



ST BENET BISCOP CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Family Handbook

Our Values

- Respect • Resilience • Integrity
- Self-Discipline • Excellence



"Rise up and Shine" Isaiah 60



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Contents

Welcome.....	3
Our Mission.....	4
The St Benet Biscop Way - “RISE up and Shine”	5
The School Day	6
Wellbeing.....	7
Transition.....	7
Rewards	8
The Curriculum	9
Feedback.....	10
Independent learning - Homework	12
Enrichment	13
Inclusivity and Equity.....	14
School-Home Communication.....	14
Mobile phones.....	15
Detention.....	15
Home – Academy Agreement.....	16
Academy Meals	18
Free School Meals.....	19
Academy Transport	20
Attendance	21
Punctuality.....	21
Absence	22
Leave of Absence.....	22
Term Dates 2025-26	23
Leadership Team	24
Pastoral Support.....	24
Subject Support	24
How to get in touch	25
Contact us	26
Academy Uniform & Equipment List	27
Sixth Form Dress Code.....	29
Careers Advice and Guidance	30



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Welcome

St Benet Biscop provides a wide ranging and holistic educational experience, rooted in the Catholic tradition. Our lived values allow students to grow, develop, and ultimately contribute to the communities in which they belong.

We believe that every child has the potential to achieve high across all areas of our curriculum, both the taught curriculum and the wider curriculum. As a school community, we see it as our responsibility to ensure that everyone is nurtured, and flourishes during their time with us. We ensure that our students have a sense of belonging in our school community: that they feel like they have significance, and value, and that as a student body, they are all equal.

It is important to us that our students have a full and rounded educational experience, with many opportunities to experience awe and wonder in the world, and to develop personally, morally, and spiritually.

The development of values shapes our student's character; to live a full life responding to God's calling and living out these values in positive daily actions through stewardship. It allows our students to be the person God intended them to be contributing to the common good and society.

The St Benet Biscop Way - "RISE up and Shine"

The St Benet Biscop Way is rooted in the Gospel values and lived out by our community. Our RISE values run through all aspects of school life at St Benet Biscop and help our student achieve 100% Excellence.

Working together will be the key to our success. We recognise that partnership between home and school provides everyone with more opportunities to learn and grow and become the people that God intended us to be. Therefore, this handbook will help you to understand what 100% Excellence really looks like. We look forward to your support and encouragement for their work, interest in rewards and celebrations shared on our App and school blog and on your attendance at parents' evenings and academy events. Together, we will make sure your child's education is successful.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Lewis-Dale
Headteacher



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Our Mission

Inspired by our Christian faith, our mission is to provide the highest standard of education and opportunity for all our students, enabling them to live their lives to the fullest.

*To seek wholeness through **faith**,
quest and **learning** to become
what God intends us to be.*

There are three key strands in the mission statement. Faith, quest and learning.

Through these three strands we ensure that our students live out our values to allow them to “Rise up and Shine”, to become what God intended them to be.

Rise up to Faith

Opportunities are carefully planned to allow students to show faith in themselves, each other, staff and God. They use their God given gifts to be the person God intended them to be.

Students can talk about the mission statement and our RISE values and how these impact their lives and actions. Students have opportunities to express their faith; they know how to be ready to learn and how to respect themselves, others and their environment.

Students live out Catholic Social Teaching helping others in school and the wider community.

Rise up to Quest

Our curriculum, including extracurricular and enrichment is dedicated to enhancing students' lives as they embark on an intellectual, moral and social journey, encouraging them to explore, discover, and develop their full potential.

Students have leadership opportunities to build experience, confidence and skills developing character.

Our Careers Programme allows students to understand links between careers and subject areas including transferable skills and ensures that they have the information to make informed future choices.

Our culture of rewards allows pupils to recognise the value of commitment and determination.

Rise up to Learning

Our curriculum is creative, rigorous, challenging and promotes critical thinking; preparing students to adapt to change and become lifelong learners.

We provide a positive and engaging environment where students are encouraged to work hard both in class and at home, to develop creativity, social responsibility, and personal growth.

Learning empowers students to become active participants in their education, take ownership of their progress, and make informed decisions.

Through Core Studies and the curriculum of individual subject areas students have an appreciation of the British values of democracy, and mutual respect for those of other faiths and beliefs, these are examples of our lived-out values.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

The St Benet Biscop Way- “RISE up and Shine”

The St Benet Biscop Way is rooted in the Gospel values and lived out by our community.

Respect

St Benet Biscop students are respectful and kind and celebrate the uniqueness of each individual, acting to make a positive difference in the lives of others. We have respect for self, for others and keep each other safe.

