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 27th November 2026

Faith

In this Sunday's Gospel (Mark 13:33-37), Jesus reminds us to "stay awake" and be ready for His coming. During Advent, we are invited to prepare our hearts by living each day with kindness, faith, and hope. As a school community, may we remain attentive to the needs of others and ready to share Christ's love in all that we do. Through our words and actions, we can help bring His light to those around us.

House Awards

Hilda Student of the Week: **Evie L (10H2)**
Hilda Highest Credits: **Michael A (9H2)**
Hilda Attendance Hero: **Lewis W (11CDO)**

Oswald Student of the Week: **Zach L (7O1), Eve O'C (9O1), Nosariemen I (10O2)**
Oswald Highest Credits: **Hacer A (7O2)**
Oswald Attendance Hero: **Carter R (7O1)**

Columba Student of the Week: **Lola M (8C1)**
Columba Highest Credits: **Lola M (8C1)**
Columba Attendance Hero: **Szymon S (9C2)**





Reporting Student Absence



To help us safeguard all students and maintain accurate attendance records, we would like to remind parents and carers of the importance of reporting any student absence to the school.

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school on each day of absence, ideally before the start of the school day. Please do not wait for the school to contact you regarding your child's absence.

When an absence is not reported, it can cause unnecessary concern and takes valuable time away from staff who are required to make enquiries to establish a student's whereabouts. Prompt communication helps us ensure all students are safe and accounted for.

Please remember:

- Contact the school on every day your child is absent due to illness.
- Provide a reason for the absence.
- Keep the school updated if the absence is likely to continue for several days.

Thank you for your support in helping us keep all students safe while ensuring attendance records remain accurate and up to date.

Every absence matters. Every child matters. Every day counts.

Norah's North Pole

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported our Advent Appeal so far through their generous donations. Your kindness and compassion will make a real difference to young people in our local community.

We will continue to collect donations until **Friday 11th December.**

Alongside collecting donations, we have also been fundraising for this very worthy cause. Members of our School Council will use the money raised to purchase much-needed gifts for teenagers, ensuring that young people who are often overlooked receive a special gift this Christmas.

We are incredibly grateful for the generosity shown by our school community and for the difference it will make to others during the festive season.

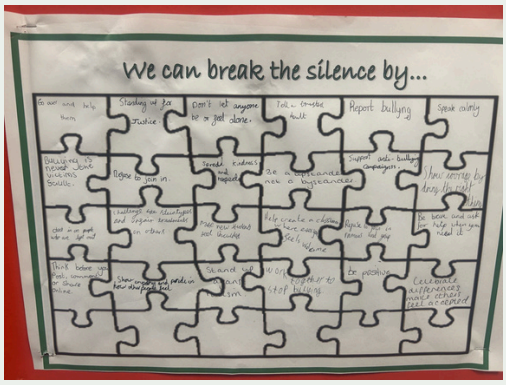








Anti-Bullying Week



As part of Anti-Bullying Week, students explored this year's theme, "Break the Silence." During tutor time, students discussed some of the common issues currently affecting young people in schools and reflected on the importance of speaking out when they witness bullying or unkind behaviour. They considered how they can support one another and help create a culture where everyone feels safe, valued and heard. Each tutor group also contributed to our Break the Silence Jigsaw, demonstrating their commitment to challenging bullying and building a community of respect and kindness for all.

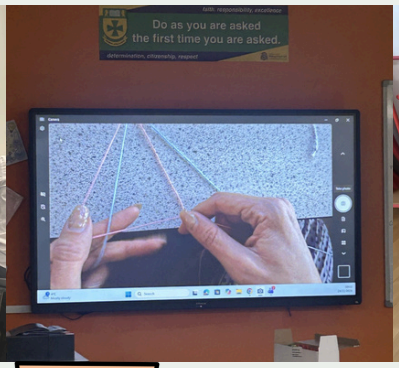
Interfaith Workshops

Over the last two weeks, a large number of our students signed up to take part in our Interfaith Workshops, where they learned about the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faiths.

