



**Respect
Resilience**

Integrity

Self-discipline

Excellence



Key information and news

Free School Meals

The Department of Education has suggested that at least 14% of students eligible for FSM are not claiming them. For more information on children entitled to free school meals and how to apply, please see our website [Free School Meals](#) for more details.

ASD Family support Drop-in Sessions – New dates added

Free support and advice in your local area when supporting young people with ASD. 0-19 years. No diagnosis needed. Please see attached flyer for dates and locations.

Attendance matters, moments count

Punctuality. In each class the teacher takes a register. The attendance register is taken twice a day. If your child is late for school after the register has been closed your child is marked as late after registration. The Local Authority recognise this as an absent mark. Sustained lateness can result in prosecution, so we ask parents who are having difficulty with morning routines to speak to the attendance team as soon as possible for support from school.

How do schools work out attendance?

Schools count each day as 2 sessions (AM & PM) Your child has to attend 10 full session (5 days, morning and afternoon) each week to achieve 100% attendance. If your child has a half day absence, they would have 90% for that week. One day absence would be 80%.

Welcome to Y7 evening

Thank you to all our parents who attended Wednesday evening. Details from the evening will be emailed to all parents alongside a copy of the year 7 extracurricular timetable.



Dates and events

Parent Events

No upcoming events

Student Events

Monday 7 and Tuesday 8 October 2024

Police Violence Reduction – Knife Crime Awareness (In school event)

Wednesday 9 October 2024 5.30 – 11pm

Wicked at the Sunderland Empire

Wednesday 9 and Thursday 10 October 2024

Sixth Form Newcastle University Library Visit

Thursday 10th October

World Mental Health Day (In school event)

In form assemblies, all students will reflect on how they can maintain good mental health.

Tuesday 15 October 2024

Dragon Quizzes – Year 7 (In school event)

Wednesday 16 – Friday 18 October 2024

Camps International Assemblies (In school event)

Thursday 17 October 2024

Year 9 Netball Tournament



RISE – The St Benet Biscop Way



Harvest foodbank collection

This week, we launched our harvest collection for local foodbanks, recognising their vital role in supporting our community. It's heartening to see many students already contributing donations, and we still have two more weeks to gather more support. Our goal is to fill a minibus with food to deliver to those in need. Currently, the most needed items include tinned vegetables, tinned meat, biscuits, and toiletries. We appreciate everyone's efforts in making a difference during this important initiative!

Fundraising

Over the past couple of weeks our school community has come together to raise money for various charities, showcasing our collective spirit of support. The modern foreign languages department held a fantastic cake competition and sale during European Day of Languages, raising an impressive £75 for CAFOD. Additionally, staff participated in a Macmillan coffee morning, enjoying some delicious cakes while raising £151 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

In a show of solidarity with those who struggle during harvest time, staff also observed CAFOD's Family Fast Day by opting for simple soup prepared by our wonderful kitchen staff instead of their usual lunches, resulting in another considerable amount of money raised for CAFOD. It's been a couple of weeks filled with camaraderie and compassion, making a real difference in our community!

European Day of Languages 2024

Last Thursday we had a great time celebrating European Day of Languages across the whole school. Students were invited to enter the 'SBB Bake Off' and create a cake linked to a European country or the theme of peace. We had some amazing (and delicious!) entries, a huge well done to all those who took part!



During form time, students took part in a form quiz about national dishes written by one of our talented Y11 linguists. The following forms all won a prize: 7S – Miss Thompson; 8P – Mrs Thirtle; 9O – Mrs Irving; 10T – Mrs Vermaas; 11C – Mr Dunbar. There was a scavenger hunt, and students had to find out which languages teachers learnt at school or what their favourite food from another country is.

In MFL lessons, KS3 students worked together to create a beautiful display linking languages and peace together. Finally, we were all treated to some delicious continental food from the canteen, including Greek gyros. It was a great day, and we hope the students enjoyed it as much as we did.



Faith

Theme of the week

This week, our school community has been exploring the concept of self-discipline, emphasising its significance in both personal growth and our shared values. We've thought about how self-discipline involves controlling our emotions, behaviours, and desires to achieve long-term goals through setting boundaries and making sacrifices. In the context of our faith, we've reflected on how self-discipline enhances our spiritual growth through prayer, helping us deepen our relationship with God. Additionally, we've considered how it encourages moral living and self-control, allowing us to resist temptations and make choices that reflect our values. Our conversations have highlighted how self-discipline also motivates us to serve our communities, embodying the teachings of Jesus about love and service. Ultimately, we've recognised that self-discipline is not just a personal virtue but a means to authentically live out our faith, contributing to our collective spiritual growth and reflecting our shared beliefs in everyday life.

