



**ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY**



Newsletter
Spring/Summer
2022-2023



Headteacher's WELCOME



It brings me great pleasure, introducing another one of our bi-annual newsletters.

Over the course of the last few months, our school has been a busy place, and a real hive of activity. Our newsletter will give you a flavour of some of the things that have been happening both in and out of the classroom.

I would like to mention my pride in Year 11 and Year 13 students, as they have recently sat their public examinations. Without doubt, this can be an incredibly daunting and stressful period in a young person's life. Our students worked with a steely determination to complete the exams as best they could, and I couldn't be prouder of them for that. But whatever the results bring, our students are an incredible bunch of people who leave a strong legacy in school. They are known for their good humour, their manners, respect, resilience, humility and talents. If there were GCSEs and A-levels for these things, they would definitely achieve full marks!

Equally, I have been really pleased to see our younger students really embrace life at school. In the newsletter you will read about a recent performance at Whitley Bay Playhouse. It was great to see so many of students come together to perform so brilliantly. Not only that, but it was great

to see our students share the stage with so many pupils from local primary schools. We look forward to welcoming many of these pupils into our school in the coming years, and I hope to see them continue to tread the boards. I am always delighted to hear of our students doing so well in sport and this year, we have celebrated great success in a number of sports at local, national and international level.

After a busy year, where so much has been achieved, I would like to say a huge thank you to the staff of the school for their work this year, and to you the families, parents and carers of our students for all of your continued support. I hope you have an enjoyable, long summer break and I look forward to welcoming students back to school in September.

K Shepherd
Headteacher

Contents

<i>Literacy Levels Soar</i>	3
<i>Fay Represents Northumberland</i>	3
<i>Year 12 Reading Mentors Visit</i>	4
<i>Year 12 Historians Visit</i>	5
<i>Gabi's a Swimming Superstar</i>	6
<i>2023 Maths Challenge Prize Winners</i>	6
<i>Hakuna Matata!</i>	6
<i>Year 8 Footballers do us Proud</i>	7
<i>Sixth Form Reading Mentors</i>	7
<i>New Sixth Form Block</i>	8-9
<i>Nos Amis Francais</i>	10
<i>GCSE Art work</i>	10
<i>Life in Learning Support</i>	11
<i>Sixth Form Taste of University</i>	12
<i>Year 7 Weather Presenters</i>	12
<i>Year 10 Get Gardening</i>	13
<i>Athletic Success</i>	14
<i>Football Referees</i>	14
<i>Exam Season is a Success</i>	15
<i>Year 10 Girls Get Set</i>	15
<i>Sixth Form Physicists Visit</i>	16
<i>Year 7 Trip to Beamish</i>	17
<i>Quad Kids</i>	17
<i>Year 9 Geography Complete Fieldwork</i>	17
<i>Year 11 Leave their Legacy</i>	18-19
<i>Performing Arts Summer Show & Performance</i>	20
<i>St Benet's are Smashing Sparx Maths</i>	21
<i>Community Outreach</i>	21
<i>Year 12 Become Peer Mentors</i>	21
<i>Maths Feast Challenge</i>	21
<i>Year 12 Cambridge Chemistry Challenge</i>	22
<i>Year 7 Enjoy Epic Poetry</i>	22
<i>Students Enjoy Summer Festival</i>	23
<i>Year 9 Retreat and Reflect</i>	24
<i>Year 6 Get a Taste of Life in Year 7</i>	25
<i>Year 10 Selected for Festival of Chemistry</i>	25
<i>Year 11 Celebrate at Prom</i>	26-30
<i>Year 12 Complete Coursework Fieldwork</i>	31
<i>Mr Plumb Celebrates Year 10 Achievements</i>	31
<i>Year 12 Geography Discover Day</i>	32
<i>Teachers Run the Extra Mile</i>	32
<i>Year 10 Geographers Complete Fieldwork</i>	33
<i>Baa-ri!lliant Art Adventure!</i>	33
<i>Year 13 Fine Art Project</i>	34
<i>Year 7 UK Maths Challenge Success</i>	34
<i>GCSE Biology: Year 10 Explore Anatomy</i>	35
<i>Students Develop Their Musical Talents</i>	36
<i>Year 7 Explore World Faiths and Traditions</i>	37-38
<i>Year 7 Make the most of Maths Club</i>	39
<i>Celebrating Lent</i>	39
<i>Year 10 Visit the Battlefields</i>	40
<i>Key Stage 3 Readers Relish a Scandalous Thriller</i>	40
<i>Year 10 Experience Life in the Work Place</i>	41
<i>Science & Technology Survive Zombie Apocalypse</i>	42
<i>Chinese Club</i>	43
<i>Trampolinists Soar for Success</i>	44
<i>Summer Enterprise Challenge at</i>	
<i>Ss Peter's and Pauls</i>	44
<i>Year 12 Work Experience:</i>	
<i>If you Go Down to the Woods Today...</i>	45
<i>Miss Todd Praises Year 9 Achievements</i>	46
<i>GCSE Art work</i>	46
<i>NHS Work Experience by Amelia Brown Year 12</i>	47
<i>Gardening Club is a Growing Success</i>	48
<i>Mr Mavin Marvels at</i>	
<i>The Mighty Achievements of Year 7</i>	49
<i>A Successful Year for Sixth Form:</i>	
<i>Mr Maughan Reflects...</i>	50-51

LITERACY LEVELS SOAR AS STUDENTS EXPERIENCE LEXIA POWER-UP SUCCESS



At St Benet's, we are committed to ensuring that all students have excellent levels of literacy. Some of our KS3 students have been using the computer based 'Power-up Lexia' program to help develop their literacy.

The program is designed to help students improve their word, grammar and comprehension skills, through reading, spelling and understanding of texts, challenges, games and quizzes. In September we invested in some new headphones and chrome-books and students really embraced the challenge! They have worked tremendously hard over the academic year, with some students even putting in extra time at home, in order to gain more levels. One third of all students who began using the program in September, have now reached the advanced level. We are looking forward to the KS3 reward assemblies, where prizes will be given for effort and achievement on Lexia.

HERE'S WHAT SOME OF OUR STUDENTS HAD TO SAY ABOUT LEXIA:

"Lexia has helped me improve how I pronounce my words." Lorissa Louis 7T

"It can get hard, but it helps me remember the difference between nouns, verbs and adjectives." Isla Hindmarsh 7T

"I've liked doing the games, they help me learn in a fun way, but you don't realise you're learning." Ruby Richardson 7P



Faye Represents Northumberland In National Cross Country Championships

Faye Heatley in Year 7 represented Northumberland at the National Year 7 School Cross Country Championships 2023 on the 25th March at Loughborough, which is a university town near Leicester.

Impressively, she came 58th out of 153 runners. Faye had to qualify for the race by competing in 3 previous races. Faye said: "It was a good day and an excellent experience, it was very muddy and there was even a thunderstorm just before I started!"

We look forward to observing Faye's running successes as she progresses through the school.

Well done Faye!

YEAR 12 READING MENTORS VISIT

Ss PETER & PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

As part of our Peer Mentor Reading Programme, a group of our Year 12 students took the opportunity to go to one of our feeder schools, Ss Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary School in Cramlington, to read with Year 5 and 6 pupils. Our students spent the morning listening, one to one, to pupils read; supporting their fluency and understanding as well as encouraging a love of reading. The Year 12 students were able to employ their training as reading mentors and extend their own understanding of how pupils progress with their reading, as they move from primary to secondary school.

The Year 5s reported back to us saying that they 'loved' reading with our students as they were so 'nice' and 'supportive'. One pupil said that they liked the way our Sixth Former, 'didn't tell me the word, but helped me spell it out so I could work it out for myself'. This has been a valued experience for our Year 12s too as they were 'taken out of their comfort zone' and some were thrilled to visit their old primary school and speak to Miss Timlin (Year 5 teacher) who was then starting her career at Ss Peter and Paul's.

Well done our Year 12 who have, yet again, shown themselves to be great ambassadors for St Benet Biscop and thank you to Ss Peter and Paul's for hosting us!

Mrs Elliott



YEAR 12 HISTORIANS

VISIT NEWARK CIVIL WAR MUSEUM

Following meticulous planning by our teacher, our history class went on a trip to Newcastle University on the 23rd of March with Ponteland High School to plan for a parliamentary style debate, as well as to get a general taste of university life. Upon arrival we participated in a seminar which related to our topic of study in school, and afterwards we sat in a lecture talking about parliament during the time period we study.

These experiences were helpful for us in introducing us to the style of teaching we will encounter should we decide to go to university, as they were helpful in giving us new information we didn't previously have. After having our lunch, we proceeded to go into a secluded room to look at the preserved sources from our respective time periods. This was an incredibly immersive task, each table being able to focus on a particular source and answer questions about them, and the privilege we had with permission to touch them. Following an inspection of these sources was a session on parliamentary debates and how they work, explaining the parts each person took as well as general etiquette. Our argument for debate was chosen from a hat and therefore out of our control, but we still prepared to the best of our ability for the upcoming debate in Newark, both inside and outside of school time.

On the 19th of April, we took the bus down to Newark to do the debate we prepared for at Newcastle University and in class. Upon arriving at the museum, we went for a session looking at specific artefacts relating to the civil war and Newark under siege. This was an enormous privilege, to be able to old and have a closer look at such historic artefacts. We looked at cannons, coins, armour, plague masks and documented letters from the time, which we attempted to decipher. After that, we went in for our debate. A woman from Voice

21 was present and gave us some helpful pointers on how to debate, how to stand and how to make our voices heard. We debated whether the British monarchy should be abolished, where we argued in favour of the British monarchy and won. We sat and watched other schools' debate on whether the voting age should be lowered to 16 or not, wherein it was decided the voting age should be lowered. Afterwards, we went for a tour of the Civil War Museum and looked at other artefacts the museum had relating to Newark

under siege, and we got the chance to try on clothes that were a model of the time period. We were then taken for a session on how to shoot guns as if we were a soldier shooting them at war. We went through how time sensitive it was to load and shoot the guns and how complicated it was to accurately shoot. Overall, it was an enjoyable and informative trip that gave us a valuable insight into both university and British history.

*By Jessica Wells and
Anona Thompson, Year 12*

1645 BATTLE OF
MASEBY
1646 CHARLES
SURRENDERS
TO SCOTS

1647 PARLIAMENT BUYS
CHARLES I FROM SCOTS

**NATIONAL
CIVIL WAR
CENTRE**
NEWARK MUSEUM

GABI'S A SWIMMING SUPERSTAR

Year 10 student, Gabi Freeman has been selected to represent Team GB at the European Youth Olympic Festival in Maribor, Slovenia from 23-29th July.

Gabi is a very talented Morpeth swimmer, and will be competing in the 100m and 200m backstroke as well as the relay. We wish her the best of luck, and we look forward to updating you with her progress in the new academic year.



2023 MATHS CHALLENGE PRIZE WINNERS

Huge congratulations to Arjun Narayan 9H, and Daisy Watson 7S.

Arjun was entered for the Senior Maths Challenge, and Daisy was entered for the Maths Challenge. These are challenges that are set externally that students can undertake, and that test problem solving, reasoning, mathematical fluency and precision of thought. Overseen by Newcastle University, Dr Henderson, the academic lead for working with schools on Maths Challenge, commented on the exceptionally high standard of the entries. Both students attended a prize giving ceremony in recognition of their success.



HAKUNA MATATA!

The Performing Arts department took 80 students to Sunderland Empire on Thursday 23 March to watch The Lion King.

Students are required to watch a range of different performances for their GCSE course, and the fact this is a musical, that makes extensive use of puppets, made this an innovative performance to attend.

The students and staff thoroughly enjoyed the performance, and they have been so inspired, they are going to include a musical number from the production in the summer show.



YEAR 8 FOOTBALLERS DO US PROUD AT COUNTY TOURNAMENT

A number of students in Year 8 competed in a county-wide football tournament earlier this term. The boys' team narrowly missed out on being the overall winners of the tournament by just 1 point. The boys played incredibly well, and were an absolute credit to the school.