Through these sessions, students explored the beliefs, traditions and practices of different religions and discovered many shared values that connect them with our own Catholic faith, including compassion, respect, service, prayer and care for others.

The workshops were a wonderful opportunity to deepen understanding, celebrate diversity and recognise the values that unite us as one community.













Year 8 London Trip

On Friday, 50 Year 8 pupils visited London thanks to the generous support and funding provided by Historic Royal Palaces. The main focus of the day was exploring the Tower of London and taking part in two workshops, The White Tower and Protest and Rebellion, but we managed to fit in several other exciting experiences too.

Our day began with a 6.15am departure from Seaham Train Station, and congratulations go to every pupil for arriving on time and helping the trip get off to a smooth start. After travelling to London, we stopped at St Pancras International, where Grace and Kian entertained us by playing Sir Elton John's donated piano. We then visited the British Library to see treasures including the Magna Carta, Shakespeare's First Folio and original Beatles lyrics.

At the Tower of London, pupils enjoyed fascinating workshops and learned about people connected to the Tower's history, including Edward Francis and suffragette Leonora Cohen. A highlight for many was seeing the Crown Jewels, including St Edward's Crown, used at the coronation of King Charles III.

The afternoon included a boat trip along the River Thames, a sunset ride on the London Eye and a walking tour of Westminster, where pupils saw Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, No. 10 Downing Street and Buckingham Palace.

After more than 20,000 steps, a busy journey home and a very full day, we returned tired but happy. Throughout the trip, pupils were exceptionally well behaved, resilient and a real credit to the school. Several are already planning a return visit with their families, this time as tour guides!













Pupil Voice

Reflecting on the visit, Maisie L G (8H2) said:

"*On the London Eye we were able to see amazing views, as well as Big Ben. We all sang songs and had a really good time."*

"I would 100% go again. It was my first time visiting London and probably one of my best experiences. I'll remember this forever."

"I'm so thankful to the staff because without them I wouldn't have been able to have a trip of a lifetime to London."

These comments capture the excitement of the day and highlight the lasting impact the trip has had on our pupils.



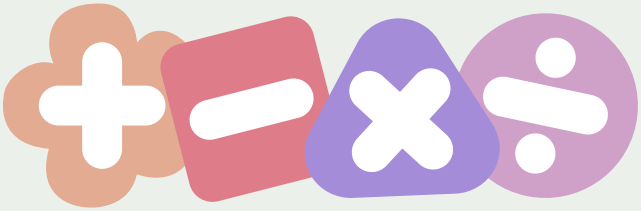




Maths Wall of Legends

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!

Mr Fowler- **Daniel C (11LHA)**
Miss Houghton- **Emily M (9H2)**
Miss Jones (Winning with Numbers)- **Leo C (10H2)**
Mrs Keniry- **Michael A (9H2)**
Mr Marrs- **Parker C (7O1)**
Mr Taylor- **Olivia R (11JFO)**
Mr Teasdale- **Hacer A (7O2)**
Dr Treanor- **Jia J G (11CCO)**



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- **William D (11LHA)**
Mr Moss- **Harvey B (9H2)**
Mr Griffths- **Nathan B (7O2)**
Miss Armstrong- **Jayden L (9C2)**
Mr Day- **William J (8H2)**
Mr Balls- **Georgia W (10O2)**
Mr Bowyer- **Joe D (11JMl)**
Mrs Lord- **Bree W (10O2)**
Mr Gooch- **Khayal G (10H2)**



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- **Ruby L (7O2)**
Mr Johnson- **Grace D S (8H2)**
Ms Laverick- **Jokubas K (8C2)**



Map Masters:

Miss Scott- **Isabel W (9H2)**
Mr Harper- **Darrell H (9O1)**
Mrs Martin- **Jess S (13CH1)**

Music Maestros

Mr Teasdale

Preston W (9H2)- Consistently approaches lessons with enthusiasm and a positive mindset, giving their best effort at all times.

