St Bede's Catholic Primary School
Whickham View, Denton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7HP
Telephone: 0191 2743430
Email:office@stbcps.co.uk Website: www.stbcps.co.uk
Headteacher: Mrs L Young Deputy Headteacher: Miss R McTernan

Thursday 22nd October 2026

Dear parents / carers,

As we come to the end of the first half term of this academic year, just a few updates, reminders and forthcoming events to add to your diaries.

News
It has been a really busy half term with lots of lovely things going on in school, here are a few highlights:

We Learn Together:
- Year 6 had a fabulous few days on residential at Robinwood completing lots of fun and exciting outdoor adventures, and learning loads of new skills
- The whole school took part in a lovely Harvest Assembly and had the opportunity to meet a real life farmer and hear about her daily work
- Year 2 and Year 3 went along to John Marley Centre to enjoy a show with BalletLorent
- Year 1 enjoyed some visits to Forest School
- Year 5 and Year 6 took part in an e-safety workshop led by Northumbria Police
- Year 5 and Year 6 enjoyed a construction workshop as part of our careers programme where they had to use their mathematical budgeting skills to aid them in 'purchasing' resources to build the tallest and strongest tower of straws
- Parent have engaged in two different session – one curriculum evening where you could find out all about the teaching and learning in your child's new class; and one individual parents evening to focus on your child's attainment, progress and how we can work together

We Play Together:
- Year 1 to Year 6 enjoyed a House Team afternoon where they all came together within their mixed age house teams to complete a variety of fun activities based on team building and friendship

We Pray Together:
- Year 6 have led three Parish Masses – the Welcome Mass, the Creation Mass and the Harvest Mass
- Year 6 and EYFS shared a lovely 'Welcome' liturgy
- Year 5, Year 2 and Year 4 have shared a lovely 'Stay, Play and Pray' session with their families
- The First Holy Communion Programme has begun
- Year 5 and Year 6 took part in a session with 'More than Dance'

We also welcomed a new member to our staff team; Miss Corbett has joined our support staff team and will be working alongside EYFS and Year 1. We are delighted that she has joined our team and welcome her to the St Bede's family.

Important Reminders

School Lunches:
Can parents please ensure that they pre-order their child's meal through the Arbor app. Mrs Walton has previously sent out instructions as to how to access the pre-ordering. The menu operates on a three-weekly schedule.
We currently are not able to offer Halal meals however there are always vegetarian options available. We are hoping to be able to negotiate re-introducing a Halal option in the future, I will keep parents posted of any developments in this area.

Parents Evening:
Thank you to everyone who attended the recent parent's evenings. Dialogue between home and school is essential for helping your child to reach their full potential. if you did not attend, can you please speak with your child's class teacher to organise a meeting in the new half term.

School holiday Free School Meals voucher scheme has ended:
For the past few years, Newcastle City Council has been providing vouchers to families whose children receive means-tested free school meals to help with the cost of food and other essentials during school holidays. That support was funded through the Household Support Fund (HSF), a government grant funded by the Department for Work and Pensions.
However, the government ended that fund on 31 March 2026. While the council continued to provide vouchers until the end of the 2025 to 2026 academic year through the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) to those who had previously received them, CRF guidance says that the council and schools are longer able to do this. No further vouchers will be issued to families during school holidays such as October half term, Christmas or Easter.

While the vouchers have ended families in need can access a range of other support.
Benefits: To check what benefits you can receive, or for debt and money advice from Newcastle City Council, and help with benefit applications, see www.newcastle.gov.uk/benefits

Crisis and resilience fund: If you are in crisis, or have suffered a sudden financial shock, you may be entitled to a crisis support payment – see www.newcastle.gov.uk/crisis-resilience-fund for details of how to apply

Council tax support: If you are on a low-income help may be available to assist you in meeting the cost of your council tax

Healthy start: If you have a child under 4, you may be entitled to receive help to buy food and milk through the NHS Healthy Start scheme. For more information see www.healthystart.nhs.uk.