Well done to Joshua Thompson, Ben Craik, Jack Lockhart, Jenson Parkin, Blake Fordy, Theo Benjamin, Charlie Lee, Archie Woodman, and Joel Williamson.



SIXTH FORM READING MENTORS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

For the last couple of years, we have run a reading mentor scheme which has seen Sixth Form students partnered with Year 7 students, to listen to them read, talk to them about what they are reading and to be a positive role model for them.

Our Sixth Formers are trained on how to support students with their reading before they are assigned a student to work with over the course of the year. For our Sixth Formers, this gives students responsibility in school, and an opportunity that they can reflect on and refer to when applying to university or for apprenticeships.

For Year 7, they are being given the opportunity to read aloud regularly, developing their reading fluency and comprehension as well as getting to know one of our most mature students. Year 7 students have told us they have loved this opportunity to meet with a Sixth Former and more and more students want to be involved from both year groups. We have recently assessed the progress that students are making with their reading and the results are tangible and very positive.

It's a fact... our Sixth Formers are making a real difference to our community.

Many thanks to Mrs Elliott, Assistant Headteacher, for leading on this initiative in school.



BRAND NEW ST BENET'S SIXTH FORM BLOCK TO BE BUILT



We are delighted to confirm that we are in the process of building a brand new block that will be specifically designed for our Sixth Form students.

As a Sixth Form that is proud of the academic results and aspiration, we are really pleased that we are growing in popularity and more and more of Year 11 are looking to stay on at our Sixth Form, each year. This means that we have outgrown the Sixth Form spaces we have.

We are currently working with Howard Litchfield architects to finalise the design and interior, but we are keen to ensure that students have a state-of-the-art Sixth Form block that will be for sole use for students in Year 12 and Year 13. The block will have study spaces, a common room and a Sixth Form bistro, as well as classrooms for Sixth Form teaching and a meeting room. We intend the design to be contemporary and modern, and a

place that will be a total pleasure for our students to learn, study and socialise. The block is intended to be opened to students in the 2023-2024 academic year, and we look forward to sharing updates with you as the work develops.

In the meantime, have a look at the current designs for the block, and the 'mood board' that reflects what students should expect the interior to be like.

In addition to a brand new study space, we are delighted to have built capacity into the leadership of the Sixth Form to ensure we maintain excellent pastoral care to support students at this important time in their lives, whilst also welcoming more students back into the Sixth Form. Mr Plumb has recently been appointed as our Deputy Head of Sixth Form, to support Mr Maughan, Head of Sixth Form.

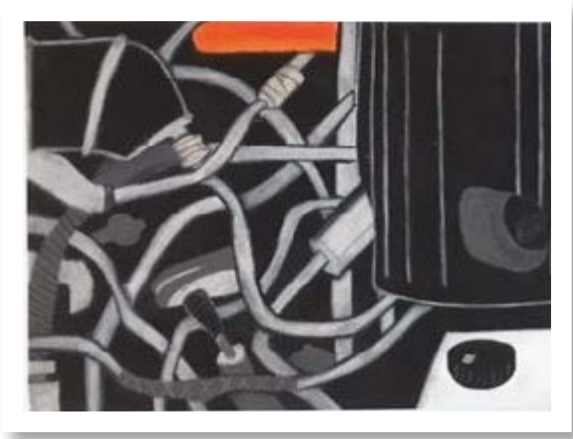
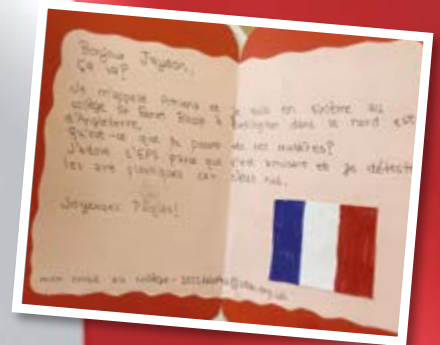
A MOOD BOARD FOR THE INTERIOR DESIGN OF THE NEW SIXTH FORM



NOS AMIS FRANÇAIS

Following the employment of a former St Benet Biscop MFL teacher (Mme Régnier for those who may remember her) in a school in the West of France, some of our Year 7 French students have been involved in establishing a link with the Year 7s in France. We initially sent over Christmas cards introducing ourselves, using vocabulary we had been learning in lessons. The French students replied with some beautifully designed 'Happy New Year' cards written in English, and they talked about their families and hobbies. Our students read through many of them and decided who they thought would make a great pen friend and wrote back to those specific students – we designed some fantastic Valentine's Day cards full of information about our likes and dislikes and about our families.

We are currently eagerly awaiting their replies and we hope that the correspondence will continue into Year 8. It has been great to see the excitement around making these new connections and the enthusiasm our Year 7s showed whilst making their creations.



GCSE art work by Zack Rudd

GCSE art work by Charlotte Kenny

LIFE IN LEARNING SUPPORT

It has been a busy year in Learning Support where we have welcomed new members of staff and made some exciting developments. We have run a number of successful interventions over the course of the year and welcomed a number of students into the department for additional support.

LEGO THERAPY

Lego therapy continues to be a popular intervention which has been delivered this year by Mr Jay. The aim of the intervention is to develop and enhance social skills and relationships through interaction with peers and by using Lego as a stimulus. Students work in small groups of 3-4 to undertake a variety of tasks and are able to build new friendships and relationships as a result. Below are some comments from students that have accessed Lego Therapy this Year:

Year 8 Male Student: *"I found Lego Therapy really calming. It has helped with my mental health. I got to know the other students better and now one is like my best friend."*

Year 9 male student: *"I Found Lego Therapy helped me have a calm demeanour. I looked forward to it"*.

ACADEMIC MENTORING

One of our new interventions this year has been academic mentoring with our Year 11 students. The aims of the intervention have been to build confidence with approaching exams, help to prepare effectively for revision and to share strategies for managing with exam stress and worries. The response from students has been very positive and our current Year 10 students will begin academic mentoring shortly in preparation for their transition into Year 11. Below is some feedback from our Year 11 students:

"It has helped me feel less worried about revising for exams"

"I have someone to check in with"

"It has helped me get organised"

As part of the academic mentoring process Mr Wright has also helped students prepare for the world outside of school. Several students have worked with Mr Wright to prepare CV's which have helped them secure part jobs. We are very proud of all of our Year 11 students' engagement with the academic mentoring programme this year and Mr Wright and Miss Oliver wish all of our Year 11 students the very best for the future.

UNDERSTANDING MYSELF

Miss Figueiredo shared the following about delivering interventions this year: "Over this term we have carried out several of our emotional regulation and understanding myself interventions with our students. This has involved working through our resources and engaging in conversations around emotions and self-esteem. Our students have enjoyed our sessions, they feel it is a safe space to discuss how they are feeling and any of their concerns. The morning check ins with our students really set them up for the day and provides them with a positive start for the day ahead. I look forward to continuing to work in supporting our students in the year to come".

TRANSFORMING THE LEARNING SUPPORT AREA

As a school we have heavily invested in our learning support area within school this year. The space has been transformed into a multi purpose area to enable us to provide further support to our students. We have a traditional classroom area which is used to deliver morning intervention sessions, 1:1 work and small group work and also for our academic mentoring. We also have our 'calm corner' which is a sensory area and quiet space for students that need some time to decompress and regulate. We also have an area for our popular lunch club and SEN homework club. As you can see from the images the space has been transformed to offer a welcoming, calming and purposeful space for our students to engage with. We look forward to further developing this space over the coming academic year and sharing our progress with you.



NEWCASTLE UNDERGRADS GIVE SIXTH FORM A TASTE OF LIFE AT UNIVERSITY

A number of Newcastle University undergraduates visited our school to speak to A level Maths students about the opportunities that maths and physics offers to students, including what subjects work well with maths, the jobs that you can be secured with a maths and/or physics degree, the different modules that can be studied in a maths and physics degree and the requirements needed to enter a maths/physics degree at Newcastle University.

Students found the session really informative, getting an insight into academic life at degree level, as well as a flavour of life at university more broadly.

"They were kind, relatable and informative. They were very helpful and opened me up to

what modules you can study in a Maths degree, degrees that are necessary/helpful with A level maths and also the future job opportunities involved with a maths degree that I previously was unaware of". Toby

"They were helpful and gave

me a clear understanding of the courses that I could do with maths". Joe

"They opened my eyes to other courses available to me". Josh

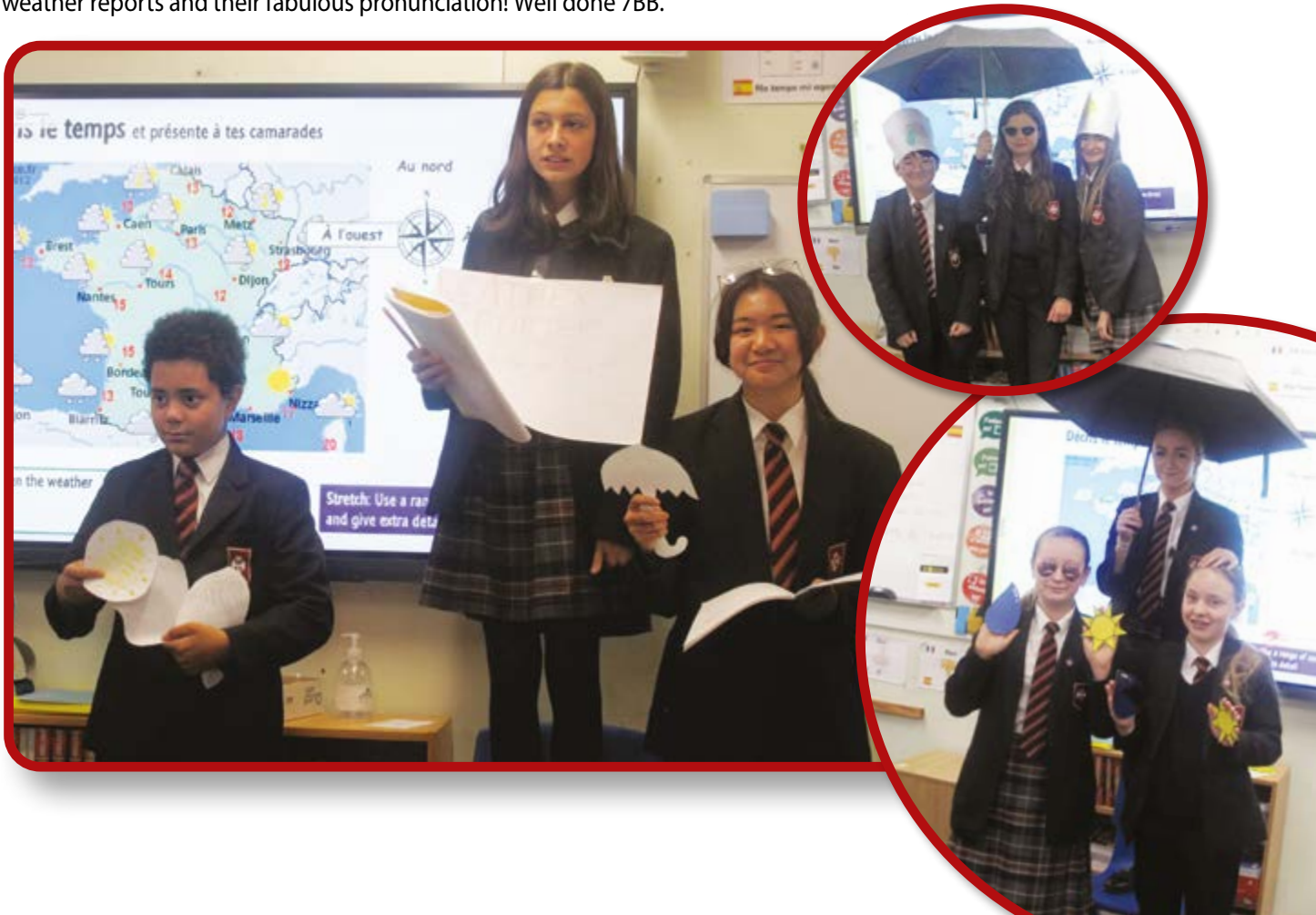
"I learned about different careers other than the ones I was originally planning to do." Kacper



YEAR 7 BECOME THE NEXT GENERATION OF WEATHER PRESENTERS!

