# St. Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form College

*'Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world ablaze'*

## Newsletter: 24 April 2026

## Faith

In Matthew 21:1–11, Jesus enters Jerusalem not with grandeur, but with humility, riding on a donkey. The crowds welcome him with joy, recognising a leader who brings peace rather than power. This moment invites us to think about how we welcome new experiences and people into our own lives.

As a school community, we're reminded that true strength often shows up in gentleness, kindness, and small acts of courage. Just as the crowd made space for Jesus, we can make space for hope, compassion, and understanding in our daily interactions. May we continue to be a community that leads with humility and welcomes goodness wherever it appears.

## Excellence

### Headteacher's Award

**Tobias Todd 7H2** is this week's winner of our Headteacher's Award. Tobias has demonstrated exceptional commitment to his learning, consistently showing determination, positivity and a willingness to challenge himself. His teachers describe him as a polite, thoughtful and hardworking student who always gives his best and sets a strong example to others.




### Tutor Group of the Week

This week's winners are **8H2** - well done!

**Columba**
Student of the Week: **Charlie Nevens 10C2**
Highest Credits: **Kyla Furlong 7C1**
Attendance Hero: **Leo Groves 10C1**

**Hilda**
Student of the Week: **Marni-Rose Smyth 7H2**
Highest Credits: **Tobias Todd 7H2**
Attendance Hero: **Lincoln Clint-Withers 10H2**

**Oswald**
**S**tudent of the Week: **Finley Griffiths 9O2**
Highest Credits**: Shayne Mills 7O1**
Attendance Hero**: Sophia Place 8O1**

## Headteacher's Easter Message

As we come to the end of a busy and purposeful term, I want to take this opportunity to thank our students, staff, and families for their continued support and commitment to the life of our school. Each day, our community strives to live out our six core values of **Respect, Excellence, Determination, Faith, Responsibility, and Citizenship** - values that shape who we are and who we aspire to be.

At this time of year, I am reminded of the words of **St. Catherine of Siena**:
**"Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire."**

It is a message of hope, purpose, and encouragement - one that speaks powerfully to our young people as they continue to grow in confidence and character.

We especially keep **Year 11 and Year 13** in our thoughts as they prepare for their upcoming GCSE and A-Level examinations, and **Year 10 and Year 12** as they approach their mock exams. I encourage all students to use the break wisely: plan revision carefully, stay focused, and ensure they return fully prepared for the challenges ahead.

After Easter, we look forward to welcoming the **Year 6 pupils and their families** who will be joining our school community in September. We are excited to meet you all, and we hope you feel the warmth and belonging that define our school. Parents and carers will shortly receive detailed information about the transition programme, including dates for the pupil sessions and parent meetings.

The summer term is always a wonderful time in school - lighter evenings, warmer weather, and the sense of fresh energy that sunshine brings. As we return, please ensure that all pupils come back in **full school uniform**, taking these two weeks to revisit the uniform policy. Wearing our uniform with pride is an important sign of belonging and helps reinforce the high standards we uphold.

Wishing all our families a peaceful, joyful, and restorative Easter break. I look forward to seeing everyone refreshed and ready for the term ahead.

Mrs Cessford
Headteacher



## Maths Wall of Legends

We are incredibly proud to have appointed over 150 legends so far this year - we're aiming for 250 by July! Over the past two weeks, each of the following pupils has been exceptional in lessons, showing respect, determination and responsibility throughout. Their books are exceptional, showing excellent effort and high levels of work produced, correcting their mistakes so they can learn from them. Congratulations!

- Mr Fowler: **Evan Vickers 8O1 & Leo Watson 9O1**
- Miss Houghton: **Meevel Ullas 7H1 & Abraham Laogun 8H1**
- Mrs Keniry: **Nikola Porebska 13Ch1 & Olivia O'Connor 12Ch1**
- Mr Taylor: **Harrison Martindale 10H3 & Imogen Topping 8H2**
- Dr Treanor: **Faye Miller 9H1 & Arthur Assadi 9C1**

## Humanities Students of the week

The following students have been recognised this week by their Geography and History teachers as working really hard and producing excellent work in their lessons. Well Done.