Resilience

St Benet Biscop students ‘stick at it’ remain positive and have the strength to persevere. We see mistakes as opportunities to learn and show resilience. Students challenge themselves to do it better next time seeing mistakes as opportunities to learn

Integrity

St Benet Biscop students are truthful and honest in all areas of life living out their values. When faced with tough decisions and hard choices, they do the right thing, even when it’s difficult or when no-one is looking. They give their work and keep promises.

Self-Discipline

St Benet Biscop students follow the rules; first time, every time. They are respectful and kind to all members of our school community and its visitors. In and outside of lessons they positively encourage each other to learn

Excellence

St Benet Biscop students work hard and have high expectations, striving for excellence in all they do. They are determined to get better and understand that the journey is as important as the destination. We celebrate effort and excellence through our culture of rewards.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

The School Day

Equipment

It is important that students are taught how to be organised and responsible. Having a school bag supports student in organisation. At first you could help by packing bags with your child, but you should expect them to check their timetable each night and learn for themselves very quickly.

Students are expected to bring the following to school:

- Pencil case
- Black / blue pen
- Green pen
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Ruler
- Planner (provided by the school)
- Casio fx-85GTX (or equivalent) calculator. These are available to purchase from Student Reception.

Lunchtime

Family Dining is a crucial part of Academy life. We expect students to eat a healthy meal. Students may bring a packed lunch.

However, students are not allowed to bring energy/fizzy drinks. If a student brings in anything deemed inappropriate by the Academy, items will be confiscated.

We encourage all parents to purchase a suitable, clear, water bottle for their child so that they can regularly drink water throughout the day. Water refilling stations are available.

School Day Timings

Students should be on site for 8.40am for a prompt start to the school day. The school day ends at 3.15 pm.

	All Year Groups
08:45 - 09:10	Registration
09:10 - 10:10	Period 1
10:10 - 11:10	Period 2
11:10 - 11:25	Break
11:25 - 12:25	Period 3
12:25 - 13:15	Lunch
13:15 - 14:15	Period 4
14:15 - 15:15	Period 5



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Wellbeing

We believe we need to build an inclusive environment where every student and member of staff can thrive. As a school community, it is our responsibility to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are taught within our personal development curriculum. Mental health education within school is intended to develop students' understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing and provide them with a self-care toolkit.

All staff, students and parents at St Benet Biscop have access to the resources on the Wellbeing hub. The wellbeing hub is a live and interactive web app which provides up to date and expert support for the school community 24/7. The QR code will allow you to register for the Wellbeing hub.



Transition

At St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy, we recognise how important a smooth and supportive transition from primary to secondary school is for every child. We understand that for some students this change can feel seamless, while for others it may bring greater challenges. That's why we are committed to working closely with families, primary schools, and all stakeholders to ensure that every student feels welcomed, supported, and a true sense of belonging from the moment they join our school community.

To help foster this connection, we invite parents into school in September for a 'Welcome to Secondary' evening, with similar welcome evenings taking place throughout each key stage as students progress through the school.

We place a strong emphasis on building effective home-school communication through in-person communication on site or by phone, the school planner, Arbor, school blog and parent newsletter amongst other means.

Transition at St Benet Biscop is not just a one-off event when students join us in Year 7; it is a carefully planned and ongoing process that supports each student throughout their journey with us, helping them grow in confidence, character, and community.

We firmly believe that smooth transitions are significant for all learners to flourish—spiritually, socially, emotionally, and academically—so they can thrive to be the best that they can be.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Rewards

We firmly believe that rewarding students for their positive behaviour, hard work, and contribution to the school is important. This year we have relaunched our school mission and values. Students will be given opportunities to Rise up and Shine. With a focus on holistic development and leadership, this will allow opportunities for demonstrating excellence and related recognition.

Rewards are outlined but not limited to what is shown in the table below.

Daily	Arbor - Merits linked to our RISE values
Weekly	Tutor - Star of the week Teachers - Star of the week RISE Walk stickers and merits Attendance recognition Pastoral assemblies – Heads of Progress share successes to celebrate positive culture
Half termly	Post cards home - curriculum and pastoral Certificates home Rewards assembly
Termly	Rewards assembly as part of Spirituality "Rise up and Shine" day Tutor award Head of Progress award RISE up awards - learning and quest Headteacher award Attendance/ Sports/ Performance awards
Annual	Rewards night RISE rewards badges - Bronze, Silver and Gold. Termly rewards morning



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

The Curriculum

Our curriculum is challenging and aspirational, to prepare students for the next phase of education, employment, and life. Lessons are designed to support students with new knowledge and the remembering of knowledge over time, so that they can make great progress through our planned curriculum.



