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 20th November 2026

Faith

As we approach the end of the Church year, the Gospel of Matthew 25:31-46 reminds us that Christ is present in the people we meet every day, especially those who are struggling, lonely, or in need. Jesus teaches that whenever we show kindness, compassion, and generosity to others, we are serving him.

This message challenges us to look beyond ourselves and notice opportunities to make a difference. Whether it is offering friendship to someone who feels left out, supporting a charity appeal, helping at home, or showing respect to those around us, even the smallest acts of love can have a lasting impact.

As a school community, may we continue to live out our faith through service, remembering that in caring for others, we encounter Christ Himself. Through our words and actions, let us strive to build a community where everyone feels valued, welcomed, and loved.

House Awards

Hilda Student of the Week: **Georgia B (10H1)**
Hilda Highest Credits: **James C (8H1)**
Hilda Attendance Hero: **Ayo F (7H1)**

Oswald Student of the Week: **Jordan C (7O1)**
Oswald Highest Credits: **Zach L (7O1)**
Oswald Attendance Hero: **Leo B (9O2)**

Columba Student of the Week: **Riley N-W (10C2)**
Columba Highest Credits: **Harrison S (7C1)**
Columba Attendance Hero: **Blake C (9C1)**





Attendance Matters Every Day

Attendance and Punctuality: Every Minute Counts

As we move further into the academic year, we would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support in ensuring students attend school regularly and arrive on time.
At this stage of the term, it can be tempting to view an occasional day off or a few minutes late as insignificant. However, these absences quickly accumulate. A student who misses just one day every fortnight could lose almost four weeks of learning across an academic year. Likewise, arriving just ten minutes late each day results in over 30 hours of lost learning time across the school year.

Good attendance is strongly linked to:

- Higher academic achievement
- Improved wellbeing and confidence
- Stronger friendships and social development
- Better preparation for future education and employment



We understand that students may sometimes feel tired, particularly as the mornings become darker and the weather becomes colder. Maintaining routines such as regular bedtimes, limiting late-night screen use and preparing school equipment the night before can make a significant difference to attendance and punctuality.

Unless your child is genuinely unwell, we encourage them to attend school. Often students who may feel anxious about a lesson, assessment or friendship issue feel much better once they are in school and supported by staff.

Thank you for working in partnership with us to ensure every student has the best possible opportunity to succeed.

Children In Need Success

A huge congratulations to everyone who took part in this year's Children in Need fundraising activities. Thanks to your generosity, enthusiasm, and support, we raised an incredible £171.90 for this fantastic cause. We are so proud of the effort shown by our students, staff, and families in helping to make a difference to the lives of children and young people across the UK. Thank you to everyone who contributed and helped make the day such a success!







Young Carers

A young carer is a child or young person under 18 who helps to look after a family member who has a disability, long-term illness, mental health condition, or struggles with substance misuse. This definition is used by the NHS.



A young carer might:

- Help with household chores such as cooking, cleaning, or shopping.
- Provide emotional support to a parent, sibling, or other relative.
- Help manage medication or attend appointments.
- Look after younger brothers or sisters because of a family member's condition.

Many young carers do not realize that they are young carers because helping at home feels like a normal part of family life. However, they may benefit from extra support in school and from local services.

We are committed to supporting all of our students. If you believe your child is a young carer, please email **oballs@st-bedes.org** so that we can ensure they receive any support they may need.

Norah's North Pole

As we prepare for the season of Advent, we are once again proud to support Norah's North Pole through our annual Advent Appeal. This wonderful charity works tirelessly to bring comfort and joy to children and families facing difficult circumstances during the Christmas season.

