



St Bede's RCVA Primary School School Brochure



Laborare est orare - To work is to pray

Our School

Welcome to St Bede's RC Primary School.

We are proud of our school, which has been part of the community and parish for over 130 years. St Bede's is a wonderful place to be, with enthusiastic, conscientious children that are a pleasure to teach and incredibly hardworking, dedicated staff and governors.

We believe that strong home-school links are vital in order to ensure every child in our care reaches their full potential. You are the first and most important educator in your child's life. With your support, we can offer your child a very happy school career and some of the most memorable years of their life.

Mrs Eve Alderson
Headteacher



Our aims

Our pupils are the focus of life at St Bede's. We aim to ensure any child who leaves our school will be a confident, caring and independent individual. To do this we provide a broad and balanced curriculum within a Christian environment. As a Catholic school, great importance is placed on the teaching of RE and the living out of the Gospel message in every part of school life. We place great value on traditional skills of reading, writing and mathematics whilst also developing all other National Curriculum requirements and encouraging the natural abilities pupils possess. At St Bede's, whilst academic success is obviously very important, we truly believe in developing the whole child. Personal, Social and Health Education is taught on a weekly basis and we work alongside a wide range of outside agencies to ensure our children understand the importance of becoming well rounded citizens in the community.

To achieve our aim our school will:

- Provide children with a safe, nurturing and inspirational environment
- Value and celebrate the individuality and potential of each child in our care
- Provide strength and comfort to all through prayer, worship and liturgy
- Encourage children to develop their talents and use the gifts God has given them
- Harbour strong links between home, parish and the wider community

Our School

Our parish school began its life in 1865 in two converted cottages on Sacriston Front Street. The school then moved to its present site in 1884. Extensive improvements have been made to the building over the years. Today's building now consists of four classrooms, an administration area, a library/resource room, a school hall/dining room/gymnasium, cloakrooms and toilet facilities. The school has playgrounds attached, with a recent welcome addition of active play facilities, an outdoor Early Years classroom and a playing field a short distance away.

As we are a small school, with just under 100 on roll, most classes are mixed age and ability. This enables us to provide education in a caring, family environment. We have a house system which children are allocated to when they start school. Brothers and sisters are placed in the same house and the children in each of the three houses (St Hild, St Cuthbert and St Aidan) are looked after by a House Captain. House points are awarded each week for good behaviour, work and effort.

This works alongside our 'good to be green' positive behaviour system and our 'restorative approaches', which encourage children to really consider the feelings of others and resolve conflict in a positive manner. All staff are trained in restorative approaches and some of our older children act as peer mediators at break times. It all helps to create a calm and happy school in which children and staff feel valued, respected and listened to.



Our Parish

We have very strong links to St Bede's parish. The ability to worship is a key part of life in our school and we place great emphasis on both the teaching of RE and also living out our religious beliefs in all that we do. We pray on a daily basis and gather together regularly to listen to God's word through liturgy, which children often prepare and lead. All classes attend parish Mass each term and a Family Mass is held approximately three times a year, with everyone welcome to gather for refreshments in the hall afterwards. Our newly created prayer garden at the front of school is used as a place of peaceful reflection and contemplation.

First Confession and First Holy Communion

We endeavour to create a loving environment between our parish, our parents and our staff so that our pupils can develop morally and spiritually within the community.

Children are given the opportunity to take part in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Parents are encouraged and expected to join in the preparations for these. A programme, to help with these preparations, is provided by the parish and takes place in school.

Our Governors

Our school governors are at the heart of our school community. Their focus is to work strategically to drive our school forward and ensure success. Governors include representatives of the parish, parents, teachers and the local community. A governor's term of office lasts four years and an election takes place when a term of office expires, or as the need arises.

Admissions Policy

- Our Governing Body is the Admissions Authority for our school.
- Our Admissions policy criteria will be applied on an equal preference basis.
- Our policy intends to admit up to 15 pupils to the Reception year group in September each year.