KNOW MORE



REMEMBER MORE



GO THE EXTRA MILE / CAN
DO MORE

We understand the need to prepare our students for the challenges of GCSE and so our curriculum, from the outset in Year 7, is tailored to support and develop the necessary skills and knowledge our students will need to be successful in reaching their full potential.

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum (Years 7, 8 & 9) teaches our students the knowledge, skills and learning toolkit needed to succeed in GCSEs. We provide stretch and challenge for our most able, whilst ensuring that provision is in place to ensure those that need to catch up, do so quickly.

All GCSE and equivalent subjects will be taught from the beginning of Year 10, and our options process takes place with students when they are in Year 9.

All students follow the subjects below. The table figure shown is how many hours the subject is taught per fortnight:

	Years 7 & 8	Year 9
Religious Education	5	5
English (Language and Literature)	8	7
Mathematics	7	8
Science	6	6
Geography	3	3
History	3	3
Modern Foreign Languages	4	4
Art	2	2
Design & Technology	2	2
Drama	2	2
ICT	2	2
Music	2	2
Physical Education	4	4
Core Studies (rolling period of collapsed timetable each week)	2	2



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Feedback

Assessment and reporting

Teachers assess how well students are learning regularly and provide feedback as to how they can improve. We encourage students to see mistakes as opportunities to learn and develop – mistakes are an important part of the learning journey. Assessment of learning ranges from in lesson questioning, low stakes quizzing to more formal extended opportunities to apply knowledge. Teachers will help students prepare for more formal assessments and will communicate with you about when this is happening via homework on Arbor.

We issue reports for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 three times per year, once each term. For students in Years 11 and 13, reports are issued twice during the year, in terms 1 and 2.

The reports are designed to give parents/carers a summary of students' progress and include the following information:

Years 7, 8 and 9

Target Grade

This grade is decided using prior attainment (KS2 SATs results) and is designed to give an aspirational, but achievable, target for each subject. This target remains the same throughout Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9). As the target is set based on KS2 SATs and students' academic understanding develops at different rates, it is feasible that students could be working above their target in some subjects.

Current Achievement

This grade for each subject is determined by subject teachers, by taking into account all classwork, homework, and assessments completed to date. This grade is selected from the 5-point scale shown below:

- **Developing** – Working at a level that is significantly below age-related expectations.
- **Approaching** – Working at a level that is below age-related expectations
- **Securing** – Working at a level that is in-line with age-related expectations
- **Extending** – Working at a level that is above age-related expectations
- **Mastering** – Working at a level that is significantly above age-related expectations



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Years 10, 11, 12 and 13

Target Grade

This grade is decided using your child's prior attainment and is designed to give an aspirational, but achievable, target for each subject. Please note that this target is for the end of the key stage, not the end of the academic year, therefore the end of Year 11 or end of Year 13.

Current Achievement

This grade for each subject is what the subject teacher thinks your child will actually achieve at the end of Year 11 / Year 13 if they continue to work at the same rate. This prediction is a holistic judgement based on classwork, homework, and ongoing assessment.

Students in all year groups also receive an effort and attitude grade for each subject as set out below:

Effort and Attitude

This grade evaluates areas that are critical for future success, including organisation, behaviour, quality of homework and classwork, work rate and preparation for assessments. To arrive at an overall judgement for effort and attitude, staff use a simple numbering system of 1 to 4. The following explains what each number means:

1	The student is consistently well motivated, they complete the vast majority of their work to the best of their ability. They have a positive attitude towards their studies and are well-focused and participate fully in lessons.
2	The student is usually well motivated but on occasions could give a little more effort. They complete most of their work to the best of their ability, but with a little more focus or participation in lessons, they could do even better.
3	The student often does not give full effort or focus to their work and an improved attitude is needed in lessons. They may also need to give greater effort with homework. Overall, greater application and effort is needed.
4	There are serious concerns regarding the effort and attitude of this student. They need to significantly improve their attitude and effort towards their work, as well as improving their behaviour in lessons. They are often unfocused and may disrupt learning. Overall, vastly improved application and effort is needed.

Please note that the assessment and reporting structure within school is continually reviewed so reports received going forward may differ from those set out above.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Independent learning- Homework

Homework is an important part of your child's education as it allows them to prepare for upcoming learning, consolidate learning, further enrich the learning that has happened at the academy, as well as build crucial skills that encourage independent learning which is a life skill.

Homework is closely linked to our curriculum values and Teachers will set tasks that help students know more, remember more or do more and go the extra mile.