**History Heroes:**

- Miss Jackson: **Emily Scollen 11O3**
- Mr Johnson: **Sheena Takhar 11O2**
- Ms Laverick: **Valerie Onogholo 9C2**

**Map Masters:**

- Miss Scott: **Mathew Robson 10H3**
- Mr Harper: **Macie Dixon 7C2**
- Mrs Martin: **Lauren Balls 13Ch2**

## Experto de Español

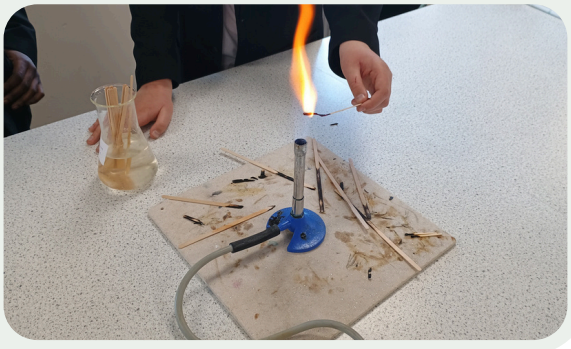
We are very proud to celebrate this week's Expertos de Español. These students have really stood out to their Spanish teachers this week because of their brilliant attitude to learning and the progress they continue to make. ¡Enhorabuena!

- Señorita Garcíá: **Keira Ridley 11H1** - The student who has revised the most on Educake. As revision she has answered an impressive 351 questions!
- Señorita Atkinson: **Evie Cochrane 10C2** - Excellent attitude to learning. Completes classwork and homework to a very high standard.
- Señorita Tilston: **Sophie Anderson 9O3** - Resilience and a great attitude to learning consistently.

We would also like to take a moment to recognise Miss Tilston, who has been a valued member of the Spanish department for the past eight years. Her dedication, expertise, and unwavering commitment to our students have made a huge impact on the department and the wider school community. We are incredibly grateful for the energy, care, and creativity she has brought to Spanish over the years. Thank you, Miss Tilston, for everything you have contributed.

## Year 7 Science Club

This week in Y7 Science Club, we examined our bacteria cultures and compared which surfaces showed the highest and lowest levels of bacterial growth. We also talked about how effective soap is at preventing bacterial growth, as well as how bacteria can be found in the air. After that, we set up the Bunsen burners and carried out flame tests using ionic compounds to identify different metal ions. We recognised each metal ion by observing the distinct colours produced when the compounds were heated in the flame.



## Mass

We began Holy Week with a beautiful school Mass celebrated by Fr. Sean, joined by Our Lady of the Rosary School and members of the parish community. It was a wonderful way to enter this sacred week together, united in prayer and reflection.

Our students were outstanding throughout, reverent, engaged, and deeply respectful of the significance of the celebration. Their participation helped create a calm and meaningful atmosphere, reminding us all of the hope and humility at the heart of Holy Week.



## Holy Week

This week, members of our Youth SVP group led our Holy Week Celebrations of the Word with maturity, reverence, and a real sense of service.

Their leadership offered our school community a thoughtful and prayerful space to reflect during this important time. It was inspiring to see our young people step forward with such confidence and compassion, embodying the spirit of Holy Week in their actions.



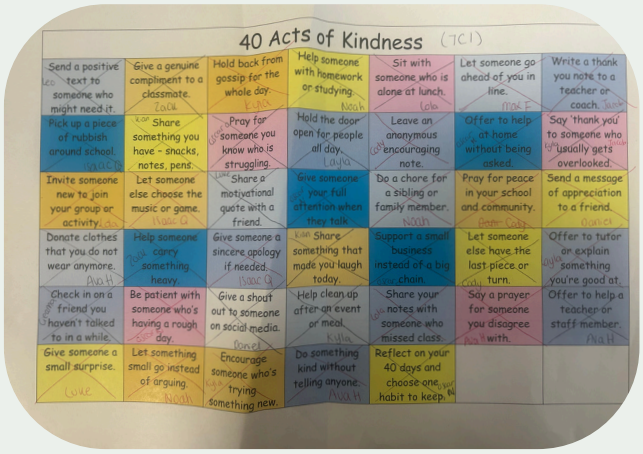

## Art Competition

A huge well done to Georgia in Year 9, who won this year's Lent Art Competition with her beautiful piece on the theme "Resurrection/New Life."

Her artwork showed new life in a thoughtful and creative way, capturing the hope and renewal at the heart of the Easter season. We are incredibly proud of her achievement.



## 40 Days of Kindness




This Lent, our students took part in the 40 Days of Kindness challenge, finding simple, meaningful ways to brighten someone else's day. Their enthusiasm and commitment were inspiring to see.

A big shout-out to Mrs Lancashire's and Mr Garlinge's classes, who were the first to complete the full challenge. Their dedication set a wonderful example for the whole school community.

