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: Friday 6th November 2026

Faith

In this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 25@1-13), we hear the parable of the ten bridesmaids, Jesus reminds us of the importance of being ready for God's call. The wise bridesmaids prepared carefully and were ready when the bridegroom arrived, while the others were not.

This Gospel challenges us to think about how we live each day. We prepare for God's coming through prayer, kindness, service, and faithfulness in the small things. By choosing to live as disciples every day, we keep our lamps burning brightly and become a light for others.

May we always be ready to welcome Christ and recognise his presence in our daily lives.

House Awards

Hilda Student of the Week: **Rylee C (10H2)**
Hilda Highest Credits: **Maddox C (9H2)**
Hilda Attendance Hero: **Stephen B (7H1)**

Oswald Student of the Week: **Rhian B (7O1) and Mason H (10O2)**
Oswald Highest Credits: **James B (8O1)**
Oswald Attendance Hero: **Brody R (8O1)**

Columba Student of the Week: **Stephanie O (9C2)**
Columba Highest Credits: **Savannah M (7C1)**
Columba Attendance Hero: **Katie G (10C1)**





Italy Geography Trip 2026

During the half-term break, 51 students and 6 members of staff enjoyed an unforgettable Geography trip to the Bay of Naples from 26th-30th October. The visit provided students with the opportunity to bring their classroom learning to life through a range of geographical, historical and cultural experiences.

Day 1: Herculaneum
Our adventure began with a visit to the ancient Roman town of Herculaneum. Students explored the remarkably well-preserved streets, houses and public buildings that were buried following the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. Walking through this fascinating UNESCO World Heritage Site offered a unique insight into life in Roman times and demonstrated the devastating impact of volcanic hazards on communities.

Day 2: Capri and Boat Trip
On the second day, students travelled by boat to the stunning island of Capri. The journey provided spectacular views of the coastline and the dramatic physical geography of the region. Students enjoyed exploring the island and learning about how tourism has shaped the local economy and environment. The boat trip itself was a particular highlight, allowing everyone to appreciate the beauty of the Bay of Naples from a different perspective.

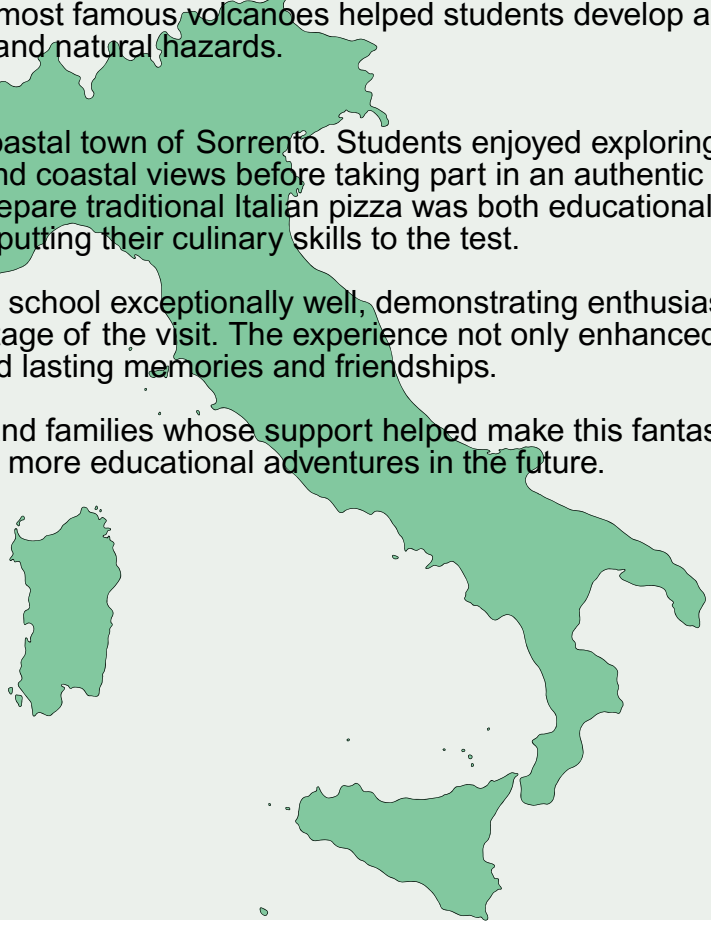
Day 3: Pompeii and Mount Vesuvius
Day three focused on the area's most famous volcanic landscapes. Students spent the morning exploring Pompeii, one of the world's most significant archaeological sites. Later, the group tackled the climb up Mount Vesuvius, where they were rewarded with breathtaking views across the bay. Standing on the slopes of one of the world's most famous volcanoes helped students develop a deeper understanding of tectonic processes and natural hazards.

