

## Newsletter

Issue 403 13th February 2026

### MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL

This week's theme has been Devotion. There are many ways for us to show our devotion to Christ and to each other, many of which are on full display at St Bede's. Students show their devotion to their faith through things like leading tutor prayers, engaging with chaplaincy, serving as Eucharistic Ministers and attending retreats. They show their devotion to each other by being kind to and showing love for those in their classes who are finding life or their studies challenging at this time. Staff have reflected this week on their vocation or calling and how they can live this out through love and commitment.

As we look towards the start of Lent next week, we commit to deepening our faith through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

I wish you all a restful half-term and look forward to seeing you again next term.

*Heavenly Father, As I look forward to this Lenten journey, help us to turn our hearts fully to You. Give us the strength to fast, the humility to pray, and the generosity to give. May this Lent bring us closer to Jesus, that we may share in His suffering and His victory. Through Christ our Lord. Amen*

### REFLECTION – 14 February – St Valentine

There are several stories of who Valentine was. The widely accepted and popular belief is that St. Valentine was a priest in Rome who was martyred during the 3rd century.

We don't actually know much more for certain about St. Valentine's life, but according to the legends that have come down to us, the emperor at the time issued an edict that prohibited the marriage of young people. At a time when young men were needed for the army, this outlawing was based on the idea that unmarried soldiers fought better than married soldiers because the latter might be afraid of what might happen to their wives and families if they died.

In the midst of all of this, St. Valentine viewed marriage in the light of the Church—as a sacred bond between a man and woman for life. He understood that sacrifice was a major part of marriage and that married couples should therefore understand the sacrificial and sacramental aspects of the married state.

Some soldiers also held this notion of marriage and desired marriage, so St. Valentine would secretly marry them, defying the edict. Many couples flocked to him to be married.

On the 14th of February around the year 269, St. Valentine paid the ultimate price for his Faith. This is why the 14th of February is now his feast day. St. Valentine stands not only as a witness to the sanctity of love and marriage but also as a defender of freedom of religion.

**Reflection:** "As I have loved you, love one another" John 13:34

**Prayer:** Prayer to St Valentine

O St Valentine, lover of Christ and of the Church, we ask your intercession that we may learn how to love God above all things, and to selflessly love one another. Amen



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2026

**13th February**  
END OF TERM 3

**23rd February**  
START OF TERM 4  
Year 12 Assessment  
week

**24th February**  
Ski Trip Parents'  
Information Evening

**26th February**  
Year 10  
Progress Evening

**27th February**  
Year 11  
Careers Event  
'Meet the  
Professionals'

**2nd –5th March**  
Sound of Music  
Show week

**9th March**  
Year 11 & Year 13  
Photographs

## LENT A JOURNEY BEGINNING AT HOME



As we approach the upcoming break, our thoughts turn toward the season of Lent. This year, Ash Wednesday falls on February 18, while school is closed for the holiday.

While we won't be gathering as a school community to receive ashes this year, Ash Wednesday remains the vital "doorway" into our 40-day Lenten journey. It is a day of fasting and abstinence that calls us to hit the "reset button" on our spiritual lives.

Since we are away, we encourage all our students and families to: Visit your Local Parish: Check your local parish bulletin for Mass times and Ash Wednesday services. It is a beautiful way to start the holiday with intention.

The "Lenten Reset": Use the quiet of the half-term break to decide on your Lenten commitment, take this time to reflect on what will truly bring you closer to God.

Wishing all our students and families a restful half-term and a holy start to the Lenten season.

Lord God, As we enter this season of Lent, we thank you for the gift of a new beginning.

In the busy-ness of our lives, help us to find moments of quiet. In our distractions, help us to find focus. In our selfishness, help us to find a heart for others.

May the small sacrifices we make over these forty days remind us of the great love you have for us. Give us the courage to be better versions of ourselves and the grace to walk closer with you each day.

Amen.

## HE+ PROJECT COMPETITION 2025

St. Bede's Arete Sixth Form is proud to announce that a group of talented Year 13 students have been awarded Certificates for successfully completing the prestigious HE+ Project 2025 from the Cambridge HE+ Team.

The HE+ Project is designed to stretch and challenge high-achieving students, offering opportunities to explore subjects beyond the standard A-level curriculum. Throughout the programme, St. Bede's students took part in a range of academic extension activities and masterclasses, deepening their subject knowledge and developing skills that will serve them well in higher education. They also undertook a research project culminating in an academic poster, showcasing their ability to work at degree level and think critically about complex topics.