Food banks: If you are struggling to afford to eat, food banks or charities may also be able to help. To find a food bank near you, visit Information Now at www.informationnow.org.uk/food-banks

Low-cost meal advice: Find ideas for healthy low-cost meals in 'Air Fry and Eat Well' from Children and Families Newcastle at https://childrenandfamiliesnewcastle.org.uk/pregnancy-and-early-years/pre-school-children/eat-well



Kids eat for free (or £1.00):
The office team have already sent out a message linked to these great offers for half term which allow children to eat for free or for £1.00. A great way to have a family treat without the huge expense.

Free Pre-Owned Uniform:
School uniform can be expensive for parents; therefore, we are very keen to help where we can. We have a huge amount of washed, pre-owned uniform which is free

Items from home:
We have an increasing number of children bringing items from home. These range from toys, squishies, sensory / fidget toys, keyrings and lip balms, to name but a few. We appreciate that some children benefit from having a sensory / fidget toy as part of their emotional regulation and these are provided by school for use within school. Other toys, keyrings. lip balms, etc are not only a distraction, can potentially get lost or broken and can even be a temptation to other children who may not have these items themselves

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Safe-Guarding

Birthday treats:
Within school, we have a number of children with food allergies. Moving forward, to support the school in addressing the allergy awareness guidance, we request that, if a parent wishes to bring in something to celebrate a child's birthday that, rather than a open cake (which needs individually slicing and wrapping), that parents instead bring something that is already pre-wrapped and contains a list of ingredients for example a small backed of sweets or a packaged individual cake / cake bar. These will be given out at the end of the school day and then the parents will be able to ensure that the item is safe for their child to eat.

Photographs:
Moving forward we will be reviewing the way that we take images of children to ensure that we can help to safeguard our pupils in relation to the potential dangers of AI. It is really sad that this has to happen, as we all love to showcase the wonderful things that happen here at St Bede's, however it is very important to us to try to keep our children safe from the terrible misuse of technology.
Images moving forward will focus on sharing 'the same story but from a different angle'. This will mean that we will move to taking photographs from behind so that we do not display children's faces or images where we focus in on hands or work. Over time, we will be reviewing our school website and social media account to follow the same principles.

Online safety:
Technology is a valuable tool, but children's growth and development depend on a balance of experiences. Limiting screen time helps ensure children have opportunities to be active, sleep well, build relationships, and learn through real-world experiences.

Age-based screen time guidance:
2 - 5 years
- Aim for no more than 1 hour of high-quality screen time per day.
- Prioritise physical play, reading, and interaction with others.

5 - 11 years
- No specific universal time limit, but many experts recommend keeping recreational screen time to around 1-2 hours per day.
- Ensure screens do not replace:
  - Sleep
  - Physical activity (at least 60 minutes daily)
  - Reading
  - Family time
  - Hobbies and outdoor play

Practical Tips for Parents
- Establish screen-free bedrooms.
- Have screen-free family meals.
- Create a family media agreement.
- Model healthy screen habits yourself.
- Encourage outdoor play, reading, sports, music, and creative activities.
- Switch off screens at least one hour before bedtime.

Forthcoming Events
November dates:
Monday 2nd November: School re-opens for pupils
Monday 2nd November: Year 6 visit to Safety Works
Wednesday 4th November: Year 4 visit to Forest School

Sunday 8th November: Parish Coffee Morning (after Mass)
Wednesday 11th November: Y5 leading Parish Remembrance Mass
Wednesday 11th November: Year 4 visit to Forest School
Monday 9th November: Year 1 Stay, Play and Pray (2.15pm)
Monday 16th November: Odd Sock Day to launch Anti-Bullying Week
Wednesday 18th November: Year 4 visit to Forest School
Thursday 19th November: Year 3 Stay, Play and Pray (time to follow)

December dates:
2nd December: EYFS / KS1 Christmas Lunch (one parent able to attend – information to follow)
3rd December: KS2 Christmas Lunch (one parent able to attend – information to follow)
7th December: Christmas Crafts (further information to follow)
9th December EYFS Nativity 2.00pm
10th December: Y1 / Y2 joint Nativity 2.00pm
14th – 17th December: Christmas party days (further information to follow)
17th December: Whole School Christmas Mass
18th December: PJ and Movie Day

If you have any questions regarding any of the items raised in the newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact school.

We return to school on Monday 2nd November, on behalf of all of the staff I would like to wish you all a happy and safe half term break.

Kind regards
Mrs Young
(headteacher)