



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

R

**Respect
Resilience**

I

Integrity

S

**Self-
discipline**

E

Excellence



Key information and news

Headteacher Retirement

I have informed the CEO of Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust of my decision to retire at Easter this year. The Trust is actively engaged in the recruitment process to appoint my successor, and we will update parents and carers as more information becomes available. I want to express my gratitude for your support during my tenure as Head and assure you that I will continue to work tirelessly for the benefit of the St. Benet Biscop community.

Information from Mrs Mills – Chair of Governors

It is with great sadness that we accepted Mr Shepherd's resignation. He has been a great leader of St Benet Biscop, taking our school through a successful Ofsted inspection and working tirelessly to improve outcomes for all our students in the years he has been here. On behalf of the Governing Committee, I would like to thank him for all his hard work and dedication during his time as headteacher.

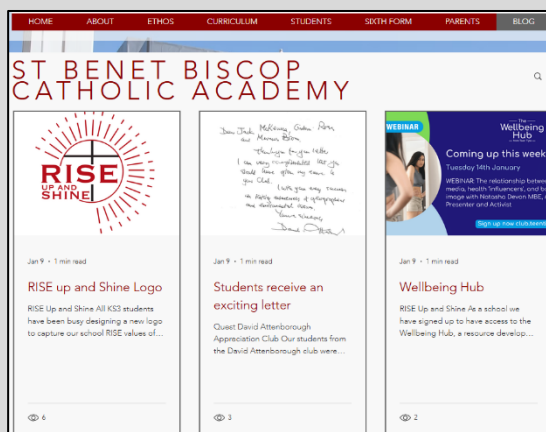
We are so sorry to see him go but wish him well in his retirement. Please rest assured that myself, and the Governing Committee, are working with Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust leaders to secure a new Headteacher for St Benet Biscop. We will begin the process of recruiting, with adverts for the position published next week. I will keep you updated with our progress and be in touch when the new Headteacher is appointed.

Mrs Christine Mills

New School Blog

We are always looking for ways to celebrate our wonderful students and staff and communicate with you about all the opportunities and events in school that our students have to live out our values and "Rise up and Shine". We have now set up a school blog. Please use this to find out more about what is going on in school.

[St Benet Biscop Blog](#)



Supporting Your Child's Attendance: NHS Pharmacy First Service

We know how important it is for your child to attend school regularly and stay healthy. Sometimes, when children are unwell, it can be a struggle to get an appointment with a GP, which can delay their return to school. That's where the **NHS Pharmacy First Service** can help.

This NHS-funded service allows children and adults to get quick advice and treatment for seven common conditions, **without the need to wait for a GP appointment**. This means your child can feel better and return to school faster, and parents/carers can also get the support they need for certain health issues.

The great news is, there's no need for an appointment! You can simply pop into your local **Boots pharmacy** with your child and ask for help. A private consultation with a pharmacist will guide you on the best course of action, and if appropriate, treatment will be provided on the spot. If any treatment is given, the pharmacist will send an update to your child's GP to keep their health records up to date.

The service covers treatment for the following conditions:

- **Earache** (ages 1-17)
- **Impetigo** (ages 1 and over)
- **Infected insect bites and stings** (ages 1 and over)
- **Sore throats** (ages 5 and over)
- **Sinusitis** (ages 12 and over)
- **Uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs)** in women (ages 16-64)
- **Shingles** (ages 18 and over)

This service is free of charge (unless NHS prescription charges apply), making it an easy and accessible way to help your child get back on their feet and into school quickly. To learn more, you can watch a short animation and find further information at the following websites:

- [NHS - Think Pharmacy First](#)
- [Boots Pharmacy First](#)

We encourage you to think **Pharmacy First** for these common health issues. By using this service, you'll not only help your child recover faster, but you'll also be supporting the NHS during this busy time.

Thank you for your support in helping to keep your child healthy and in school!

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.

The Toby Henderson Trust

The Toby Henderson Trust is an independently funded charity supporting autistic children and families in the Northeast of England. They provide relevant and appropriate support for young people and their families. Please get in touch to discuss what individual support can be offered (both for students with and without a diagnosis).

[The Toby Henderson Trust](#)



Dates and events

Parent Events

Wednesday 22 January 2025

Year 9 Parents Evening (online)

Thursday 13 February 2025 2.15 – 3.15pm

Parent drop-in session with Education Psychologist – supporting young people with anxiety

Jill Sandeman (Education Psychologist) will be in school to run a session on anxiety; why young people experience anxiety and how best to support them.

If you would like to attend, please register your expression of interest on the following form:

[Education Psychologist Drop in Session Interest Form](#)

Note - places will be allocated on first come first served basis, with a maximum of 20 places. The form closes on 7th February.