The HE+ Project aims to boost confidence and aspirations, equipping students with the skills and experiences that make their applications to competitive universities stand out.

A special congratulations to our Year 13 students who took part for their hard work and dedication!



## YEAR 12 & 13 ART STUDENTS SHINE IN ST IVES

Our Year 12 and Year 13 Art students recently returned from a residential trip to St Ives, and it's safe to say it was a huge success.

Students immersed themselves in one of Britain's most influential artistic landscapes, visiting both the Tate St Ives and the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden. These gallery visits gave students the opportunity to experience key works first-hand, deepening their understanding of modern and contemporary art while exploring how artists respond to place, light and environment.

A real highlight of the trip was a practical workshop led by working artist Greg Humphries. Students took their sketchbooks and paints out onto the beach, drawing directly from the surrounding town and experimenting with painting elements of the beach itself.

Throughout the trip, students demonstrated excellent engagement, creativity and independence. Many produced a strong body of drawings, paintings and visual research that will directly support their ongoing coursework. The St Ives residential was not only a valuable learning experience but also a memorable opportunity for students to connect with each other, their subject and the wider artistic world. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, maturity and artistic ambition shown by all students who took part.



## CYBER UNLOCK CAREERS DAY

In January, St Bede's Year 12 A-Level Computer Science students attended a cybersecurity careers event organised by UWE's Cyber Unlock team. The event offered students the opportunity to engage with sessions led by major organisations from the cybersecurity and financial sectors.

A highlight of the day was an 80-minute immersive simulation delivered by CrowdStrike, a global leader in endpoint security, threat intelligence and cyber-incident response. Used internationally to train senior business leaders across the US, Europe and Asia, the simulation placed students in the midst of a live cyber-attack on a mid-sized organisation.

Through real-time decision-making, students experienced first-hand the operational, financial and human consequences of responding to cyber threats, gaining valuable insight into the pressures faced by organisations under attack and the techniques routinely used by cyber criminals.

We extend our thanks to Elaine Brown and the Cyber Unlock team for providing such a valuable introduction to the diverse career opportunities available within cybersecurity—a fast-growing and highly rewarding sector.



## PARLIAMENT TRIP

On Thursday 29th January, 45 Sixth Form students, mainly studying Politics and Law, took part in the annual London Trip. We first spent some time exploring the Imperial War Museum before heading to Parliament in the afternoon where we split into small groups for a tour of the House of Commons and Lords. Watching the Lords speak about Holocaust Memorial Day was particularly moving as we had visited the Holocaust exhibition in the Imperial War Museum in the morning. We visited Westminster Hall, which is 1000 years old, and was where Guy Fawkes was tried. That is where the photo below was taken. Students then went to the Parliament Education Centre where they took part in a workshop on voting and the electoral system. Students commented 'seeing the House of Lords and Commons in person helped me get a better understanding of Parliament as a Law student' and 'it was good to see the history of WW1 and WW2 at the museum and I was also particularly interested to watch a live debate'. We look forward to our next London Trip in 2027!



## YEAR 11 MOCK INTERVIEWS

Year 11 mock interviews took place this week, the event was a fantastic success. Throughout the two days, students met with volunteer interviewers from a variety of industries, gaining first-hand experience of what a real interview feels like.

It was wonderful to see students rise to the challenge — speaking passionately about their goals, reflecting on their strengths, and engaging thoughtfully with feedback.

Events like this are invaluable in preparing students for their next steps, and this year's event truly showcased their potential.



## SPORTS LEADERS

This year, we have had a large number of Year 9 and Year 10 Sports Leaders actively involved in our programme, with consistently high attendance at weekly School Games events supporting primary schools across North Bristol. Throughout the term, students have planned, officiated and delivered sessions in dodgeball, netball, and multi-skills, developing key leadership skills such as communication, teamwork, organisation, and confidence.

In addition, a small group of students have taken part in the GO Lead Girls Football Activator programme, where they are learning how to promote participation, lead inclusive activities, and inspire younger female pupils to engage in football. Others have begun the I AM Lead project in partnership with Culverhill School in Yate, working collaboratively with students from another school to develop leadership, problem-solving, and community engagement skills.



## WINTER OLYMPICS INSPIRE GCSE PE STUDENTS

With the Winter Olympics getting underway, our GCSE PE students have been inspired to explore new sports linked to this global event. This week, students took part in an introduction to New Age Curling in the sports hall.