This half term, students in 7BB have been learning how to describe the weather in French.

In groups, students wrote their own weather reports to present to the class. They enthusiastically made and brought in props from home in preparation for presenting their weather reports. We were so impressed with the quality of their weather reports and their fabulous pronunciation! Well done 7BB.



YEAR 10 GET GARDENING



Students in Year 10 have been busily clearing, weeding, planting and pruning the garden behind the bungalow we have on school grounds, that used to be the home of our former caretaker.



Since Mr Gardener retired, the garden has been left untended. The Year 10 volunteers have cleared a path through the lawn, leaving a wild meadow garden on either side. This will be seeded with bee-friendly wild flowers. The strawberry patch has been weeded to reveal lots of fruit about to ripen and there are even some onions popping up here and there. Cuttings have been taken from some of the larger shrubs and, if they root, there will be some new plants to spread through the garden next year.

The team work and effort shown by the Year 10s working on this project has been tremendous. They're doing a great service to the school community by helping to bring back to life a garden that will provide a peaceful and beautiful place to spend time.



ATHLETICS SUCCESS

On the 26th May a number of students in Year 9 and 10 represented the school in the ENSAA Senior Athletics Competition at Monkton Stadium, the students were a credit to both themselves and the school throughout the competition. From this event, the following students all qualified to represent East Northumberland at the ENSAA County Track and Field Championships on Saturday 10th June:



JUNIOR GIRLS: Niamh Adams – 800m and 200m

INTER GIRLS: Freya Johnson – 1500m | Anya Kelly – Long jump

INTER BOYS: Harrison Scott – 100m and 200m

On the day, Niamh Adams competed in the 200m sprint, she finished 3rd in her heat and made it to the final, finishing 6th place and running a personal best time. Harrison Scott competed in both the 100m and 200m sprints, qualifying for both finals, a fantastic effort! Anya Kelly competed in the long jump and finished in 4th place overall. A huge well done to all 3 students, this is an incredible opportunity for them to compete at this level, and they all represented the school in an excellent light.

On Wednesday 7th June we then took a large number of Year 7 and Year 8 students to represent the school at the Minors East Northumberland Area Athletics Competition. This was a fantastic opportunity for the students, and for many of them was the first time they have experienced this type of competition, they were all incredible

on the day and should be very proud of their achievements. Out of the students who competed, the students named below finished in the top 3 for their events and qualified to represent East Northumberland at the Minors County Athletics Championship on the 24th June at Gateshead Stadium:

YEAR 7 GIRLS: Faye Heatley - 1500m | Lily Williamson - 800m

YEAR 7 BOYS: Jamie Floyd - 1500m

YEAR 8 GIRLS: Elysha Gunayon - Shot put | Lexie Hardy - Discus

YEAR 8 BOYS: Dylan Carter - Long jump | Blake Fordy - High jump

All students who competed performed incredibly well on the day and should be very proud of themselves. Congratulations to Lily Williamson who finished 1st place in the 800m, making her Northumberland County Champion for this distance in her age group.

FOOTBALL REFEREES

Year 9 and Year 10 students volunteered to referee at the U11 Northumberland Catholic Cup. The feedback from the Primary schools was very positive. Well done to those students involved:

Nathan Nolan | James Robson | Tom McIntyre |
Dan McDonald | Jack Hall | Regan Hanson |
Matthew Welch | Dan Craig | Adam Mason |



EXAM SEASON IS A SUCCESS

In recent months, students in Year 11 and Year 13 have been preparing for, and sitting their GCSE, A-level and BTEC exams.

On average, students in Year 11 have sat 27 hours worth of exams. This is the culmination of 2 years hard work and revision. Leading up to the exams, students were offered a comprehensive revision programme after school. Students were also offered additional revision and support for English and maths, given how important these subjects are for students looking to secure places at college, apprenticeships and jobs. There were revision classes during the Easter holidays, and staff have made themselves available over lunch times to support students too.

Students in Year 13 have also worked incredibly hard, making the most of their study periods, as well as the additional support offered by teachers. For most students, success in their A-level exams will mean securing places at

university, but we have a number of students looking to secure higher level apprenticeships as well.

Despite the nerves, all of our students coped brilliantly throughout this pressured period. Unlike last year's cohort, students have had to sit full exams, there has been no pre-release or guidance on what the exams will focus on, and so it really has felt like exams had returned to the same intensity levels of pre-covid.

Students have been well supported throughout this period by their form tutors, Miss Cowey and Mr Maughan as well subject teachers and other pastoral staff.

We hope students are enjoying a long, care-free summer now. They have certainly earned it.

We look forward to results days which will take place on 17 August for Year 13, and 24 August for Year 11.



YEAR 10 GIRLS GET SET

GirlsGetSET is an exciting programme aimed at showing girls in years 9-13 what Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) is all about.

In the UK only a very small percentage of engineering professionals are female. Baker Hughes wants to address this imbalance by encouraging girls to consider a career in this field. They host a range of activity days, run workshops and by targeting key academic years, they aim to encourage the girls to consider SET subjects when making important decisions about their education and ultimately about their future careers. We have been taking a group of girls to Baker Hughes (and before that PII Pipeline Solutions) for several years. For the last 2 years, due to demand, Baker Hughes have also run two sessions for boys from our school, and the school we share sessions with.

17 girls and 16 boys in Year 10 attended a series of 5 half day work shops run by Baker Hughes at their premises in Cramlington in autumn 2022 and spring 2023. This showcased their technologies to give our students insight into the opportunities that a career in Engineering and Technology can offer. The students heard about the

production processes involved in designing, producing and testing Pipeline Inspection Gauges (PIGs for short). They had a tour of the factory floor and saw products made with the 3-D printer. One session involved a challenge where they wrote the code for, and made electrical units that buzzed and flashed lights when certain conditions were met.

At other sessions they heard about careers from the people actually doing the job at Baker Hughes, including past St Benet Biscop students.

A highlight of each visit was lunch at the company canteen, followed by cakes and drinks during each session, kindly provided by Baker Hughes.



Sixth Form Physicists

VISIT TORNESS NUCLEAR POWER STATION

In March, as the year thirteen students finished studying Nuclear Physics, we took a trip up the A1 to Dunbar in Scotland to visit Torness Nuclear Power Station. You'll probably have seen it before if you've taken the train to Edinburgh, it's the massive, ugly grey box that sits right on the east coast about twenty minutes after you've left Berwick. What you may not have realised is that it provides the energy for about two million households, as it puts out a staggering eight hundred megawatts of power – that's enough energy to fully charge just shy of forty thousand iPhones per second.

The first thing we learned was that the aforementioned iPhones, or any mobile phones for that matter, weren't allowed in. But rather than being about safety, that was apparently to make sure everyone was paying attention. After a safety briefing, and thorough security wanding (it's easier to get through airport security) we went into the main building where you are first confronted with a live display of the current output power and then a corridor-sized display showing how the site has changed over the years. We then passed over the workshop where they ensure they have, or can create, every part they could possibly need to ensure the continued running of the power station and organise the never-ending maintenance schedule.

We then went up about ten stories high to the viewing gallery of the actual reactor. The scale of it blew a few minds among the young audience. We found out here that a uranium fuel pellet (roughly the size of your finger, above the top knuckle) contains about the same amount of energy as one tonne of coal – and there are about 18 million pellets per reactor (Torness has two reactors). We then had a look in the control room (very similar to where Homer Simpson works, but this one appeared an awful lot calmer) and it looks like it's from a timewarp, with old fashioned phones, row upon row of ring binder and displays which change by hand. This is also where some of the most highly trained staff work in the power station, given how important a job controlling the reactor is.

We also saw the turbines hall, with it's incredibly large and loud spinning turbines and generators which are the very last step before the energy that was once in the uranium is sent out, electrically, to the national grid. Anybody is able to visit the power station, I would strongly recommend it as a good use of a couple of hours.

Mr Maccoy,
Head of Physics



Year 7 Trip TO BEAMISH

On Thursday 13th July, 60 Year 7 students stepped back in time to the war-ridden and divided pit villages of Beamish, where they dusted off their discussion and debating skills, as part of an exclusive interactive experience.

A 15-year-old boy has lied about his age, and enlisted as part of the British Army, to fight in WW1. Should his actions stir within us a proud patriotism, or should they reveal the dangers of poisonous propaganda? After interviewing different characters from across the village, the students were given the task to decide. This activity put into practice knowledge that was acquired during the reading of Michael Morpurgo's 'Private Peaceful', and skills that were developed during a war-themed Non-Fiction Writing module last term. Many thanks to Mr Winn and the English department for organising this trip for our students.



On 14 June, Year 8 and 9 students officiated at the Year 4 Quad Kids event held at Meadowdale Primary.

Quad Kids is a team-based competition with four boys and four girls competing in a long distance run, short distance run, a throwing and a jumping event. Local primary school students were competing in the event. Staff from the primary schools were very pleased with our students' maturity and officiating.

QUAD KIDS

Well done to the following students:

Elysha Gunayon, Julia Bautista, Magdalyne Williams, Yasmine Jaucian, Keira Richardson, Grace Skinner, Jade Matias, Lexie Hardy, Jasleen Lagmay, Gracie Stobbs, Olivia Trood, Amy Robinson, Lola Riley, Matthew Welch, Regan Hanson, Dan Craig, Aiden Miller, Alex Agim, Cheyenne Saculingan and Safiyyah Karoli

YEAR 9 GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS COMPLETE WEATHERING FIELDWORK

Our Year 9 Geographers have been studying rocks types, weathering process and lichens this half term, with an opportunity to collect primary data from Westlea Cemetery with their Geography teachers.

Our Geographers used systematic sampling techniques to select a range of headstones to analyse patterns of weathering. Using the information from the headstones, pupils could identify the rock type and age of the stone. From this, they also calculated the distance from the road using a scaled map, and scored the Rahn's index of weathering,

and % coverage of lichen. Students have been using this data to prove or disprove their own hypothesis, complete complex graphs, analyse, conclude and evaluate their investigation.

As quoted by a member of the public, pupils were 'respectful' and 'polite' showing impeccable behaviour in our local cemetery.





As Head of Progress for Year 11, I have always taken immense pride in working with such a dynamic, hard working and resilient group of young people, but never more so than over the last few months. Students have spent all year preparing for their final GCSE examinations, and when the time has come to complete their exams, our students have risen to the challenge with the same positivity and determination that we have come to expect from them over the last 5 years.

This academic year has been a milestone year for our Y11 cohort; they have worked tirelessly, planned for their next steps and made amazing contributions to our wider school community. Across the academic year, our students have had a number of opportunities to engage with advice and guidance to help

plan for their post-16 options. I am delighted that a large number of our Year 11 cohort will be joining us in our Sixth Form in September. In addition to this, we have a number of students who have been offered exciting apprenticeship opportunities, as well as others in the year group who have

applied for placements for courses at Newcastle, Ashington and Northumberland Colleges. Wherever our students find themselves in September, I have absolutely no doubt that they will be able to make a success of whatever they turn their attention to next.





As the academic year has drawn to an end, we've managed to ensure we give our Y11 students a fitting send off. On Friday 26th May, we held our Y11 celebration afternoon. This included a Leavers Video featuring a combination of contributions from staff across the school, a special celebratory lunch and an afternoon on the field, signing shirts and taking photographs. It was a fantastic day, and a real treat to see our students looking so happy to spend time with their friends and teachers in the midst of their exam period.

On Thursday 29th June, our Y11 Leavers' Prom was held at St James' Park. This event had been one our students were looking forward to throughout the school year, and did not disappoint! It was fantastic to see so many of our students making a glamorous entrance to the evening. Our student council representatives gave a rousing speech to get the celebrations started, and our students danced the night away in style! The students were a credit to our school, with the staff working the event commenting on how respectful and enthusiastic the students were throughout the night.

