

ST. BEDE'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

celebrating life and learning

Autumn 1: Issue 1

3rd September, 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Bede, patron of our school, wrote:

"It was always my delight to learn and to teach".

We are a celebrating community, living the Gospel Values, committed to educating children in the light of the Catholic Faith.

We journey together so that we

"Might have life - life in all its fullness".

John 10:10

PRAYER FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

Heavenly Father,
We come before You with hearts full of hope and trust, seeking Your guidance as we navigate the paths laid before us. Just as You spoke through the prophet Jeremiah, reminding us that You have plans for us—plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and a future—may we hold fast to these promises.
Amen

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

Welcome back to school and to our September newsletter. It is certainly good to be back; we are all looking forward to the next academic year. To ensure that information is shared in a timely fashion, the newsletter will be published once a month. All up and coming events will be advertised in the newsletter; however, the school website is an excellent source of information.

CURRICULUM MEETINGS

There are a number of events taking place in September starting with the parent/carer Curriculum Meetings. They begin with Year 6 on Tuesday 17th September at 9.00 am. Year 5 is on Wednesday 18th; Year 4 on Thursday 19th September and finally Year 3 will be on Friday 20th September. These are all at 9.00 am.

SCHOOL DISCO

The first School Disco is from 3.30 - 5.00 pm for Year 5 & 6 on Tuesday 10th September. Year 3 & 4's disco is on Wednesday 11th September from 3.30 - 4.30 pm. Pupils who are attending the disco can wear non-uniform on the day. All other pupils wear school uniform as expected. There will be no other clubs and all children can attend on the respective day. Tickets will go on sale on Wednesday 4th September and are priced at £2.00. Refreshments are available to purchase.

PRAYER & WORSHIP

All parents/carers are welcome to join the staff and children at ANY Prayer and Worship. They take place in the school hall every Tuesday and Thursday from 9.00 - 9.25 am. It is a wonderful way to start the school day and gives an insight into the Catholic Life of the school.

WELCOME TO SCHOOL MASS

Father Mark has kindly offered to say a special mass for us to celebrate the start of the school year. All parents/carers are welcome to join us on this lovely occasion at St. Bede's Catholic Church at 2.00 pm on Thursday 5th September.

CHANGE TO OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The school office will be open from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30 am to 4.00 pm on a Friday. The office can be very busy at the start and end of the day. We want to keep communication lines open, therefore, if parents/carers need to speak to the school office about a non-urgent matter, please feel free to email the office on:

admin.stbedesjunior@haltonlearning.net.

We are excited to meet our new pupils, most of whom have had the opportunity to meet their class teacher and other pupils at the end of the last academic year, and look forward to another fabulous year at St. Bede's Junior School.

WATER BOTTLES

Whilst we want children and adults in school to stay hydrated, and we actively encourage drinking water throughout the day, please give your son/daughter suitable, inexpensive water bottles. They must have a sports cap to prevent spillages (ruining their work and/or another student's), and should be suitably sized for a child. They are able to refill during the day so do not need the big (and expensive) Stanley cups. Moreover, pupils leave their bottles all over school so they are easily 'lost' so inexpensive, refillable bottles with sports caps are most desirable.



APPLETON VILLAGE, WIDNES, CHESHIRE, WA8 6EL

Telephone: 0151 424 3386 Email: head.stbedesjunior@haltonlearning.net



CHILD - PARENT/ CARER - TEACHER CONFERENCES

MONDAY AND TUESDAY

7th and 8th October, 2024

Monday 3.30 - 5.30 pm.

Tuesday 3.30 - 6.30 pm.

It is preferable for pupils to attend the meetings.

BIRTHDAY NEWS

Remember, we invite pupils to wear non-uniform on their birthdays. This way, they will be instantly recognised as celebrating their own special birth day! We know that sometimes a birthday falls on a weekend or even in the holidays, therefore, pupils can celebrate in non-uniform on the Friday before or the Monday after. Hopefully, our special pupils will feel extra-special on their birthdays!