Using specialist equipment adapted for indoor use, students developed their understanding of accuracy, teamwork, tactics and communication — key components of the GCSE PE curriculum. The session also allowed pupils to experience how traditional winter sports can be modified to be inclusive and accessible in a school setting.

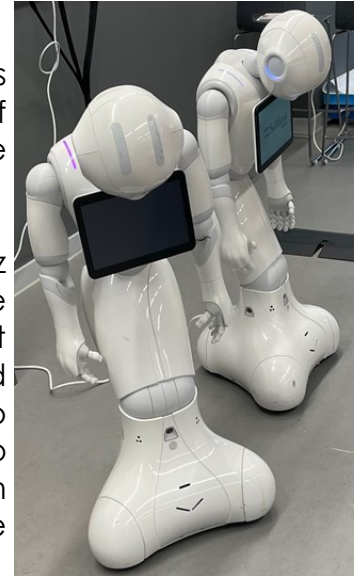
The group showed excellent engagement and enthusiasm, embracing the challenge of a less familiar activity while making clear links to skill development, decision-making and leadership. It was a great opportunity to connect classroom learning with real-world sporting events and to celebrate the excitement of the Winter Olympics.



## ROBOTICS WORKSHOP

In January, Mr Bogle and Year 12 members of the Arête Robotics Enrichment Group visited UWE for a guided tour of the School of Engineering, followed by a hands-on workshop delivered by the university's engineering outreach team.

The visit began with a live demonstration led by Emanuel Nunez Sardinha, a PhD researcher in robotics, who showcased the capabilities of humanoid Pepper robots. Designed to interpret human emotions through the analysis of facial expressions and vocal cues, the robots provided a compelling introduction to current research in human-robot interaction. Emanuel also demonstrated how block-based coding can be used to program the robots, encouraging students to engage directly with the technology.



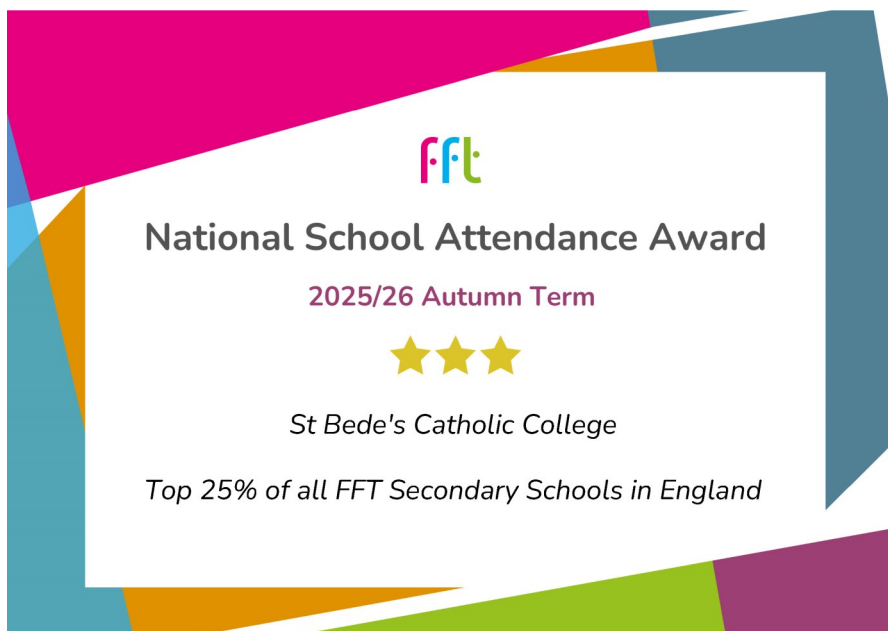
The session was followed by an engineering design challenge in which students were tasked with constructing a wind turbine capable of generating power using airflow from upright fans. The activity combined healthy competition with collaborative problem-solving, as students applied their understanding of physics and design principles to develop effective turbine blades.

The visit proved to be a highly valuable learning experience for our Arête students. We extend our thanks to the School of Engineering's outreach team for organising this bespoke event exclusively for St Bede's students.



We are delighted to announce that St. Bede's has been awarded the **National School Attendance Award 2025/2026 (Autumn Term)** in recognition of our outstanding attendance. This achievement places us in the **top 25% of all FFT secondary schools in England.**

This award reflects the commitment, resilience, and dedication of our students, families, and staff, whose collective efforts ensure that attendance remains a priority. Well done to everyone who has contributed to this fantastic accomplishment!