Year 11, I hope that in your time at St Benet Biscop, we have taught you how to cope with the challenges that await you when your time here comes to an end. Whilst our jobs as teachers is to impart knowledge and prepare you for exams and assessment as best we can, we also have responsibilities to develop you

as people. For some of you, you have faced your hardest life challenges in your time here. You have blown me away with your resilience, determination and sheer capacity to cope when faced with the unimaginable. One thing I can promise each and every one of you, is that life never turns out quite as expected. None of you need to me to tell you how important your examination period is; you have heard that on repeat all year. What I would like to tell you, is that as important as exams are, there are a great deal of things that exams can't measure. There is no examination for the kindest person, the most resilient, the funniest. Being a great friend, a loyal partner or a diligent leader is not something that can be assessed through written examinations, but these are all qualities that I hope you have learnt to develop and continue to foster as you make your way into the world.

I'd like to thank our Year 11 students for being such a fantastic group of young people, who have brought joy to their teacher's lives every day in their dedication, humour and good nature. Whilst it is sad to say goodbye, it is also a source of great pride to see the confident young people you have grown into during your time at our school. As you leave school, I hope you take with you the importance and passion for learning that drives our school forward; my hope for you is that you never reach a point in your lives where you think you know everything, and where you forget how exciting it is to learn new things. Your life is full of limitless possibilities and I hope that you take each and every one of them. I very much look forward to hearing about all of your future successes!

Miss Cowey,
Head of Progress, Year 11

PERFORMING ARTS SUMMER SHOW & PERFORMANCE AT WHITLEY BAY

On Wednesday 21st June we took 67 students to perform at the Whitley Bay Playhouse as part of our Catholic partnership annual show. It was so lovely to be back in a theatre after the success of last years' show and our students did us proud.

The show is a variety performance where each school produces a number of acts that are performed for parents and carers. We did a variety of musical theatre numbers from various shows including Les Mis and Dear Evan Hansen. The finale number was 'Naughty' from Matilda the Musical where we had 223 students from across the Catholic partnership schools on stage and in the auditorium dancing and singing together.

The students worked tirelessly in the run up to the show and their hard work paid off because their performances were fantastic. It was lovely to see the combination

of KS3-5 working together and supporting one another. It was such a positive experience for these students to perform in a professional theatre in front of a huge sell out audience of over 700 people.

Mrs Maughan and Mrs Anderson hosted the show and were delighted by the professionalism shown by all the students who took part.

Our Summer Show took place on Monday 26th June at school and this was a cabaret style show that included the performances from the Whitley Bay show 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, and many thanks to the Performing Arts department for their work and commitment in preparing students so well.

We are on a countdown to the next production, which will be the wonderful, powerful and inspiring musical 'Hairspray'.



ST BENET'S ARE SMASHING SPARX MATHS

Sparx Maths has been used by students in all year groups this year for some of their maths homework and also for independent study and revision.

There have been 250,049 questions answered correctly and an incredible 4,057 hours of personalised practice completed by our students! Students are awarded XP points for completing tasks on Sparx. The students with the highest XP points in each year group are: Y7 Eva Toole, Y8 Elysha Gunayon, Y9 Marian Sarmiento, Y10 Filip Sidzinka, Y11 Charlotte Kenny. We would like to congratulate these students for their excellent effort this year in maths homework and independent study.



GCSE art work by Alfie Wright

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Life is almost back to normal, but the effects of Covid and the unprecedented isolation that came with it, are still having an impact on people.

Therefore, we have continued to find ways to reach out to the lonely and isolated in our community. This Easter we sent letterbox parcels to the vulnerable people in our community. Inside each box was an Easter card that was designed by a year 10 student, a bookmark that was designed by a year 7 student, a prayer card made out of seeded paper, in addition to other little gifts. We received lots of lovely letters saying thank you for the gifts, therefore this is definitely something we will begin to build on in future.



YEAR 12 BECOME PEER MENTORS

This year some of our Year 12 students have been working with 'Be You,' Northumberland NHS. 'Be You' is a new programme focusing on schools which is designed to improve and support the mental health and wellbeing of young people; enabling them to build emotional resilience and identify issues early.

Their team is aimed at supporting teachers and 6th formers to enhance mental health provision within schools. They are there to give advice and act as a bridge to other services. But more than anything they help young people develop healthy habits towards mental health and, where necessary, offer support at an early stage.

Our Year 12 students have been working with a peer educator, to train to become a peer mentor, so they can help each other manage their own mental health and provide support to younger students when emotional difficulties arise. This is a brilliant initiative for our students to be involved in, and we know our students will be an important, supportive and compassionate peer, for those who need it.

MATHS FEAST CHALLENGE

On Monday 27th March 2023, Charlotte Easton, Gabi Freeman, Ericka Gunayon and Rihanna Lee in Year 10 represented St. Benet Biscop in the North East Maths Feast Challenge at Newcastle University.

- The girls competed in a competition against 20 other groups from 17 schools. The girls did absolutely brilliantly, working so hard together as a team, working under pressure through each challenge in tough time restrictions and showing huge resilience in not giving up.
- Their efforts were rewarded by finishing in 4th place scoring 71 points out of 100, narrowly missing 3rd place. Congratulations to the students who took part. Their attitude and behaviours were impeccable and I'm very proud of how they represented each other and our school community.

YEAR 12 TAKE ON CAMBRIDGE CHEMISTRY CHALLENGE

All of our Year 12 Chemistry students opted to sit the extremely gruelling 'Cambridge Chemistry Challenge' in June.

Previous papers have covered topics such as Pharaoh's serpent, ferrate ions (not to be confused with the animal) and isomers of benzene. The competition aims to stretch and challenge students interested in chemistry and is an excellent experience for anyone considering taking their studies further. The paper is set by an experienced team of teachers and university chemists

and is designed to be accessible to Year 12 students but takes them significantly beyond the syllabus and encourages them to think about science in the way they would at university.

Well done to all the students for their resilience in both preparing and sitting the paper.



YEAR 7 ENJOY EPIC Poetry

Throughout this term, year 7 have been busy exploring Epic Poetry in their English lessons. Year 7 have thoroughly enjoyed Beowulf, an Anglo-Saxon epic poem that has allowed the students to immerse themselves in Anglo-Saxon culture, including listening to old English and investigating the myths and legends of the people that transformed into some of their favourite storybook monsters. Analysing the language choices in the poem has caused year 7 to appreciate that the language techniques they have been learning about this year are thousands of years old and come from a long line of literary tradition.

Inspired by Beowulf, students have been creating their own epic poetry monsters and mimicking the language used in Beowulf to create a sinister atmosphere. Creating their own monsters has culminated to writing their own epic poems, drawing from key themes seen in a range of epic poems including Homer's The Odyssey. Using their knowledge from Beowulf, year 7 have been experimenting with using hyperbole, alliteration and impressive vocabulary. Year 7 are proud to show you some of their hard work which you can enjoy below:



*In days long forgotten,
When men were yet to conquer even seas,
There lived a 1000 ft tall Kraken,
Who slept for centuries until he was awoken.
As soon as a boat passed,
The sinister Kraken snatched the boat, ripping it apart,
Crunching the bones of the men inside in it's colossal jaws.*
- BY LEWI LIGHTLY

*Behold a time,
In the depths of the forest,
Twigs and leaves covered a monster called Saxef.
He was the most demonic creature,
Forever finding weak wanderers.
Countless people were killed.*
- BY XANDER HONEY

STUDENTS ENJOY SUMMER FESTIVAL

WITH THE YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM

Recently, a number of students have enjoyed a retreat, to the Youth Village in Consett, for the annual summer festival, with YMT. The summer festival provides pupils with the opportunity to take a step back from their studies and their daily routines at school. It is a great opportunity to strengthen current friendships and even make new friendships, and it provides students with the opportunity to explore their faith whilst enjoying live music, games and camping.

During the three days there were a variety of activities on offer that are all linked to the theme of being bold and brave. Students were encouraged to feel empowered knowing that God loves them unconditionally, and to feel confident and empowered to be the person God intends them to be today and always. Students enjoyed camping with their friends, live music, team building activities, games, meeting new people from other schools, exploring faith, and lots more! Students were blessed with good weather, the beautiful and peaceful surroundings of the Derwent Valley, where the Youth Village is located.

**“Do not lose courage or be afraid”
Jeremiah 51:46**



YEAR 11 GET A TASTE OF SIXTH FORM LIFE

In July, Year 11 took some time after their GCSEs to begin their transition to Year 12, by attending a taster day. This gave students the opportunity to hear from Mr Maughan, Head of Sixth Form, about life in the Sixth Form, and how best to prepare for the demands of Year 12. Students were able to sample taster lessons in the subjects they are hoping to study from September, and it gave them the opportunity to try new subjects that they might be thinking of studying, but haven't had the experience of yet.



Year 11 are thoroughly deserving of their long, relaxing holiday after their exams, but it was great to see them in school, looking ahead to the exciting challenge of Year 12. We can't wait to welcome them to life in the Sixth Form.

YEAR 9 RETREAT AND REFLECT

In March, 65 Year 9 students departed school for a two night residential retreat at the Emmaus Youth Village. Each day was filled with exciting activities that got our students thinking about their unique journey through life. The Youth Ministry Team endeavoured to help our students understand who is walking with them in life, through things such as arts, crafts, sports, music and walks through the beautiful surrounding forest.

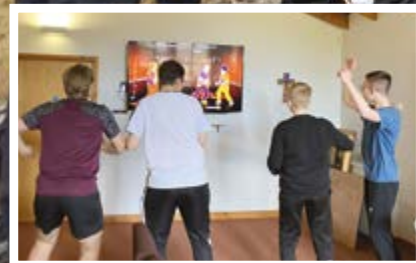
The retreat was based around the 'Adventures of St Paul' with various activities designed to bring alive his story. The Thursday evening session involved exploring St Paul's most famous letter, 1 Corinthians 13, and what it means for us today. We are all born with an incredible potential to share God's love with our own gifts and talents and help make the

world a better place. Each one of us has been chosen and called by God to be a unique and important part of His plan and as St Pope John Paul II said of Christ, "His power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine."

Intermingled throughout the retreat, there was plenty of free

time – the students enjoyed the sunshine, played football, capture the flag, watched films in the evening, alongside enjoying some hot chocolate.

We were so proud of our students – they were very knowledgeable, learnt a lot, were well behaved, polite and made new friends.





YEAR 10 SELECTED FOR SALTERS' FESTIVAL OF CHEMISTRY

St Benet Biscop was selected this year to send a group of Year 10 students to Newcastle University for the Salters' Festival of Chemistry. Salters' Institute provides schools with opportunities that transform their perception of chemistry, what it can do, how it shapes our lives and the career pathways it offers. They provide creative, fun and inspiring spaces to explore chemistry, discover its potential as a subject, and recognise those who are using chemistry to make the world a better place. The group of students used state of the art equipment in the Chemistry department of the University to synthesis aspirin, a six hour practical, and then purify it. They were able to check the purity of their aspirin using Infra-Red spectroscopy. One of the students who attended the day has written an account of her day.

We met with a guest speaker who told us about crystallising different medicines. This linked into our 'Aspirin making' practical which took up most of our time there and it was so fun being in a 'professional' lab. I was quick to learn that the fume cupboard would be useful – the smell of salicylic acid was awfully strong. We raced through the practical

but efforts were in vain – we resulted in a purity of 93.4% and the threshold was 95%+. Nonetheless, using the lab equipment was so much fun, considering we were doing an undergraduate/Year 13 practical. We finished the day talking to 3 Key Note panellists who told us about their chemistry based jobs, in fields like chemical engineering.



YEAR 6 GET A TASTE OF LIFE IN YEAR 7

In July, we welcomed students from a range of primary schools, who visited us as part of their transition to Year 7. The day included a tour of the school, the opportunity to experience some lessons, an assembly and liturgy. This event followed a parent information evening, where parents of Year 6s joining our school, were invited to hear a little bit more about our ethos and mission, as well as our curriculum and systems.

It was great to meet our new Year 7 students. They made an excellent first impression, and we look forward to welcoming them to the school in September.



