

At the beginning of this academic year we had a number of new members of staff joining us here at St Bede’s and Byron, and we’d like to extend a very warm welcome to them all, as they become part of our fabulous community.

One new teacher is Mr Parr, who is a new history teacher. We spoke to him and asked him about his career. *“I started my teaching career in Chester Le Street and 5 years ago moved to teach in Darlington and have now moved back to the East Durham area to teach in St Bede’s.”* he told us. *“I feel that the staff and pupils are very friendly and welcoming and I have really enjoyed my time here so far and look forward to enjoying my time teaching here at St Bede’s and Byron.”*

Another new teacher who we would like to formally introduce, is Mrs Bowman as our new SENCO, who had this to say *“At St Bede’s Catholic Comprehensive and Byron Sixth Form College we are committed to working in partnership with parents, pupils, the Local Authority and other agencies to ensure that there is a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of all our vulnerable learners. If you would like to discuss any aspect of SEND provision, please feel free to contact the school to make an appointment.”* Jas Lally

Bede’s Buddies

It has been a month since the newest group of St Bede’s students joined the ranks at our school, and the reception has been fantastic so far! All around school the new Year 7’s have been settling in smoothly, making their own friendship groups and sailing through classes independently. I spoke to Miss Sheriff, Head of Hilda House, and she told me about the House competitions that have been running since the start of the year, including the House Attendance Cup. The Year 7s have been ‘extremely keen’ to participate, which also means that Year 7 Attendance is flourishing which is a brilliant sign in the early days of their St Bede’s career!

In order to help out with the new students’ adjustment into St Bede’s life our Head of School, Mr Price, has introduced a ‘Buddy System’ to help anyone who needs someone to talk to instead of the teachers, as we all know that talking to a teacher about our problems at school can be an uncomfortable experience when you don’t quite know them yet. The Buddy System aims to help Year 7s with work, as well as emotional and social issues that the child feels that they may have. At the child’s request, they will be assigned with a Year 12 or 13 “Buddy”, with whom they can talk to and connect with in order to make them more comfortable in school. The majority of Year 12 and 13 have been through Years 7-11 in St Bede’s School, so hopefully they will be able to provide advice. This system is also a brilliant opportunity for Byron students to step up and help out the school community by guiding younger students through their time at St Bede’s, so that they can get the best possible experience out of their time here at our school.

We would like to wish Year 7 good luck and advise them to make the most of every opportunity that will be made available to them at our fantastic school! Eleanor Steadman


To kick start our first term back at school there have been a number of positive changes, the first being the construction of a brand new website. Not only has the style and structure of the webpage been reorganised to become more modern and user friendly, but the biggest change is how St Bede’s and Byron Sixth Form will now share the same website. This will allow younger students to have a ‘sneak peek’ at what will be in store for them if they choose to attend Byron for Further Education, as well as giving everyone an update to what’s really happening around our whole school, from Halloween dress up day to the new teaching staff that have recently joined us. Check it out if you get the chance - we hope you’ll be impressed.



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Christmas Hope

The St Bede’s Music Department is holding an evening of Christmas Music and Carols with our musicians and our feeder primary schools. Come and join us for an evening of fun on Wednesday 14th December 2016 at 7 pm in our School Hall. All welcome!

The tickets will be on sale from 31st October and need to be purchased in advance from reception. The cost is as follows:
Adults - £3 Under 18s - £1
The Music Department is supporting the work of CAFOD and The Salvation Army so please come along and donate to these charities.



St Bede’s and Byron Go From Strength to Strength with Fantastic Results!

St Bede’s staff and students were over the moon with the excellent results achieved by Year 11 in 2016. Impressively, 65% of students achieved an A* - C grade in Maths and English which are the best results St Bede’s has ever seen! The staff and students worked incredibly hard in the run up to the exams and their commitment and dedication certainly paid off.

The areas of most progress included Business Studies, History, Art, Geography and RE. Mr. Pearson, the Head of Art, was particularly pleased with the Art results. “All students in the Art department achieved 3 levels of progress with most students achieving 4 or more levels of progress, some even surpassing that.” With a smile he adds, “As a member of SLT I am really pleased with the results achieved and feel like in 2017, with even more effort, these already brilliant set of results can be exceeded.” Maths and Science were the most improved out of all of the subjects and we managed to get the Head of Biology, Mr. Smith’s opinion on the results. “I was elated, I was very happy to see the students succeed.”

