

St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School Newsletter - Issue 26- 28th March 2025

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Dear Parents, Carers & Parishioners,

As the morning's become brighter and the rain levels have started to decrease (hopefully!) we are beginning to look forward to the Summer Term. The diary dates for Summer Term are now included later in this week's newsletter—please do have a look at the exciting things coming up. We are also working on a number of other events—including a careers week, school competitions and some special trips. You will hear more about these things soon. This Sunday we celebrate 'mother' figures in our world. This afternoon, as is tradition here at St. Patrick's, Mrs Nowell will lead our 'Someone Special' celebration. Please do join us if you can.

Have a lovely weekend,

Sam Keys

Easter Choir Concert—Thursday 3rd April at 4pm

The choir will be performing their Easter concert at 4pm next Thursday. I am sure they will be brilliant once again. All are welcome!



Arbor Payments

If your child has a paid school lunch or uses Breakfast Club, please can we ask that you ensure that there is enough credit on their account to cover the cost – the accounts are not intended to run into a debit balance. If you have any problems, please contact the school office.



Arbor Consents

We still have many parents that have not completed the Pupil Consents in Arbor and it is important that these are completed urgently. To do this, please log into Arbor and you will see a section entitled Notices – if there are any statements written in orange under here, can you please click into each one and either give consent or decline consent.

If there are questions about hearing and vision tests, when you click into these you can either enter the details or leave it as Not Tested and then click Add. Thank you for your support here.

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The Visit of the Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis

Mr Keys and Mrs Griffiths accompanied 5 of our Class 4 pupils to St. Bede's Secondary School in Lanchester yesterday to venerate the relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis. Our KS2 pupils joined online. The event was incredibly special and our pupils were an absolute credit. There are still more opportunities to see the relic this weekend if you wish. See details on the link below.



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Attendance

Procedure for appointments during school hours

If you have to take your child out of school for any reason, including a medical, dental, school visit appointment, please could you inform the school office prior to the appointment along with any supporting evidence of the appointment. This is so that we can authorise the absence where we can and your child is not marked as unauthorised in our register.

Please see below guidance from the government regarding school attendance. <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Children should aim to arrive in school by 8.55 am at the latest. **Persistent lateness causes disruption to your child's education.**

Holidays in term time

It is Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust policy that we as a school must refer to the local authority when a child takes holiday during term time. You can see Durham's procedures here: [Holidays in term time - Durham County Council](#)

"Where leave of absence has not been granted, but the pupil does not attend, the headteacher will refer the case to the local authority in line with the National Framework. This may lead to the local authority issuing a fixed penalty notice." - BWCET Attendance Policy





Year	Attendance this week:
R	100%
1 / 2	98.69%
3 / 4	92.59%
5 / 6	98.77%
Weekly Overall Attendance: 97.13%	
Yearly Attendance to date: 95.88%	

Standards at St. Patrick's

Our expectations on attendance must remain strong and, as the parent community know, we take this part of our job very seriously indeed. We will be contacting parents/carers of those children who are persistently absent, this means any child with an attendance percentage of 90% or less. Please understand that this is a supportive measure and that we are working hard to leave no stone unturned to help your child achieve the very best possible outcomes.



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HOUSE POINTS				
Feast Days:	St. Bede	St. Cuthbert	St. Hilda	St. Aidan
25th May				
20th March				
17th November				
31st August				
Weekly total	227	146	115	167
Running total	10,340	9978	9618	10,719

You will see your child's house points add up throughout the week via Class Dojo. This will only be used for house points this year and not school to home communication.

Stars of the week

George **Year R** For having a good sense of humour and making people smile.

Finley **Year 1 / 2** For always helping his friends and teachers.

Oliver B-B **Year 3 / 4** For consistently great behaviour

Poppy **Year 5 /6** For amazing progress and positivity in all lessons.