Day 4: Sorrento and Pizza Making
The final full day was spent in the beautiful coastal town of Sorrento. Students enjoyed exploring the town's narrow streets, bustling squares and coastal views before taking part in an authentic pizza-making experience. Learning how to prepare traditional Italian pizza was both educational and enjoyable, with students enthusiastically putting their culinary skills to the test.

Throughout the trip, students represented the school exceptionally well, demonstrating enthusiasm, curiosity and exemplary behaviour at every stage of the visit. The experience not only enhanced their geographical knowledge but also created lasting memories and friendships.

A huge thank you goes to all students, staff and families whose support helped make this fantastic trip such a success. We look forward to many more educational adventures in the future.





RESPONSIBILITY – DETERMINATION – CITIZENSHIP – RESPECT













A Reminder About Holidays During Term Time

As we continue to work together to support every child's success, we would like to remind parents and carers of the importance of ensuring that holidays are not taken during term time.

Regular school attendance is essential for students to achieve their full potential. Every lesson matters, and even a short period of absence can result in missed learning, gaps in knowledge, and difficulties catching up with classwork.



Taking a holiday during term time can mean that students miss:

- **Important teaching and learning activities**
- **Coursework, practical lessons, and assessments**
- **Opportunities to work collaboratively with their peers**
- **Valuable preparation for examinations and future learning**

Parents should be aware that schools are unable to authorise leave of absence for family holidays during term time except in truly exceptional circumstances. Any requests for absence must be submitted in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered in line with statutory guidance.

We understand that family holidays are important; however, wherever possible, these should be arranged during school holiday periods. By ensuring children attend school every day, parents are helping them to make the best possible progress academically, socially, and emotionally.

Thank you for your continued support in promoting excellent attendance and ensuring that all students have the greatest opportunity to succeed.

"Every day in school counts."

Y10 Parents' Evening - Monday 16th November 2026



Thank you for those parents who have signed up to our Y10 Parents' Evening.

If anyone is struggling to make appointments through the Arbor app please get in touch and we will support you through the process.

If you are unable to attend please inform our office team **(enquiries@st-bedes.org)**, asking for feedback from your child's teachers via email or over the phone.

Break and Lunchtime Improvements: Creating a Better Experience for All Pupils

This week, we introduced several changes to our break and lunchtime routines. These changes are already having a positive impact, helping to create a calmer, safer and more orderly environment for pupils, with noticeable improvements in behaviour, movement around the school and reductions in litter.

We recognise that some families have had questions about the new arrangements and, in hindsight, we should have communicated these changes sooner. We apologise for this and thank parents and carers for their patience and feedback as we continue to refine the systems.

What are we trying to achieve?

Our priority is to ensure that every pupil can enjoy break and lunchtime in a safe, welcoming and well-organised environment. The changes have been designed to:

- Improve safety and reduce congestion around busy areas of the school.
- Ensure fair access to catering facilities for all year groups.
- Create a calmer atmosphere during social times.
- Reduce litter and maintain a cleaner school environment.
- Help pupils access food, seating and social spaces more comfortably.

Supporting Access to Food

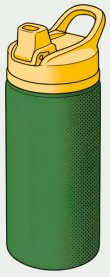
We want to reassure families that our aim is to improve access to food, not restrict it.
Our staggered lunchtime system helps ensure that pupils can access catering facilities, find a seat and eat comfortably without excessive crowding. Year 11 pupils continue to have priority access to lunch so that they can attend revision and study sessions, while the rotation of other year groups helps us manage numbers fairly and effectively.

We are also delighted to be joining the **Magic Breakfast programme**, which will allow us to expand our breakfast provision and offer additional free breakfast opportunities for pupils. Supporting pupil wellbeing and ensuring children are well-nourished remains a key priority for the school.