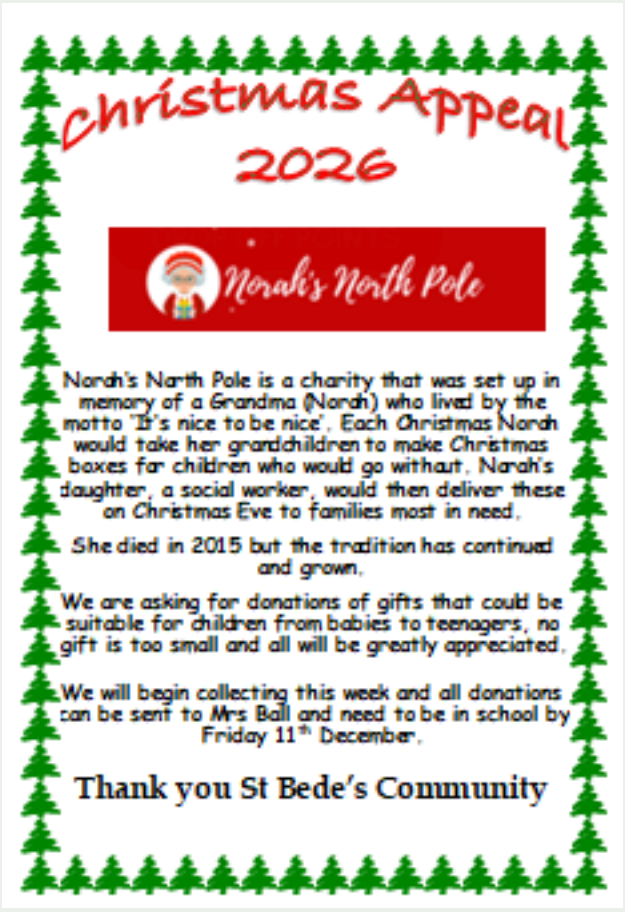
We invite all members of our school community to support the appeal by donating new gifts and essential items. Every donation, no matter how small, can make a real difference and help ensure that local families experience the joy and hope of Christmas.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and continued support. Together, we can help make Christmas a little brighter for those who need it most.









Interfaith Week

Interfaith Week provided a wonderful opportunity for our school community to learn more about different faith traditions and celebrate the values that unite us. Several of our students led a thoughtful Celebration of the Word, while many others took part in interfaith workshops focusing on Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism.

Through these sessions, students explored the beliefs, practices, and traditions of each faith, while also discovering the many similarities they share, such as the importance of compassion, respect, service to others, and community. The week encouraged meaningful dialogue, deepened understanding, and reminded us that, despite our differences, we are united by our shared humanity and commitment to building a more inclusive and respectful world.





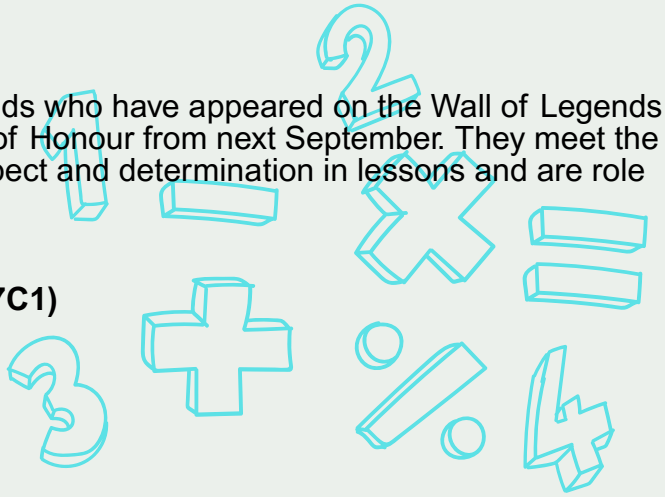




Maths Wall of Legends

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!

Miss Houghton- Polly S (8C2)
Miss Jones (Winning with Numbers)- Abigail W (7C1)
Mrs Keniry- Leon R (9C2)
Miss Scott- Scarlett F (7H1)
Mr Taylor- Dexter H (11JFO)
Dr Treanor- Evan E-J (11JFO)



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- Ava C (10C1)
Mr Johnson- Grace S (10O3)
Ms Laverick- Katie M (9C2)

Map Masters:

Miss Scott- Matthew C (11JMI)
Mr Harper- Zach L (7O1)
Mrs Martin- Joshua W (11LHA)



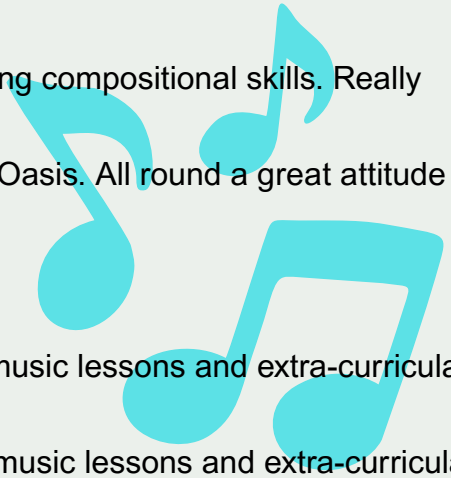
Music Maestros

Mr Teasdale

Niamh B (7H1)- Following the St. Bede's standard really well, engaging with all the content and always has a positive attitude in the music lesson.