## Lourdes



This Easter Saturday, two of our students will be travelling to Lourdes as part of the HCTP pilgrimage, representing our school with faith, generosity, and a spirit of service. It's a wonderful opportunity for them to support others and deepen their own experience of Holy Week.

A big thank you to Fr Sean for his continued support and encouragement of our young people as they take on this special journey.

## Geoffrey Gordon Cup




Last weekend, four of our students took part in the Geoffrey Gordon Cup- an impressive challenge of resilience, teamwork, and outdoor skills. Over three days and two nights in the North York Moors, they set up camp each evening, cooked all their own meals, and completed an 18km hike while carrying rucksacks weighing 12–15kg.

Throughout the challenge, they tackled a range of activities to earn points, demonstrating excellent problem-solving, cooperation, and perseverance. We are incredibly proud of the way they represented our school, showcasing responsibility, determination, and outstanding teamwork.

## Y11 Boys Crown Their Journey in Style with County Cup Glory

What. A. Way. To. Sign. Off.

Under the Friday night lights, our Year 11 boys delivered a performance worthy of the biggest stage, sealing their school football journey with a dominant and unforgettable display in the Under 16 Bert Hodgson County Cup Final.

Facing a strong and resilient Whitburn Academy side, St. Bede's rose to the occasion with composure, confidence and sheer quality from the first whistle to the last.

**St. Bede's 6 – 2 Whitburn Academy**

From the outset, the team played with a level of desire and intensity that set the tone for the night. Every player stepped up, showing the kind of unity and determination that has defined this group for the past five years.

Whitburn battled throughout - but this was our night.

**A Champion's Display:**

The boys showcased everything that is brilliant about school football: teamwork, resilience, flair and heart. It was a complete performance befitting the occasion - and the perfect final chapter for a squad that has given so much to St Bede's football.

**Goal Scorers:**

Nathan –
Beau –
Jack –
Louca –



Six fantastic goals, each one celebrated by a crowd who knew they were witnessing something special. A Fitting Finale. As the final whistle blew, the celebrations said it all. This was more than just a win - it was a legacy. A team who have grown together, achieved together, and now walk away as County Cup Champions. The perfect ending to their school football journey… and one they'll never forget.

## Y10 Boys Book Their Place in Their First Ever County Cup Final!

Our Under 15 Boys delivered a phenomenal performance this week, earning their place in the County Cup Final for the very first time.



Up against this year's National finalists, the boys showed remarkable character and resilience in a fiercely contested match that ended 2–2 after normal time. The excitement didn't stop there, as the tie headed into a dramatic penalty shootout.

Both sides produced penalties of outstanding quality, but the breakthrough moment came when goalkeeper Oliver pulled off a brilliant save to tip the balance in our favour. With the pressure on, Thom stepped up and calmly slotted home the winning penalty, sealing an unforgettable 9–8 shootout victory.

This was a true squad effort from first whistle to last - every player contributed to an exceptional team performance.

The team will now face Hurworth in the County Cup Final on Friday 24th April, 6:15pm kick-off, at Maiden Castle. We hope to see strong support there as the boys look to make even more history!

## Another Outstanding Sporting Triumph for St Bede's!

We are thrilled to celebrate yet another remarkable achievement from one of our talented athletes. Year 12 student Neve has delivered a sensational performance on the international stage, returning from the prestigious Yokoso Dutch Open with an incredible haul of four gold medals and two bronze.



This phenomenal success is a testament to Neve's commitment, discipline, and exceptional talent. Her hard work continues to pay off, and she now sets her sights on an even greater challenge - qualifying for Team GB at the World Championships later this year.

Everyone at St Bede's is immensely proud of Neve's achievements.

A huge congratulations, Neve - what an inspiration!

## Y7 Girls Shine in the Durham County Futsal Finals

A huge well done to our Year 7 girls, who put in a brilliant effort at the Durham County Futsal Finals earlier this week. After a series of impressive performances, the team narrowly missed out in a hard-fought final against St Joseph's at the Beacon of Light.

Throughout the tournament, the girls showed fantastic determination, teamwork, and spirit - playing with confidence and scoring some outstanding goals along the way. Although the final didn't go their way, their effort and attitude were exemplary from start to finish.

Reaching the final itself is a tremendous achievement, and every member of the squad should be incredibly proud. This is a special group with a bright future ahead. Well done, girls!




## Free Holiday Football Sessions

Does your child receive Free School Meals?

You can claim FREE holiday sessions!

We're excited to share that the Food and Fun Scheme is back this Easter - bringing football, activities, and nutritious food to children across our community!

Fast Feet Football Academy will be delivering an action-packed week focused on play, development, and confidence-building in a safe and supportive environment.