A Cleaner and More Pleasant Environment

The expectation that food and drinks purchased from the cafeteria are consumed in designated areas has been introduced to help reduce litter, minimise the attraction of pests and maintain high standards across the school site.

Pupils are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to school and can refill it throughout the day using our water stations. Water can be accessed during lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes.









Listening and Improving



As with any significant change, there is an adjustment period. We have already identified some improvements that can be made, including alternative arrangements for Year 11 pupils during the second week of mock examinations to reduce congestion further.

We will continue to monitor the new systems closely, listen carefully to feedback from pupils, parents and staff, and make adjustments where necessary. Early indications are very positive, and the overwhelming majority of pupils have adapted well to the new routines.

Keeping Families Informed



We appreciate the importance of clear communication and will continue to keep families updated through this weekly newsletter. This newsletter is published on the school website every Friday afternoon under **Pupil & Parent Information > Parental Letters** and remains our primary method of sharing important updates and celebrating school life.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to provide the best possible environment for all pupils.

Lost Property



We currently have a large amount of lost property in school, including coats, PE kit, water bottles, lunch boxes and other items.

All unclaimed items will be kept until our upcoming Parents' Evening, when parents and carers will have the opportunity to look through the lost property collection and reclaim any belongings.

To help us return items to their owners, please ensure that clothing and personal items are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Thank you for your support.

International Success for Katie!



What an incredible half term for Year 11 student Katie, who had the fantastic opportunity to travel to Kansas City, USA, as part of the England U16s squad for an international training camp.

Katie represented her country in both fixtures against the USA, earning two more international caps and continuing her impressive development on the national stage. Although England were narrowly defeated in both matches (2-0 and 2-1), Katie delivered outstanding performances throughout and was deservedly awarded Player of the Match for her efforts.

This latest achievement is another milestone in what has been a remarkable year for Katie. Her hard work, determination and commitment to her sport continue to shine through, and she is a wonderful role model for our school community.

Everyone at St Bede's is incredibly proud of Katie and all that she has achieved. We look forward to following her journey and celebrating many more successes in the future.

Congratulations, Katie, and keep reaching for the stars!

Ruby Shines On Stage and Dance Floor!



Congratulations to Ruby R in Year 9, who has recently celebrated success in both performing arts and dance.

Ruby performed in her performing arts school's production of The Lion King, playing Banzai the Hyena and performing as part of the chorus. She has also passed her latest dance examinations and received a special award for achieving one of the highest freestyle scores.

A fantastic achievement and a reflection of Ruby's talent, hard work and dedication. Well done, Ruby!

Why Tracking The Reading In Class Matters

Lauren Tomlinson October 2025

One of the difficulties in the modern classroom is the issue of split attention. The brain learns what it attends to, so securing the attention of all learners in the classroom is a very important starting point for teaching and learning. Reading is the bedrock for accessing the school curriculum and it is a multi faceted skill. Why we read differs from subject to subject; are we searching for hidden meaning and depth, are we hunting for facts, are we trying to find links between different factors or events? This is just the starting point. In the primary phase the main focus for reading is on developing fluency via phonics and then comprehension of text. As learners move to the secondary phase other academic approaches to reading become more important in their learning.

There is a body of evidence suggesting reading rulers (which are also coloured overlays) are beneficial for supporting attention and reading focus in secondary school. They are particularly useful for students with attention deficit, ADHD for example, dyslexia or visual processing disorders but can help all students to focus on a particular part of the text as directed by their teacher. If we allow fluent readers to skim read academic text without focusing on the core purpose and type of reading skill they need to employ, then aspects of their learning will be less effective than if they followed the text, as the teacher modelled the discrete reading skill needed for that academic subject and that particular task. Similarly, if we allow fluent readers to read ahead during our daily reading tutorials there is a danger that they skip over words they don't know, their fluency means they can decode and read the word with ease, but they do not fully comprehend the meaning of the word. The teacher leading the reading session can not respond to a class of students who are all at different parts of the text. One of our key aims via the reading tutorial, is to expose our students to a wide range of new vocabulary. This requires a teacher led approach to reading which reading rulers help us to facilitate.