Rainbow Rewards

Red	Is for the blood he gave (Be Kind)	Jackson, Maddison, Ava and Lily
Green	Is for the world he made (Be a steward)	Lyla
Yellow	Is for the light so bright (Be humble)	Lyla
Orange	Is strong and full of might (Be courageous)	Lyla
Purple	Is for his hour of sorrow (Be compassionate and say sorry)	Lyla
Pink	Is for a new tomorrow (Be just and fair)	Lyla
Blue	Is for the sky he made so we can aim high (Never give up or take the easy option)	Lyla

The rainbow is a sign of God's promise,
 He will guide us through any storm.
 When you feel battered by life's storms,
 Just remember God's rainbow is coming -
 It's only a prayer away.

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Ask your child



We're sure you all ask your children what they have learned at school every day. We're also sure that the depth of answers that you receive will also vary, with some children saying, 'nothing'. To help aid your discussions, each week in the newsletter we will include a starter question that will help your child to talk about what they have been learning that week in school. Try it tonight.


Reception (Class 1)	What is the name for the noise sheep make?
Class 2	What were Victorian schools like?
Class 3	What is a classification key?
Class 4	What is adaptation?
General	On Monday, Mr Keys said that we can change the world, one small step at a time. What can you do this weekend to make the world a nicer place?

Article 14: The right of freedom of thought, belief and religion



THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH

Sunday 30th March 2025



Jesus said, "A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, 'Father, let me have the inheritance that would come to me.' So the father gave him his share and his son then left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of shameless living. When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and he began to be in need and he had to hire himself out to feed pigs. So he decided to go back to his father. When his father saw him, he ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him. Then his son said, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him and kill the fattened calf. For this son of mine was lost and is now found.' And they began to celebrate."

*Adapted from Luke 15:1-3.11-32
The 4th Sunday of Lent, Year C*

Getting to know Jesus makes life joyful.
Learn more about this Sunday's Gospel in your local Parish Church: all are very warmly invited.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, * as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and **forgive** us our trespasses, as we **forgive** * those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. ✨

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about BLUESKY SOCIAL APP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

With an App Store rating of 17+ & Google Play rating Mature

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

While Bluesky has been around since 2019, it's suddenly taken off in a big way thanks to a significant exodus from X (formerly Twitter). Indeed, it looks and behaves a lot like Twitter before Elon Musk bought the platform. Bluesky has been touted in recent months as a safer, more open-minded alternative to X – but like any social media site, it still has its share of risks.

NO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS

While most social networks allow accounts to be private, at the time of writing, all Bluesky accounts must be public. The development team has indicated this might change in the future, but the app is built on a public-first protocol. If private accounts are ever introduced, it may only be in a limited way – such as through the implementation of group chats.

INTERACTIONS WITH STRANGERS

Every account being public means that anyone can be contacted by anyone else. While users don't have to respond and can easily block people and move on, it does mean that youngsters are at particular risk of being conned by scammers, messaged by predatory adults or exposed to others with ill intentions. These hazards can be compounded by the fact that Bluesky doesn't require its users to provide their real name.

TROLLING AND BULLYING

While Bluesky currently feels a lot friendlier than X seems to have become, its lack of private accounts means that there's nothing to stop users from trolling and cyberbullying younger people. While accounts can be blocked and reported, a persistent bully could simply create a new profile, potentially making their victims feel unsafe in continuing to use the app.

DANGEROUS MISINFORMATION

Established news organisations have fact-checking and editing processes, but social networks have no such controls and can often serve as breeding grounds for misinformation and disinformation. Bluesky will possibly be no different once it reaches a certain size, and children may not have the critical thinking skills to tell fact from fiction – or to discern an informative, honest user from a malicious one.

ADULT TARGET AUDIENCE

Bluesky isn't designed with children in mind, and there aren't many parental controls on the platform. In an interview with the BBC, Bluesky's CEO originally said that the app would only allow users aged 18 and above to sign up, but a spokesperson later clarified its age restriction as 13+. This could imply the app was originally meant for an adult audience and suggests that making the platform more child-friendly might not currently be a priority.