## INTER HOUSE COMPETITION

### Interhouse - Girls Basketball

The atmosphere in the Sports Hall was electric—and slightly humid—as the four houses gathered for the annual Inter-House Basketball competition. With bragging rights on the line across each year group, the stage was set for a period of high-octane drama and several questionable layup attempts.

The Year 10's were up first. A highly competitive tournament with some excellent shooting on display. Descartes showed their competitive colours taking the win.

Year 7's were next. Having not done any basketball this year it took a while to get going, but once it did the girls showed some great skills and teamwork. Pasteur taking the win.

Year 9's had the better tournament having played basketball recently in lessons. They showed great skills but even more important, great sportsmanship. Seacole came out on top after a very close tournament.

Year 11's came next on the second Monday afternoon. A bit too nice to each other so less of the skills but still showed fantastic sportsmanship. Bell Burnell stepped up and took the win on the day.

Year 8's finished off on Wednesday afternoon. Some interesting skills more akin to Netball, but Seacole got the win over the line with some consistent performances.

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Girls	1st 8 Points	PAST	SEA	SEA	DES	B/B
	2nd 6 Points	B/B	DES	DES	SEA	DES
	3rd 4 Points	DES	PAST	PAST	B/B	PAST
	4th 2 Points	SEA	B/B	B/B	PAST	SEA

### Interhouse - Boys Football

The weather was damp, but the "tactical genius" of four different house captains was put to the ultimate test. While the basketball court was all about finesse, the football pitch became a battleground of grit, long balls, and a few interesting tackles.

The Year 10's were up first. A wet and windy early Monday morning saw some quality passing and finishing on pitch one, with some questionable tactics on pitch two. Seacole came out on top with the last game deciding the rest of the placings.



Year 7's were next with a lot of hype around our so-called footballers. The wet weather didn't dampen their spirits, but there weren't a lot of golden moments. Bell Burnell came out on top.

Year 9's had a better tournament with a similar pattern to the Year 7's. Bell Burnell once again showed their authority.

Year 11's came next on the second Monday afternoon. A high standard of competitiveness and ability, but no one could oust Bell Burnell who made it 3 year group wins.

Year 8's finished off on Wednesday afternoon. Descartes finally becomes the bride instead of the bridesmaid with a win!

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Boys	1st 8 Points	B/B	DES	B/B	SEA	B/B
	2nd 6 Points	DES	B/B	DES	PAST	SEA
	3rd 4 Points	PAST	PAST	SEA	B/B	DES
	4th 2 Points	SEA	SEA	PAST	DES	PAST

# Team Pilgrim

## Year 9 Boys Football – Team Pilgrim

Team Pilgrim produced a hard-fought and disciplined performance to secure a well-deserved victory in the Year 9 boys' football. Under pressure for large spells of the game, the boys showed great resilience and teamwork, finding themselves 2-0 up despite sustained opposition attacks. Every player played their part defensively, working tirelessly as a unit to protect the lead.

A special mention goes to **Max O**, who scored a remarkable goal from a clearance in his own half – no mean feat on our large 4G pitch. His all-round performance was outstanding, and he was deservedly named **Pilgrim of the Match**.



## Under 16s Girls Football—Team Pilgrim

The U16 Girls had their first football match of the season against OAB. They showed great determination and positivity throughout the match, despite the muddy and wet conditions. They conceded the first goal, but fought back to equalise making it 1-1 at half time. Unfortunately in the second half OAB pulled away to win 3-1.

**Player of the match** awarded by the opposition was **Eva M**.



**Pilgrim of the Match** was **Amelia R**.

## Year 10 Boys Through to the Next Round!

Congratulations to Team Pilgrim Year 10 boys who have progressed to the next round of the Bristol Schools Football League after two outstanding performances.

The boys showed determination and quality in victories over local rivals Blaise High and Oasis Brightstowe. Both matches were competitive and hard-fought, but the team demonstrated excellent teamwork, discipline and resilience to secure their place in the next stage of the competition. A special well done to our **Pilgrims of the Match: Nikodem** for his performance against Oasis Brightstowe and **Henri** for his display against Blaise High

We look forward to the next round – well done, boys!