YEAR 11 CELEBRATE

at Prom



On Thursday 29 June, Year 11 celebrated their long awaited Prom. After months of revision, hard work, exams and stress, it was time to let loose, and celebrate all of the things our Year 11 students have achieved over the last 5 years.

It was an incredible night. Students looked super smart, sophisticated, and elegant in their outfits. The dancefloor was awash with all of the colours of the rainbow, and a wide range of styles that reflected the eclectic nature of the year group.

Miss Cowey and Miss Lee organised the event which took place at St James' Park. We had access to The Magpie Club, which gave us access to the terrace and an amazing view overlooking the pitch at the club. Students enjoyed some top quality food, as well as mocktails before dancing the night away.

Nate Pink and Nathan Smith both gave a vote of thanks to form tutors, teachers and to pastoral staff who had supported them over the years, and students had been casting votes before Prom, for a number of awards. At the Prom, award winners were announced and they were:

- **Prom Queen – Natalie Fletcher**
- **Prom King – Amarveer Ladhar**
- **Most Likely To Become Famous – Nate Pink**
- **Most Likely To Take Over The World – Matthew Ball**
- **Most Likely To Win An Olympic Medal – Libby Freeman**
- **Most Likely To Win The Lottery... And Lose The Ticket – James Medlen**
- **Most Likely To Become A Billionaire – Harry Langhorne**
- **Couple Most Likely To Get Married – Hannah Orchard and Alfie Wright**

Students were able to make unlimited use of the photobooth for the night, so that they could have photos from the night, as keepsakes of this really special event. It was great seeing students and staff really letting their hair down together, after such an intense few months in school.

We are sure it was a night our students will never forget











On the 19th June we visited different beaches along the coastline for our NEA's. We firstly went to Seaton Sluice with the enquiry title 'to what extent do Seaton Sluices sand dunes show processes of succession?' We looked at how dense the vegetation was, the distance of sand dunes from the coastline and the pH of the sand. To do this we used a range of methods such as vegetation collection with quadrats, as well as transects and clinometers for the other hypotheses. Then we went to Blyth beach to investigate 'how effective are coastal management techniques in Blyth?' We looked at the groynes and their impacts as well as longshore drift, and the way it deposits sediment along the groynes including methods of a survey of coastal management. To conclude the day, we went to Newbiggin beach to answer 'how does sediment and beach profile change along Newbiggin beach?' Here we investigated the size of material in relation to longshore drift with weights in our methods.

The variety of different methods provided ideas and inspiration for my own NEA.

On the following day of 20th June, we went into Newcastle to prepare for the human geography aspect of the NEA's, where we visited Heaton, the Quayside and Ouseburn. We had a range of different hypotheses

to choose from, to then further investigate individually at each location, such as 'Newcastle is an environmentally-friendly city' using methods of land use survey maps and environment questionnaires and a further environment bipolar survey. In addition, another hypothesis that I chose to investigate was 'Newcastle

has areas with healthy streets' where I completed a cyclist count and a pavement quality survey, alongside an audit of crossings. At the Ouseburn it allowed us to gather further additional information for our NEA's as a regeneration site.

By Ruby Gray, Year 12



MR PLUMB CELEBRATES YEAR 10 ACHIEVEMENTS

As the summer break approaches, Year 10 should be very proud of their achievements since September. I would like to congratulate Year 10 for all their hard work, their positive attitude and their contributions to school life.

I was delighted to watch the extremely talented Year 10s who performed so confidently in The Addam's Family. The enthusiasm for the show and the support the whole year group gave to those taking part on stage was wonderful to see. It was a perfect display of St Benet Biscop community spirit and pride.

Throughout the year, Year 10 have matured and grown as individuals. This has been most clearly seen recently when Year 10 completed their Work Experience. The extremely positive feedback employers gave about Year 10, and the offers of part-time jobs, were fantastic to hear. These experiences have also led to conversations between students and staff about their possible routes Post 16. Students are thinking seriously about their futures and considering A-Level choices, and college routes, as well as making enquires with their work experience employers about possible apprenticeships.

The mocks exams have also been approached very

maturely by the year group. As the week has gone on, they've got used to the exam routines and the feedback from invigilators has been positive. I hope these exams are a good foundation for further mocks in Year 11 and help students get prepared for the revision and work required to achieve in their GCSEs.

The sporting achievements of our school teams and individuals outside school has been another success story and we wish those individuals who are competing at home or abroad this summer, all the very best of luck. Myself and Miss Lee have been incredibly lucky to work with you all. We both wish Year 10, and their families, a restful and enjoyable summer break.

Y12 GEOGRAPHY DISCOVER DAY AT NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY



Our Y12 Geographers were invited to Newcastle University for a Geography Discovery Day. Over the course of the day our students were given a unique insight into life as a university student, as well as an exclusive look at the Geography courses on offer at Newcastle University. Students were able to explore the difference between the university Geography courses and what they offer (entry requirements, expeditions, field trips) and were provided with information about supported entry routes (Newcastle partners scheme), graduate careers and the accreditation of the courses.

Students were given a lecture from two Geography academics at Newcastle University, about glaciers and their melting rates, as well as a follow up seminar session on glaciers and climate change consequences.



In addition, students were provided with a campus tour and were able to see all the new Newcastle facilities available (including the new Geography department, sports arena/centres, libraries, labs, accommodation etc.), whilst speaking to existing students about their student experience.

All of our Y12 students were full immersed in the university experience and were able to engage with all challenges and activities thrown their way. We discovered that we may have quite a few Geography university candidates on our hands! Well done for a fabulous day Y12!



TEACHERS RUN THE EXTRA MILE

Over the last few months a couple of teachers from our school and Trust have been running rather than stepping out of their comfort zones.

Madame Vermaas, from the Modern Languages department and Mrs Banfield, who is currently part of the Bishop Bewick Trust and will join St Benet's in September as Assistant Headteacher, both love to challenge themselves by signing up to increasingly tough races. The Deurgar night race was the 1st race they'd both signed up to together. This is a 10 mile run in the dark up Simonside, with beautiful views of the lines of head torches filing up and down the Cheviot hills.

Last month, they braved the Edinburgh marathon, both achieving PBs on an unusually hot day. But their biggest challenge to date is the Great North Ultra - a 55km race taking place on 15th July. If anyone sees either teacher struggling to walk down the corridors to their lessons then give them sympathy! Who knows what the new academic year has in store!



YEAR 10 GEOGRAPHERS COMPLETE FIELDWORK

All of our Y10 geographers have ventured out over the course of two days, to complete human and physical geography fieldwork. This fieldwork is required as part of the GCSE specification, and supports students with their paper 3 content 'Geographical Applications'.

Over the course of two days, students were carrying out data collection to assess housing quality in Newcastle Upon Tyne, and the effectiveness of coastal management at Blyth. Both aspects required students to complete risk assessments, create aims, choose sampling methods, carry out data collection, present this data, and then evaluate and draw conclusions from this data.

All students engaged with this practical fieldwork well, over coming challenges and providing solutions to any problems encountered-just like true geographers! Well done Y10.



baa-rilliant art adventure!

Students within the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust were presented the exciting opportunity to decorate their own Shaun the Sheep sculpture, to form its own mini flock and take over venues across Tyne & Wear this summer.

Students from across St Benet Biscop, St Bede's (Bedlington), St Aidan's (Ashington), St Peter and Paul's (Cramlington), St Wilfred's (Blyth), St Paul's (Alnwick), St Robert's (Morpeth) and St Cuthbert's (Berwick) have been busy attending workshops where they collaboratively created a unique design for a sculpture of the much-loved TV star, Shaun the Sheep.

Students worked for a full day painting the Shaun the Sheep sculpture with a final design that connects each school's location, and celebrates our wonderful Northumberland landmarks.

St Oswald's Hospice are holding their third Art trail, 'Shaun the Sheep on the Tyne' from 19th July – 27th September 2023. Across Newcastle City Centre and surrounding areas, 50 super sized Shaun

sculptures individually designed by Artists from the region and beyond, will be displayed alongside "Little Shaun" sculptures, painted by schools and youth groups.

St Oswald's Hospice are an incredibly important charity, that offers specialist care for adults, young people and babies with life limiting conditions, as well as providing support for families and loved ones. Following the public trail, the large Shaun sculptures will be auctioned to raise awareness, and vital funds for St Oswald's Hospice, allowing the charity to continue their vital work.

Be sure to visit the 'Shaun the Sheep on the Tyne' trail, to support St Oswald's Hospice, but also to celebrate and admire the amazing local talent amongst our schools!





YEAR 13 FINE ART PROJECT

Our Year 13 Fine Art students worked very hard and with focus on their A level Art Exam project, for which this year's title was 'Simple and/or Complex'. The final part of the exam project was the 15-hour exam, which was run over three days at the beginning of May under exam conditions. In this exam they worked on their final piece for the 'Simple and/or Complex' project. Students worked in the disciplines of Drawing, Painting and Printmaking, demonstrating the depth and extent of their knowledge, understanding and skills in their chosen materials, techniques, and the working methods and style of their chosen artists. They worked hard to express and explore their ideas through the creation of their artworks.

We were delighted at how well they worked up to and during the exam. They each produced exciting and individual responses to the exam theme. Well done to all of the students who completed such great art work.

YEAR 7		
Tomasz	Sidzinka	GOLD
Mason	Phillips	SILVER
Ava	Mckenner	SILVER
Gabriel	Gallagher	SILVER
Thea	Woods	SILVER
Ciaran	Scott	SILVER
Joe	Halton	BRONZE
Daisy	Watson	BRONZE
Alicja	Kierpiec	BRONZE
Corey	Beecroft	BRONZE
Max	Laws	BRONZE
Finley	Baptist	BRONZE
Megan	Cornell	BRONZE
Jamie	Floyd	BRONZE
Isaac	Munnelly	BRONZE
Farrah	Stafford	BRONZE

UK MATHS CHALLENGE SUCCESS

In late April, 110 students from Year 7 and 8 took part in the UK Mathematics Trust Junior Mathematical Challenge. The challenge encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and fluency in using basic mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems. The students were very successful in this challenge and all received a certificate of participation. The following students with especially high scores were awarded with a Bronze, Silver or Gold certificate depending on their scores.

Some of our students achieved scores high enough for them to be selected to complete the follow-on round called the Junior Kangaroo. These students are: Tomasz Sidzinka from Year 7, Aiden Bolton, Josie Forster, Lexie Hardy, Liam Mitchell, Keira Richardson and Freddie Watson from Year 8. The students took the challenge in their stride, answering some very difficult mathematical questions. They have all been rewarded with a Certificate of Participation. Tomasz Sidzinka achieved an exceptionally high score in this round, earning himself a Certificate of Merit for achieving a score in the top 25% of all those who completed the Junior Kangaroo. We would like to congratulate all of the students involved in the UKMT challenges, and are look forward to entering more of these next year.



GCSE BIOLOGY: YEAR 10 EXPLORE ANATOMY

In a captivating Biology class, Year 10 students had the unique opportunity to participate in an ox heart dissection under the guidance of their Biology teacher, Mr. Pollard. This hands-on learning experience allowed students to explore the complexities of the cardiovascular system and gain a deeper understanding of anatomy. Mr. Pollard's interactive teaching methods and careful guidance ensured that students developed valuable skills, such as precision, teamwork, and scientific inquiry. The dissection not only bridged the gap between theory and practice but also inspired a passion for biology and helped to nurture the next generation of aspiring scientists.

It's not often we get the chance to do something quite as unique. Usually students have the opportunity to participate in a Pig or Lamb heart dissection, so to mix things up with an Ox heart almost five times the size was very exciting. Our mission in science is to promote curiosity and discovery and wherever possible make links to the wider world within our teaching. Giving the students opportunities like this dissection helps to captivate our students and bring what is written in textbooks and revision guides to life!

Many thanks to Mr Pollard for planning this unique experience for students. It is sure to be one they remember for some time!



STUDENTS DEVELOP THEIR *MUSICAL TALENTS*

It's been a fantastic year in the Music department, with so many students taking advantage of the instrumental and vocal tuition provided by our team of skilled peripatetic music staff. At our school, students can learn how to play a broad range of musical instruments.