Teachers will set homework on Arbor and students will record homework in their planner with the date that it will be due. Homework can take the form of paper tasks, or it may also be online, using platforms such as Sparx Maths / Sparx Reading. Login details for these will be recorded in your child's planner.

The minimum frequency and duration of homework your child will receive is set out below:

Year Group	Frequency & Duration
Year 7 and 8	English and Maths One piece of homework per week (average 20 minutes) RE, Geography, History, Science, Modern Foreign Languages One piece of homework per fortnight (average 20 minutes) Art, Design and Technology, Drama, Music, ICT One piece of homework per half term (average 30 – 60 minutes)
Year 9	English and Maths One piece of homework per week (average 30 minutes) RE, Geography, History, Science, Modern Foreign Languages One piece of homework per fortnight (average 20 – 30 minutes) Art, Design and Technology, Drama, Music, ICT One piece of homework per half term (average 30 – 60 minutes)
Year 10 and 11	For each subject taken, between 30 – 60 minutes of homework will be set per fortnight.
Year 12 and 13	4-5 hours of homework per week for each subject. We expect Sixth Form students to match independent study hours to their hours in class (E.g. 5 hours of English Literature a week, equates to 5 hours of English Literature independent study)

Additional homework may be set by subject teachers where appropriate.

Your child will be expected to complete all homework on time and to a high standard. Please encourage your child to take pride in their homework and complete it to the best of their ability.

We support students with a staffed homework club. This is available daily at break, lunch and after school on four nights of the week. Students can attend whenever they want, but if they are struggling with homework deadlines, they may be directed to attend Homework Club to support them get into the right habits. This is compulsory.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Enrichment

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education

We believe that learning is both academic and the wider holistic. It is important for students to have a wide range of enriching educational experiences to support their spiritual growth and foster a moral purpose.

Core Studies

We are committed to ensuring that our students develop into young adults with the knowledge, understanding and skills to make informed decisions in their future life. Our Core Studies programme helps to equip students to live safe, healthy, productive, responsible and balanced lives. Core Studies lessons provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own and our school values and attitudes.

Relationship, Health and Sex Education

All topics are studied objectively and openly, and we always explore Catholic perspectives highlighting the fact that everyone is made in God's image. Our RHSE enables students to establish a strong moral framework for their own decisions about relationships. We present a vision of the human person that embraces the full dignity of the person physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Literacy

We believe that students have the right to develop confidence in reading and the use of spoken and written language across the curriculum to prepare them for the challenges of the curriculum and wider world. We recognise that it is the responsibility of all staff from all subject areas to teach literacy skills as reading, writing, speaking and listening is integral to all subjects.

There is lots of research which suggests that reading for pleasure regularly can have a positive impact on success at school and future career prospects. We promote a love of reading at St Benet Biscop and plan a range of activities in school to help build reading confidence and help students find books that they love.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Inclusivity and Equity

The academy encourages high aspirations, high motivation and high achievement for all. We are an inclusive school and take every member of our community with us. It is our aim to remove barriers to learning by providing an education appropriate to individual needs. We do this through promoting positive relationships, active engagement, and wellbeing for all pupils to ensure all pupils can access the best possible teaching. We provide tailored additional support and use the graduated process of “assess, plan, do review”

Our experienced team will be there to help and support the students and families. Should you require any assistance or have any queries regarding the academy’s provision for your child, please contact our SEND coordinator who will arrange for someone in the SEND team to speak to you.

School-Home Communication

A partnership between school and home based on trust and open and honest communication helps develop successful and well-rounded students. We recognise that this partnership provides everyone with more opportunities to learn and grow and become the people that God intended us to be.

We communicate through our school blog and newsletter with RISE and Faith, Quest and Learning events and share our RISE assembly focus. RISE events are also communicated via our school blog and parent newsletter.

Students and their families see a live update of their merits through Arbor.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Mobile phones and Smart watches

Research shows that mobile phones in school can impact wellbeing and attainment, therefore we strongly recommend that students do not bring mobile phones or smart watches into school. Students needing to contact parents/carers may use a school telephone with a member of staff's permission.

If parents want their child to bring a phone to school, it must be switched off and, in their bag, and it is not to be seen or used during the school day. They are the responsibility of the owner. Phones or any attached equipment (including air pods) must not be visible or audible at any time. School premises include classrooms and all public areas of the school buildings, including the yards, fields, stairs, and corridors. If a member of staff sees or hears a mobile phone, it will be confiscated and will be kept until the end of the day when a parent can come to the academy and collect it.

No smart watches are allowed. If they are seen, they will be confiscated and returned to a parent/carers.

The academy accepts no responsibility for the safety or security of the above equipment.