School Policies

In association with the Local Authority and the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, St Bede's governors have established a wide range of policies. Please see the website for more details.

Our School Life

Our school day begins at 8.55am. The yard is supervised from 8.40am onwards and parents are kindly requested to stand behind the gates when a member of staff is on duty.

Lunch break is 12-1.15pm for Infants and 12-1pm for Juniors. The day ends at 3.15pm for Infants and 3.20pm for Juniors.

Added Responsibilities

We have a wide range of responsibilities which give children the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills.

Some groups which children are encouraged to become ambassadors for are:

School Council, School Nutrition Action Group, Mini Vinnies, Eco Warriors, Outdoor Play and Learn Team, Junior Road Safety Officers, E-Cadets, School Sports Organising Crew

School Meals

Our school meals are of a very high standard and follow the National Nutritional Standards for School Lunches.

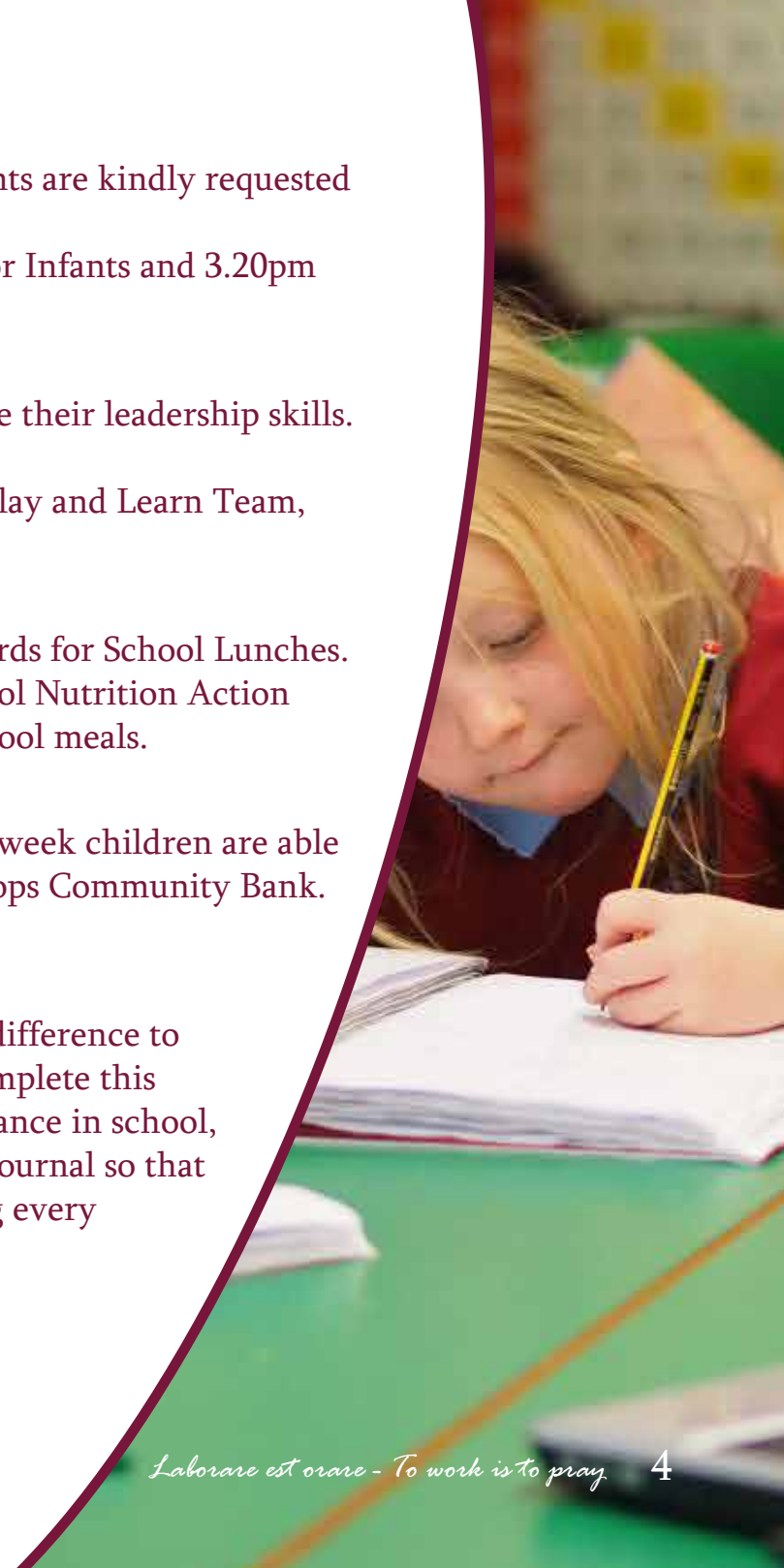
An excellent and varied choice of menus ensures that all tastes are catered for. Our School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) involves pupils, school and catering staff meeting regularly to discuss school meals.