Student Events

Tuesday 21 January 2025

Year 10 Maths Feast Preparation

Wednesday 22 January 2025

Year 8 Justice and Peace fundraising

Friday 24 January 2025

Holocaust Memorial Virtual Reflection

Monday 27 January 2025

Year 11 and 13 trial exams begin

Wednesday 5 February 2025

Baker Hughes STEM – Girls event



RISE – The St Benet Biscop Way

Wellbeing hub

As a school we have signed up to have access to the wellbeing hub, a resource developed by experts in child and adolescent mental health and wellbeing. We are able to offer all students, parents and staff free access to this valuable resource. Students all have log in details via their school email.

This is the link to log in as a parent

<https://club.teentips.co.uk/register/parents/?ca=d5d1d514bbe35c2520cf48c2be08da5a>

This month's webinar is about the relationship between social media, health 'influencers', and body image with Natasha Devon MBE. It took place on 14th Jan at 6:30pm. All webinar recordings are available to be watched later.

<https://club.teentips.co.uk/events/the-relationship-between-social-media-health-influencers-and-body-image/>

Christmas Carols

At the end of last term, we took around 30 students to sing Christmas carols at our local care home, spreading festive cheer to the residents. Dressed in colourful Christmas costumes, we sang and danced to familiar Christmas carols, and some of the residents even joined us in the dancing, filling the room with joy and laughter. It was heart warming to see their faces light up as they reminisced about the Christmas carols that they sang in their younger days. This experience not only brought smiles to the residents but also reminded our students of the importance of giving their time to others. It was a beautiful example of living out the Catholic values of compassion and service, showing how small acts of kindness can make a big difference in the lives of others.



Christmas Fair

Last term, Year 7 hosted an exciting Christmas Fair that brought so much festive cheer. Each form class contributed a creative stall, ranging from cake sales and throwing sprouts into a bucket, to painting baubles, a penalty shootout against teachers, and many other activities. The students had an amazing time running their stalls and participating in the fun, all while raising a huge £618 for charity. The joyful afternoon concluded with carols in the hall, where everyone came together to celebrate Christmas. It was a fantastic event that left smiles on everyone's faces.



Faith

Epiphany

Last week, our theme has been the Epiphany, a significant moment in the Christian calendar that celebrates the visit of the three wise men to the infant Jesus. The Epiphany is important because it marks the revelation of Jesus as the Saviour of the world. The wise men, who were from different nations and backgrounds, show us that Jesus came for everyone, regardless of race, culture, or status. Their journey to Bethlehem reminds us that God's love is inclusive, reaching out to all people. The Epiphany is a reminder that Jesus welcomes everyone into His love and invites us to do the same, sharing His light with all, no matter where they come from.

Feast of St Benet Biscop

This week, our school is reflecting on the life and legacy of St. Benet Biscop, an important figure in the history of our faith. St. Benet Biscop was a 7th century Benedictine monk, founder of the Monastery of Wearmouth, and an influential figure in the spread of Christianity in England. He was known for his deep faith, his dedication to education, and his commitment to building strong Christian communities. St. Benet's life reminds us of the power of service, learning, and community. As we reflect on his example, we are encouraged to pursue wisdom and live in service to others, just as he did.

Advent liturgy

In our Advent liturgy last term, we reflected on the story of Mary and her courageous "yes" to God, a decision that shaped the Christmas story we celebrate today. As we imagined Mary's thoughts after the angel's visit, we were reminded that she was an ordinary teenager living a simple life in Nazareth. To bring this reflection to life, our 6th form drama students performed a moving piece about the thoughts Mary might have had. Despite the fear and uncertainty she must have felt, Mary trusted in God's plan, leading to the birth of Jesus and the hope He brought to the world.

This story calls us to consider how we, too, can say "yes" to God in our own lives, whether through small acts of kindness, standing up for others, or using our talents to serve. Each time we choose love, we are echoing Mary's trust and making a difference in the world. Our school choir also enhanced the liturgy with a beautiful rendition of "Mary, Did You Know?", which added a special touch to this liturgy.

Outreach boxes

This Christmas, our Chaplaincy Team worked hard to spread some festive cheer by creating Christmas outreach boxes for vulnerable people in our community.

Each box was thoughtfully packed with a variety of items, including a letter written by a student, a Christmas card designed by a 6th form student, a prayer book filled with prayers written by our students, a Christmas joke sheet, chocolate coins, a decoration, and other small gifts.

The students had a lot of fun putting the boxes together, and their efforts brought them great joy when they received thank you cards from the recipients. The cards expressed how much the boxes meant to the people who received them, and how they truly made a difference to their Christmas.

It was a beautiful reminder of the power of kindness and the importance of giving to others.