Detention

Students who do not meet our expectations may be given negative points on Arbor. If students persistently do not comply, this may result in social time detention (i.e. break, lunch or after school).



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Home – Academy Agreement

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy will ensure that:

- we provide regular opportunities for students to take part in liturgy and prayer
- we provide a safe and supportive environment for students to enjoy learning and achieve their full potential
- we provide a consistently high standard of teaching
- students have the best possible education by providing a suitable curriculum and individual support
- we provide parents/carers with regular reports and opportunity for discussion about their child's progress
- we set regular homework
- we contact home to acknowledge students' successes
- we contact home if there are concerns about students' behaviour, progress or attendance
- we contact home if students are to be detained at the end of the academy day as a matter of courtesy and so alternate travel arrangements can be made
- we provide a wide variety of wider curricular activities trips and residential visits.

Parents / Carers will ensure that:

- you support the spiritual life of the academy
- your child attends every day, on time, unless they are ill
- your child does not take extended family trips or holidays during term-time
- dental and medical appointments are arranged outside of academy time where possible
- your child has the correct learning equipment needed for the day, including PE kit when necessary
- you support the academy's policies and regulations on behaviour and uniform including after-school detentions (there is no exemption from detention)
- you provide a suitable environment for your child to work at home
- your child completes their homework on time and to the highest standard
- you attend Parents' Evenings to discuss your child's progress, and any other meetings arranged
- you read and sign the student planner every week
- your contact details are up-to-date, and you let reception know if your contact details change
- you support your child in participating in wider curricular activities and residential visits
- you accept responsibility for your child's behaviour in public, including the journey to and from the academy or when your child is taking part in any academy organised or academy related activity
- you inform the academy of any issues or difficulties which may affect your child so the appropriate support can be put in place
- you pay for the replacement of any equipment or books your child loses or damages.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Students will ensure that they:

- live by the St Benet Biscop Way and the values of integrity and respect
- follow the rules, first time, every time
- work hard and persevere
- follow the learning habits in every lesson and around the academy
- attend regularly, arrive on time, wear the correct uniform and bring the correct equipment
- behave responsibly both at the academy and travelling to and from the academy
- complete all homework to the highest standard and hand it in on time
- treat all adults and students with respect
- respect the academy building and equipment and leave all rooms tidy after using them
- do not undermine the safety of others
- keep their planner up to date i.e. with homework and reading logs
- take an active part in the academy life including wider curricular activities.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Academy Meals

Our dedicated Catering Team provide a wide range of delicious and nutritious food prepared daily on the premises. Students can spend as much or as little as they like but at present £3.10 will buy a substantial meal deal.

All students have a biometric lunch account which parents can top up via our online payment system iPay. Students entitled to Free School Meals will have £3.10 added to their account daily.

Menus are provided on a 3-weekly menu cycle. Meals from the menu cycle are priced at £3.10 and include a main meal and a dessert.

In addition to these menus, we also offer a wide range of other dishes:

- Assorted paninis
- Selection of baguettes, sandwiches, wraps and salads
- Pasta and curry dishes
- Jacket potatoes with assorted hot and cold fillings

If your child has an allergy to any of the food allergen groups or any other dietary requirements, please contact our Catering Manager, on **01670 822795 (option 3)**.

Students are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. **All students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school** and there are water coolers available at break and lunch time to refill their bottles. Energy/fizzy drinks are **not allowed** in the academy and will be confiscated.

What if my child runs out of lunch money?

If your child does not have any money on their account, they will be able to get a meal deal which costs £3.10. You will then be contacted by the school to top up the balance on their account to ensure it is not in deficit.

How do I top up my child's lunch money?

Payment for academy meals is via our secure online payments system: iPay Impact. If you do not have details to set up an account, please contact the academy office.

Breakfast Club

We continue to offer a free breakfast club which is open to all students. The breakfast club runs from 8am until 8.35am every morning in the school hall. Students do not need to sign up in advance and can simply just turn up if they wish to use this facility.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Free School Meals

Benefits of applying

- Your child will receive a freshly prepared, nutritious hot or cold school meal every day
- Our cashless catering system ensures complete confidentiality
- You will be supporting the school to claim additional pupil premium funding to enhance the education & attainment of your child

Eligibility

From September 2026, free school meals eligibility will be divided into 2 categories:

- **Targeted FSM** – this continues to be based on the existing threshold covering pupils who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less.
- **Expanded FSM** – a new category covering pupils who do not qualify for Targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit.

Applications can be made for the new criteria from **1 June 2026** to ensure students receive the provision from September.