# Team Pilgrim continued...

## Year 7 Boys Football – Team Pilgrim

The Year 7 boys' football season kicked off on Monday with an impressive performance against Oasis Brightstowe. Although the final result did not fully reflect the fantastic football on display, the team demonstrated great spirit, determination and teamwork throughout the match, representing Team Pilgrim exceptionally well. After a closely contested game, the boys were unlucky to come away with a narrow 2–1 defeat. **Pilgrim of the Match** was awarded to **Jan K** for his outstanding playmaking ability and influence on the game.

The second fixture followed quickly on Wednesday, once again at home, this time against a very strong Blaise side. Undeterred by the challenge, the boys started brightly, with Jan K putting Team Pilgrim 1–0 up early in the first half. Despite their positive start, Blaise responded well and their quality eventually showed. Pilgrim continued to play some excellent football and worked tirelessly throughout, but found it difficult to break down a determined Blaise defence. The match finished 4–1.

**Pilgrim of the Match** went to **Kevin T** for his superb performance on the wing and his outstanding work rate in defence. A special mention must also go to **Arthur G**, who bravely volunteered to step in as goalkeeper for the second half and made a series of fantastic saves.

## Team Pilgrim Shine at Year 8 Sportshall Athletics County Finals!

After an incredible performance at the Bristol School Finals, where both our Year 8 boys' and girls' teams finished **1st**, Team Pilgrim took on the **County Finals** with determination, skill, and team spirit finishing in **7th place - Boys** and **4th place - Girls**.

The boys' team impressed with their speed and power, dominating the sprint and relay events, while the girls' team excelled in the jumping and throwing challenges, showing remarkable technique and consistency. Every athlete gave their all and represented Pilgrim with pride, supporting each other throughout the competition.

A special congratulations to our **Pilgrim of the Match** award winners: **Lucas S** for the boys and **Alicja J** for the girls, who led by example with outstanding performances and sportsmanship. This county-level competition was a fantastic opportunity for our students to test their skills, gain confidence, and experience the thrill of representing Pilgrim on a bigger stage. We are incredibly proud of all our Year 8 athletes and can't wait to see how they continue to grow and succeed in future events. Well done, Year 8s – you've made Team Pilgrim proud!



## LANGUAGE CHANGE LECTURE- DR SARA PONS-SANZ

Today we were excited to have a guest lecture by Dr Sara Pons-Sanz from the linguistics department of Cardiff University. She spoke to our A Level English Language students about the history of language change, how we have borrowed words from other languages (e.g. Norse- window, skull; Greek- television) and the ways that new English words are formed. She talked about how periods of massive social change can lead to linguistic change- e.g. through blending- putting two words together- with Brexit- Brexiteer, remoaner etc, Covid- Covidiot, Blursday. We have learnt how creative our language can be- we have created words like 'hangry', 'mocktail', 'chocoholic' and lots more. The ultimate question was- 'Can we stop language change?' What do you think?

Please speak to Mrs De Hondt or Mr McNamara if you'd like to find out more about taking English Language A Level.

## FAITH ACROSS CULTURES: LESSONS FROM NAGASAKI

In the spring term, our college celebrates the diverse cultures that enrich our community. Recently, in conversation with a student, I reflected on how we recognise the global Church within that diversity: its joys, its sufferings, and the lessons it offers us today. Coincidentally, I also heard a remarkable homily preached by Fr Lawrence Lew OP from Blackfriars, Oxford, that captured the richness and depth of our brothers and sisters in the global Church.

On 5 February 1597, on a hill overlooking Nagasaki, began what could be called the centuries-long passion of Christ's mystical body in Japan, Fr Lawrence explained. The story of Christianity in Japan had begun with extraordinary promise. When St Francis Xavier first set foot in Japan in 1549, he planted seeds that grew rapidly. Within two and a half years there were already around a thousand converts. Over the following decades, despite instability and suspicion from local rulers, the Church continued to grow. By 1597 there were nearly 100,000 Christians in Japan. Still a small minority in a country of 20 million, yet proof that God often works through what is small and humble.

Political tensions and fear of foreign influence led the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi to order the expulsion of missionaries. Many went underground. Yet the faith endured. Then, in 1597, twenty-six men and boys were arrested, marched to Nagasaki, tied to crosses on Nishizaka Hill, and executed by the spear. It was a moment that shocked the Christian community and marked the beginning of prolonged persecution. Over the next 276 years, more than 650 martyrs would shed their blood in Japan.

