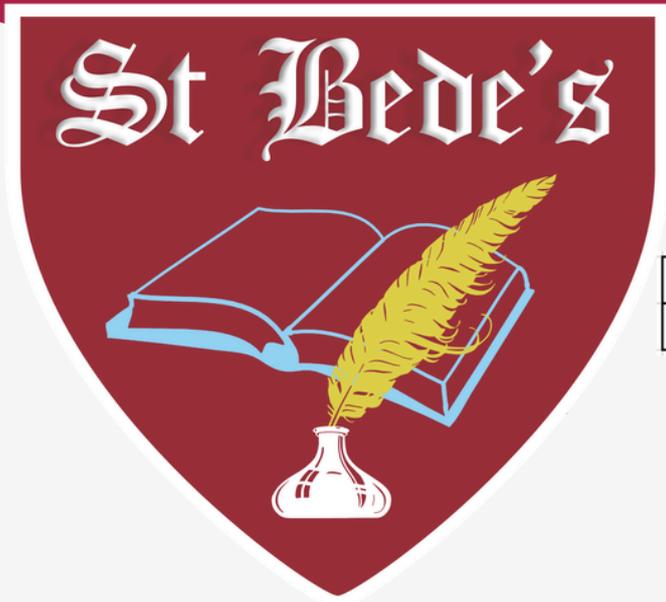


St Bede's Newsletter

Welcome to St Bede's...



Attendance up to 13/02/26

Y1	Y1/2	Y2	Y3	Y3/4	Y4	Y5	Y5/6	Y6
94.67	94.33	95.04	95.51	95.27	97.10	96.57	96.1	92.88

Coming soon...

Tuesday 3rd Mar

- Mrs Derbyshire Y4 Class Assembly 9.15am
- Y5 Bikeability

Wednesday 4th Mar

Y6 SATS Booster

Thursday 5th Mar

Y5&6 Football Cup

Friday 6th Mar

Mayor's Song Contest
Dolphin Centre

This week...

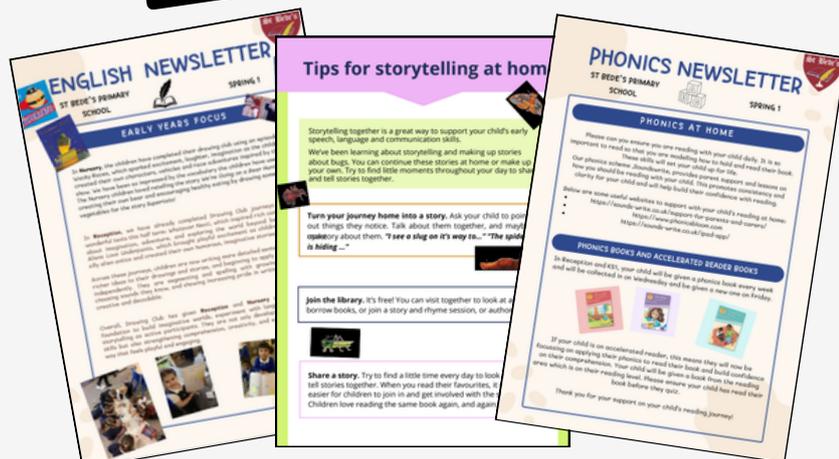
Tuesday 17th Feb

Miss Armstrong Y3/4

Class Assembly 9.15am

Wednesday 18th Feb

- KS2 Walking to church Ash Wed
- Year 3 We Eat Elephants workshop
- Y2 Feelings workshop
- Y6 SATS Booster



You can now view our latest curriculum Newsletters on our website

Our Safeguarding Focus This Week...

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE**

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 48% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 15, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Keep up to date with upcoming events via our school calendar

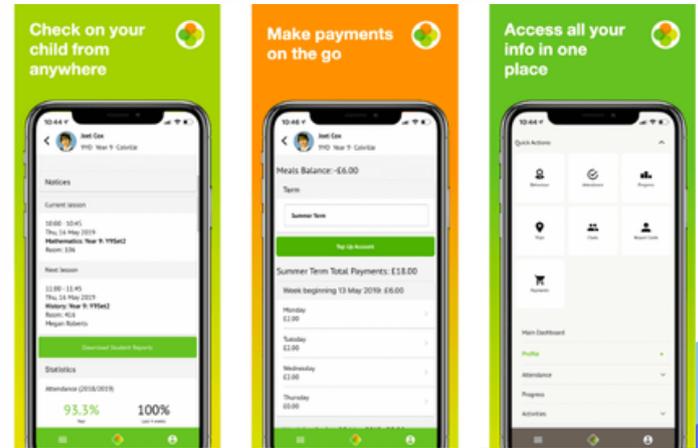
<https://stbedesdarlington.bhcet.org.uk/calendar>



Arbor

Reminder we have moved to a new MIS system called Arbor!

- You can no longer make payments using MCAS
- You can use Arbor from 12pm Friday 20th Feb
- Balances from MCAS will be transferred to Arbor



Please make sure you have downloaded Arbor

Please let us know if you have problems receiving school communications

THE BIG LENT WALK

This Lent, we are excited to join CAFOD's Big Lent Walk. Throughout Lent children will join in special walks – beginning on Ash Wednesday, when pupils will walk together to Mass as our first Lenten journey. We warmly invite families to make a donation to CAFOD to support their vital work with communities around the world. Taking part in this initiative also supports our efforts towards achieving the Live Simply Award, as we continue to live in solidarity with others and care for our common home. We try to live kindly, simply and thoughtfully each day.