How to apply

- Apply online at: https://online.northumberland.gov.uk/citizenportal/form.aspx?form=Free_School_Meals
- Telephone number for enquiries: 0345 6006400



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Academy Transport

Free school transport for eligible students living in Northumberland is provided by Northumberland County Council, and decisions are made by them in strict accordance with their School Transport Policy.

Eligibility for free school transport to St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is usually decided by:

- Distance from home to school
- St Benet Biscop being your child's qualifying school by reason of faith
- Other exceptional circumstances (e.g. Medical, SEND, low income)

Northumberland County Council's School Transport has information about applying for free school transport, and the eligibility criteria.

Apply online at:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-transport-1/Transport.aspx>

If you have any queries about your application, please contact the County Council Transport Department on **01670 624839** or at schooltransport@northumberland.gov.uk



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Attendance

At St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy, we believe that excellent school attendance is fundamental to every student's success. Our message is simple but powerful:

Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow – Attendance Matters.

Regular attendance at school is essential not only for academic achievement but also for a young person's wellbeing, personal development and future opportunities. Every school day provides valuable learning experiences that cannot be fully replicated elsewhere. Students who attend school consistently are better able to keep up with their learning, develop positive relationships with their peers and trusted adults, and build the confidence, resilience and social skills they need to thrive both in school and beyond.

Strong attendance also supports students' mental health and wellbeing. School provides a safe, structured environment where young people can feel a sense of belonging, establish positive friendships and access the support they need. Positive relationships with peers and staff are recognised as important protective factors in promoting emotional wellbeing.

National evidence continues to demonstrate a clear link between attendance and educational outcomes. Students who attend school regularly are significantly more likely to achieve strong GCSE results, progress to further education, employment or training, and enjoy improved long-term life opportunities. Even small reductions in attendance can have a significant impact on learning, as lessons build upon previous knowledge and missed learning can be difficult to recover.

Attendance is monitored carefully throughout the academic year because every day in school matters. If your child is absent without an appropriate reason, a member of staff will contact you to establish the reason for the absence. Where attendance becomes a concern, we will work in partnership with you to identify any barriers and agree appropriate support to help improve your child's attendance. This may include meetings with school staff, targeted interventions or referrals to external agencies where appropriate.

At St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy, we are committed to working collaboratively with families to ensure every student attends school regularly, arrives on time, and is ready to learn. Together, we can give every child the best possible opportunity to achieve their potential and flourish in all aspects of school life.

To help families understand attendance expectations and access practical advice on overcoming barriers to attendance, please refer to the guidance available at the link below:

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2022/12/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance.pdf>

Punctuality

Every child should be on the school site with all the equipment they will need, by 8.40 am each day.

We'd like to remind families about the 'U' code, which is used when a student arrives more than 30 minutes after the start of the day, which is at 8.45am. The 'U' code counts as an unauthorised absence and will affect their overall attendance record.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

We know mornings can be busy, and we truly appreciate the efforts families make to get students in on time. A prompt start helps students settle in, feel confident, and make the most of their learning.

We want to work together to build strong routines and support our young people in starting each day positively, prepared, and ready to succeed. If you ever need support with punctuality, please reach out — we're here to help.

Please support your child with this by keeping to bed-time routines and allowing sufficient preparation time for school. We ask parents who are having difficulty with morning routines to contact school so we can work together to address any problems that may be arising attendance@stbb.org.uk

Absence

When a student is absent from the academy with no advance notice, for example because of illness, parents contact the academy that same morning, and each subsequent morning, to inform us of the reason for absence. Please contact the academy as soon as possible ideally by 7.30am by emailing attendance@stbb.org.uk or telephone 01670 822795 and select option 1 – student absence. You will need to leave your child's name and form group along with details of why they are absent. It is possible to leave messages on the student absence voicemail at any time prior to 8.30am.

Please note that only emergency appointments for dentists, opticians, and doctors should be during academy hours. Routine appointments must be arranged outside academy hours. Where this is not possible, please ask for appointments in the afternoon so that your child can be registered. This will ensure that their attendance record is not affected.

When it is known in advance that an absence is to be requested for emergency appointments, notify the academy with a note in their planner and a copy of their appointment card/letter. They must show this to their Head of Progress who will give them permission to sign out at Student Reception.

Under no circumstances should a student leave the academy and go home without permission.