With record numbers of new starters this year, our Year 7 students have really impressed us and we hope for great things from them in the future. Further up the school, students have built on their solid foundations and are really developing as musicians. While we can't name them all here are some of the students who have achieved stand out success this year.

LEO ASTLEY STONE, YEAR 11: DRUMS

Leo, on drums, achieved a high mark on his grade exam this summer. He worked very hard to achieve this and didn't let things beat him, trying and trying again and again till he got it right, "West Coast Rollin'" being a great example. He has worked well on his technique and always offers other students who are not as far ahead as him great advice and lots of encouragement and support. Well done Leo!

RACHEL MONAGHAN, YEAR 10: BRASS

Rachel's range has doubled and doubled again, she has put in lots of effort to achieve this, she has gone from performing basic tunes with restricted range to more complex tunes that make full use of the horn's range. She joined a band! Success!

MICHAEL ELLIOTT, YEAR 10: BRASS

Michael has worked and worked with great diligence and performed brilliantly to complete his grade 4. His sight reading has skyrocketed and he has developed really well in reading and playing swing style. He really enjoys band. Success!

KIERAN KELLY, YEAR 9: DRUMS

Kieran deserves special mention for practising all the time and really putting the work in to achieve success. He's ready for his first exam now but wouldn't have been if he had not worked so hard to conquer his timing issues. Well done Kieran!

CHEYENNE SACULINGAN, YEAR 9: GUITAR

Over the course of the academic year, there have been massive improvements in Cheyenne's ability on guitar. She has developed a more direct and dynamic level on the instrument and is able to project her performance more confidently. She has displayed outstanding chordal knowledge and has been able to accomplish playing in a variety of music styles. Not only this, but she approaches lessons with a positive attitude and open mind.

BETHANY LILICO, YEAR 8: VOICE

Bethany is exceptionally well organized, keeping her music neatly filed, remembering her guitar lesson every week and arriving punctually without fail. She has worked through a variety of genres with enthusiasm, and enjoys singing them through with her guitar.

CHARLIE MAZZELLA, YEAR 7: PIANO

Charlie has made a big impact on St Benet Biscop in his short time here through his passion for performing on the piano. His "can-do" attitude and dedication are great qualities in a musician. He embraces any performance opportunity with both hands and works hard to be the best that he can be. Well done, Charlie!



YEAR 7 EXPLORE WORLD FAITHS AND TRADITIONS

Wednesday 23rd of June was our first World Faith Day. We wanted to students to experience the day, partly as a reminder of the need for harmony and understanding between religions and faith systems, and also to grow in their knowledge of different faiths and beliefs.

Pope Francis very clearly expresses his belief that all of the major religions are different paths to the same God. He says that whilst people from various global faiths may be "seeking God or meeting God in different ways," it is important to keep in mind that "we are all children of God". This was our inspiration for the day: looking at different pathways to God.

Year 7 students spent the day exploring 5 major world faiths. It was a day that was jam-packed, learning about aspects of the different faiths in a fun and engaging way. Students looked at Buddhism mindfulness and experienced some guided meditation. They wrote letters of appreciation and love for the world. They built on the work they having been doing in their RE lessons on Islam, and how their faith is put into action with the

work of Islamic Relief through games and competitions. We also had the pleasure of a Hindu artist come in and show us how to create beautiful Dot Mandalas, and the students produced some fabulous art work of their own. The students also participated in a session looking at different aspects of the Jewish faith and they created their own menorahs as a symbol of the Jewish faith. We also welcomed the brilliant Bhangra Dance North East team in to school, to teach all of us the importance of the dance and their traditional dress. Students created their own dances and everyone enjoyed trying out the different moves!

As a part of the day Years 8, 9 & 10 were offered the chance to enter the



National NATRE competition looking at the themes: Where is God today? We have more in common than divides us. Faith in action, Values in action. Further to this Year 10 were invited enter our essay competition, examining their own 'world view'. Overall it was a fantastic day of learning outside of the classroom that gave students a snapshot into other faiths.

Many thanks to Mrs Pringle and the RE department for organising this event.







YEAR 7 MAKE THE MOST OF MATHS CLUB

Year 7 Maths Club has been a very popular lunchtime club this year run by Mrs Delf and Mr McGurk each Friday lunchtime. Some weeks have seen more than 40 year 7 students get together to take on maths challenges and puzzles. The students have explored various online maths platforms and competed in the weekly times table challenge. We have given out many prizes for winners of various challenges over the year. We are looking forward to expanding Maths Club next year to be able to include more year groups.



CELEBRATING LENT

Lent is a significant time of the year for Christians all over the world. This year we explored the theme of Repair, Remember and Restore. We thought about how we can repair our relationship with others, remember those who have been there for us in times of need, and how we can restore our relationship with God.

REPAIR

The theme of our Lenten journey began with the concept of repairing relationships in our lives. It might have been relationships that we had neglected, or promises that we had broken. We thought about how we can repair the relationships in our lives, that have fallen apart because we have hurt someone.

We acknowledged that friendships and relationships often come to an end because we have hurt someone. However, there are many occasions when we don't want to be friends with someone anymore because they have hurt us. It is not always easy, but God asks us to forgive those people because he forgave us, when Jesus Died on the cross for us.

During lent we also spent time thinking about how we can help repair our global community. Most form classes raised money for CAFOD which was used to help communities where the need is the greatest. We raised nearly £900!

REMEMBER

The second way we prepared our hearts for Easter was by spending time remembering the moments we have been shown mercy and love, compassion and understanding. Lent also gave us the opportunity to remember the many people, who in a thousand quiet ways, have stretched out their hands and given us hope to make a new beginning.

We thought about all those people who have helped keep us on the right path, supported us during challenging times, and helped guide us into the person God created us to be.

RESTORE

Life gets busy and sometimes, in the middle of trying to stay afloat, we drift away from God. Lent was therefore been a perfect time to try to restore our relationship with God. Over Lent we thought about: Talking to God, listening to Him, being mindful.

Through following these steps, we started to try to restore our relationship with God, so that we could enter Easter with a fully prepared heart.

All year groups celebrated this theme in a liturgy which was led by students and even included a drama by our 6th form students.





YEAR 10 VISIT THE BATTLEFIELDS

Before the end of term 42 Year 10 pupils will be leaving school, on a trip that is designed to enrich their knowledge of the taught content, students study for their History GCSE. They will be visiting the battlefields of the First World War, of Ypres as well as the Somme.

Departing school on Monday 17 July, the pupils are leaving for Hull and their overnight ferry. Arriving early on the Tuesday into Rotterdam, we will be going straight to Ypres.

Tuesday at Ypres will be a long but important day, as it includes some important locations and activities. First, we will be going to Memorial Museum Passchendaele, where there is a chance to set the scene with a British bunker system and some of the group will handle equipment and weaponry and dress in Great War uniform. Pupils will hear from the guide as to why war started and the role the Northumberland Fusiliers played.

The group will then make a stop at Tyne Cot cemetery and some will have a chance of laying a wreath. We will learn from different sources of information and also hear about the

role of the Empire, about Indian Army and Canadians. Our next stop will be to Langemarck German cemetery, to provide an important moment of reflection. There will be a specific focus on the two British soldiers buried in this cemetery away from their comrades. It will also look at the first use of Gas attacks within the war. Next, there will be a visit to Essex Farm cemetery as well as a close up of an advanced dressing station. This will be a great opportunity to connect with the course studied so far in Year 10, looking at the Chain of Evacuation on the Western Front. It will also pose an important question: the Christmas Truce, myth or reality?

Of course, a trip to Ypres would not be complete without a visit to the chocolate shop.

The day itself will finish with the Last

Post ceremony at Menin Gate and will be a chance of reflection at the end of a very poignant day.

After hopefully getting lots of sleep, pupils will then travel to the Somme on the Wednesday, learning about Pals' Battalions and especially the Tyneside Irish, but also the role of women within WW1. On arrival, pupils will have a chance to view a preserved trench system and have an opportunity to walk across the Battlefield. They will visit Newfoundland Memorial Park and reflect on the Battle of the Somme, whether it was a British victory, or an utter failure.

The trip forms an important moment to pause, reflect and connect with their History course. Maybe even inspire future Historians further! Regardless, we hope the trip lives long into their memories.



KEY STAGE 3 READERS RELISH A SCANDALOUS THRILLER

Over the Summer Term KS3 pupils have continued to meet regularly to share their love of reading. The scheme we have been following is part of the North East Teen Book Awards. It has continued to enthuse young readers to delve into popular fiction books and to discuss, debate and express opinions about literature.

After receiving the shortlist of books involved, pupils have taken it in turns to enjoy and take home one book at a time.

Throughout this term, pupils have met during lunch time to vote and discuss why particular books have hooked them more than others.

This warming, supportive environment has invited pupils to review, converse and enjoy a variety of storylines and plots. After multiple discussions, pupils then voted which book they preferred. The winner was then announced! The 2023 winner was a book named 'The King is Dead,' a scandalous thriller by the young author Benjamin Dean.

It is a great credit to the pupils that they have been so keen, and immersed themselves into a wide-ranging book collection. We hope to continue this extra-curricular club for KS3 pupils into the next academic year.



YEAR 10 EXPERIENCE LIFE IN THE WORK PLACE

This year saw the return of our Year 10 students heading out on work experience for a week in June. The whole process of applying for the position and attending the work placement has provided the students with numerous practical skills and knowledge, that they wouldn't get in the classroom. Some of them have been lucky enough to apply what they have been learning in school in a real-world setting, and developing a deeper understanding of the field. Many of our students reflected on how surprised they were at how confident they felt in dealing with other employees or customers. The employers have commented on how resilient our students were during the week, and how students showed a level of independence beyond their years. Thanks to all the parents/carers who took the time to find a placement in their own place of work, or with friends/families, or who made numerous calls to businesses in the region. A few of our students have given a snapshot of their experience in the work place.

"For my work experience I worked with CSI. I was shown scenes of stolen cars and the equipment they use, e.g. swabs, cameras and fingerprint powders. They then have to recover anything they can use as evidence from the scene. I was also shown how to book in a job on the system and put photos taken onto a disc which is kept in a digi room with the case notes. I found this interesting as it's something I'd be interested in as a career. They also told me ways and routes I can go down after year 11. I also went with stocking the van they use for CSI. Overall I was inspired further to go into that career and very interested in it for the future."

Erin Wells

"I really enjoyed my work experience. I was in a safety and repair workshop for safety and gas detection equipment, carrying out tests and calibrations using computer software. If a customer had sent in a piece of equipment that had a problem with it we would open it up and try and find out what was wrong with it and try and fix it as best we could. The people there were great fun and the managerial team were really supportive."

Thomas Routledge

"I enjoyed my work experience. I learned about mechanical and electronic engineering and the routes into working at Baker Hughes. I learned about possible apprenticeships in the future and what they do when in an apprenticeship. I did a presentation on the data I analysed using a sensor and a magnetic field to find defects in pipe walls. I answered all of the panel's questions. I learned how all the departments link together from the field technicians to the data analysis team."

Will Lennon

"I enjoyed my work experience. I enjoyed meeting and working with all of my primary school teachers that taught me when I was younger. I worked with a teacher for the whole week and helped his Year 5 class with Maths, English, Science, PE, French and History. My favourite moment of my work experience was when I went and got a Gregg's every single day! On my first day, I was lucky enough to go to a sports trip where the kids did a number of activities."

Harrison Scott

"Throughout my week of work experience I was able to shadow nurses and some other parts of the multi-disciplinary team. I observed bloods being taken and observations on patients which included taking blood pressure, temperature and consent forms. As well as that I had the ability to make tea, coffee and toast for patients and serve them. I saw how surgeons, doctors and nurses work together to care for a patient. I also had to call patients from the waiting area and assign them to their beds. I also got to transfer patient belongings to a ward which is where patients will stay overnight after their surgery. My favourite activity was shadowing the nurses while they did observations in patients and asked them questions. Although I was not allowed to enter theatres I still had a fun time. I will most likely like a career in this work place."