HAPPY NOT PERFECT

A gentle reminder to our parents/carers and wider community that St. Bede's Catholic Junior School is not a perfect place filled with perfect people. Should a problem arise, we respectfully request that you contact the school to discuss the issue with school staff. Social media is fantastic and is used to celebrate success and good news. Airing opinions about decisions made by the school on social media is unhelpful and could potentially damage the reputation of the school as others begin to comment. We have a Parent/Carer Working Party. All parents/carers are invited so please, if you have a suggestion to make, do so in a manner which is helpful and affords the school the respect it deserves.

SCHOOL MEALS

From today, we now have a new catering provider. Mellors have been working alongside our kitchen staff to ensure they are ready to provide the children with a tasty, healthy school meal. All children are welcome to stay for a school meal. We ask that all meals are paid for in advance. If your child orders a meal in the morning and you have not paid for it, then the office will contact you to remind you to pay or to provide a packed lunch.

Year 3 pupils are no longer entitled to the Universal Infant Free School Meals, so meals need to be paid for via the School gateway APP/website. We encourage you to make a claim for free school meals with Halton Borough Council and more information can be found on our school website under the Parent/Carer information Tab.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

ABSENCE

If your child is too ill to attend school, please ring and leave a message on the answerphone, preferably before 8.30 am.

If you have not contacted the school on the first day of absence by 9.15 am, then a member of the school staff will try to contact you. This is not a good use of resources but your child's well-being is of paramount importance. If school staff are not able to make contact, a home visit will be carried out as routine. Staff wish to ensure that your child is safe with you and has not been abducted or involved in an accident on the way to school.

If the school has to make contact on three occasions, rather than the person with parental responsibility informing the school of the reason for absence, then the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) automatically visits the home to ascertain the reason for non-compliance with school policy.

If a child is absent for 5 days or more, then some form of medical evidence must be provided, e.g.: medicine prescribed by a medical practitioner.

When attendance falls below 90% the EWO is routinely involved with the situation. No further absence is authorised without some form of medical evidence.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM

Persistent absence is regarded as 90% or below. Consequently, if your child's attendance falls to 93% you will be requested to provide some form of medical evidence, for example, a prescription or prescribed medication, for the absence to be authorised by the school.



It should be the exception that attendance falls below 90% over a full year. 90% attendance means in effect that the child has missed, on average, half a day per week over the year! By the end of the academic year, 27 pupils had attendance below 90% last year. This is 8.8% of the school!

REDUCING LATENESS

In the last academic year, there were **3,816** late marks in total. It is recognised that children are occasionally late due to traffic issues or simply a forgotten alarm call; however when children are late, it does impact on their learning and their well-being. It can be embarrassing walking into a room late especially if it is at a crucial time such as during registration and prayers.

This academic year, in an attempt to reduce lateness, parents/carers have to sign their son/daughter in at the school office after 8.50 am. In addition, children who are late will participate in 'catch up' sessions with Mrs. Harrington so we can ensure that they don't miss any learning time.

AUTUMN TERM FUNDRAISING EVENTS

A 'Back to School' Disco will be held for Year 5 and 6 on Tuesday 10th September, 2024 and for Year 3 and 4 on Wednesday 11th September, 2024. The discos begin straight after school so pupils can wear non-uniform **IF THEY ARE GOING TO THE DISCO.** Pupils without a ticket wear their uniform / PE Kit (on PE Days) as normal. Tickets cost £2.00 and are purchased in school. There is also a Tuck Shop available at each event. **Please note that Wednesday's Disco (Y3&4) finishes at 4.30 pm.**