Mr. O’Hara, Assistant Headteacher, processes the results and was also delighted with them. “We come in to teach to the best of our ability and to have the students achieve more than what was expected of them, makes the job worth doing. It brings me great pride knowing that they have been educated correctly and that Year 11 have done so well.” His smile was blinding as he spoke, which is a real reflection of how overjoyed the teachers are for having made such a difference. He also told us with immense pride, how the school is now in the top 10 of the 34 schools in the County, due to our fabulous results.

Mr. Price, Head of School, had a few words to say on the matter also. “I am very pleased with these fantastic results: it shows what can be achieved by students, parents and teachers coming together.” His tone was ecstatic and it was obvious how proud of the students he was.

Of course, we can’t talk about results without asking the students themselves about their reaction. “I was buzzing that I passed maths! Mr. O’Hara helped me get that C,” said Ellen Black and with a wide grin added “I celebrated with a well-deserved trip to Leeds festival.” We also spoke with Adam Pescod who achieved an A*, 4 As and 5 Bs. “I’m happy; I put the work in and got the grades I deserved. My teachers helped a lot, Mr. Oxberry put in extra time to help me with my coursework and Mr. McGuiness helped me get an A in maths.”

The students were thrilled with their results after all of the hard work and commitment they had put in to achieving them. Well done to all involved!

Declan O’Neil & Rhiannon Thirlaway.



Best ever exam results achieved in 2016

St Bede’s held a very successful Yr 6 Open Evening in September, where both parents and students, from several feeder schools around the area, were invited to have a glimpse of what studying at St Bede’s would really be like. There were a number of fantastic drop-in sessions on offer, such as experiments conducted for visitors within the science department and even some delicious tapas to try in the Spanish department. Subject ambassadors from both Yr 12 and 13 were present to help with visitors and events, showing the parents and students around and giving demonstrations of the subjects and activities on offer.



We look forward to welcoming our new additions in September of next year! Megan Turner

On behalf of everyone here at St. Bede’s Catholic Comprehensive and Byron Sixth Form – we want to say a huge ‘well done’ to all of the students who achieved an award at our annual Awards Evening, held on Wednesday 28th September, 2016.

On top of all the awards won on the night, we welcomed Savannah Marshall, top British Boxer, to present prizes to some of our top pupils and students. Savannah Marshall is the first ever British female to win a women’s boxing world title. Brought up in Hartlepool, she spoke to the gathered audience about the dedication and resilience she has needed to apply in her bid to win Commonwealth, World and Olympic medals.

Savannah spoke from the heart about the years of hard work she has put into becoming World Champion in 2012 and winner of the Gold Medal in the women’s middleweight at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. She described the heartbreak of being unsuccessful in achieving her final goal of an Olympic medal, but inspired us all to persevere in order to fulfil our own dreams.

Savannah was joined on stage by Mr McCourt, our Chair of Governors, to present over 100 pupils and students with certificates and trophies in recognition of their 100% attendance, contribution to sport, community services and academic success. Savannah was especially pleased to present awards to our Year 11 and 13 students for their outstanding grades in public examinations and for achieving St Bede’s best ever exam results.

For some students, however, one award wasn’t enough! Congratulations to Alex Livingston for achieving 4 awards in overall Academic Achievement, Chemistry, Music and Tutor Award and again well done to Annie Wright for achieving 3 awards in History, Graphics and Art.

Mr. Oxberry, Head of Columba House and ICT, said
 “Everyone who won an award last night honestly deserved them, they got the recognition for all of the hard work they have done. I’m extremely proud of each and every one of them - especially the year 11 students who I have taken through year 7 to their GCSES. It’s a fabulous partnership between the parents, the students and the school that help them develop as young people.”