Jasmin Emolaga

"I have just recently completed a one week work experience placement at the Tyne and Wear Metro as a Corporate Planner. As part of my placement, I was developing a business case and slide show for a new station for the Murton Gap development project. This involved collecting data on the metro with researchers, working with data scientists and having meetings with managers. The week was a really intense week with a mix of field visits and desk based work. This was a real eye opener into how things are planned and how things are run."

Aidan Wright

"During my work experience I designed two different odd shaped chopping boards on paper and transferred it onto the wood and used a jigsaw to cut the shapes out. After sanding it, I filled the cracks with resin and made holes and filed them with resin too. The next chopping board was chopped up and had alternating wood and resin strips. We also measured up and made a dining table for children and we fitted it into the kitchen of the client. We then made some circular coasters from a log and filled them with resin and sanded them down. During the week I learned how to use a jigsaw, a table saw, disc sander and a table sander and how to mix resin. This is something that I would enjoy to do in the future."

Harrison Barraclough

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS SURVIVE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

A number of students have been taking part in an exciting and innovative Science and Technology club. The club offered students a fun opportunity to investigate how design and technology can help survive a zombie apocalypse! Students were given a number of different briefs that they had to respond to. In response to these briefs, students created

silent footwear to sneak past the zombies, they designed and made siege weapons, barricades to keep zombies out, neck protection to protect survivors from bites, and they learnt how to communicate with other survivors using Morse code. Students also benefited from learning from a professional prosthetic make up artist who helped students design, mould

and apply realistic fake wounds. The results, as you can see, are both gruesome and great!

The skills within the activities were designed to not only be fun but also to enhance students' problem solving, and practical skills.

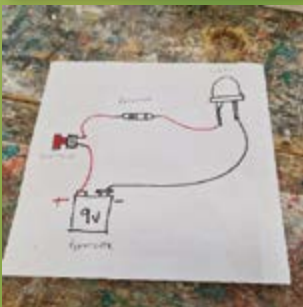
Many thanks to Mrs Harding and Ms. Burn for leading on this initiative.



Briefing

Zombies spread their virus by biting uninfected people. Humans' necks are soft, exposed and contain large arteries and veins, which will help to quickly spread any bite-injected virus to the brain and body through the bloodstream. Nine out of ten zombies think necks are the tastiest part of the body!

YOUR TASK Design and test a bite-proof neck cover to protect you from zombie bites.



Briefing

You're safe within your enclosure! But there's no mobile phone signal and the landlines don't work. How can you communicate with other groups of survivors? You need to send some vital messages soon!

YOUR TASK Create a transmitter and then send and receive your vital messages - in code!

你好 CHINESE CLUB!



After the success of Chinese club last academic year, this year we welcomed a new cohort of Year 7 students to our KS3 Mandarin Chinese club. The club has provided a fantastic opportunity to enrich students' linguistic and cultural knowledge, giving students an insight to this fascinating language.

We have had a fantastic attendance to Chinese club, with over 30 students across Year 7 and Year 8 attending regularly. Students have enjoyed learning to read, write, speak and listen in this amazing language, as well as having an insight into Chinese culture and tradition. Throughout the course of this year, students have learned how to introduce themselves, talk about age and birthdays, talk about relationships with family members and describe their pets in Chinese.

In Year 8, students have built on the language they acquired in Year 7. A topic which students enjoyed studying in particular was learning about Chinese cities. Students were captivated by the cultural and geographic diversity of the many Chinese cities we studied. Students took it upon themselves to

research Chinese cities in their free time and create informative posters to demonstrate the beauty of a city of their choice. Magdalyne Williams, Julia Bautista, Yasmine Jaucian, Elysha Gunayon, Keira Richardson, Grace Skinner, Bethany Lillico, Josie Forster and Lexie Hardy all went above and beyond to create outstanding posters about 北京 (Běijīng), 上海 (Shànghǎi), 香港 (Hong Kong), 深圳 (Shēnzhèn), and 成都 (Chéngdū).

Looking ahead to next year, we are eager to continue Chinese club in September, welcoming a new cohort of Year 7 students, alongside our existing Chinese club members going into Year 8 and Year 9. We will be moving on to the topics of free time and sport, as well as exploring Chinese cuisine, giving students the opportunity to sample some authentic Chinese snacks.

TRAMPOLINISTS SOAR FOR SUCCESS

This year has been a very successful one for some very talented trampolinists from St Benet Biscop. Liam Kemmish (Y7) Mya Teasdale (Y7), and Cerys Dewison (Y10) have competed many times this year and all of them represented St Benet Biscop in the British Schools Gymnastics Association Zonal Trampoline Finals in Northern Ireland, after successfully qualifying to get there from previous rounds.



Liam and Mya qualified from this into the BSGA National Finals in Northampton where Liam placed 6th in the Years 7-9 Intermediate Boys category, and Mya placed 11th in the Years 7-9 Intermediate Girls category. Liam and Mya have both qualified to the English Championships which is to be held at Telford International Centre on 16th July after successful qualification in both individual and synchronised events.

Liam, Mya and Cerys have also all qualified to the Inter-Regional Challenge Cup National Final to be held at Utilita Arena Birmingham in September, after all placing first in their categories in the regional finals. We would like to wish them the best of luck in their upcoming competitions and look forward to hearing about their fantastic experiences. A special mention must also go out to Noah Kemmish, Year12.

After his own success competing in trampolining when he was younger, he is now completing his coaching qualifications and he is an integral part of the team at Wansbeck Gymnastics and Trampoline Club where Liam, Mya and Cerys all train. Noah's wealth of experience and his excellent way with the young people is enabling him to be very successful in his coaching.

SUMMER ENTERPRISE CHALLENGES AT Ss PETER'S AND PAUL'S

Our feeder school St Peter and Paul's in Cramlington, has been hosting their Aspiration Careers Weeks during June and July. As part of these inspiring weeks, some of our Year 12 students designed an enterprise challenge for Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 to take part in. Keiran Gallagher, Arran Stobbs, Oliver Slack, Jessica Wells and Liam Hall spent two days with the year groups putting them through their 'Apprentice' style paces, with a T-shirt design competition.



Each year group was tasked with creating a team name, logo, design ideas, t-shirt template design, creating the t-shirt, modelling their t shirt on a catwalk and then pitching to the judges! Every student in each year group was fantastic. They worked well as team, and stepped out of their comfort zone to 'sell' their ideas to our sixth formers who they had never met before. The sixth formers also excelled in their leadership of getting 'down to it' with the challenge... quite literally, with Year 3 children on their smaller chairs and desks!

The two days were really inspiring to see some of our oldest and youngest students working together to plan out ideas, refine plans and then encourage each other with their final pitches. Thank you St Peter's and Paul's, and watch out Alan Sugar!



YEAR 12 WORK EXPERIENCE: IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY...

We have been working with Leading Link for the past week as part of our Year 12 work experience. This opportunity has given us a wide range of tasks to do, such as renovating and making structures of wooden animals for the nature trail in Plessey Woods. We have also been paired with 'Gaz' who is a specialist joiner. Gaz has worked in his specialist field of joinery for the majority of his life. He has enabled us to learn all things joinery based.

Over the course of the week, we worked as a team with Gaz, Vicky, Chris, Hannah and Lyn from Leading to develop our personal skills in various ways. We started off the week with a safety briefing and expectations, and then began developing the project of building the 'Ogre's bog'. This new installation replaces a previous one that was put up, that had been vandalised and destroyed. We also worked on creating wooden animals to scatter all around Plessey Woods.

To make the 'Ogre's Bog' we used timber with a lot of different tools. We feel that through the week Gaz has given us wise knowledge about his field of work and his life. This opportunity for work experience with Leading Link has given us an insight into different styles of work and trades such as joinery, carpentry and other building trades. The animals and 'Ogre's bog' will improve the experience of Plessey Woods for all the local kids who visit, like the old "Ogre's bog" did for us when we were younger. We were also taught how to hang and flip a door which will be extremely helpful for not only our dream of being a joiner but a helpful life skill! Finally, Leading Link spent time teaching us administrative skills, and they took us through the process of the day to day running of the office of a charity.

Through this experience we have learned more about working with a team, organisational skills and with meeting set deadlines. This will help us with our future jobs.

Nathan Johnston, Ewan McGregor, Archie Muter and Josh Graham, Year 12



MISS TODD PRAISES YEAR 9 ACHIEVEMENTS

Year 9 have had a brilliant year! It has been great to see how much students have grown, both academically and emotionally, over the course of this year.

There have been challenges throughout the year but it has been great to see Year 9 coming together as a community and supporting each other, showing kindness, consideration and respect for each other.

Over the last few weeks Year 9 have been finalising their GCSE options for September. They have really engaged in conversations about what their future might hold, what they enjoy and where they have been successful in order to make informed decisions. It has been lovely to hear such enthusiasm and optimism as they move into Year 10 and the next stage of their academic lives.

In March we took 60 students to the Youth Village, where we focused on St Paul's Road to Emmaus and the journey he undertook. Students were an absolute credit to St Benet Biscop. Both students and staff took a lot from the experience and really enjoyed ourselves.

Each form class has led a year group assembly over the course of the year, including the themes of compassion, hope, humility and justice. It takes courage to stand in

front of the rest of the year group and students really stepped up to the plate. A huge thank you to everyone who got involved, whether it was in the ideas, planning or delivery stage of the assembly.

Students have been involved in lots of activities, both in and out of school. Examples include refereeing, sports coaching, musical performances, pantomime and work with NUFC. Students have represented school and county teams in a variety of sports.

In March, form classes started to plan fundraising activities to raise money for CAFOD. There was great enthusiasm in Year 9 and forms became quite competitive. Activities included penalty shootouts, guess the teddy's name and a Mario Kart tournament. I look forward to seeing the creative ideas that form classes have next year.

Each half term students are nominated for Form Tutor, Head of Progress and Headteacher awards. It is always a very difficult decision! Congratulation to the recipients of this year's awards:

9B

Amelia Long, Rhys Appleby,
Ethan Tweddle (x2),
Paige Hetherington, Sophi Patterson

9C

Tess Brown (x2), Olivia Beadnell,
Robyn Jones, Jasmine Atkinson,
Alfie Maddison

Head of Progress

James Kain, Sophie Patterson,
Kasey Taylor,
Marian Sarmiento,
Ewan Holder, Jacob Wealleans

9I

Reuben Yarrow, Rachel McGrath,
Emily Bramley, Caitlin Clough, Marco
Whitelaw, Codey Ballinger

9O

Daniel Sweeney, Harry Litster,
Angus Young, Maddie Brown,
Olivia Trood, Lola Harrison

Headteacher

Emily Bramley, Olivia Trood,
Ewan Holder,
Cheyenne Saculigan,
Alexander Agim,
Matthew Welch

9S

Daisy Wilkins, Sophie Bramley,
Jago Middleton, Essie Moody,
Bailey Wright, Alfie Herron

9P

Rhys Hall, Jessica Ross, Gracie Stobbs,
Thomas Preston, Safiyyah Karolia,
James Dolan

9H

Sophie Bell, Zoe Young,
Alfie Barratt (x2), Ronya Lane,
Jake Russell

9T

Jasleen Lagmay, James Todd,
Oliver Taylor, Mya Stewart,
Adam Mason, Annabelle Pattie

I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for their ongoing support and to wish all of our families a safe and restful summer break.

Miss Todd



GCSE art work by Gavin Franciso



GCSE art work by Michalina Orłowska



GCSE art work by Elliott Dawson



NHS WORK EXPERIENCE

By Amelia Brown Year 12

I applied to the Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust for a week of work experience in a hospital within the trust, securing a placement in Wansbeck Hospital. The placement I was offered was on ward 9 which is the stroke patient ward.

I chose to apply for a placement within the NHS because I wanted to learn first-hand what a career in healthcare entails and begin my journey to becoming a doctor. The values held by the NHS are embodied by every member of the workforce, and so I believe that it was the best way to identify what values are important when becoming a part of the organisation, in order to carry these with me to becoming a doctor. As well as having a glimpse at what my future in the NHS would look like.