Tuesday 10 th September	Year 5 & Year 6 Disco	3.30 - 5.00 pm Tickets: £2.00
Wednesday 11 th September	Year 3 & Year 4 Disco	3.30 - 4.30 pm Tickets: £2.00
Friday 15 th November	'Blue Friday'	School Day £1 donation
Monday 25 th November	Christmas Bingo	5.30 - 8.00 pm approx
Tuesday 3 rd December 7.00 pm	School Production	Tickets only £2.00
Wednesday 4 th December 1.30pm	School Production	Tickets only: £2.00
Thursday 5 th December 7.00 pm	School Production	Tickets only: £2.00
Friday 13 th December	Christmas Jumper Day	School Day £1 donation
Monday, 16 th December, 2024	Christmas Film Night	3.30 - 5.30 pm Tickets: £2.00
Monday, 16 th December, 2024	Christmas PJ Day	School Day £1 donation

ST. BEDE'S BABY NEWS

We are delighted that both Mrs. Horton and Mrs. Smith have welcomed lovely baby boys into our school community.

Zachary Tony Horton was born on Sunday 28th July at 6.48 am. He weighed a healthy 8lb.

Patrick Joseph Smith was born one week later on Sunday 4th August at 10.10 pm. Patrick weighed 8lb 8 oz.

I am sure that the school community wish both members of staff a happy and healthy maternity leave enjoying their time with their new-born babies and a toddler each before they return in the summer term.

"For You created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb - Psalm 139:13-
Kate"

SCHOOL SECURITY

Throughout the day, the school gates are locked and access is only granted by the office. The gates will be opened at home time for 15 minutes, after which time they will be locked again as we still have children on site, at The Village Care Club until 6pm.

Parent/carers are asked to vacate the premises by 3.40 pm. If your child is attending an extra-curricular club until 4.15pm, the gates will remain closed and staff will bring the children to the gate. This will be under review.

We also ask that all children, including Infant School children are fully supervised on the playground at the end of the school day and do not play on or with the school equipment.

Thank you for your support with keeping the children safe.

EARLY COLLECTION

A timetable must be adhered to by all schools. The day begins at 8.50 am and ends at 3.30 pm. Last year there were a number of pupils who were collected from school early for various reasons. The majority of these were unplanned / unnecessary. This has the same effect on pupils' education as lateness. Missing the last 15 minutes of the school day can mean they miss essential information. Pupils will not be allowed to leave school early except if previously arranged or in extenuating circumstances. Please remember that appointments for dentist and/or doctor should be made out of school time except when your child is unwell / has an emergency. Please discuss any concerns with Mrs. Harrington.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are not to be used in school. Any student found with a phone will be asked to take it to the office so it can be collected by an appropriate adult. We understand that some Year 6 children require their phone for walking to and from school. We ask that pupils who require a phone with them in school, place it in the delegated boxes at the pupil entrance on entry to school and they collect it on the way out at the end of the day. Parent / carers are required to complete a form, stating that school will not be responsible for any loss or damage to phones that are brought to school.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS LIST

It is hoped that there is an extra-curricular club for everyone so that every child has an opportunity to earn credits for Children's University. Every hour counts as one credit towards graduation (30 hours). Presently, all clubs are delivered free of charge and by school staff (with the exception of Taekwondo). However, despite the 'free' nature of the clubs, we ask that pupils show commitment and attend every week. Clubs are not allocated on a first come, first served basis to ensure every interest expressed is respected. It is a time consuming task to sort 307 letters so please be prompt with replies. This term there are a whopping 21 different clubs!

	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
MON	Taekwondo	Taekwondo		
TUES	Mindfulness	Stitching Club	Christmas Production	Christmas Production
		Art & Craft Club	Tag Rugby	Tag Rugby
		Photography		
WED	History Detectives	History Detectives	Table Tennis	Table Tennis
	Film Club	Digital Leaders	Digital Leaders	Digital Leaders
		Games Club	French (lunch)	French (lunch)
	Drumba Club	Drumba Club	Cookery Club	
			Netball	Netball
THUR	Debate Club	Debate Club	Christmas Production	Christmas Production
	Art Club		Film Club	
FRI			Football	Football
			Badminton	Badminton

REQUESTS MADE TO PARENTS/CARERS: WE NEED YOUR HELP!