Thank you to everyone who attended the Awards Evening and Good Luck to the students who have left to take a new path in life, whether it be university, an apprenticeship, a job or starting college. We would like to wish you all the best of luck in the future. Lucy Wright

Christmas Shoe box appeal

What a lovely feeling it is to wake up on Christmas morning with a little stack of presents waiting for you beneath a perfectly decorated Christmas tree. Isn’t it lovely to unwrap the beautiful paper and find that one gift from your Christmas list that you were hoping and praying that you would get? Then, isn’t it lovely to sit at a table and eat a classic Christmas dinner cooked, with love, by your Mam, or your Dad, or your Gran or your Grandad, with Christmas crackers being pulled at the dinner table? Isn’t it just lovely? Unfortunately, Christmas Day itself is not this picture perfect for everyone. Not every person has the luxury of a hot dinner, a stack of presents and a Christmas tree covered in baubles. Some people do not even have a family around them to shower them with love and affection despite the lack of gifts. How would you feel in that situation? It is devastating to think that due to the gross amount of poverty in the world, many individuals will not enjoy their Christmas this year because they simply have nothing. This is the point at which we must come together both as a school and local community to ensure that everyone feels God’s love this Christmas. How can we do this? We can all participate in ‘The Shoebox Appeal’. The Shoebox Appeal is a campaign which has been running for many years now to promote the Christmas spirit year after year to ensure that every single person across the globe feels God’s love at Christmas and knows that somebody out there is thinking of them. It works by simply wrapping a shoebox with wrapping paper and filling it with small token gifts that are both essential and thoughtful. Examples of these gifts may include: a toothbrush and toothpaste, a bar of soap, pens, pencils, a cuddly toy or even a scarf. These items may seem so simple to us yet to someone suffering from extreme poverty, they will be the most glorious gifts in the world. It is asked that you kindly provide a £3 donation to help with the cost of the boxes being transported.

See your tutor for more information or visit operationchristmaschild.org.uk for further details.

Shania Newton



Dia de los Muertos alter!

7A1 have been learning about Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) during their Spanish lessons and have managed to set up an altar in the languages department, which guides the dead souls back for one night only. We chose to make our offering for the Saints of the School and the North East (Bede, Columba, Chad, Cuthbert, Hilda and Oswald). This celebration originated in Mexico and is celebrated in many other Spanish-speaking countries. It is celebrated on ‘el primer y segundo de Noviembre’ (the 1st and 2nd of November) but we will leave our altar up all month to show you! We all put a lot of effort into this altar so we would love it if you could come along to see it!

Results Newsflash!

We are absolutely delighted with our results this year, both in GCSE and Sixth Form Examinations, which exceeded all expectations!

Our Progress 8 Measure (which is how well students progressed in their best 8 subjects) for our Y11 leavers, was at +0.05 means that our students gained higher grades than expected and made more progress than average during their 5 years of studying for their GCSEs. An amazing 65% of our Y11’s gained a grade 'C' or Higher in both English and Maths which is well above the National Average.

Our Y13 data also gave excellent reading. Our students achieved superb results giving the school a Value Added score of +0.05 from our A-Level results and an out of this world Value Added of +1 from our Vocational results, which is phenomenal!

Well done to all students, staff, and parents for their hard work throughout their time at our fantastic, high achieving school & sixth form. We should all be very proud of ourselves! Mr O’Hara

On behalf of everyone in the St. Bede’s and Byron Sixth Form community, we would like to say many congratulations to our fabulous P.E department for winning the “Contribution to School Sporting in Physical Education Award ,2016.”

The event, held at the beautiful Ramside Hall Hotel, was a night to remember as it was announced that our school had fought off the competition and had won the award against all other East Durham schools. After previously winning various other awards, such as the success of the Girl’s Football team, it was never in doubt that St. Bede’s would win this one. Our P.E department offers a vast range of opportunities for the young people in our school and college. Each student has the chance to take part in something, whether it be competitions, charity runs or the fun and enjoyment of P.E lessons.

Mr Garlinge, Head of PE stated “I am absolutely delighted that our department has won the award. The students have grasped every event that we hold with both hands and it is amazing how much the students want to get involved. It is reassuring to know the students want to go to a school where they can improve their confidence and ability with the support of staff and their peers alike.”

This fantastic achievement follows years of hard work and dedication from St Bede’s incredible PE team who work all hours of the day working towards building students confidence whether they have a natural ability for the subject or not. They run many afterschool clubs which offer activities to build on pupils’ individual ability and help them to fully enjoy every aspect of their school life and are continuously planning lessons which aim to have every child involved in PE.

So, what’s next for the department? “For now, we will continue to work on improving the department in any way we can so that it will be the best that it can be. Hopefully, there is a very bright future ahead.” We wish the PE department the best of luck and once again offer our congratulations on this outstanding achievement! Well Done! Lucy Wright & Shania Newton