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St Paul's
Catholic Primary School

Head Teacher: Sheena Sinclair

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5th September 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and families,

Thank you for helping the start of term run so smoothly. It has been a pleasure to welcome our children and families back to school and very rewarding to see how quickly children have settled into the routines and responsibilities of their new classes.

Good communication is so important to assist in the smooth running of the day-to-day life of our school. We aim to share lots of news about school events on our school Facebook page and will also send whole school newsletters at the end of each term, as well as information letters when needed. Your child's class teacher(s) will share your child's class newsletter at the beginning of each new term to ensure you are aware of the content of the curriculum and any specific arrangements. Teachers will also use 'Seesaw' to share homework or general information. Hopefully, this ensures that we have good communication between home and school. If you do need to update us about anything, you can use the school email address office@stpauls.bhcet.org.uk or phone school directly.

The purpose of this letter is to share some information with you that I would like you to have as soon as possible. I hope you find the information helpful; thank you for your support and co-operation with any requests.

St Thomas of Canterbury Parish

Our school is part of St Thomas of Canterbury Parish, serving Billingham in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

Fr Adrian Dixon is our Parish Priest. Fr Adrian is looking forward to coming back into school to celebrate Mass. As soon as we have organised dates for our Masses this term, we will let you know.

Our Parish SVP society operate a Food Hub every Friday from 12noon until 3pm in the Medway Hall (next to Holy Rosary Church/School). The Food Hub is open to everyone, and you do not need a referral to purchase high quality food items and other essentials at a greatly reduced price. Please pass on this information to anyone you know who could make use of this offer. It is a fabulous service which lends a helping hand.

Weekend Mass in our Parish is celebrated every Saturday at 5.30pm at St John the Evangelist Church, Billingham and Sunday at 10am at Holy Rosary Church, Billingham. Fr Adrian is very keen to re-start the children's liturgy group during Mass where the children can engage in the Gospel readings in a child appropriate way. If you feel you would be able to help support the running of the children's liturgy then there is a short meeting after each Mass on the weekend of 13th and 14th September. The parish really needs some new volunteers to ensure that the group for children can continue.



In Him we Live and Move and Have our Being

Year 6 Parents' Information Meeting: Wednesday 10th September

Year 6 parents will have already received this information, so just a reminder:

If your child is in **Year 6** there are statutory assessment tests which take place towards the end of the year. Mrs Wilson, Year 6 class teacher, would like the opportunity to talk to parents about their curriculum to ensure that you are well informed.

The Y6 meeting will begin at 5pm will take 30-45 minutes.

If you intend coming to this meeting, please email the school office to let us know you can attend.

Children should not attend this meeting but can be supervised at school if required – just let us know via email.

Class welcome event: Wednesday 17th September

We would like to invite you to come into school to meet your child's class teacher, see your child's classroom and some of the learning that happens. You can come in at the end of the school day (from 3.30pm) or come back to school any time before 5.30pm. This is an informal drop-in session, not a formal Parent's Consultation meeting. You may bring your child with you to this event and move from one class to the next if you have more than one child. You are very welcome to look around the whole school.

The event will run from the end of the school day until 5.30pm so you can drop in any time! Please feel free to have a look around the whole school and drop into any class. It will give you a good 'feel' of our lovely school and will help you get to recognise our wonderful teachers.

Homework:

Home learning expectations are shared by class teachers via Seesaw. Thank you for supporting your child's learning journey by ensuring that home learning activities are completed and that any resources or books are returned on the correct day. We know that many children thrive because of regular support at home, with reading, spellings and number work/times tables. Homework should not impact negatively on home life, as we appreciate how precious time is, but the 'little and often' support from home really does make a difference.