1. Please ensure that your details are up-to-date with the school office: phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts and primary contact. The school office communicates with parents/carers via email and the School Spider App. We would love to use this as the main source of communication, but cannot do so due to under-use from parents. Each year, communication is flagged as an area to improve, but we need your help! ALL parents/carers should download the School Spider App. Then, we can use this as our main communication method.
2. **Lost Property:** On behalf of all school staff, can we please ask you to name uniform and PE kit please; lunch boxes also benefit from being labelled. Please use labels or a Sharpie (biro fades and/or washes away). Any items left at the end of the last academic year, have now been washed and added to the pre-loved rail or disposed of.
3. Last year we moved to using workbooks for homework and found them very popular with the children. School provides all books free of charge, however if your child loses them, there will be a charge of £3 to replace a lost CGP book.

CLASS ASSEMBLIES

Parents/Carers, family members and friends are most welcome to share the celebrations at 10.00 am.

The following assemblies have been arranged for this academic year, though they are subject to change.

DATE	TOPIC	CLASS
13.09.24	INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DEMOCRACY	C6 JJ
27.09.24	PEOPLE	C5 MH
11.10.24	INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD	C10 MG
24.10.24	CALLED	C3 VF
15.11.24	INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE	C7 MH
22.11.24	GREAT THINKERS: WORLD PHILOSOPHY DAY	C4 RG
6.12.24	GOD'S MESSAGE: PROPHECY AND PROMISE	C1 AR
20.12.24	CHRISTMAS MEDITATION	C9 JM
17.01.25	SOURCES	C8 JW
31.01.25	GOD'S KINGDOM: GALILEE AND JERUSALEM	C2 LL
14.02.25	UNITY	C10 MG
14.03.25	SACRIFICE	C6 JJ
28.03.25	INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ZERO WASTE	C9 JM
04.04.25	EASTER MEDITATION	C7 MH
02.05.25	NEW LIFE	C3 VF
23.05.25	SAINTS AND ANGELS	C5 MH
13.06.25	WORLD OCEANS DAY	C1 AR
20.06.25	HEALING	C8 JW
04.07.25	CELEBRATION OF SPORT	C2 LL
11.07.25	GOD'S PEOPLE	C4 RG
22.07.25	LEAVER'S ASSEMBLY (1.30 pm)	Y6

UNIFORM: A BIG THANK YOU

Thank you for the efforts that parents/carers have made with purchasing the uniform and PE Kits. Remember that the children wear a school PE Kit on their class PE Days, not ANY sportswear. School hoodies are for PE days too; not for wearing with the school uniform.

The school T-Shirt is black and green and includes the school badge. Black shorts or UNBRANDED black joggers, tracksuit pants or leggings can be worn. I know that sometimes children may grab a pair of navy or grey bottoms and think that is ok, but we insist that pupils wear a uniform of a school PE Kit on PE days too.

Remember that we have a 'Pre-Loved Stand' for donated uniform too which is all washed and ready to be picked up. If any parents/carers need support with uniform, please let me know as I will be happy to help.

PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S UNIFORM AND PE KIT.

READING STRATEGY: LEARN TO READ; LOVE TO READ

As we continue to focus on our students' academic and personal growth, we want to emphasize one of the most crucial activities that can significantly impact your child's success: **reading at home**. Whether your child is just starting to read our book-banded books or is already devouring chapter books, reading at home plays a vital role in their development.

At St. Bede's we are ever-committed to developing robust readers, working incredibly hard to select texts within our Reading Spine that both inspire and challenge our readers in English lessons.

