



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

NEWSLETTER – ISSUE 18 6th February 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and Parishioners,

It's amazing that we are already in February. The children continue to work hard despite what feels like weeks of rain. This week the children looked at the power of co-operation in our statement to live by. It has been lovely to see the children living this out in their actions with each other. Next week is Children's Mental Health Week where the children will get the opportunity to look at the theme 'This is My Place' Have a peaceful weekend.

Paul Rogers



Cross Country Event

A huge well done to the children who have been selected to represent the school in the Cross-Country competition on Thursday 12th February at Our Lady's and St Joseph's in Ushaw Moor. We are proud of you all. We know you will be great representatives for St Patrick's. Good luck.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Firstly, thank you for all your co-operation regarding parking. It is appreciated, especially considering the on-going roadworks that will be with us over the next few months. Following a request from staff, please could I ask that when collecting Reception and KS1 children that it is from the yard at the front of school. It is important that a member of staff can see the adult that is collecting. Once again, thank you for your support.

Mobile Phones

St Patrick's operates a mobile phone free zone. Phones in school are stored securely during the school day. Please could I ask that any parent or carer that is on school premises refrains from using mobile phones. Thank you. For your co-operation.

Upcoming Events

Children's Mental Health Week – all week.
Safer Internet Day – Tuesday 10th February.
Year 1 Parent's Phonics Meeting –
Tuesday 10th February (3.30pm)
Cross Country Competition –
Thursday 12th February (4pm – 5.30pm)
Year 3/4 Mass – Friday 13th February (9.30am)

Pancake Day and Ash Wednesday

School will be carrying out themed days. See posters below with details.

Tuesday, February 17th

Pancake Day Celebration



Flip, Feast, and Fun!

Fluffy pancakes and toppings will be served for lunch in the dining hall

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH VIA THE SCHOOL OFFICE IF YOUR CHILD HAS AN ALLERGY OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENT. YOUR CATERING TEAM WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN PROVIDE TAILORED MENUS TO CATER FOR YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS.

UNIVERSAL INFANT FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL KS1 PUPILS

*SPEAK TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT FREE SCHOOL MEAL ELIGIBILITY



Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust



Wednesday,
February 18th



Ash Wednesday

We will be serving our
'Fishy Friday' menu.

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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	94.12%
3 / 4	92.78%
5 / 6	98.25%
Weekly Overall Attendance: 95.66%	
Yearly Attendance to date: 95.23%	

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.



Use well the gifts that God has given you

HOUSE POINTS				
Feast Days:	St. Bede	St. Cuthbert	St. Hilda	St. Aidan
25th May				
20th March				
17th November				
31st August				
Weekly total	282	333	314	298
Running total	6910	7277	7151	7190

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

- Grace Year R For great writing.
- Georgie Year 1 / 2 For fabulous writing across the curriculum.
- Ella C Year 3 / 4 For great listening and being a wonderful member of Class 3.
- Aria Year 5 / 6 For showing an excellent attitude to all subjects.

Rainbow Rewards

Red	Is for the blood he gave (Be Kind)	Oliver B-B
Green	Is for the world he made (Be a steward)	James, Oscar N
Yellow	Is for the light so bright (Be humble)	
Orange	Is strong and full of might (Be courageous)	Evie, Anne, Oscar G
Purple	Is for his hour of sorrow (Be compassionate and say sorry)	
Pink	Is for a new tomorrow (Be just and fair)	
Blue	Is for the sky he made so we can aim high (Never give up or take the easy option)	Kaylee, 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.

Use well the gifts that God has given you



Dear Parents and Carers,

This Sunday's Gospel shows how the message of Jesus can change everything in the world. Jesus reminds us that we are not here only for ourselves – we're here for others: to improve the lives of those around us with love, care and goodness.

Whenever we perform an act of goodness, even the smallest good deed, it pleases God and sets an example for others to see and to follow.

Wednesday 4th February 2026

So this Gospel reminds us of the importance of our role in life: to bring God's light to others and to be 'the salt of the earth'. Now let's go and bring that taste and that light of Jesus to everyone we meet.

Enjoy a special time together exploring this Sunday's Gospel and this Wednesday's word, which is **GOODNESS**.

