebrating reading by completing lots of fun activities and games.

There will be a whole school Assembly with prizes for the best costume and reading quizzes.

We look forward to seeing all of your amazing costumes!



World Book Day Reading Challenge!

This half term, we're inviting all our pupils to take part in a fun and creative reading challenge! Your task is simple: find the most unique, unusual, or imaginative place to enjoy a good book - and capture the moment with a photo!

It could be somewhere cosy, somewhere adventurous, or somewhere completely unexpected. The more creative, the better!

Once you've taken your photo, send it in after half term using this email:
admin@stbedesdarlington.bhcet.org.uk

Please reference it using your initials with WBD26 e.g. L.RWBD26

Miss Cuff and Mrs Peacock will carefully look through all the entries and choose the student who found the most unique reading spot.

The winner will receive a special prize!

We can't wait to see all the amazing and inventive places you discover for your reading this half term. Happy reading!

Kind Regards,
Miss Robinson