Leave of Absence

The Academy follows Department for Education attendance guidance and does not authorise holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances – this is done at the discretion of the Headteacher. Please write to the Headteacher before the absence. You will be informed in writing of the decision as to whether the absence is authorised or not.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Term Dates 2026-27

SEPTEMBER 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

OCTOBER 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

DECEMBER 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JANUARY 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

MARCH 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MAY 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JULY 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST 2027						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
	1	2	3	4	5	

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
INSET Days	School Holidays	Bank Holidays
2026-27 School will re-open on Tuesday, 1 September 2026 Years 7 and 12 start on Wednesday, 2 September 2026 All other year groups start on Thursday, 3 September 2026 2027-28 School will re-open on Monday, 6 September 2027		



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Leadership Team

Mrs S Lewis-Dale	Headteacher
Miss L Wrigley	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs M Salmon	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs L Banfield	Assistant Headteacher
Mrs L Poulter	Assistant Headteacher
Mr R Smailes	Assistant Headteacher
Dr S Watts	Assistant Headteacher

Pastoral Support

Heads of Progress
Student Support Managers
SEND Coordinator
Attendance Officers

Subject Support

Subject Leaders
Assistant Subject Leaders



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

How to get in touch

Good communication between home and the academy supports success. There are a number of opportunities for you to communicate with the academy including:

- Parents' Evenings
- Student Planner
- Meet the tutor evening
- Email
- School Website: www.st-benetbiscop.org.uk

If you are concerned about anything relating to your child's welfare, then please contact your child's **form tutor** in the first instance. If you have any concerns about a particular subject your child is studying, please contact their **subject teacher**.

Please note that the majority of our staff also teach and are not usually immediately available to receive a telephone call. We also try to keep our telephone lines free during the day for emergency and urgent calls, but there are many other ways you can contact the school. Please refer to the "**Contact Us**" information on the next page for the best way to contact us. We will always endeavour to respond as soon as possible and within two working days.

The majority of our written communication is by email or notifications via our management information system. We will also communicate by telephone and SMS.

Please ensure that the academy is kept up to date with any changes of address or telephone number. It is crucial for us to be able to make contact with a parent/carer should the need arise.

I'm not receiving emails or texts – what should I do?

First of all, please contact us to check that we have the correct information.

If you are not receiving emails, it may be that our messages are going into your Spam or Junk folder. You will need to change your mailbox settings to ensure your provider accepts our emails.

How do I change my child's contact details?

Any changes to named contacts, addresses and any other contact details should be notified to Student Reception. Please ask your child to request a data form from Student Reception for you to complete and return to the academy.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Contact us

Topic	Contact by
Attendance – Absence (daily)	attendance@stbb.org.uk 01670 822795 (option 1)
Attendance - Leave of absence requests	attendance@stbb.org.uk
Attendance - Notification of Appointments	attendance@stbb.org.uk Student Planner
Arbor account queries	admin@stbb.org.uk
Finance	finance@stbb.org.uk 01670 822795 (option 2)
General Enquiries	admin@stbb.org.uk www.st-benetbiscop.org.uk
Meetings in school - by appointment only	Student Planner admin@stbb.org.uk
Messages for Form Tutors	Student Planner admin@stbb.org.uk
Messages for Subject Teachers, Subject Leaders, Student Support Managers, Heads of Progress	Student Planner admin@stbb.org.uk
Microsoft Teams queries	admin@stbb.org.uk
Parent Portal or Ipay queries	admin@stbb.org.uk
Urgent response/emergency	01670 822795



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Academy Uniform & Equipment List

Uniform:

Blazer	Black blazer with academy badge available from our appointed supplier.
Tie	Academy clip-on tie available from our appointed supplier.
Trousers	Black tailored trousers. Trousers must be black, in a trouser material not a legging material (e.g. not sports material) and should have “trouser style fastenings” rather than be pull on as this becomes a legging.
Shorts	Black tailored, knee-length shorts (optional)
Belt	Plain black leather belt, if required. No logo, branding or decoration visible.
Kilt	Knee length kilt available from our appointed supplier (optional). You are advised to purchase a longer length to get adequate wear.
Shirt	Long or short sleeved white school shirt.
Sweater	Black v neck knit jumper (optional).
Shoes	Plain black formal flat leather/leather look school shoes. No trainers, trainer designs, sports brands, canvas shoes, plimsoles, UGG style or suede. Plain black formal flat leather/leather look boots may be worn (if worn with trousers, the boots must be worn under the trousers not tucked in). No visible branding. Boots with distinctive fashion features such as buckles and coloured stitching, tags or logos are not permitted, and neither are boots with heavy sole cleats.
Socks/Tights	Plain black <u>ankle</u> socks or plain black or natural tights. No running or training socks, no pattern or decoration.
Coat	A weatherproof coat or jacket that can be worn over the blazer. No denim, hooded tops, leather jackets, non-school sweaters, cardigans, tracksuits or sports tops. Gilets cannot be worn as an alternative to our school blazers. Outdoor wear must not be worn under blazers.
PE Kit	School branded PE shirt (compulsory for any new purchases) Plain black rugby quarter zip mid layer shirt OR plain black polo top (legacy). Plain white or black sports socks. Plain black shorts, black gym skirt or plain black tracksuit bottoms or black ‘sports’ leggings. Plain black sweatshirt, plain black hooded top, plain black rain jacket (optional) Trainers Football/rugby boots (optional)