School Bank

We encourage children to understand the importance of saving money regularly. Every week children are able to deposit money in our school bank, which is held in conjunction with the Prince Bishops Community Bank. Volunteers help to run the bank every Friday.

Homework

The support that families can offer children at home is invaluable and can make a huge difference to their progress. Children of all ages receive homework each week and are expected to complete this on time. Research has found that home reading has the greatest direct effect on performance in school, reading at home is absolutely crucial for all children and every pupil is given a reading journal so that any reading at home can be logged; we are incredibly committed at St Bede's to ensuring every child leaves school with the ability to read.



Our Extra Curricular School Activities

A variety of clubs are on offer before and after school. They vary each term and have included Tri-golf, Dodgeball, Maths club, Games club, Relax Kids, Choir, Spanish and Fit and Fun. See our website for up to date information.

Sports Activities

St Bede's believes that active children learn more and are healthier. We have a commitment to sporting activities and are proud to hold the Sainsbury's Active Mark Silver Award. We also hold weekly Active Maths sessions and work closely with Durham School Sports Partnership to ensure children access a range of sporting festivals whilst our teachers receive top quality professional development in PE.

Educational Visits

All classes take part in an educational visit at least once a term. These are usually linked to the topic the children are studying in class. Some examples of recent visits have been Cragside, the Centre for Life, Rainton Meadows, Beamish Museum, Kingsway Residential Centre and London. We also have regular visitors to school to bring learning to life. These have included artists, charities, police, believers of different faiths, politicians, outdoor activity providers and sports personalities.

Friends of St Bede's School

The Friends of St Bede's are a hardworking (and truly invaluable) group of volunteers made up of parents and relatives of our pupils, parishioners, staff and members of our community. They all share the common goal of helping the children of St Bede's get more from school by organising and helping out at fundraising events such as fayres, discos and parties. Everyone is welcome to attend these warm and informal meetings. We would love all parents to get involved and we really appreciate this support; please come and join us!

Our Safeguarding Procedures

Safeguarding our pupils at all times is of paramount importance at St Bede's. We are a listening school and all staff are trained in safeguarding procedures. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are our Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Absence from School

Attendance figures at St Bede's have traditionally been above the national average and we would like this to continue. This is based on our expectation that all children will attend school unless there is a very good reason not to.

If a child is ill or unable to attend for any other reason, parents/carers must contact our school office before 9am to inform us.

To ensure the safety of our children, parents must keep us up to date with emergency contact details.

The law says that children must attend school during term time. If there are unusual circumstances why a child may be unable to attend school, an application must be made to the Headteacher. Holidays in term time will not be authorised unless the circumstances are very exceptional.