Chapel Lessons

Our year 7 students have been exploring the St Benet Biscop values in their RE lessons this week. They have taken part in a chapel lesson which included a time for reflection with our chaplain Bridgid and a chance to share ideas about how they could contribute to our wonderful school community. They were given time to personally reflect on what 'rising up' meant to them and they created some very colourful bunting for our chapel as a reminder of how we should show respect, resilience, integrity, self-discipline and excellence in all we can do to ensure we are rising up and being the best version of ourselves.



Quest

Year 13 Theatre Trip

The year 13 drama students went to see 'Pride and Prejudice- sort of' at the Theatre Royal last week and met the cast after the show. They thoroughly enjoyed the production and took lots of notes. This is great preparation for the written exam and the live theatre component.

UK University and Apprenticeship Careers Fair – St. James' Park, Newcastle

Year 13 students embraced the opportunity to find out more information about different universities and apprenticeship providers as they continue to prepare for life beyond our Sixth Form. Our students had the opportunity to speak to a multitude of exhibiting universities and apprenticeship providers, including Russell Group, red brick and modern institutions, as well as apprenticeship providers and local colleges. The fair featured a wide range of vital seminars including: UCAS Personal Statement & Application Advice, Why take an Apprenticeship, Choosing a University Course, Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and Student Finance to support them with their relevant applications.

International Trip Programme

We are committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to participate in trips and visits which can enrich their learning experience and broaden their horizons.

I wanted to share with you information about our upcoming international school trips, to give you plenty of time to consider whether this is something you would like your child to participate in and how you might plan for such a trip. We recognise that some families may already have a range of commitments.

Further information will be sent out in due course with full details of each trip.

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
CERN Trip Geneva, Switzerland	Spring Term Students in Years 12 and 13		Spring Term Students in Years 12 and 13 (Current Years 10 and 11)
Battlefields of France and Belgium	Summer Term Students in Year 10	Summer Term Students in Year 10 (Current Year 9)	Summer Term Students in Year 10 (Current Year 8)
Spain Language Immersion Trip	Summer Term Students in Years 8 and 10		Summer Term Students in Years 8 and 10 (Current Year 6 and 8)
France Language Immersion Trip		Summer Term Students in Years 8 and 10 (Current Years 7 and 9)	
New York Performing Arts Trip		Easter Holidays Students in Years 10 to 13 (Current Years 9 to 12)	
Ski Trip Davos, Switzerland		February Half Term Holidays Students in Years 10 to 13 (Current Years 9 to 12)	
Camps International Cambodia		Summer Term Students in Years 10 to 13 (Current Years 9 to 12)	

Living safely in a digital world

This week we welcomed Northumbria Police colleagues from the violence reduction unit to help our students understand how to live safely in digital world. Year 7 joined sessions based around malicious communications. They discussed how unkind or offensive messages, and the sharing of indecent images, can impact both the sender and recipient, along with the laws around this and the support available. Year 9 & 10 focussed on risks around sharing indecent images and grooming. Students developed their understanding of what can happen if sharing indecent images, and knowledge about the risks of grooming. The session also addressed the law around this, and consequences linked to sharing images.



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER | violence reduction unit

Online Communication can be Positive – it can be used like this

- Connect us with people who have similar interests
- Help businesses grow
- Assist in finding missing people/pets/belongings
- Provide us with entertainment

But it's not all good!
How do you think social media, and other forms of digital communication, can be used inappropriately?

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER | violence reduction unit

The Facts = The Risks

- 60% of 8-11yrs olds & 98% of 12-17yrs olds own a mobile phone
- 1 in 5 children, aged 10-15 have experienced online bullying (approx. 764,000 young people)
- 60% of internet users have experienced bullying & harassment online
- 8 in 10 children – have followers they DO NOT know
- 90% of 13-17yrs olds – say the internet has made it easier to be mean to others
- 41% of young people – have blocked & reported another users behaviour through Apps & Gaming

National Online Safety



Learning

'New Group Reading Tests' (NGRT) and Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs)

Currently, in school, all students in Years 7 and 8 are completing the 'New Group Reading Test' (NGRT). This test will allow us to accurately gauge the reading ages for all students and identify students where reading ages are below age-related expectations and could be causing a barrier to accessing the curriculum within subjects. A programme of reading intervention will then take place to support any students identified to help them develop their reading proficiency.

Starting in the week beginning 07 October, Year 7 students will also be sitting Cognitive Ability Tests. These tests assess abilities involved in thinking such as reasoning, perception, memory, verbal and mathematical ability, and problem solving. They are delivered in a way which is not subject specific.

Please reassure your child that these tests are nothing for them to worry about but that it is an essential element of how we support them in their academic development. There is no need for students to do any preparation for the tests.