Cramlington Foodbank
The Hope Centre
Forum Way
Cramlington
NE23 6QN

St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy
Via email

5th January 2025

Dear Brigid and the St Benet Biscop School Community,

Re: Christmas Donation to Cramlington Foodbank

Thank you so much for supporting Cramlington Foodbank. Your recent donation weighed in at an impressive 40kg and has already gone into parcels being given to local families. In total this brings your annual donation total to an extremely generous 90kg. Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated in these difficult times of rising costs for everyone and especially at Christmastime.

Without generous donations like yours, it would be impossible for the volunteers here at the foodbank to provide for the many local people who are in need of such help. We are extremely grateful to have your support.

Wishing you a very happy 2025 from all at Cramlington Foodbank.

With our love, thanks and blessings,

Lorraine Alexander

Lorraine Alexander (Project Manager)

Foodbank Collection

This year, we held our annual Christmas foodbank collection, and once again, our school community showed incredible generosity. The foodbank was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of donations, and we received a heartfelt thank you letter from them.

The letter expressed how our contributions made a huge difference to the Christmases of many families who rely on the foodbank, and how their celebrations wouldn't have been the same without our support.

Students from all year groups brought in whatever they could, but it was the class of 7T who really went above and beyond, bringing in the most donations. As a special thank you for their outstanding efforts, 7T enjoyed a Christmas film party in the chapel, a well-deserved treat for their hard work and generosity.

It was truly inspiring to see our students come together to make a positive impact on those in need during the holiday season.



Y11 Healthy Relationships Day

Our recent Year 11 Healthy Relationship Day was an empowering and successful experience for our Year 11 students. The day, designed to help young people recognise the importance of healthy relationships, proved to be an invaluable opportunity for growth, learning, and reflection.

The goals of the day were to:

- Empower students to recognise controlling and coercive relationships
- Help them identify 'red flags' in relationships
- Equip them with knowledge on where to get help when they encounter these red flags
- Clarify their role as influencers to the people around them
- Promote attitudes and behaviours that are healthy, respectful, and inclusive

Through the use of resources from the White Ribbon Campaign Change Starts with Me campaign and Holly's Hope, the students were guided through meaningful discussions on the value of mutual respect, consent, and emotional support in relationships. These resources offered an impactful and engaging framework for students to reflect on their own experiences and better understand how to foster positive relationships in their lives.

One of the highlights of the day was the personal story shared by Holly's mum and dad, who delivered three powerful sessions to Year 11. Their story, deeply personal and moving, provided students with an emotional connection to the themes of the day and highlighted the importance of awareness and early intervention in relationships.

Throughout the day, students demonstrated remarkable maturity and engagement. They took part in open and thoughtful discussions, showing a deep understanding of the complex issues surrounding relationships. Their willingness to reflect on their own attitudes and behaviours, as well as to listen and support their peers, was truly inspiring. The "Change Starts with Me" sessions, fostered conversations that empowered students to take ownership of their actions and influence positive change in their communities. Signing up to a Year 11 pledge that 'Change starts me'

The IT based sessions provided students with an opportunity to review safeguarding resources online, complete a student survey, and sign up for the Wellbeing Hub — our online wellbeing platform supporting mental and emotional well-being, this session was run with support from sixth-form facilitators.

The maturity shown by Year 11 students throughout the day was a testament to their growing understanding of the importance of healthy relationships and their role in creating a safe, respectful environment for themselves and others.

The Christmas Show

Our Christmas Show took place on Wednesday 11th December at school and this was a cabaret style show that included the performances from large groups/bands and solo performers. We use this show to raise money for our annual musical and we were overwhelmed with the money that we raised on the evening of the event. Once again it was a lovely opportunity to show off the talents of the students in the Performing Arts department.

Well done to all the students involved in both events; we hope that you all come along to see our production of Grease which takes place between Monday 17th and Friday 21st March.

Fundraising in Asda Blyth

As part of the fundraising for the school production this year the Performing Arts students took part in this year's Fundraising in the Community. This took place at Asda in Blyth on Sunday 8th December and involved them singing and bucket shaking. The students raised a whopping £1200 which will go to support the school show in March 2025.



Year 10 Work Experience

Thank you for your patience as we finalise the details for the upcoming Work Experience programme. We understand that many of you have been eagerly awaiting further information, and we appreciate your understanding during this process.

The Work Experience sign-up and management will be completed through the Unifrog platform – www.unifrog.org Unifrog is an excellent tool that allows students to explore and apply for opportunities, track their progress, and ensure they meet all necessary requirements.

To assist you in navigating this process, we have provided a video guide for parents that walks you through the steps of using Unifrog. You can find the guide at the following link and video: <https://www.unifrog.org/blog/unifrog-placements-tool-faqs>

How does the Placements Tool Work?