Reading rulers are a form of visual tracking aid and can also help to reduce cognitive load, helping students to build reading stamina and to sustain attention during learning tasks. Coloured overlays like reading rulers have been shown to increase reading speed and accuracy, particularly for students with attention difficulties or dyslexia. However, students with these barriers to reading can feel singled out if they are the only ones using a reading ruler. A core theory around maintaining a truly inclusive environment is that barriers are not caused by individual impairment, but how school (and other institutions) are structured. We give every student a reading ruler when they join our school, not just those with SEND or a learning need. Another reason therefore, that we ask all students to use a reading ruler, is to maintain an inclusive learning environment. By asking all students to use a reading ruler we ensure that it becomes the 'norm' and no one feels different by using one. Inclusive education is not about helping SEND students with different practices, it is about redesigning our approach so that no one is disadvantaged in the first place.

If you would like to delve into the evidence behind this blog please use these articles as a starting point:

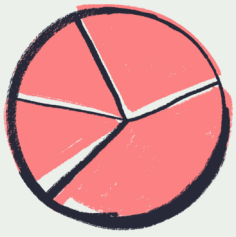
Wilkins, A., Lewis, E., Smith, F., Rowland, E., & Tait, A. (2001). Coloured overlays and their benefit for reading. Journal of Research in Reading, 24(1), 41–64.
Taylor, S. (2011). An investigation into the effectiveness of coloured overlays in improving reading ability. Educational Psychology in Practice, 27(4), 365–377.
Uccula, A., Enna, M., & Mulatti, C. (2014). Colors, colored overlays, and reading skills. Frontiers in Psychology, 5, 833. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00833
Millard, B., & Lynn, A. (2005). Helping students read: The effectiveness of visual supports. Support for Learning, 20(2), 70–75.

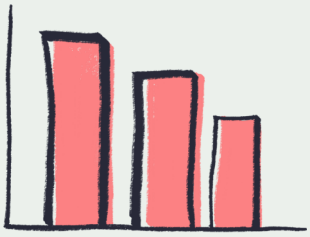
Maths Wall of Legends

We are very proud to unveil this week's Maths Legends who have appeared on the Wall of Legends this week and will be named on our permanent Roll of Honour from next September. They meet the St. Bede's Standard in their books, demonstrate respect and determination in lessons and are role models for other pupils. Well done - keep it up!

Two records for the Wall of Legends this week! A complete clean sweep for St. Columba House - well done the blues...! Additionally, our first ever sibling combination, well done to the Oliver-Goggins household!

Mr Fowler- **Jokubas K (8C2)**
Miss Houghton- **Rory J (11CDO)**
Mrs Keniry- **Jia Q G (9C1)**
Miss Scott- **Theo O-G (7C1)**
Mr Taylor- **Alfie O-G (11GMO)**
Dr Treanor- **Lucy P (10C1)**







Lab coat Legends

In science we want to award and celebrate the excellent effort put in by our different students. Working hard in science lessons builds problem-solving skills, encourages curiosity, and helps students understand the world around them. It shows determination by often involving analysing complex problems, predicting outcomes and conducting experiments.

Mrs Hayward- **Amii W (11GMO)**
Mr Moss- **Sebastion T (10H1)**
Mr Griffiths- **Jordan C (7O1)**
Miss Armstrong- **Dolcy L (9H1)**
Mr Day- **Samuel B (8H2)**
Mr Balls- **Pipeloluwa A (9O2)**
Mr Bowyer- **Bobby O'R (8H2)**
Mrs Lord- **Logan R (10O2)**
Mr Gooch- **Teddie W (7O1)**







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.