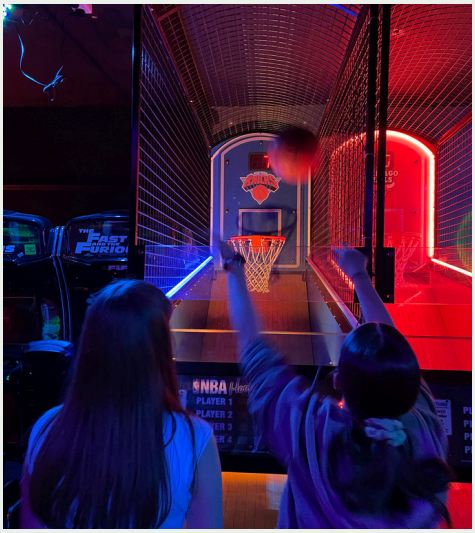
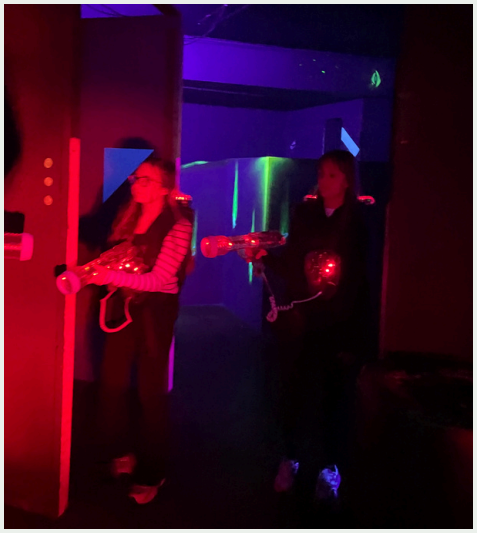
To book, click this link Events - Durham County Council events and search for Fast Feet Football Academy.

Alternatively, use your benefit-related Free School Meal ticket provided by your school or contact: funandfoodtickets@durham.gov.uk
Our team are also on hand to help; simply email hello@fastfeetfa.com

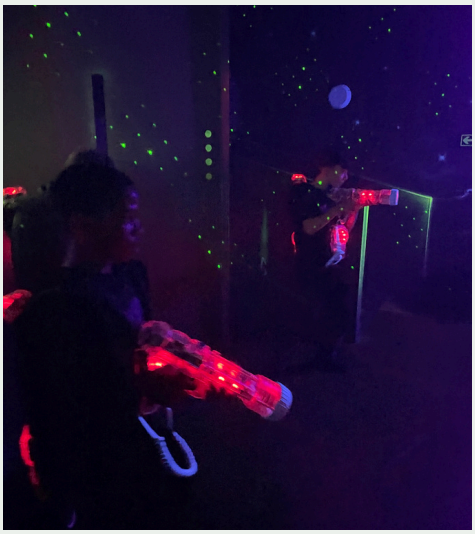
## Pastoral Reward Trip to Laser Quest

We were delighted to reward our Year 7 to Year 10 pupils with an exciting visit to Laser Quest and the VR simulator in Sunderland, recognising the incredible effort they put into meeting our core values each day. This trip was a celebration of students who consistently show respect, responsibility, perseverance, and kindness in their learning and interactions with others. The enthusiasm and positive behaviour demonstrated throughout the visit were a real credit to them and to our school community and they thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

These experiences are not just about fun - they are a way of saying thank you to students who strive to do their best and make positive choices every day. We are extremely proud of their commitment and attitude, and we are grateful to our families for supporting and reinforcing our shared values at home. Opportunities like this remind us how important it is to celebrate effort, character, and personal growth alongside academic success. If students did not have the opportunity to participate this time, there is another opportunity at the end of the summer term for those students who show our ABLAZE values!


















LASER
QUES


LASER
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ARMOURY



## Key Dates

- **Mon 20 April:** Timetable Week B
- **Mon 20 April:** Return to school
- **Mon 20 April:** Year 10 Mock Exams Begin
- **Thu 30 April:** Year 7 Parents' Evening
- **Mon. 4 May:** Bank Holiday
- **Fri 22 May:** 3.15pm finish for Half Term

## Safeguarding

### Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

**Designated safeguarding leads:**




## Home and School Links

**Address:** St. Bede's Catholic School & Byron Sixth Form
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**Website:** www.st-bedes.org
**Facebook:** StBedesandByron

**Our Parish:** Our Lady of the Rosary in Peterlee and Horden
**Our Diocese:** Hexham & Newcastle