I observed that the smallest things are the most rewarding, and it was beneficial to observe the other departments (e.g. Healthcare assistants, bank staff, etc.), because it helps to see the bigger picture and how patient care is a dense network, made up of many individuals, that are all equally important.

I began by observing Healthcare assistants and apprentices, which helped me appreciate how the ward works as an interlinked system, and each aspect of that system plays its part in promoting the highest standard of patient care. I then observed the doctors rounds in which the Consultant discussed with each patient their situation and helped them understand the patient's point of view, as well as their understanding of the situation. I learnt that it's important to keep patients up to date on their plan to discharge, to encourage them to stay positive.

I was brought into the Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting (MDT) which occurs weekly on ward 9. It

is important to make sure that the MDT happens regularly, to promote communication between all aspects and departments of the care team. Sometimes this can be forgotten due to the busyness of the wards, resulting in lack of communication and impacted patient care. Wansbeck Hospital, especially ward 9 is admirable in this respect, because the staff ensure that the MDT occurs regularly, regardless of how busy the ward can be.

One thing I have found fascinating is that the doctors have different opinions on what is the most important thing about patient care. One said that this is due to the notion that "if you give someone a hammer all they will see are nails". According to this, an Orthopaedic Consultant may believe the most important aspect is their bones and skeletal injuries, or a healthcare assistant may believe that the most important aspect is keeping the patient clean to prevent infection. However, whilst all these things are important, according to one of the doctors the most

important aspect about the patient is the patient themselves, their wishes and thoughts.

I think this experience will help me in the future, because in retrospect sometimes when people become doctors, they can forget that they are still a person. Patients appreciate care and support but what they appreciate most is to be spoken to like they are equal, speaking from one person to another makes them feel safe which is especially important for their stay in hospital away from their home. Also, when a patient is in pain and has low mobility, all they want is to feel listened to and understood, and so talking to them on the same level will guarantee that they feel comfortable. I wholly recommend that if a prospective healthcare student is looking for experience that they look to the NHS, because the experience was eye-opening. The staff on the ward made certain that I had a full experience and there was never a dull moment, and I now feel sure of my decision to go into the healthcare profession.

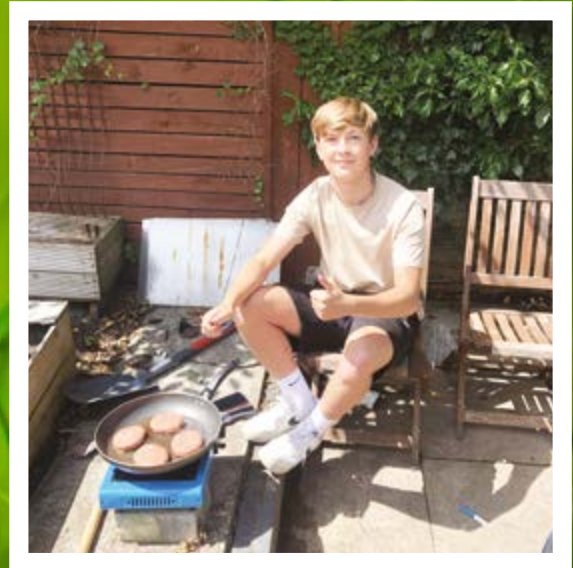
GARDENING CLUB IS A GROWING SUCCESS

Year 10 and 12 students have invested their time in renovating an area of school grounds to develop their own garden area. Year 10 were not faint hearted when they first embarked on tackling waist high weeds and untangling wayward vegetables and strawberry plants! Year 10 broke the back of the project by donning their gardening gloves, secateurs, spades and trowels to claim back a garden they plan to use for wellbeing, reflection and reading, alongside growing fruit and vegetables. Year 10 worked hard to take back control from Mother Nature! Year 12 then got down to ground levels and worked through raised beds, harvested onions and strawberries in preparation to move in to Autumn with vegetable beds, and areas ready to sow for a year of gardening throughout the year.

The sixth formers are also considered the area as a place they would take like to take the peer mentees and young readers to be close to nature and promote well being. Finally, after all that hard work – Year 12 did manage to cook their lunch there are well!

After

Before



MR MAVIN MARVELS AT THE MIGHTY ACHIEVEMENTS OF YEAR 7

It seems like only yesterday that we were welcoming Year 7 to the St. Benet Biscop community. It really does fill me with huge pride and privilege to be able to work with such wonderful, caring, compassionate and hard-working young people. Since the onset, I have been impressed with the positive approach that our students have shown in their daily activities and interactions.

In October 2022 parents had the opportunity to meet our Year 7 Pastoral Team, to discuss the settling in process and identify any early successes and concerns. The Parent/School partnership is one of the key pieces in the jigsaw of ensuring that our students are secure, happy and successful in all that they do. It would be difficult to list all of the activities, visits, visiting speakers and clubs that our students have taken part in- but hopefully the following will give everyone an idea as to the busy schedule of opportunities that have been offered. A large group of students (130 in total!) attended a theatre production *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* in December at the Northern Stage in Newcastle. Everyone who went agrees that the production was really enjoyable and entertaining, and that the acting, the costumes and even the lighting were fantastic to see. I am certain that this experience helped to encourage some of our students to take part in the fantastic school shows that we have had (including *The Adams Family*).

We had a representative from the Kielder Observatory delivering an information session explaining the important, and internationally recognised work carried out by scientists at the Kielder Observatory, Northumberland. We also had a visit from Red Watch Fire Service, where students took part in discussions about the important role of the Fire Services in the UK, as well as local issues that have arisen recently in our region. Visiting speakers have also delivered sessions on Internet safety and safe use of social media sites. Many of Year 7 students have taken part in clubs and activities including Chess, Homework Support, Justice and Peace, Badminton, Athletics, Football, Multi-Sports, Horrible Histories, Musical Theatre Club, Drama, debate Club and Cheerleading to name a few. In the run-up to the end of Year, our students will be taking part in our Inter-Form Sports Day – and a large group of students will be visiting Beamish as part of their studies. Every tutor group has presented an assembly to the rest of the year group, as well as taking part in Mass in our school Chapel. It has been fantastic to see the respect and kindness shown to the priests who visited us and celebrated Mass with us. We have recently celebrated World Faith Day in school. This was a fantastic opportunity to remind ourselves of the need for harmony and understanding between religions and faith. At Christmas I was astounded by the generosity of parents and students when we were collecting food donations for the local Matthew Project. This generosity is a true reflection of the caring and supportive community that we are all part of. Finally, a BIG well done Year 7 for being such an amazing, caring, helpful, respectful and friendly group of students. Keep up the good work – and I am looking forward to seeing everyone back into Year 8 in September. Have a great Summer holiday everyone! I will leave you with some comments from our Team of Year 7 Tutors:

"I have had a great year getting to know 7B and seeing them grow into St Benet Biscop pupils. From knowing about their

sporting interests and achievements, Evie's swimming, as well as their Drama interest and time spent in the chapel. Adam spoke with excitement of being picked for Athletics events, and Jaime represented the school. I have seen friendships blossom and many speak about this as their greatest enjoyment of the year. We have had new members join during the year, and they have added positively to our form community."

Mr Hatcher, Form Tutor for 7B

"7I have been wonderful in their first year at St Benet's. They have welcomed three new students starting midway through the year and made them feel at ease which just shows a snapshot of the warmth, positivity and community attitude year 7 have. The class are enthusiastic, resilient and somewhat competitive, an absolute joy to be around first thing in the morning. I look forward to seeing them grow and develop the next 4 or more years."

Mrs Jewitt and Mrs Lord, Form Tutors for 7I

"Throughout year 7, 7S have been an asset to the school, consistently demonstrating the Catholic ethos of the school, being truthful and honest in everything they do. The form's enthusiasm to get involved with school life and participate in a range of activities and clubs does not go unnoticed and demonstrates year 7's resilience and ability to try new things. 7S have enjoyed debate club, cheerleading, being a part of the school shows, Maths club and much more. It has been a pleasure to be 7S' form tutor and they always make my day, everyone in the form starts each day with a smile on their face, excited for learning."

Miss Johnson-Gibbs, Form Tutor for 7S

"I would like to congratulate 7H on a wonderful first year at secondary school. I'm very proud of their hard work and dedication shown in lessons and getting involved in any wider school activities. I hope they have a wonderful summer, enjoy their deserved break and come back refreshed and ready to do it all again in Year 8."

Mr Feeney, Form Tutor for 7H

"7C have made a fantastic start to their school career here at St Benet Biscop. From day one, they have proven themselves to be hard working, empathetic, resilient to change and trustworthy. Like all of the Year 7 pastoral team, I am so proud of my form and what they have achieved and the benchmark they have set going forward. The future is bright for these youngsters and I'm looking forward to sharing it with them!"

Mr Gibson, Form Tutor for 7C

"What a wonderful group of students we have in our tutor group. It has been lovely to see us all working together as a community and supporting each other every single day. The enthusiasm and mutual respect that you have all shown is a pleasure to see, and lots of praise is due to you all. Have a lovely Summer everyone."

Mrs Malkin & Mrs Irving 7O

"It is a pleasure to be your form tutor. You have all settled into secondary school life amazingly well. Your resilience, drive and commitment to being your best selves shines through daily. Continue to enjoy Y8 with the integrity, tenacity and ambition that has led to your success in Y7. Enjoy a well-deserved summer break!"

Mrs Milne and Mrs Lord, Form Tutors for 7P

"Thank you so much for the wonderful year and all of the great memories. You have all grown so much from when I first met you and you are growing into incredible young people. It has been wonderful to see your excitement about music lessons, world faith day (although I'm biased here!) and sports competitions where you competed against other schools and showed our school off in its finest. You have shown nothing but kindness and warmth to me and to the rest of the school community and you have all really made me smile. I wish you all of the best as you continue to grow at St Benet Biscop. You are all going to be amazing and do amazing things!"

Miss Thirlwall, Form Tutor for 7T



A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR SIXTH FORM: MR MAUGHAN REFLECTS...

Students in Year 12 are coming to the end of a very busy and successful year, and students in Year 11 getting ready to study in the Sixth Form, should prepare themselves for a busy, challenging and enjoyable time.

On Thursday 6th July, we said an official goodbye to our Year 13 students at the Year 13 Leaver's Prom. Students and teaching staff had a thoroughly enjoyable evening at the Vermont Hotel in Newcastle, where they were treated to a two-course meal, speeches from Mr Maughan and the Sixth Form Leadership Team, as well as awards, to celebrate the end of their exams. Staff at the venue were incredibly complimentary about the impeccable way our students conducted themselves. We wish all of our Year 13 leavers the very best of luck with their future.

Year 12 have been heavily involved in planning their next steps for life after Sixth Form. They have had the opportunity to attend a number of university open days and the UCAS Exhibition at the Utilita Arena. Students found these experiences incredibly worthwhile, where they discussed university courses and apprenticeships with a variety of institutions and apprenticeship providers, as well as having experience of workshops including 'Writing Personal Statements', 'Student Accommodation' and 'Student Finance'. Students in Year 12 have also recently sat trial assessments in all A-level subjects to gauge their progress and have completed a week of work experience to enhance and improve their skills. Furthermore, a

selection of our highest performing students are engaged in an Oxbridge Programme, where over the coming months they will have the opportunity to find out more information about what it would be like to study at Oxford or Cambridge University. As part of this, on Monday 10th July, representatives of Trinity College (Oxford University) held a workshop, where students were introduced to 'Competitive Applications', 'Writing Competitive Personal Statements' and 'Admissions Tests and Interviews' which will stand those students in good stead should they decide to apply to these or Russell Group universities.

Our Year 11 students who are planning on coming back to Sixth Form took part in the Year 11 into

12 Sixth Form Transition Days on Thursday 6th July. The day started with an assembly, delivered by Mr Maughan, Head of Sixth Form, where students were challenged to become the best version of themselves, through a reflection on the 'Parable of the Talents'. In order to support students in making informed choices, they then had the opportunity to study A-level standard lessons in those subjects that they are interested in taking from September when they join our Sixth Form.

We would like to wish our Year 11 and Sixth Form students the very best of luck with their exam results in the summer!

Mr Maughan, Head of Sixth Form



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