Kris O (8H2)- Has created a great 16-Bar rhythm with his amazing compositional skills. Really engaged with all aspects of music.

Bailey B (9H1)- Great start to the performance of Wonderwall - Oasis. All round a great attitude when in music.



Mr Robinson

Rhian B (7O1)- consistently high levels of engagement in both music lessons and extra-curricular music.

Emily M (8H2) - consistently high levels of engagement in both music lessons and extra-curricular music.

Ruby R (11SHO) - consistently high levels of engagement in both music lessons and extra-curricular music.

Educake Superstars!

A big shout out for **Leo W (10O1)** who has managed to set himself the impressive amount of 3331 questions for revision on Educake! He is still on top of the league and I am really proud of his progress in the subject.

Amazing improvement from **Anna L (11B1)** who has surpassed the national level of accuracy with a 97% on Educake as well. Incredible scores in her quizzes!



English Superstars

This term, we are celebrating students who have gone above and beyond in English. Through their hard work, enthusiasm and commitment to learning, they have produced some fantastic work and made excellent progress. Well done to our English Superstars!

Miss Barkley - Lacey H (9H1)
Mr Johnson- Tommy W (9O1)
Mrs Dolan- Layton W (11JMI)
Mrs Cook- Lucy G (7H1)
Miss Milburn- Isabella H (11JMI)
Mrs Wild- John-J F (11CDO)
Mr Logan- Shannon R (9O2)



Success in Business!

Mr Bowyer and Ms Rose could not be any prouder of the achievements of our GCSE Business cohort so far this year. Every week one or two outstanding students have been selected as the 'Student of the Week' – Our winners of this prestigious award so far are:



Student name	Business class	Reason for award
Bobby S	11A	Grade 9 in the first formal assessment
Leo G	11A	Grade 9 in the first formal assessment
Chisom B	11A	Grade 9 in the first formal assessment
Layton W	11A	Relentless determination
Evam E-J	11C	Relentless determination
Frankie F	10B	Highest marks in first formal assessment
Isaac Y	10B	Highest marks in first formal assessment
Sophie A	10B	Highest marks in first formal assessment
Ava C	10C	Exceptional effort and determination
Oakley E	10C	Exceptional effort and contribution in class
Neo C	10B	Consistently working hard and contributing
Lucy K	11C	Highest mark on the Year 11 Mock

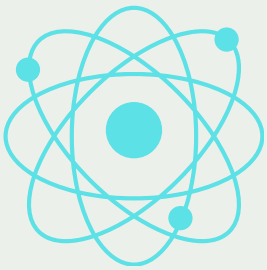


Lab coat Legends

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- Poppy W (11CDO)
Mr Moss- Joel S (11CC0)
Miss Armstrong- Benjamin S B (11JMI)
Mrs Lord- Luke H (10C1)
Mr Gooch- Cruz M (10H2)



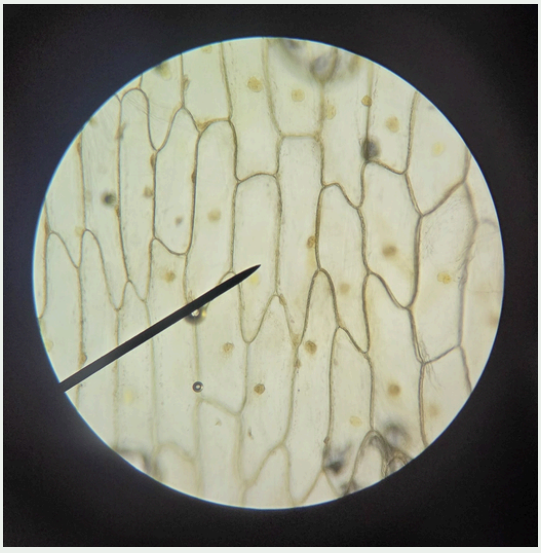


Amazing Microscopy Work in Year 7!

As part of Cycle 1, our Year 7 students have been exploring the fascinating world of cells. During their lessons, they have learned how to prepare and use microscope slides to observe plant cells up close.

