

St Bede's Catholic Primary School

Howlett Hall Road, Denton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7HS

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Headteacher: Mrs L Young

Deputy Headteacher: Mr S Keys



Monday 4th October 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome to our monthly newsletter which just gives me an opportunity to share any key information with you and keep you up to date with any forthcoming events.

First Holy Communion:

This year the First Holy Communion Preparation Programme will return to face-to-face lessons and will be delivered after school (1 session each month) by myself and Mrs Savage (we are both Parish Catechists). Year 4 children, who are eligible to participate, will receive a letter this week. I know that some families chose to withdraw their children last year, if you would like your child to be enrolled on the programme this year, please contact school.

Soft Opening:

I am delighted that the 'soft opening' system, whereby we open school for children from Y1-Y6 to arrive from 8.45am – 8.55am, appears to be helping us to maintain limited mixing indoors and is easing congestion. Can I politely remind parents that one of the ideas behind the 'soft opening' is to stop parents / children arriving too early and gathering outside - please do not arrive prior to 8.45am.

Some children have been arriving quite early and are unsupervised outside of school, we do have a morning activity club which starts at 8.00am - 8.50am which is not only a lot of fun but is also a good way to get the children active in the mornings. If you need to drop your child off early in the morning, the activity club is a good option and is only £2.50 per day (reductions for children in receipt of free-school meals).

School Book Fair:

Thank you for your support with our school book fair last week. We sold over £450 worth of books – not only is this a benefit to the children who can enjoy a new book but school will also receive commission from the sales to purchase some new books for our classrooms and library.

Harvest Festival:

Usually at this time of year we would have a whole school Mass for Harvest Festival, unfortunately, due to the current situation, we are unable to do this however I know how generous you all are and how well you support those less fortunate than ourselves. With this in mind, I would like to start a collection of tins and dried food to support the local foodbank or the SVP food charity. Children can bring tins / dried food into school from tomorrow and we will keep the collection open until half term. Thank you in advance for your generosity and support with this campaign.

Packed Lunches:

We currently have a very large number of children, particularly in KS2, who are bringing a packed lunch rather than having a hot lunch. Obviously, it is individual choice however there are some delicious meals on offer and as we move into the colder weather, a hot meal is a pleasant alternative to a cold packed lunch.

In addition to this, if your child is entitled to free-school meals they are missing out on a free hot meal each day – please have a look at our school menu on the school website.

I have also noticed that a large number of children are throwing away a lot of their packed lunch so we will be resuming the practice of children bringing home any food waste in their packed lunch bags (with the exception of used yoghurt or dessert pots), that way parents can monitor what their children are eating.

Can I also politely remind parents that children should not bring nuts into school in their packed lunch or as a snack. We have a number of children with nut allergies and we would not like to put any of our children at risk.

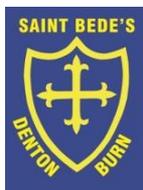
Can I also remind parents that children only need to bring a packed lunch bag to school – I have noticed some children bringing rucksacks which contain their packed lunch bag. We have very limited space at the moment as we are unable to fully make use of the cloakroom so please can you assist us by discouraging your child from bringing any bags into school (other than their bookbag if required and their packed lunch bag) unless they are going on a visit and need additional equipment / clothing etc.

Morning Activity Club and After School Club:

We have successfully re-introduced the morning activity club and the children who are attending are thoroughly enjoying the new leadership and variety of activities on offer. We do still have a few places, particularly at the beginning of the week. The club is only £2.50 per day (reduced cost for those children in receipt of free-school meals - to be adjusted on a half termly basis through the office) and is open to all children, not just those whose parents go to work early. It is proven that being active helps children to learn so why not try it out! If you are interested in a place for your child, please consult our school website for further information. If your child is in receipt of free-school meals and you would like them to join for anything from one morning each week, please just contact the office and we can make arrangements for them to do so.

The after-school club is also proving very successful and we have a number of children either attending a one of the activities or attending each day. There are a variety of activities on offer, currently gymnastics, archery, drama and boxing – these activities will be modified and adapted each half term to give variety for the children. Once again, the club is open to all children, not just those whose parents work late. The club costs £4 per session (reduced cost for children in receipt of free-school meals - this will be adjusted on a half termly basis through the office – please enquire if you require further information).





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Year Group Curriculum Evenings:

Thank you to those parents who attended the curriculum evenings, I hope that you found them useful. The video recordings and any paperwork linked to the meetings is to be emailed out this week. If you have any questions regarding your child's curriculum and how you can support at home, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

PE Days:

Can I remind parents that on a PE day children can come to school dressed in their PE kit. This should be a plain white or yellow T-shirt or a school PE T-shirt, black or navy shorts (or most likely grey / black or navy leggings or joggers as PE is mainly outdoors and also the classrooms are cooler due to the increased ventilation guidance). Children should also be wearing their school jumper or cardigan at all times.

Reading Comments:

We all know how important reading is and I know that you will be reading at home with your child. Can I politely remind you to ensure that you make a comment on the e-learning platform about your child's reading at home – this is really important in tracking reading development and it is essential that you are working alongside us and supporting reading at home.

Road Safety:

Can I please remind you about the safety of our children, particularly on Howlett Hall Road. I have had many reports from parents or witnessed myself some of the 'close calls' that children have had due to dangerous driving or unsafe parking. Please can you make every effort not to park opposite any of the gates as this really causes congestion on the road. If you can walk to school, please do so. If you need to bring your car, can you please think about where you park and the safety of our children, neighbours and other road users – please do not block the entrances or park on the corners and please do not allow your child to cross the road unsupervised as it can be very busy.

I know that you will understand my concerns and I appreciate that it is not always convenient to park elsewhere and walk to collect your child, however none of us want there to be an accident, particularly an accident involving one of our children.

Parish News:

As many of you are aware, Father Simon has taken up a new position as Dean in St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle. Father Simon was a great supporter of our school and was always very approachable and actively supported our young people in their faith – he will be a great miss and we wish him well in his new position.

Fortunately, we have a new Parish Priest, Father Paul Smith, who took up his position a few weeks ago. Father Paul is very keen to work with our school and we will hopefully soon be able to reinstate class Masses. In the meantime, some of our older classes will be attending Parish Masses once per half term in order to re-introduce them to that element of our prayer and liturgy.

Father Paul has asked if any of our Year 5 or Year 6 children, who have made their First Holy Communion, would be interested in training to become an altar server for during the Sunday Mass. If anyone is interested, please can you come along to Mass on a Sunday and let Father Paul and myself know.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above information, please do not hesitate to contact me

Mrs Young