

September 2023

It has been lovely to see the children back in school this week, they look like they have grown over the holidays and they have very quickly got back into the routines of learning in school.

Thank you for the hard work put in to get each one ready to return or for those new to St Bede's for their first day with us.

We are looking forward to the year ahead and what this will bring for us as a school family.

This year we are going to send a newsletter out on a monthly basis with the hope that it is more concise and does not fill your inbox with too much unnecessary emails.



No Parking in the Staff Car Park



Please could we remind parents/carers not to use the staff car park when dropping your child off at school, both in the morning and afternoon drop offs. This is to safeguard our children around the school grounds.

Thank you for your co-operation.

As well as welcoming new children, we are so please to welcome some new staff to St Bede's this September.

In addition to Mrs Kindred who started at the end of last academic year, Mrs Hogg has joined us in Reception class as the teacher and Miss Jarvis is our new Year 4 teacher.

We also have two new support staff, Miss Johnson and Miss Craik will be working with different children throughout our school.

Mr Scholfield will be joining us on Tuesdays. He is going to teach music throughout the day with the aim that all the children will learn to play the ukulele this year. We know that you will all make them feel welcome.

Message from Fr Peter regarding First Holy Communion First Holy Communions 2024

Parents of children in Year 4 who are to celebrate their First Confession and Holy Communion in 2024 (*and other years above where children have missed their turn*), are asked to speak to Fr Peter at Sunday Mass, and to collect an application form, to put their child's name on the list for candidates. *Please remember that this includes children who do not attend our own local First / Primary Schools, but catholic children at any school in our parishes who are eligible.*

There will be Parents' Meetings - 6pm at St Bede's Church on Monday 18th September and 6pm at St Robert's Church on 20th September - and the first official Mass will be on the weekend of 30th September / 1st October.



At the beginning of the year I would like to send out some reminders so that everyone is clear on expectations.

- There are various ways to contact school about queries or to give information.
 - You can contact the School Office on 01670 822389
 - Email admin@st-bedes.northumberland.sch.uk
 - You can report any absences via phone, email or text message service (School Gateway app). When reporting an absence school requires the reason for any absences your child has. This is for safeguarding reasons, you will be messaged or contacted via telephone for the reason for absence if you have not already contacted school.
 - You can speak with a member of staff at drop off or pick up. Please be mindful though that at drop off the teachers need to be with the children. If it requires more than a minute's chat please make an appointment outside of teaching time.
- The only things children need to bring into school every day are their reading book and water bottle. In school the children have all that they need for their learning with regards to writing, they are to leave pencil cases at home.
- PE kits can be brought in on a Monday and left for the week. This means that they will have them ready for when they do PE.
- Children are not to wear any jewellery including earrings. If your child has their ears pierced they can wear small plastic retainers. These are easily purchased at a very low cost.
- Children are to use small bags please. Big back packs in school can cause a safety hazard because of the amount of room they need.
- Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are all entitled Universal Free School Meals (UFSM). Meals for the children in the other year groups have to be paid for unless your child is entitled to Free School Meals (FSM). Please contact Northumberland County Council if you believe your children may be entitled to this
<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals.aspx>
- We do appreciate that it can be a challenge to park for school drop off and collection but please for safety reasons **do not**
 - drive onto the school site at these times, this includes the entrance area of St Benet Biscop
 - drive along Catholic Row
 - use the Salvation Army car park behind St Bede's Church
- Medication can be administered if the prescription states that it is needed. A medicine form must be completed and handed into the school office with your child's medication (please do not give any medication to your child's teacher).

Howtown Residential – September 2023

A meeting was held last night for our Howtown Residential trip for parents/carers of our Year 6 & 5 pupils who will be attending in a few weeks. If you were unable to attend, please do contact us and we can share the information with you separately.

When the children visit the centre there is no need to provide any additional equipment or clothing than the usual. It is best for the children to take old clothes as they will possibly get wet or dirty throughout the time there.

A packing list will be provided on Thursday and if any parents would like support with things this can be arranged. The few days at Howtown are a great opportunity for the children to learn in a very different environment and the memories stay with them.



RAAC

You will have seen in the press that some schools in the country have been affected by Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac) and this can be confusing

At its simplest, the situation is that all of the 39 Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust (BBCET) schools were surveyed over the last year and RAAC was found at two schools, St John Vianney in Newcastle and St Columba's in Wallsend. These two schools were both closed for a short period before the summer so appropriate modifications were designed and implemented. These were undertaken by the independent structural engineering company.

Both St John Vianney and St Columba's were signed off as safe before staff and children returned in July - and they continue to be safe to use. All 37 of the other schools have been surveyed and the independent building surveyor has confirmed RAAC has not been identified at any of these schools. They continue to be safe to use.

The Trust has been reporting the position of all 39 schools to the DfE regularly over the last 6 months and they are comfortable that all 39 BBCET schools remain safe to be open.

I hope you find this update understandable and reassuring, during what is obviously a very difficult and stressful period for many across the country. I feel confident that St Bede's will continue to remain safe for all users. We will of course continue to monitor the building with the support of the Trust.