The Placements tool is essentially a series of forms that have to be filled in one after another. Each time one is completed, the person who filled in the form gets a confirmation that they've done it, and the next person who needs to fill in a form gets an email notification. When (and how) should a student add a placement? To start the process on the Placements tool, the first step is for the student to add the placement to the tool. However, before adding a placement to the placements tool, the student should first agree their placement with the employer, for example by email or over the phone. When the student is ready to add the placement, they can find the Placements tool just like any other student tool, via a tile on their homepage:

After the student fills in the 'Student initial form' to get the ball rolling, the system automatically emails the employer inviting them to fill in the 'Employer initial form'. The employer must have agreed to the placement before this is filled in.

The employer details what the placement will consist of, and confirms Risk Assessment, Health & Safety, GDPR compliance, safeguarding, and insurance.

As soon as the employer marks the Employer initial form as complete, this form is emailed to the parent / carer. The Parent/carer agrees for the placement to go ahead.

Some email tips:

All the forms are sent by email, so it's really important that everyone involved in a placement has the correct email entered for them, and that everyone checks their email.

To help avoid issues:

- Unifrog shows each person involved everyone else's email addresses;
- If anyone involved says they aren't getting the automated emails that the system generates, they should check their junk folders, and add noreply@unifrog.org to their safe sender list

For further information and FAQ please have a look at the Placements Tool Guide in the Unifrog know how library. <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/keywords/how-to-use-the-placements-tool>

In addition, **Mrs. Poulter** is in the process of meeting with each form class to guide students through the sign-up process on **Unifrog**. This ensures that all students are familiar with the platform and can make the most of the available opportunities.

We hope this helps clarify the process and we are confident that using Unifrog will make the work experience planning smooth and efficient for both students and parents alike.



Learning

Year 12 Geography Field work

Our Year 12 Geographers explored the unique glacial landforms of the Easedale valley. The melting snow created some turbulent, cascading waterfalls as we climbed through the hanging valleys. The noise was only matched by the low flying jet fighters from the RAF. The hike was challenging but the fabulous views from the tarn were worth the hard work.

Teamwork enabled the students to overcome challenging conditions with ice under foot, flooded paths and steep ascents, but their self discipline and steely determination saw them through.



Year 12 Health and Social Care - Guest Speaker

In December we welcomed back a past student who is in her third year studying Paediatric nursing in Manchester. It was great to have the opportunity for our year 12 Health and Social Care students to hear about the relevance of their current studies and skills that they are developing and how they transfer into university life and careers. We heard about the challenges the NHS currently have and the importance of multi-disciplinary work to support different job roles. We explored university life and the balance of studies and work placements within health and social care degree courses.

Students were left inspired as to how ready for the next step of studies they will be once they leave studying with us.



Year 13 Trial Assessments 2025

Year 13 Trial Assessments are being held between 27th January and 7th February. Students and parents can access Revision guidance and Support [here](#).

Medical Mentoring

In2MedSchool is a registered Charity (1197973), which supports aspiring medical students. They are inviting students to sign up for a **FREE MEDIC MENTORING** scheme. So far, they have around 2,400 mentors, all of which are doctors/medical students who have been through the application cycle and will do their best to help you with your application.

If you are an aspiring medic, apply here: <https://bit.ly/I2MS-Mentee>

You can find more information here: www.in2medschool.com.

The Telegraph Media Experience: Media Literacy Programme

The programme aims to provide school pupils with the tools and skills to think critically about the media landscape. It provides an insight into what it's like to be a journalist at an award-winning multimedia news brand. It is open to all 16-18-year-olds across the UK.

The online sessions will be with a range of journalists from departments across the business including news, sports, beauty, music, and social media, with students having the opportunity to learn skills such as headline writing, interviewing and travel writing, and win prizes.

The programme will run for four weeks, beginning on Tuesday 4th March 2025.

Sessions will run from 4 - 5 pm every Tuesday. At the end of the programme, each student will receive a Telegraph Media Literacy Journalism Certificate.

For the students to submit their applications, they will need to go to <https://careers.telegraph.co.uk/jobs/job-details/The-Telegraph-Media-Literacy-Programme-2025-London>. They will need to complete a cover letter for their application explaining why they would like to participate.

Experience University of Southampton Residential

This residential opportunity is being held between 15th – 18th July 2025, available to eligible Year 12 students.

This year students will visit the campus for a free 4-day, 3-night programme. There be opportunities to work with academics and students from other schools and colleges through a timetable of lectures, practical activities and a variety of fun evening social activities. It's a great opportunity to get a taste of degrees offered at the University of Southampton and student life.

Degree programmes taking place in this year's residential are as the follows; **Chemistry/ Chemical Engineering, Physics, Geography, Music, History, Modern Languages, Biological Sciences, Mechanical Engineering and Business.**

This residential is **free** and open to Year 12 or Level 3 (Year 1) students who meet the academic and Widening Participation eligibility criteria.

To find out more, here; <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/schools-colleges/experience-summer-event.page>