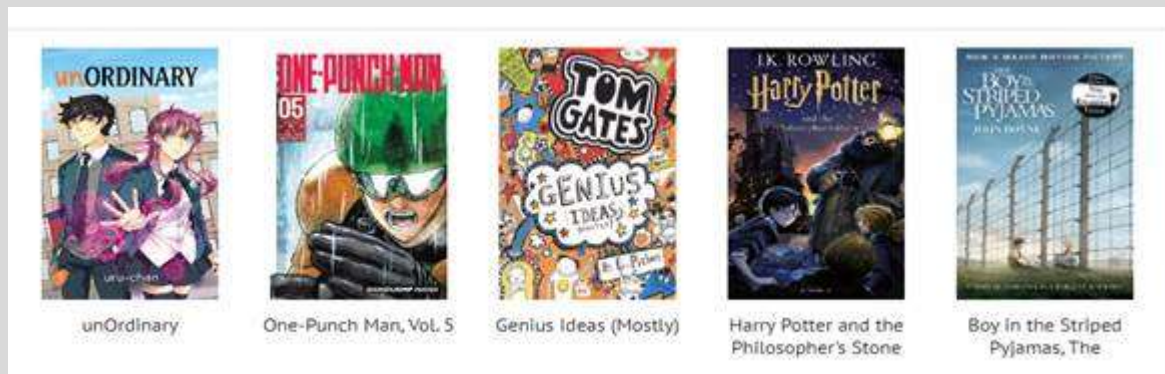
News from the school library

Our school library is becoming very popular with students who pop in at break and lunch time to read, revise, complete homework and do book quizzes.

Year 7 and 8 also have a fortnightly lesson, where they choose books and try out accelerated reader book quizzes. We constantly update our book titles and genres and have recently expanded our selection of books for year 10, 11 and 6th form.

Current genres are as follows: general fiction, historical stories, animal stories, fantasy & sci-fi, crime & thriller, teenage stories, sports, graphic and manga, non-fiction, KS4 and 5, quick reads, comedy, classics and modern classics.

Most popular books so far this term:



The library is open from 8:30am, breaktime, lunchtime & after school until 4pm.

Quote of the week:

"I think books are like people, in the sense that they'll turn up in your life when you most need them." – Emma Thompson

Remember more...



Helping our students to revise, recall and retrieve the knowledge from their learning is an important part of the curriculum. Teachers try a wide range of different strategies to help build habits. Using flashcards is one way to do this and these flashcards were spotted at breaktime in the Dining Room and were being used to help revise Science key terms.

Staff Book Club – sharing our love of reading.

This week Mr Winn launched the St Benet Biscop Staff book club, with 22 members of staff joining. Students have been asked to vote which book the group reads first from a shortlist of 3. The group will then spend the half term reading the book and feedback their thoughts and reviews of the chosen book. Copies will be available for students to borrow from the library. We will announce which book has been chosen in the next newsletter.

VI Sixth Form

There are a number of opportunities available to sixth form students. A few early opportunities are listed below. We'd encourage anyone interested in Aim Oxford or Pathways in Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science to apply early to ensure they secure their place on these sought-after courses.

Newcastle University Library Visit 9th and 10th October

All Year 12 are attending a Sixth Form Independent Study Skills workshop at Newcastle University Library. This is a great opportunity to experience a little of university life, learn how to carry out research and how to manage their time and deadlines. Students are attending one day only. Parents/carers need to complete the online consent form, using the link sent in the letter about the trip. Any students who don't have a completed consent form, cannot go on the trip and must attend school as normal.

Aim for Oxford is an outreach programme designed to support students to apply to Oxford University. The programme includes a series of activities such as online workshops, a residential study programme, and personalised application support. The goal is to increase participants' confidence and preparedness for the Oxford application process. **Applications are now open** for Year 12 students in the North-East of England. The deadline for applications is **Friday, 3rd November 2024**. For more details and our application form, visit the [Aim for Oxford webpage](#).

Pathways into Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science – Nottingham University

Applications are now open for our Pathways to Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science Programme, and we would like to invite your Year 12 students with an interest in science to apply. Now in its second year, the programme is an exciting opportunity for students considering a career in the veterinary industry to receive tailored support through a range of activities.

This two-year programme is free of charge and provides ongoing support and guidance through:

- A range of veterinary and animal science-related lectures, taster sessions and masterclasses
- An undergraduate mentor studying Vet Med or Animal Science
- Advice and guidance sessions on UCAS, interviews, careers and employability
- A guaranteed place on the residential summer school at the University of Nottingham
- A supported work experience placement

Students can find eligibility criteria and apply online [here](#). **Applications close on Monday, 4th November.**

Reading in the Sixth Form

Students are encouraged to read often and widely, for pleasure and for academic growth. Sixth form classes read together in registration at least once a week. The school's library is stocked with non-fiction and fiction books, suitable for Year 12 and 13 students. Students are also provided with a reading list for each subject they study, to help boost their learning and their personal development. Research shows that students who read often are more likely to achieve higher grades and to secure higher paid jobs. We also promote reading as a proven way to:

- Boost memory, improve problem solving, creativity and empathy
- Improve communication skills, spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Develop patience and resilience.