



Bishopton Road West, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 0QH  
T: 01642 704970  
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**OUR LADY & ST. BEDE**  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Head Teacher: M Wilkinson  
CEO: Dame M Regan DBE OBE, DL  
M.Ed., B.Ed (Hons), FCIEA, CEA  
Deputy CEO: M Shorten M.Ed., BA (Hons)  
Chair of Directors: M Matthews B.Ed, NPQH

12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I can't believe we are nearing the end of the first half term of the academic year.

It's been lovely to welcome our pupils back to a bubble-free school environment and there is a real sense of positivity around the school. We are especially proud of the way our new Year 7 pupils have adapted to and embraced new routines in their new school.

We remain as committed as ever to ensuring every child maximises every learning opportunity and is supported in doing so by our outstanding teachers and support staff. With that in mind, and to support our school expansion, we are privileged to be able to welcome a number of new staff to our school to complement our excellent existing team.

While academic success is a major priority, ensuring your child receives a holistic education in a happy, safe and secure environment is of equal importance. To ensure this, and to support the national Covid-19 agenda, we remain vigilant in terms of health and safety procedures and thank parents and carers for your continued support.

Please encourage your child to take full advantage of the many enrichment clubs and opportunities we offer and support us by ensuring your child is punctual to school and adheres to our high expectations around uniform, conduct and learning routines.

We believe that successful partnerships are based on strong relationships and positive communication. To that end, may I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and assure you of our total commitment to providing your child with the best possible educational experience here at Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy.

Best wishes,

Mrs M Wilkinson  
Headteacher





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### **Pupil Leadership Team**

We have recently launched our 2021-2022 Pupil Leadership Team. We received over 160 applications from pupils across the school to join one of our four teams; Community, Sports, Communication and Social. Alongside these applications, we have also received 24 applications from our Year 11s for our two Head Pupil positions. These 24 pupils have created their own video campaign, which is currently being shown to all pupils across the school. Pupils will vote on the 18th of October for their Head Pupil!

### **Personal Development Drop Down Day - Everybody Welcome - Everybody Equal**

As part of our Personal Development annual calendar, we will have our first 'Drop Down Day' on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October, where pupils will not follow their usual subject specific timetables. The three sessions throughout the day will focus on key topics such as:

- Religious discrimination
- Racism - Black History Month
- Sexual harassment - Me Too

The pupils will spend the day with their forms learning about and discussing these important issues.

### **The Importance of Attendance**

Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. Pupils who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams.

Pupils have had assemblies this half-term on the importance of good attendance and the impact of attendance on their future.

If you require any support with your child's attendance or punctuality, please speak to your child's Head of Year.

### **Attendance Expectations**

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- School's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence
- The ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with the Local Authority's codes of conduct.
- The duty on the Local Authority to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education.





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## Medical Appointments

Due to the amount of school time lost since the pandemic we would ask that medical appointments be made outside of school hours wherever possible. If an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, please note that pupils should always attend school before their appointment and return to school after the appointment.

School requires medical proof to be provided for all medical/dental appointments. School must be notified of the appointment in advance to allow school systems to be updated.

We would be grateful if you could remind your child of their appointment on the day.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

## Reminder

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 is a Trust Training day and therefore the school will be closed to all pupils on this day.

## Enrichment

This term we are pleased to have been able to fully re-launch the enrichment programme at Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy. Enrichment timetables, which can be found on the school website and Facebook page, include over 50 exciting opportunities for pupils to take part in before, during and after school. Please encourage your child to take part in at least one activity a week.

<https://olsb.bhcet.org.uk/news-events/lunchtime-after-school-clubs/>

## Apply for Free School Meals

If your circumstance have changed in COVID-19, your child may now be eligible for free school meals.

From 1st April 2018 the Government introduced new regulations for people claiming free school meals who receive Universal Credit. The change means that if your net annual earnings are more than £7,400 you will not be eligible to claim free school meals.

View the free school meals qualifying criteria.

If your child is eligible/not eligible you will receive an instant notification informing you of the decision. For eligible cases, free school meals will be awarded from the day following receipt of your application.

Please use the link below to make an application:

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/our-people/coronavirus-covid-19-schools-and-childcare/information-about-free-school-meals-and-the-winter-grant-scheme/>