Kayden A (8C2)- Has composed an impressive 16-bar melody and consistently maintains high-quality work that reflects the St. Bede's standard. Excellent effort shown in lessons.

Jack M (7H1)- Demonstrates a positive attitude to learning by engaging fully in lessons, asking relevant questions, and persistently working towards success.

Mr Robinson

Jordan C (7O1)- Excellent listening skills and answers during choral music week.

Connor B (8H2)- Excellent leadership and singing during lessons.

Lilly S (9O2) and Mischa C (9C1)- Excellent rehearsal of pieces for the Christmas Concert.



Festive Fun at Cookery Club

Another fantastic evening was enjoyed at Cookery Club as we embraced the festive spirit by making delicious Christmas sausage rolls, filled with cranberry, sage, and onion stuffing.

The children also practised their plaiting techniques, carefully creating an attractive finish for their sausage rolls. The enthusiasm, creativity, and effort shown by everyone were outstanding, and the finished results looked amazing.

Well done to all involved!







St Bede's Standards

Have you produced a piece of work this week that you are particularly proud of? Why not share it as part of St Bede's Standards?

Bring your outstanding work to the Byron Entrance during Friday break time to showcase your achievements. Excellent work that demonstrates our high standards of learning, effort, and presentation will be recognised and rewarded.

We look forward to seeing the fantastic work being produced across the school and celebrating your successes!


St. Bede's
Catholic School and
Byron Sixth Form
Domino Adiuvante
4 DAYS TO GO!
Christmas MARKET
Tuesday 1st December
4pm – 6pm ★ School
Craft Stalls
Pizza Van
Tombola
Handmade Cards
Sweets
Children's Toys
and so much more!
Come hungry... leave happy!
Shop local, shop handmade!
Support our school and help raise funds
for the development of our school nurture garden

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



Online Grooming is when someone befriends and builds an emotional relationship with a child and communicates with them through the internet with the intent to commit a sexual offence. This type of victimisation can take place across any platform; from social media and messaging apps to online gaming and live streaming. Often it involves young people being tricked, forced or pressured into doing something they wouldn't normally do (coercion) and often the groomer's goal is to meet the victim in a controlled setting to sexually or physically abuse them. In some cases children may be abducted or have long-lasting psychological damage.





What parents need to know about ONLINE GROOMING



CHILDREN ARE MOST VULNERABLE

Unsurprisingly children are often most at risk as they are easy to target and unlikely to question the person who is engaging in conversation with them. Groomers will use psychological tricks and methods to try and isolate them from their families and friends and will often choose to target more vulnerable children who may be easier to manipulate. Predators will stalk apps and websites that are popular with young people and will use a 'scattergun' approach to find victims, contacting hundreds online to increase their chances of success.



LIVE STREAMING CONCERNS

Predators may use live video to target children in real-time using tricks, dares or built-in gifts to manipulate them. Grooming often takes the form of a game where children receive 'likes' or even money for performing sexual acts. Social media channels, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, all have live streaming capabilities, but there are many apps which children can use to live stream, including Omegle, Live.me, BIGO Live, YouNow and many more



ANYONE CAN BE A PREDATOR

The internet has made the ability to interact with strangers online easy. Many sites and apps are reliant on individual users entering their own information when signing up. However individuals can remain anonymous if they choose to enter inaccurate information and many online predator cases are due to groomers using impersonation techniques. However, often the greater threat comes from adults who 'hide in plain sight', choosing to befriend young children without hiding their real identity.



CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DETECT

Unfortunately most children find the 'grooming' process (before any meeting) an enjoyable one as the predator will compliment, encourage, and flatter them to gain their trust, friendship and curiosity – 'a wolf in sheep's clothing' scenario. This often means children fail to disclose or report what is happening. If the groomer is also previously known to the child, their family and their friends, then this can make detection even harder.