RAPID GROWTH

At the time of writing, Bluesky seems calm in comparison with other social networks where moderation is lax and the atmosphere toxic – but that's due at least in part to its smaller community. The app has recently been adding as many as a million users per day, and if that continues, there'll be more unpleasant users to handle, and moderators could struggle to maintain the pleasant environment Bluesky is currently known for.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE THE ADULT CONTENT FILTER

Bluesky doesn't have much in the way of parental controls, but there are content filters which can hide sexual and graphic imagery. These are enabled by default for underage accounts but can be manually turned on in the 'Moderation' section of the app's settings. The 'advanced' Bluesky Moderation Service lets you restrict content even further, hiding – for example – self-harm content, extremist rhetoric, and even rude posts.

ENCOURAGE BLOCKING AND REPORTING

Another tool that Bluesky uses to ensure a decent experience is muting and blocking accounts. The former prevents you from seeing a specific user's content, while the latter stops them from seeing yours. If a child is encountering trolls or bullies on the platform, encourage them to use this function, while also reporting the offenders to help make the platform a nicer place for everyone.

LOOK OUT FOR FAKES

Impersonation is a problem on all social networks. While the consequences are usually benign, imposters sometimes attempt to scam or groom children by pretending to be a popular influencer or online personality. Bluesky is unique in that it can be connected to official domains, with users' handles linking to other sites; while this isn't widely used right now, it could be a reliable way to verify celebrities and public figures in future.

KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

As with all social media platforms, moderation and content filters can only do so much; it's highly likely that a child will eventually face something unsavoury. For that reason, it's important to make sure that young people are aware of the risks and know how to handle the technology if anything they see on the app makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/bluesky-app>

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Date	Event	Time	Parents Invited
Thursday 3.4.25	Easter Choir Concert	4pm	Yes
Friday 11.4.25	Break up for Easter holiday	3:25pm	Yes
Monday 28.4.25	Return to school for Summer Term	8:55am	Yes

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Summer

Diary Dates

Date	Event	Time	Parents Invited
Monday 28.4.25	Return to school for Summer Term 1	8:55am	-
Monday 5.5.25	Bank Holiday Monday	All Day	No
Wednesday 7.5.25	Coffee Afternoon—Time to talk	1:30pm—2:30pm	Yes
w/c Monday 12.5.25	KS2 SATs Week	All week	No
Friday 16.5.25	Non-Uniform Day (Toys and Books)	All day	--
Wednesday 21.5.25	World Day for Cultural Diversity	All Day	No
Friday 23.5.25	Break up for half-term holiday	3:25pm	-
Monday 2.6.25	Return to school for Summer Term 2	8:55am	-
w/c Monday 2.6.25	Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check	-	No
w/c Monday 9.6.25	Phonics Screening Check delivery	All day	No
Friday 6.6.25	Non-Uniform Day (Chocolates)	All day	--
Friday 13.6.25	Someone Special Breakfast	8:30am - 9:00am	Yes
w/c Monday 16.6.25	Sports Week: Sports Clothes All Week	All Week	No
Friday 20.6.25	Sports Day	AM	Yes
Friday 27.6.25	Non-Uniform Day (Bottles)	All day	--
w/c Monday 30.6.25	Art Week	All Week	No
Wednesday 2.7.25	Provisional Date for Year 6 Leavers Trip - TBC	8:30am – 4:30pm	No
Thursday 3.7.25	Summer Choir Concert	4pm	Yes
Friday 4.7.25	St. Leonard's and Durham Johnston Year	All Day	-
Monday 7.7.25	Art Gallery Display	3:30pm	Yes
Wednesday 9.7.25	Reception 'Graduation' Celebration	2:45pm	Yes
Thursday 10.7.25	Transition Day in School	All Day	No
Monday 14.7.25	Annual Reports sent out to parents	3:25pm	--
Tuesday 15.7.25	Summer Fair	1:30pm	Yes
Wednesday 16.7.25	End of Year Mass TBC	9:30am	Yes
Thursday 17.7.25	Year 6 'Leavers' Celebration'	9:10am	Yes
Thursday 17.7.25	END of TERM	3:25pm	-

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