

St Bede's Newsletter

Welcome to St Bede's...



Attendance up to 12/12/25

Y1	Y1/2	Y2	Y3	Y3/4	Y4	Y5	Y5/6	Y6
94.47	93.70	95.14	95.47	95.63	97.44	97.07	95.37	92.94

January

This week..

Tuesday 16th Dec

Visit from Santa

Wednesday 17th Dec

- KS1 Christmas Party
- Y3/4 Miss Armstrong's class visit to Springfield Care Home

Thursday 18th Dec

EYFS Christmas Party

Friday 19th Dec

- Carols in Church 9.30am
- Advent Market (pm)

HIGHLIGHTS

Monday 5th Jan

SATS Booster parent meeting in school 3.15pm

Wednesday 7th Jan

SATS Boosters start 3.10-4pm

Monday 12th Jan

KS1 Net/Wall Festival

Tuesday 13th Jan

Y5 Class Assembly 9.15am

Tuesday 20th Jan

Y4 Class Assembly 9.15am

Thursday 29th Jan

Y3-4 Tennis Festival

Our Safeguarding Focus This Week...

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **AI TOYS**

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN

When a toy uses AI, it collects data such as voice recordings, interactions, and background sounds. This information is sent to remote servers, where it is analysed to improve responses. Your child's voice becomes training data, which may be stored indefinitely or shared with third parties.

WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS

Some AI toys have poor password protection or open network connections. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to recordings being made without your knowledge, including conversations unrelated to play.

ARTIFICIAL VOICES, REAL INFLUENCE

For very young children, an AI companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. How that voice shows humour, empathy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial, then part of what is learned is artificial as well.

PRESSURE TO KEEP ENGAGING

Some toys reward repeated use or track engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compare how their toys perform, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

MARKETING THROUGH PLAY

Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted marketing to that child and their family.

PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING

The information collected from children helps train AI systems. Their voice, emotional responses, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy; blind trust is not.

SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use. Check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device; they should be monitored, updated, and switched off when not in use.

MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are more likely to do the same. Show them how to question technology in a healthy way.

RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally. Check for a free or demo version so you can test how it behaves. Read privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes, and whether it's shared with others.

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has access to it. Some companies sell or share data with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible.

BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

AI toys can be fun and creative, but they are not a replacement for real human interaction. Encourage time away from technology with activities that foster emotional and social development. Use AI toys to support learning, not define it.

Meet Our Expert

Clara Hawking is Executive Director of Kompass Education. She advises governments, school trusts, and global organisations on AI governance and safeguarding, helping schools and families understand how technology shapes learning, wellbeing, and the digital future of children.



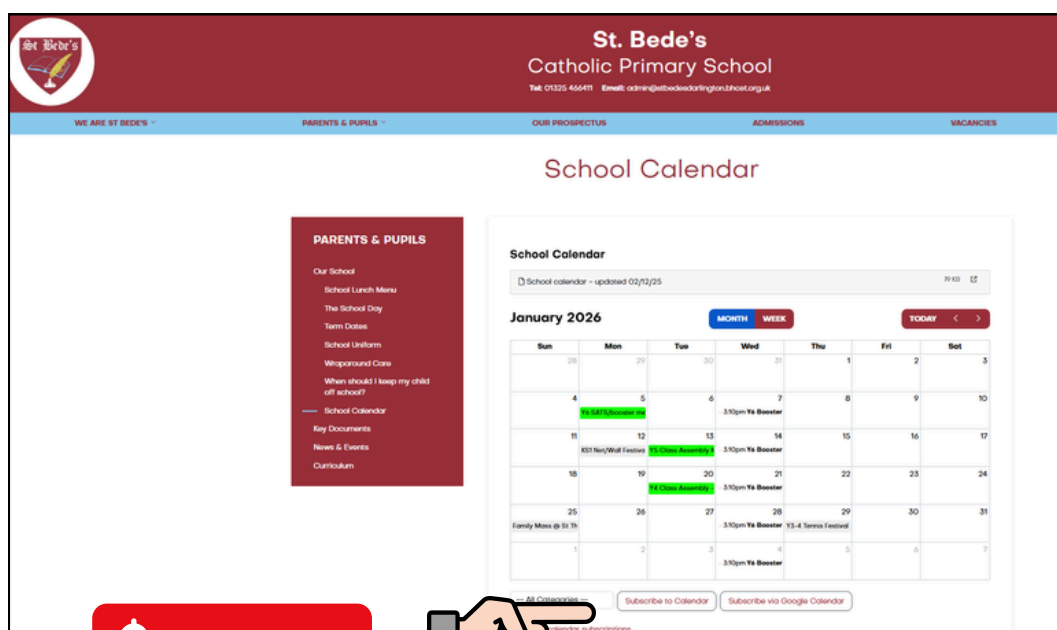
#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

You can now view our latest curriculum newsletters
<https://stbedesdarlington.bhcet.org.uk/curriculum/subjects>



You can also check out our new integrated School Calendar on our website
<https://stbedesdarlington.bhcet.org.uk/calendar>
 'Subscribe' to sync the school calendar with your personal devices



Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve – First Mass of Christmas

- Holy Family – 4.00pm
- St Thomas Aquinas – 6.00pm
- Ss William & Francis de Sales – 8.00pm
- Holy Family (Syro-Malabar Rite) – 8.00pm

Christmas Morning

- St Anne – 9.30am

Boxing Day

- The Holy Family – 10.00am

New Year's Day

- St Thomas Aquinas – 10.00am



Christmas Performance Survey Feedback

“All children had their own role which was so special”

“The show was wonderful. Beautiful singing, amazing performances. The amount of effort the teachers must have put in was exceptional”

“How inclusive it was. Loved the little donkey instrumentals. All the children had a part, costumes/ lines”

“As a parent, it's wonderful to see how supported and encouraged our children are”

“We enjoyed so much to hear that Christmas is about hope, faith and love and Jesus is in the centre of it all”