Uniform/Water bottles:

The children have returned to school looking very smart. We always encourage children to take responsibility for looking after their belongings, but inevitably jumpers and cardigans do get left behind or mislaid. **PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL CLOTHING IS LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.** Any uniform which is unclaimed and not labelled will be placed in a box in the porch. Book bags, back packs etc are not needed each day at school. We have very limited storage space. If your child must bring something to school which cannot be carried e.g.: a packed lunch box if they are cycling to school themselves, or a change of clothes for an after-school club, then a bag is clearly useful. Otherwise, children should only bring their reading folders/plastic book bags and a water bottle.

Our school uniform policy is available on our website.

A polite reminder that children should not wear nail varnish; jewellery, other than a watch, should not be worn and earrings must be removed before school (this includes nursery children). Clear, silicone retainers can be worn. Several children are still wearing earrings, bracelets, necklaces and nail varnish. Please ensure they are removed by Monday. Thank you for your co-operation.



In Him we Live and Move and Have our Being

The school holds pre-loved school uniforms for parents to access. Parents are invited to donate their child's uniform when they no longer need it if it is in a good enough condition for another child to benefit from. We kindly request that items are laundered before donating. As part of our environmental sustainability pledge, we encourage all families to make best use of pre-loved uniform sales where items can be sourced at £1 per item or you may choose to make a donation. Pre-loved uniform will be sold each month (dates to follow), or you can request to purchase items if needed at a different time.

We now have a new supply of school water bottles. All children have been provided with a water bottle, free of charge and their name is written on it. If your child requires a new water bottle, please email the school office and we will provide one. The cost of a replacement bottle is £3.00 or a new lid can be purchased for 50p, this is the cost we purchase them. Please ensure that your child's name remains on their bottle. A 'Sharpie' type permanent marker pen is a great investment – a very easy way to pop names on school uniform and water bottles! Water bottles should only contain water or diluted, sugar free squash. Thank you.

A message from Trish Abbot, BHCET Chief Operations Officer (COO)

We know that some of our students suffer from nut allergies, and we take their safety very seriously.

Every BHCET school meal is free of nuts or nut products, however, we cannot guarantee that all of our ingredients have been manufactured in completely nut-free environments, at all stages of their supply chain. In some cases, while our ingredients will be nut free, they will have been made in a factory that also produces products containing nuts.

We also take all reasonable steps to try and minimise the chance that nuts are brought onto our school sites, by either pupils, parents or staff; but again, we cannot guarantee that our sites will always be completely nut free.

We ask that parents please support us in this by remembering not to send your child to school with either a packed lunch or snack that contains nuts.

We also ask that any parent of a child who suffers from a nut allergy, speaks to the school office to ensure that we have a robust individual care plan in place.

Safety around our school:

Please ensure that you are parking safely, legally and considerately when you come to school. You will know that we always encourage an 'active travel' journey to school, so even if you have to travel by car, please park a short distance away from school which will ease congestion and make the school drop off and pick up much safer. Ensure that your child is close to you and does not run ahead. Bikes and scooters should be pushed once inside the school grounds. If you could encourage your child to stay on the path, please that would be helpful to avoid wet, grassy shoes coming into school on a morning! Thank you.

Attendance and Dates:

Please remember to notify the school by 9am if your child is unable to attend for any reason. All requests for a leave of absence or an appointment, must be completed using the forms available in the entrance porch or on the website. In line with our school attendance policy, parents may receive a penalty notice fine if your child does not attend school and their absence is unauthorised. The Government set our attendance expectations which schools must follow, and the Local Authority are responsible for ensuring our compliance.



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I will be sending a letter very soon, with events and dates for the term ahead, but just an early notification that we have booked the pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk at the Princess Alexandra Auditorium at Yarm School for Y1-Y6 pupils in December.

Please remember that Friday 24th October is a Professional Development (PD) day. Children will not attend school on this day.

Half term is Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October (inclusive)

Christmas Holiday is Monday 22nd December – Friday 2nd January (inclusive)

Monday 5th January is a PD Day so children return to school on Tuesday 6th January.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. As always, if you wish to discuss anything further, then please contact me at school.

Yours sincerely



Sheena Sinclair
Head Teacher