The first twenty-six martyrs came from many backgrounds. Nineteen were Japanese converts; the others were missionaries from Spain and Mexico. They included craftsmen, catechists, teenagers, religious brothers and priests. Among them was St Paul Miki, a 33-year-old Jesuit and the first Japanese-born martyr. From the cross he preached forgiveness and proclaimed his readiness to die like Christ. The youngest, St Louis Ibaraki, was just twelve years old. Their diversity reflected the universality of the Church: people of different nations, trades, and ages united in faith.

Fr Lawrence recalled his own pilgrimage to Nishizaka Hill, describing the monument depicting each of the twenty-six saints in bronze, hands joined in prayer, lips open in praise. Pilgrims continue to visit this site, remembering how the martyrs sang psalms and prayed the rosary as they died. As Fr Lawrence so elegantly phrased, in the 'land of the rising sun,' their blood bore witness to the true Son who rose and never sets. Even after Christianity was driven underground for centuries, hidden believers preserved with their faith in secret, sustained largely by the rosary. Red camellias still boom each year on Nishizaka Hill, planted in memory of the martyrs' sacrifice.

Yet Nagasaki would know suffering again. In 1945, only eighty years after Christians had emerged from hiding and rebuilt their cathedral at Urakami, the atomic bomb detonated over the Catholic heart of Japan. Dr Takashi Nagai, a survivor whose cause for canonisation is underway, offered a challenging reflection: he saw Nagasaki as a victim offered in expiation for the sins of war, united to Christ's sacrifice. In this sense, the Christians of Nagasaki became martyrs for peace.

Their story speaks powerfully to our own time. When war once again threatens peace and division spreads across nations, Nagasaki reminds us of both the horror of persecution and the strength of faith. The martyrs of Nagasaki call us to be peacemakers, to witness to forgiveness, love, and hope.

As we celebrate the diversity of our community, may we remember the global Church: small yet faithful, wounded yet resilient, diverse yet united in Christ. And may we, like the martyrs, bear witness to the Gospel in our own time.

Urakami Church and environs seen from the heights of Matsuyama-machi, Shigeo Hayashi, 1945-10-12/1945-10-22, From the collection of: Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum





OTR

Mind Aid is a six-week course for young people aged 11-19 struggling with stress, anxiety, low mood or depression.

Open to young people aged 11-17 in Bristol

Our next sessions:  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February  
When: 16.30 - 17.45  
Where: Online

**SIGN UP**

[WWW.OTRBRISTOL.ORG.UK/MINDAID](http://WWW.OTRBRISTOL.ORG.UK/MINDAID)



**AN OPPORTUNITY FOR 11-17 YEARS OLD TO LEARN AND DISCUSS ABOUT BODY IMAGE, SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY POSITIVITY!**

**SHAMELESS**

### WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- ⚡ BEAUTY IDEAS AND HOW THEY RELATE TO SHAME
- ⚡ SHAME VS GUILT - WHERE DOES SHAME COME FROM?
- ⚡ MEDIA AND THE WORLD OF ADVERTS
- ⚡ NEGATIVE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS
- ⚡ EXPLORING 'HEALTHY'
- ⚡ FOOD AND LANGUAGE, NUTRITION
- ⚡ COMPLIMENTS, RECAP, TAKE-AWAY



**SESSIONS HAVE BEGUN BUT YOU CAN STILL SIGN UP AT**  
[WWW.OTRNORTHSOMERSET.ORG.UK/WHATWEDO/SHAMELESS](http://WWW.OTRNORTHSOMERSET.ORG.UK/WHATWEDO/SHAMELESS)

## LOOKING AFTER YOUNG MINDS

### Introducing SilverCloud

A new digital mental health service is now available for children, young people, and their families across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG).

SilverCloud, commissioned by the Integrated Care Board, offers easy-to-access online programmes developed by clinical experts and backed by research. It provides interactive tools and strategies to help manage anxiety, low mood, stress, and build resilience. Programmes are free, confidential and can be accessed anytime from a computer or mobile device.

This service is most suited to young people aged 13+ with mild to moderate anxiety or low mood who are willing to try online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). They can use the platform independently, with support available from trained SilverCloud supporters for both young people and parents. There are also dedicated modules for parents and carers to help support children with anxiety or low mood - one for ages 5-12 and another for 12+.

## GCSE AND A LEVEL CERTIFICATES – READY FOR COLLECTION

We are pleased to inform you that GCSE and A Level certificates from Summer 2025 are now ready for collection. Certificates may be collected in person between 10:00am and 2:00pm.