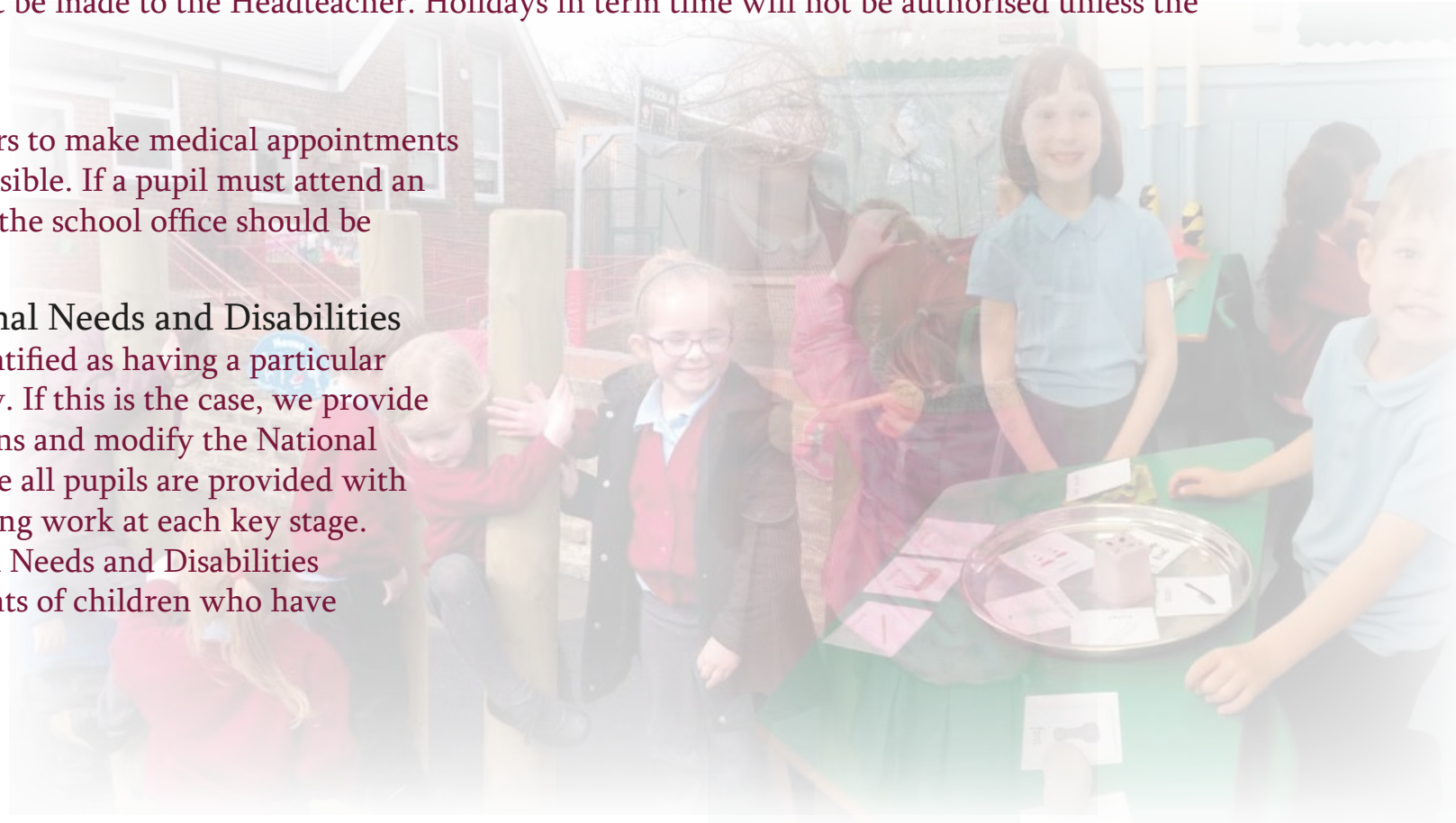
Medical Appointments

We strongly encourage parents/carers to make medical appointments outside of school time whenever possible. If a pupil must attend an appointment during the school day, the school office should be informed well in advance of this.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Some children in our school are identified as having a particular special educational need or disability. If this is the case, we provide pupils with personalised support plans and modify the National Curriculum Programme to make sure all pupils are provided with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage.

The school has a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator who liaises with parents of children who have specific needs.



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