We have been incredibly impressed by the care, precision and enthusiasm students have shown while developing their practical science skills. The microscope slides they produced of onion cells were of an exceptionally high standard, allowing students to clearly identify the structures they have been studying in class.

Take a look at this fantastic example from a student in 7D. The clarity and detail captured in the image demonstrate excellent practical skills and a real understanding of scientific investigation. Well done!



Anti-Bullying Week 2026: Break the Silence

This week, pupils at St. Bede's have taken part in activities to mark Anti-Bullying Week 2026, centred on the national theme "Break the Silence". Through tutor-time discussions and reflection activities, pupils explored the important role that everyone can play in challenging bullying, discrimination and unkind behaviour.

The theme encourages young people not to stay silent when they witness bullying or behaviour that makes others feel unsafe, excluded or uncomfortable. Pupils considered a range of realistic scenarios, including physical bullying, racist language, misogynistic comments and situations where crowds can unintentionally make difficult situations worse. They discussed how to respond safely, support others and seek help from trusted adults.

As a school community, we are committed to creating an environment where every pupil feels safe, respected and valued. We encourage all pupils to speak up if they are worried about themselves or someone else. Breaking the silence does not mean confronting situations alone; it means reporting concerns, showing kindness and ensuring that no one feels they must face difficulties without support.

We would like to thank parents and carers for the important role you play in reinforcing these messages at home. By working together, we can continue to promote a culture of respect, inclusion and courage, where everyone understands that bullying is never acceptable and that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Break the Silence. Speak Up. Stand Together.





Y11 Parents' Evening - Monday 7th December 2026

Thank you for those parents who have signed up to our Y11 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.



What a fantastic day at the Sunderland Empire!



Seventy pupils and six staff members enjoyed an unforgettable trip to see Billy Elliot: The Musical at the Sunderland Empire. For many of our pupils, this was their first opportunity to experience a live musical in such an iconic theatre, and they were amazed from the moment the curtain rose. As Jenson summed up after only ten minutes, "This is brilliant!"

The children were captivated by the outstanding performances, spectacular dancing and powerful storytelling. The energy and emotion of the show kept everyone engaged throughout, and many pupils described it as one of the best experiences they have ever had. There was plenty of excited discussion during the interval and on the journey home, with pupils eager to share their favourite moments.

The show also gave pupils the opportunity to learn more about the miners' strike and its impact on local communities. Many discovered family connections to the mining industry, helping them make a personal link to an important part of our region's history and bringing aspects of the story to life.

To top off a wonderful day, we received several compliments from Sunderland Empire staff and members of the public, who praised the excellent behaviour, manners and attitude of our pupils. We are incredibly proud of the way they represented St. Bede's School and grateful for such a memorable experience. The trip was a huge success and one that will be remembered for a long time to come.






St. Bede's
Catholic School and
Byron Sixth Form
Domino Adiuvante
Christmas
MARKET
Come and celebrate with us!
1 WEEK 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 artisan and holders including:
Candles ❤ Scents ❤ Kids Toys
Hand Made Gifts ❤ Cards and more!
We have something for everyone!
Face Painting
Mince Pies
Meet Santa
Festive Gifts
Tombola and more!
Support our school and help raise funds for the development of our school nurture garden
Cash is Preferable
Start your festive celebrations with us!