This is an example of our 'Learn to Read' for Year 4 Autumn Term. ➔

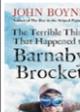
This year, we also have our 'Love to Read' books across all years, which are recommended texts that parents/carers may wish to read at home with their child, alongside what is read and studied in class.

Visit our website for more information.

How can our parents/carers support their child's reading progress?

Recent research indicates that parents/carers have the power to support and improve their child's growth in reading by an additional four months per year and so, when we ask for your support it is so much more than the signing of a diary. Just by sitting with your child and listening to them read or reading aloud regularly to them, you have the power to make a positive impact on their reading outcomes.

Year 4 Autumn Term: 'Learn to Read'		
The Hackney Martian (Paul Brown, 1997).		
This is an entertaining adventure story about an unusual friendship and working together to solve a problem. Children familiar with Hackney Marshes or the Tower of London will find it of particular interest.		
		
'The Iron Giant' Contemporary classic fiction	'The Nothing to See Here Hotel' Fictional comedy/fantasy	'Fantastic Mr. Fox' Fiction
Written in 1968, this contemporary classic by the Poet Laureate Ted Hughes celebrates human kindness.	Written by Steven Butler, this comedy tale centres on a hotel that is not for humans and instead is the perfect getaway for magical creatures of all kinds.	Roald Dahl's classic twists on tales focuses on Fantastic Mr. Fox, who is on the run from three of the meanest farmers.
Frankenstein (Mary Shelley)		
The retelling of this classic 19 th Century gothic tale is has been cited as the first ever work of science fiction – and Victor Frankenstein's shocking creation, while not a robot, is certainly an artificial intelligence of sorts. Frankenstein explores what it means to be human and examines the ethics and unforeseen consequences of creating a self-aware being.		
		
'Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief' American fiction linked to Grecian myths	'Operation Gadget Man' Adventure/detective	'The Tempest' (retold) Tragicomedy
This book is about a girl called Shona who loves words. John Asari is an Afro-Guyanese playwright, poet and children's writer.	Former Children's Laureate Malorie Blackman presents a fast-paced story about a school-girl detective.	Shakespeare's historical play retold by Angela McCallister focuses on themes of morality, justice, colonialism and love.

Year 4 Autumn Term: 'Love to Read'			
Budding Scientists	Fantastic Fiction	Picture Books	Challenging Reads
'Shackleton's Journey' by William Grill 	'Solve Your Own Mystery' by Gareth P. Jones 	'Ancestry' by Hannah Salyer 	'100 Best Poems for Children' edited by Roger McGough 
'Earth is Big' by Steve Tomecek & Marcos Farina 	'The Night We Got Stuck in a Story' by Ben Miller 	'Joan Procter, Dragon Doctor' by Patricia Valdez 	'I was a Rat!' by Philip Pullman 
'Women Who Led the Way' by Mick Manning & Brita Granstrom 	'How to Train Your Dragon' Cressida Cowell 	'The Proudest Blue' Ibtihaj Muhammad & S.K. Ali 	'Cloudbusting' by Malorie Blackman 
'Frank Einstein and the Antimatter Motor' by Jon Scieszka 	'Interdimensional Explorers' by Lorraine Gregory & Jo Lindley 	'The Midnight Panther' by Poonam Mistry 	'The Terrible Thing That Happened To Barnaby Brocket' by John Boyne 

Reading at home reinforces the literacy skills your child is learning in school. The more they read, the more they practise and hone their abilities in decoding, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Reading regularly helps children become more confident readers, and this confidence translates into better performance in all subjects. When a child can read well, they can more easily understand maths problems, science concepts, and historical texts.

Our recommended 'Love to Read' books introduce our pupils to a wide range of vocabulary that they might not encounter in everyday conversations. As they read, they learn new words in context, which helps them understand and remember them. Beyond vocabulary, reading exposes children to new ideas, cultures, and experiences. Whether it's exploring the wonders of space or understanding the emotions of characters in a story, reading broadens their horizons and deepens their understanding of the world. Reading sparks the imagination. As children read about far-off lands, magical creatures, or historical events, they are encouraged to picture these scenes in their minds. If you would like any advice or support around reading at home, please do call in to school to see one of the school staff.