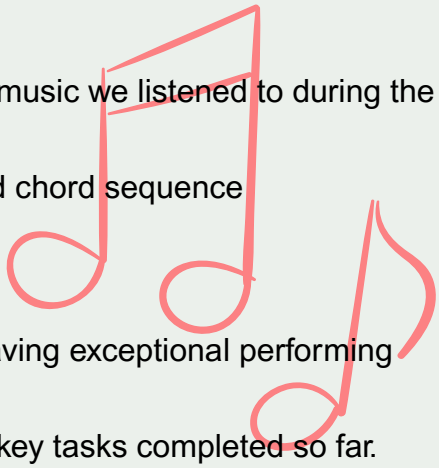
History Heroes:

Miss Jackson- **Aaron K (10O2)**
Mr Johnson- **Amelia C (10C2)**
Ms Laverick- **Oliver R (8C2)**

Map Masters:

Miss Scott- **Poppy B (7O2)**
Mr Harper- **Daniel H (8C2)**
Mrs Martin- **Harry W (10O1)**

Musicians of the Week



Mr Robinson
Harrison S (7C1)- some great questions and observations about the music we listened to during the lesson

Meevel U (8H1)- Beautifully presented and creative 16 bar rhythm and chord sequence

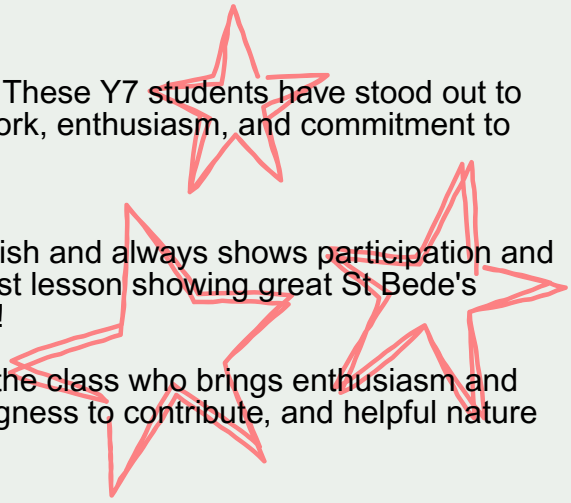
Leah B (9C1)- Fantastic work on solo for christmas concert

Mr Teasdale
Theo F (7O1)- For following the St. Bede's standard really well and having exceptional performing skills.

Scarlett D (8O1)- For her excellent compositional skills across all the key tasks completed so far.

Robyn S (9H2)- For her excellent performance on the key task - With a little help from my friends.

Spanish Stars



We are delighted to announce this week's Expertos de Español! These Y7 students have stood out to their teachers in Spanish lessons this week through their hard work, enthusiasm, and commitment to learning. ¡Enhorabuena!

Señorita García- Parker C (7O1)- Impressive progress in Spanish and always shows participation and great team spirit during the lessons. He encouraged his peers last lesson showing great St Bede's standards and passion for the language. Keep the good work up!

Señorita Atkinson- Harry L (7H1)- An outstanding member of the class who brings enthusiasm and positivity to every lesson. His excellent attitude to learning, willingness to contribute, and helpful nature make him a credit to the class.

Career of the Week: Video Producer

Could your creativity become your future career? This week, we are exploring the exciting role of a Video Producer, a career that combines creativity, organisation and digital skills to bring ideas to life through video content.

Video Producers work across a wide range of industries, including **film, television, advertising, social media, corporate communications and digital media.** They are responsible for planning, organising and overseeing the production of videos, working closely with creative teams to ensure projects run smoothly from concept to completion.

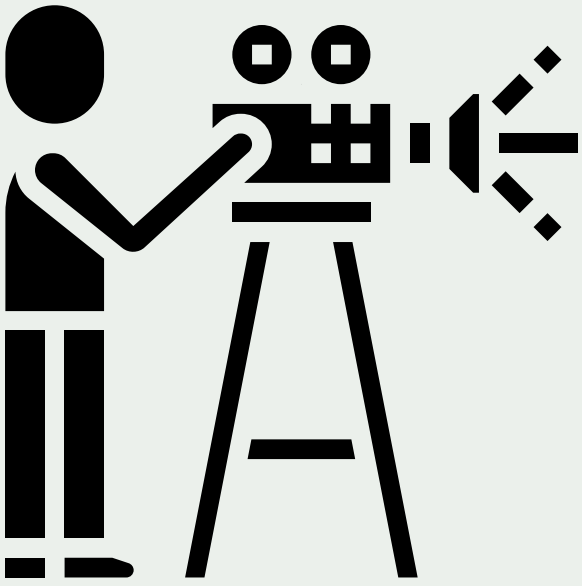
The North East has a thriving creative economy, employing around **23,000 people across the creative industries.** Opportunities exist in areas such as broadcasting, film and television production, advertising, design, photography, cultural activities and digital content creation, making it an exciting sector for young people to explore.