FROM OPEN TO CLOSED MESSAGING

Online predators may contact their victims using any number of ways including social media, forums, chat rooms, gaming communities or live streaming apps. Sometimes there is little need to develop a 'friendship /rapport stage', as the victim has already shared personal information online and is communicating openly with others. Children may also be prepared to add other online users they don't know so well to gain 'online credibility' through increasing their friends list. Predators will often seize this opportunity to slowly build a relationship and then move their conversation with the child to a more secure and private area, such as through direct messaging.

EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Online predators will use emotive language and aim to form close, trusted bonds with their victims through showering them with compliments and making them feel good about themselves. Often victims will refer to them as their 'boyfriends' or 'girlfriends' and it can be difficult to convince some young people that they have been groomed, often leading to lasting psychological effects.



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

Safety Tips for Parents & Carers



IT'S GOOD TO TALK

It's unlikely that you can stop your child using the internet, nor can you constantly monitor their online activities, but you can talk to your child on a regular basis about what they do online. By talking openly with them about online relationships, they can quickly ascertain the kind of behaviour which is appropriate or inappropriate. Ask them whether they have any online friends or if they play online games with people they haven't met. This could then open up conversations about the subject of grooming.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

In order to give your child a safer online experience, it is important to check privacy settings or parental controls on the networks, devices, apps, and websites they use. Disable location sharing if you can. If you use location-sharing apps to check where your child is, remember that these could always be used by strangers to follow your child without their knowledge. Ensure that you check options so that location information is never shared with anyone except those they have permission to share with.

MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA & LIVE-STREAMING USE

It's important to be aware of what your child is sharing on social media and with whom. Create your own profile and become "friends" with them or follow them so that you can monitor their activity. Similarly, always check on them if they are live streaming and implement privacy controls. Choose a generic screen name and profile picture that hides their identity. You may also feel more comfortable being present each time they live stream.

STICK TO 'TRUE FRIENDS'

Make it clear to your child that they should not accept friend requests from people they don't know and to verify friend requests with people who they do know. Encourage them to only interact and engage with 'true friends' i.e. those friends who don't ask personal questions such as close family and friends. Remind them to never agree to chat privately with a stranger or someone they don't really know and to never divulge personal information, such as mobile phone numbers, addresses, passwords or the name of their school.

DISCUSS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Talk to your child about what a healthy relationship looks like and how to detect someone who might not be who they claim to be. Explain that groomers will pay your child compliments and engage in conversations about personal information, such as hobbies and relationships. They may admire how well they play an online game or how they look in a photo. Groomers will also try and isolate a child from people close to them, such as parents and friends, in order to make their relationship feel special and unique.

BE SUPPORTIVE

Show your child that you will support them and make sure they understand they can come to you with any concerns they may have. They need to know they can talk to you if someone does something they are uncomfortable with, whether that is inappropriate comments, images, requests or sexual comments.



Meet our expert

Jonathan Taylor is an online safety expert and former Covert Internet Investigator for the Metropolitan Police. He is a specialist in online grooming and exploitation and has worked extensively with both UK and international schools in delivering training and guidance around the latest online dangers, social media apps and platforms.



LOOK OUT FOR WARNING SIGNS

Child safety experts have identified key grooming patterns and advise parents to look out for:

- Secretive online behaviour.
- Late night internet or smartphone usage.
- Meeting new friends in unusual places.
- Becoming clingy, develop sleeping or eating problems or even bedwetting.
- Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities.
- Having new items, such as clothes or phones, unexplainably.
- Seem withdrawn, anxious, depressed or aggressive.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.



www.nationalonlinesafety.com Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety Instagram - @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 06.05.2020

Key Dates

- Tuesday 1st December- Christmas Market, 4:00pm-6:00pm
- Monday 7th December- Year 11 Parents' Evening (More information to follow)
- Thursday 10th December- Christmas Concert 6:00pm
- Friday 18th December- Break up for the Christmas Holidays, 12.30pm finish

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Designated safeguarding leads:



Home and School Links

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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