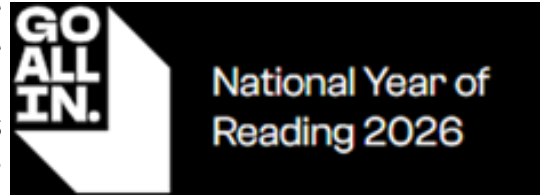
If you are unable to collect your certificates yourself, you may authorise another person to collect them on your behalf. Please note that permission must be granted in advance by completing the authorisation form available on our website.

St Bede's Certificates Collection Certificates Information  
Certificates from Summer 2023 and Summer 2024 will be available for collection until April 2026

As per the exams retention policy, after 12 months from the date of issue, certificates not collected will be destroyed.

## LIBRARY NEWS

As our first event of the National Year of Reading we are asking "What Would You Choose?" Staff have shared their interests and told us what they would choose from our non-fiction collection. We have lots of lovely new books to choose from and we have also expanded our range of special interest magazines so hopefully there is something for everyone.



For those who are more fiction orientated we have our ever popular blind date with a book. Can you commit to a book on the basis of a 3 word summary? Apparently, lots of our pupils can! Hopefully, they can find an author or a genre they enjoy that they might not have tried before.



### Catholic Social Teaching

We celebrate Catholic Social Teaching all year round in the Library. This week as well as our display of CST resources we are launching 'Reading Our Values' collection - Students and Staff are asked to 'Read in the light of Catholic Social Teaching' and recommend books to be added to our the collection. Look out for the logos on book spines and covers. Speak to Mrs Hayman or Mrs Nicks to recommend a title today.



### Bristol Teen Book Award

Mrs Nicks took some of our Pupil Librarians and Bristol Teen Book Award book club to the Award Ceremony at Redland Green School.



## STAFF NEW AGE KURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Forget the Milano Cortina Winter Olympics and the frost-bitten peaks of the Dolomites. The real drama unfolded this week in the Sports Hall, where it was transformed into a field of dreams for the St. Bede's Staff New Age Kurling Championships.

There wasn't a single block of ice in sight, and we certainly didn't need any £500 Scottish granite stones. In fact, the only things "on the rocks" were several people's reputations after some questionable delivery techniques.



### The Line-up: Team SB Takes the Stage

While the world looks to Team GB, we had the far more formidable Team SB. The "SB" stood for many things throughout the afternoon—Serious Business, Super Bowlers, and, by the final round, Slightly Blundersome.

### The Conditions

- Surface: A slightly uneven floor with a deceptive "drift" toward the door.
- Atmosphere: 10% tactical genius, 90% wishful thinking.
- Equipment: Stones on bearings that moved with the grace of a shopping trolley with a wonky wheel and a plastic mat that was the 'target' of many things.
- With the Science team heavily represented, I went with a typical scientific approach regarding the rules. Like a true atom, I made up everything.
- No multiple points for being closest to the house, 1 point for the closest stone.

### Match Highlights

The competition was fierce from the first whistle. Unlike traditional curling, there was no sweeping. This was a relief to most, though a few staff members looked visibly disappointed they couldn't use the office brooms to "clean up" their mistakes.

### The Tactical Masterclass

Mrs Carmichael and Mr Bogle emerged as the dark horses of the tournament, employing a "controlled chaos" strategy. With more luck than technique with the drop and roll that somehow hit the mark. Mrs Curnock showed us her competitive side as she not only threw some great target stones, but also some fantastic take outs. Mr Edwards had spent some time practicing and silently made it through the rounds, however there is definitely Broom for Improvement. Mr Barley finally showed his sporting prowess and made it all the way to the final!

### Final Results

After a series of "ends" that felt like they might never end, the final players were finalised:

Gold medal match - Mr Barley vs Mr Bogle  
Bronze - Mr Edwards / Mrs Walker

The winner will be announced in the next issue.



## ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

### Arriving at school on time

Arriving at school on time is not only essential for the student's own learning, it encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption. When a student arrives late, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions; this can seriously disadvantage them.

Students can arrive from 8:25am

All students are expected to arrive at school in good time for the start of the school day at 8.45am

If a student arrives at school after **8:50am** they will be marked on the registers as late if they have more than one late mark in a two-week period, they will be given a lunchtime detention.

Morning registers close at 9:15am. If a student arrives after this time, they will be marked with an unauthorised code for the morning session.

Parents may be contacted by a member of staff to discuss the reason for lateness and possible solutions if they are arriving late on a regular basis.