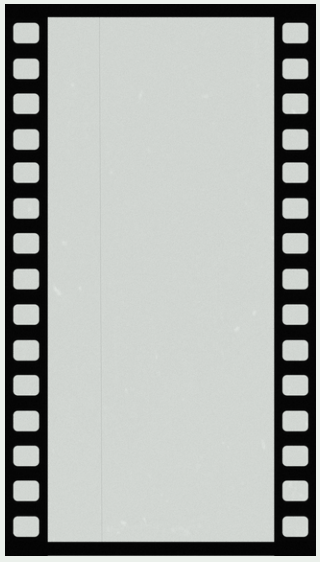
Students interested in this career will benefit from developing skills such as **creativity, communication, organisation, teamwork, digital skills and time management.** Subjects including **Media Studies, English, Art, Computing and Drama** can provide useful foundations for a future career in this field.

There are several routes into the industry, including **A Levels, T Levels, college courses, apprenticeships, higher apprenticeships and university study,** offering flexible pathways to success.

As part of this week's careers challenge, students are encouraged to research organisations in the North East working in film, television, media or digital content, explore the wide variety of roles involved in producing a film and investigate creative apprenticeship opportunities available in the region.

For more information about becoming a Video Producer, students can search **"Video Producer"** on **Unifrog.**







Remembrance Day Service – Opportunity for Pupils in Uniformed Organisations

Dear Parents and Carers,

As part of our Remembrance Day Service, we will be coming together as a school community to honour and remember those who have served and sacrificed in times of war and conflict.

We would like to invite any students who are members of a uniformed organisation, such as the Scouts, Guides, Cadets, St John Ambulance, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, or similar groups, to take part in the service wearing their organisation's uniform.

Students who wish to do so are welcome to bring their uniform to school on the day of the service and change into it before the event. We believe this will add to the sense of occasion and allow us to recognise the values of service, commitment, and community that these organisations represent.

If your child would like to participate in this way, please let Mrs Balls know by **Monday 9th November- oballs@st-bedes.org**

Thank you for your continued support as we prepare for this important occasion of remembrance and reflection.

Harvest Collection

Thank you to all our parents and carers for your generous support of this year's Harvest Appeal. Your kindness and willingness to help those in need is greatly appreciated.

A special and huge well done to 8O1, who collected an outstanding 141 items for the appeal. This is a fantastic achievement and a wonderful example of generosity and community spirit. Thank you for making such a positive difference to others






St. Bede's
Catholic School and
Byron Sixth Form
Domino Adiuvantē
Christmas
MARKET
Come and celebrate with us!
NEARLY
3 WEEKS
TO GO!
Tuesday 1st December
4pm – 6pm | School
Get into the festive spirit...
with a magical Christmas Market,
packed with festive cheer and
a wonderful selection of gifts!
Shop for unique gifts from our talented
local artisn stall holders including:
Candles ♥ Scents ♥ Kids Toys
Hand Made Gifts ♥ Cards and more!
We have something for everyone!
Support
our school
and help raise
funds for the
development of our
school nurture
garden
Face
Painting
Mince
Pies
Meet
Santa
Festive
Gifts
TOMBOLA
Tombola
and more!
Start your festive celebrations with us!

Key Dates

- **Monday 7th December- Year 11 Parents' Evening (More information to follow)**
- **Thursday 10th December- Christmas Concert 6pm**
- **Monday 16th November- Year 10 Parents' Evening (More information to follow)**
- **Friday 18th December- Break up for Christmas Holidays, 12.30pm finish**

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Designated safeguarding leads:



Mr A. Logan
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mrs F. Cessford
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Miss K. McDonagh
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mr N. Watts
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead

Home and School Links

Address: St. Bede's Catholic School & Byron Sixth Form
Westway, Peterlee, Co. Durham, SR8 1DE
Email: enquiries@st-bedes.org
Phone: 0191 5876220
Website: www.st-bedes.org
Facebook: StBedesandByron

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