READING STRATEGY: LEARN TO READ; LOVE TO READ

What will the school be doing to support my child's reading?

Teachers already deliver content from bespoke curriculum maps for reading that are progressive, engaging and exact to statutory requirements. Reading is aligned very closely to writing skills and a range of carefully selected texts serve as the focus of each unit, supplemented by thematic books as part of our Reading Spine. Feedback from our children shows us that they really enjoy the texts we choose for them in each year group.

We have a number of specialist staff certified to deliver our SoundsWrite phonics programme and training in this scheme continues. Teaching Assistants facilitate the changing of library books each week.

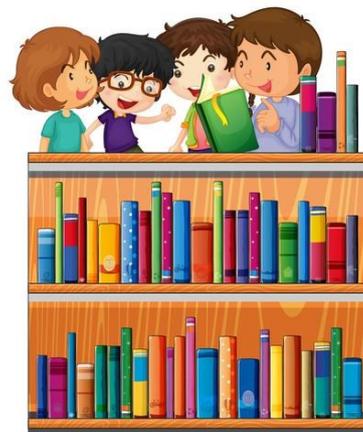
How does completing a reading diary support my child in reading?

Reading is an essential skill for life but it is also an opportunity to really enjoy yourself too—we have some fantastic books in school! Your continued effort is imperative to the success and growth of your child's reading fluency as we work together to ready our children for the rigours of everyday life. We therefore ask you to ensure that your child reads as often as possible across the busy week; it can be 10 minutes in the car or whilst they are waiting for their swimming lesson. They can read on the bus or whilst dinner is being prepared. However, the notion of a 'bedtime story' should continue as your child gets older and not be for younger children only.

By encouraging your child to write high quality comments about their reading in their diaries each day, it supports our teachers and Teaching Assistants with daily dialogues around reading and strengthens our collaborative efforts to 'Read Together'.

To encourage our readers further with this essential aspect of school routines, we will be rewarding our children for their routine record-keeping of home reading on a half-termly basis and therefore, children need to be 'in it to win it!' Please ensure that children write their own high-quality comments - signatures in the boxes will not suffice!

Children who read regularly are more likely to develop a lifelong love for learning. When reading is seen as a pleasurable activity rather than a chore, children are more likely to seek out books on their own, explore new topics, and cultivate curiosity



When will children change their library books?

As part of our promise to parents/carers and pupils, we have also taken the time to review our library routines to ensure that routine time is assigned to changing books. However, if a child needs to change their book at any time, they simply need to ask their teacher or a Teaching Assistant who will be happy to assist.

The schedule will be as follows:

Monday - Year 3
Tuesday - Year 4
Wednesday - Year 5
Thursday - Year 6

We always need adult volunteers to listen to pupils read, so if you have an hour to spare, please consider helping our pupils and staff.

If your child has been assigned a book band within our Collins scheme, we ask that you support your child's reading fluency and comprehension by ensuring their book selection remains within their assigned level.

Where can children read beyond the classroom?

We already have a really comprehensive library in school and some quiet, cosy book-nooks where children can sit and enjoy a book. As part of our continued growth, and in response to our children's requests, for 2024/25 reading at break and lunch we will be offering an outdoor book-nook so that, as part of our OPAL evolution, our children can enjoy a book amongst nature. Exciting times!

Can we still submit entries for the Summer Reading Initiative?

Don't forget that, anyone wishing to enter the Summer Reading Challenge has until Friday 13th September to email their entries to reading@stbedesjuniorschool.co.uk or, better yet, pass your book nooks to Miss. Massey for judging!

Thank you for your continued support in making our school community a vibrant place for learning and growth.