### Illness

For any child to maximise their potential it is extremely important that they attend school every day as the learning in one lesson will provide the basis for the next. It is understood that from time to time a child will be too unwell to attend and we ask families to inform us on each day by 8:40am with specific details of the reason for absence, stating unwell or sickness will not be authorised as these do not provide the information required for the principal to consider authorising the absence. You can do this by either:

- Sending us a notification via the Mcas app (My Child at School)
- Sending an email to [absence@stbcc.org](mailto:absence@stbcc.org)

If you do not contact the school regarding your child's absence in one of these ways before 8:40am you may receive a message advising you that your child is not in school. You may be asked to provide supporting evidence for extending periods of illness or if your child's attendance is in the persistently or severely absent categories and welfare checks may be completed. When looking at illness the school follows the NHS guidance is my child too ill for school, <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

This is a reminder that it is at the discretion of the principal if a student receives an authorised absence mark when not in college. If a child attends college and displays as unwell to Student Support they will be encouraged to stay in college if possible. If the first aid coordinator is unable to encourage them to stay in college, then the Senior Leadership Team will be notified and they will make the decision if the student is to be sent home as unwell based on NHS guidance. **If a student contacts home directly and is collected from college the absence will not be authorised, and following college rules the student will receive a detention for using their mobile phone.**

### **Appointments in School Time**

We expect any routine appointments for your child to be made outside of school hours where possible. Please let us know in advance of any appointments that your child will be attending. If you are only offered an appointment during the school day you are required to provide proof of the appointment, this needs to confirm the date and time of the appointment along with the student's name. Students are expected to attend school before and after appointments if they are during the school day. If they are leaving school for the appointment, please collect them from reception if you are unable to do this you will need to provide written confirmation that you take full responsibility for them leaving and what time they should leave.

### **Planned or Emergency Absences**

We would like to remind parents that requests for absences for holidays in term time are not permitted and this includes the days before and after main school holidays. This is not a policy that schools have made but is government guidelines. Absence requests for reasons other than holidays are only able to be authorised in exceptional circumstances. The principal will then make a decision based on the guidelines set out by the government. Absences may not be authorised for the full amount of time that is requested or at all. Any absence request that is not authorised may be at risk of having a penalty notice referral completed. You may be asked to provide supporting evidence for the request, this will usually be but is not limited to confirmation of when the travel was booked.

### **Other Updates**

Please note that for any absence from school it is up to the Principal to make the final decision on if the absence will be authorised or not. This includes illness and appointments made in school time.

If you do wish to check your child's overall attendance figure, please go to the MCAS app, and choose attendance. This will bring up a colour coded calendar. If you click on a date on the calendar it will bring up a list of the lessons and what the teacher put the attendance mark down as. Please contact [absence@stbcc.org](mailto:absence@stbcc.org) if you believe your child has an incorrect mark for the daily registration periods (tutor/lesson 4). These are the only marks that have an impact on your child's overall attendance figure. If you believe that your child has a correct mark for any of the other lessons, please send us an email and it will be passed on to the teacher of that lesson to decide if they need to amend the mark.

All students are to return to school on Monday 23rd February 2026. Please ensure that your child is ready to return to school with all the required uniform and equipment. The school day starts at 8:45am, doors open at 8:25am.

### **SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT** **ALLERGY ALERT: A REMINDER**

In the interest of those pupils with serious allergies to various types of nuts, please may we remind parents not to send pupils into school with nuts or nut based products, e.g. Nutella, peanut butter or cereal bars containing nuts this also includes dubai chocolate. Pupils with allergies can become seriously unwell just by being near these products, without actually consuming them.



Please do not bring any products containing nuts into the college.

Thank you for helping to keep the children safe.



St. Bede's Catholic College presents...

# THE SOUND OF MUSIC

YOUTH EDITION

Music by  
Richard Rodgers  
  
Lyrics by  
Oscar Hammerstein II  
  
Book by  
Howard Lindsay &  
Russel Crouse

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March  
Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March

6:30pm  
in the Main Hall



Tickets available on Ticket Source:  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-bedes-catholic-college>  
Adults: £8 Children & Concessions: £6 Family of 4: £25



## Together for SEND 2026

Monday 16th March  
9:30am-4pm  
We the Curious, BS1 5DB



Quartet  
Community  
Foundation

NHS 75  
Bristol, North Somerset  
and South Gloucestershire