At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.
What Parents & Educators Need to Know about
GRAND THEFT AUTO VI
Grand Theft Auto 6 (also stylised as GTA VI) has been one of the most highly anticipated games of this generation, following GTA V, one of the best-selling video games of all time. Set in the fictional state of Leonida, including Vice City, it follows criminal partners Jason and Lucia as they become embroiled in a wider conspiracy. Although GTA VI is intended for adult audiences, its enormous popularity means that younger people may still encounter gameplay footage online or express an interest in playing it.
AGE RESTRICTION
PEGI 18
WHAT ARE THE RISKS?
EXTREMELY VIOLENT CONTENT
GTA VI is rated PEGI 18 for a reason. Players may encounter weapons like guns, knives and explosives, with violence portrayed in highly realistic ways. As in previous GTA games, players may also encounter violence involving vehicles and other characters. The game is categorically not for younger audiences, with blood, gore, and intense violence clearly identified in its official content
POW!
SENSITIVE SOCIETAL TOPICS
Like other games in the Grand Theft Auto franchise, GTA VI uses satire to explore aspects of society and contemporary culture. Its exaggerated characters and situations are fictional and may be intended to challenge or mock particular attitudes rather than endorse them. Younger viewers, however, may struggle to recognise this context and could misunderstand jokes, stereotypes, or social commentary without guidance from a trusted adult.
TALKING TO STRANGERS ONLINE
GTA Online, the multiplayer experience associated with GTA V, allows players to communicate with others online. GTA VI has been announced as a single-player experience at launch, so the same in-game chat risks should not yet be assumed. Children may still discuss the game through other online platforms potentially encountering strangers, inappropriate language and adult themes.
DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE
Throughout GTA VI's storyline, drugs and alcohol form part of the game's criminal world. The official content rating identifies the use of both, while Rockstar's character descriptions reference drug runners and dealers. Earlier titles also showed substance use affecting how characters see and move around the world. Younger viewers may struggle to understand these portrayals in the context of a fictional crime story, particularly without guidance from a trusted adult.
NUDITY AND SEX
CENSORED
Relationships and sexual themes feature in GTA VI, while previous GTA titles have allowed players to visit strip clubs and solicit sex workers. It should also be recognised that GTA VI's graphics aim to be realistic, meaning depictions of nudity and sexual content may be explicit. Official ratings confirm nudity and strong sexual content, although details of specific scenes should not be assumed from earlier games.
OPTIONAL IN-GAME PURCHASES
As with its predecessor, GTA VI includes optional in-game purchases that use real-world money. While these purchases are not necessary to play the game, the appeal of additional content may encourage some players to spend more. Younger players may not fully appreciate the cost or how quickly small payments add up.
Advice for Parents & Educators
PARENTAL CONTROLS
Parental controls can block age-restricted games, but they won't remove GTA VI's adult themes from elsewhere online. On PS5, go to Settings > Family and Parental Controls > Family Management, select the child and choose your restrictions. On Xbox Series X|S, use Settings > Account > Family settings, or the Xbox Family Settings app, to manage age restrictions and screen time.
LIMIT ACCESS TO BANK DETAILS
Limiting access to banking details helps prevent accidental or unauthorised purchases. Avoid storing payment details on a child's account and require approval before spending. On PS5, parents and carers can set a monthly spending limit through Family Management. On Xbox Series X|S, the Ask to Buy feature can request adult approval for purchases, helping children and young people understand their real-world cost.
COMMUNICATION RESTRICTIONS
On PS5 and Xbox Series X|S, parental controls can restrict voice chat, messages, friend requests, and communication with other players. Parents and carers can limit interactions to approved friends or prevent communication altogether, depending on the available settings. These restrictions are especially helpful for reducing children's exposure to strangers, inappropriate language and adult themes through console chats or other multiplayer games.
MAKE THIS A CONVERSATION
Even if a child is not playing GTA VI, they may still watch gameplay clips, livestreams or trailers shared by friends and content creators. It's important to talk openly with children about why GTA VI has an adult age rating and discuss its violence, crime, strong language, sexual themes, satirical lens, and other mature content. Ask what interests them about the game and what they already know. Talk about the difference between fictional behaviour and real-world consequences.
Meet Our Expert
Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 12+ years as a journalist, editor and social media expert. He's travelled the world playing video games and working with publishers and developers to fine tune their audience messaging. When he's not gaming, he can be found watching horror and sci-fi movies, TV series, listening to music or deciding which world marathon to plod around.
See full reference list on our website
#WakeUpWednesday
The National College
@wake_up_weds
/wuw.thenationalcollege
@wake.up.wednesday
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St Bede's Catholic School
& Byron Sixth Form College
Westway
Peterlee
SR8 1DE
0191 587 6220

BYRON
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

CHRISTMAS JOY

An evening of Christmas Music and Carols.

Thursday 10th December 2026 at 5.30pm



St Bede's School Hall

Tickets available via ArborPay and on the door.
Adults £3 and under 18s free when accompanied by an adult

Doors open at 4.45pm and refreshments will be served.

Key Dates

- Tuesday 1st December- Christmas Market, 4pm-6pm
- Monday 7th December- Year 11 Parents' Evening (More information to follow)
- Thursday 10th December- Christmas Concert 6pm
- 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