Dom Henry Wansbrough

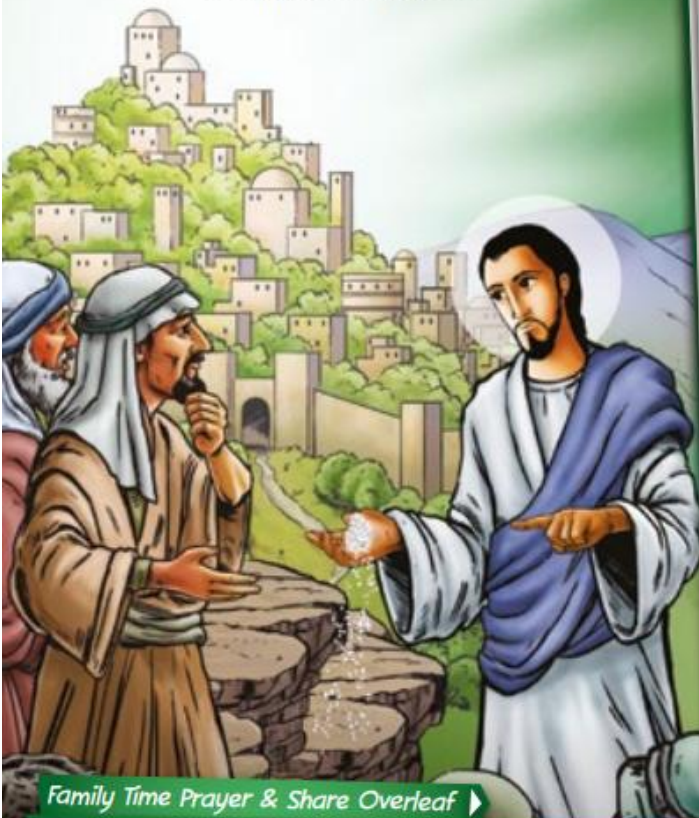


A Word from the Saints

"Happy are the young, because they have time before them to do good." St Philip Neri

"How good God is!
In His goodness He seeks
only our happiness."

St. Alphonsus Liguori



THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 8th February 2026



Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of all people, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven."

Adapted from Matthew 5:13-16
The 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

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

Family Time Prayer & Share Overleaf ▶

Good News
for Everyone

People can see God at work through the goodness in others. Living in the way that Jesus taught us, knowing that we are loved forever by God and responding to that love by our good deeds, we bring praise to God and become a light for others.

Date	Event	Time	Parents Invited
Tuesday 6.1.26	Return to school for Spring Term	8.50am	
Wednesday 14.1.26	Year 6 Parent SATs Meeting	5.00pm	Yes
Thursday 29.1.26	Year 4 Parent Tables Check Meeting	3.30pm	Yes
w/b Monday 9.2.26	Children's Mental Health Week	All week	No
Tuesday 10.2.26	Safer Internet Day	All Day	No
Tuesday 10.2.26	Year 1 Parent Phonics Meeting	3.30pm	Yes
Friday 13.2.26	Year 3/ 4 Class Mass	9.30am	Yes
Friday 20.2.25	Break up for half-term holiday		
Monday 2.3.26	Return to school for Spring 2 nd Half Term		
Thursday 5.3.26	World Book Day: Book Character and 'Breakfast with a book' / Assembly	All Day	Yes 8.30am/ 9am
w/c Monday 9.3.26	Science Week	All Week	
Monday 9.3.26	Reception Stay and Discover (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2.00pm – 3.25pm	Yes
Tuesday 10.3.26	Class 4 Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2.00pm – 3.25pm	Yes
Wednesday 11.3.26	Class 3 Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2.00pm – 3.25pm	Yes
Thursday 12.3.26	Class 2 Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2.00pm – 3.25pm	Yes
Friday 13.3.26	Someone Special Celebration	2.45pm	Yes
Tuesday 17.3.26	St Patrick's Day Celebrations: Non – uniform – wear something green	All Day	No
Tuesday 24.3.26	Parents Evening	3.30pm – 6.00pm	Yes
Wednesday 25.3.26	Parents Evening	3.30pm – 6.00pm	Yes
Monday 30.3.26	Stations of the Cross – Led by Year 3/4	3pm	Yes
Thursday 2.4.26	Easter Service	2pm	Yes
Thursday 2.4.26	Break up for Easter Holidays		
Monday 20.4.26	Return to school for Summer Term		

Future events will be added when confirmed.

Use well the gifts that God has given you

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling': trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.

2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.

3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.

4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.

5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.

6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.

7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.

8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.

9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.

10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.