Our appointed uniform supplier is Michael Sehgal & Sons Ltd at www.michaelsehgal.co.uk

It is recommended that your purchase or order uniform early to ensure delivery in time for September



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Code of Dress

Uniform	We will insist on perfect uniform 100% of the time. This is because we want children at our academy to be proud. Excellent uniform is a representation of our excellent culture. Students who breach any part of our uniform code will either be given some temporary uniform to wear, sent home to change, or will be isolated until their uniform is perfect. We will do this to ensure that our students are treated fairly. It is unfair if some students keep to our dress code and some don't. We expect full parental support with this.
Jewellery	A wristwatch is permissible (no smart watches allowed). No other jewellery is to be worn. No facial or body piercing adornments (clear or otherwise); jewellery worn to the academy which is not permissible will be confiscated and will be kept in school for 5 school days.
Make up	Make up is not part of our uniform and therefore must not be worn. No acrylic or artificial nails, nail varnish, gel nails, make-up or false eyelashes, painted or dyed eyebrows or false tan. Fingernails should be kept at a sensible length so you can take part in all in and out of academy activities. Students who choose to break our code of dress will be isolated until their uniform is corrected.
Hair	Hairstyles must be appropriate for the academy (e.g. no less than a 1.5 guard in length) with no patterns shaved into hair. Hair, including braided hair, should be natural in colour if artificially coloured. No hair extensions. No hair accessories other than a plain black, white or brown hairband may be worn.

Please note:

Students who arrive at school with incorrect uniform will be spoken to by their Form Tutor and a member of the pastoral team. Students will be given the opportunity to correct their uniform and will be given temporary uniform to wear. Students who refuse to meet our expectations or who persistently break our code of dress will be removed from circulation immediately. We do not accept notes from parents or carers explaining issues relating to uniform and your child will be asked to correct this.

If your child arrives at school without the correct uniform or hairstyle, for whatever reason, and refuses to borrow spare uniform they will likely be isolated until the uniform or hairstyle has been corrected. An exception would be considered in light of a serious medical reason but only when a member of the leadership team has seen a letter from a doctor, physiotherapist or other medical specialist to confirm that reason.

Physical Education

- Students must arrive at lessons with appropriate kit.
- A full kit should be taken to all lessons, even if a note is brought to the academy as students will still play an active role in the lesson in some form e.g. as a referee.
- Should students fail to bring a kit to lessons they will be sanctioned as per the school behaviour policy. Should this be an ongoing concern then we will contact home.
- A student must wear the school branded PE top (compulsory) either on its own or with a plain black long sleeved top underneath or a plain black rugby quarter zip mid layer.

Clothing worn to the academy which is not permissible will be confiscated.



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Sixth Form Dress Code

The Sixth Form Dress Code has been developed to allow students to dress appropriately for a professional working environment. All students are expected to dress in a smart manner. Student appearance should reflect the professional environment you work in.

- No large logos or graphics
- No denim
- No hoodies
- No sportswear

Sixth Form ID Lanyard	To be worn at all times
Shirt/Top/Jumper	Smart with sleeves and not see-through <i>No t-shirts, vest tops or low-cut tops</i>
Tie/Blazer/Suit Jacket	Optional
Trousers/Skirt/Dress	Smart <i>No jeans/shorts</i>
Footwear	Dark leather/leather look or suede shoes/boots <i>No casual trainers or running shoes</i>
Jacket/Coat	To be removed during lessons



*To seek wholeness through faith,
quest and learning to become
what God intends us to be.*

Careers Advice and Guidance

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy take seriously our responsibility to help prepare our students for life after school. We pride ourselves on providing professional careers advice to ensure that our students secure a progression route that will help them achieve their ambitions and potential.

We deliver a planned programme of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). This programme of activities includes developing aspirations which begins in Year 7 moving through to supporting option choices for Key Stage 4 and 5. Alongside making informed choices Post 16 and exposing students to work related learning opportunities in and outside of the academy.

With the support of our independent advisor, professional qualified staff, universities, further education colleges, training providers and employers, we provide a range of experiences and information sessions to help students to understand their career options and potential opportunities available to them.