



Welcome to  
Our School

Dear Parents, Carers & Students,

This booklet is designed to help you prepare for your child's arrival to secondary school. We understand this is an exciting and sometimes daunting time and we want to do everything we can at St Bede's to help you get ready to settle in quickly.

We hope this information will also answer some of the questions you may have and to introduce you to the key people you need to remember, in particular the Heads of House. There is also plenty of information on our school website, so please browse over it at [www.st-bedes.durham.sch.uk](http://www.st-bedes.durham.sch.uk)

**Key Contacts:**



Mr J.Henderson –Head of Oswald House – [j.henderson@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk](mailto:j.henderson@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk)



Mr. J Martin – Acting Head of Columba House – [j.martin@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk](mailto:j.martin@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk)



Mrs V. Hall – Head of Hilda House – [v.hall@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk](mailto:v.hall@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk)

Mrs E Robson is our SENCO, she is contactable via email [e.robson@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk](mailto:e.robson@st-bedes.durham.sch.uk).

## **How is secondary school different to primary?**

- ◆ Students often have to travel further and learn to become more independent with travel to and from school.
- ◆ Students wear a full school uniform and have new rules and regulations to remember.
- ◆ Instead of one teacher, who has often known them since their early years, they will be taught by nine or ten teachers and have to get to know a whole range of adults in different roles within the school.
- ◆ The site will be much bigger and students will have to find their way around, moving from classroom to classroom between lessons, carrying their belongings with them.
- ◆ For the first time children will be fully responsible for ensuring that they have the correct books and equipment for different lessons each day, their lunch money, bus pass, PE equipment etc.
- ◆ Students will take full responsibility for recording homework, completing it by the correct day and giving it in on time.
- ◆ There will be new lessons and new variations on familiar ones.
- ◆ Teaching and learning styles may be very different. Students will be expected to write more frequently and for a longer period of time as appropriate for their ability.
- ◆ Break-time and lunch time will be organised very differently students enjoying more independence in terms of getting back to lessons on time, buying their own snacks and lunches etc.

In general, students are expected to be more independent, self-reliant and organised....a welcome development for many students, but we do recognise that this is a challenge for most 11 and 12 year olds. St Bede's is here to help your child to acquire the skills they need to function in the adult world and one of the main aims of the Year 7 is to ensure there is no stalling of students' progress between primary and secondary education.

### **The School's aim for your child's curriculum?**

- To give pupils the wider skills, knowledge and cultural capital they need for lifelong learning
- To introduce pupils to a broad and balanced suite of subjects and studies
- To make pupils more independent ,self-aware and resilient
- To give pupils the confidence and character to join in, ask questions and to help others
- To instil a sense of pride in pupils in both their academic and extracurricular achievements
- To lay the foundations for success at GCSE and beyond.

### **What lessons will you get in Year 7?**

Pupils study 5 lessons a day, each lasting one hour. We operate a two week timetable. Lessons on Week A will be different to lessons on Week B. Over the course of 2 weeks most students will study. Some pupils will be entered for Mandarin with 2 lessons per week based on aptitude as a second language choice. Students who are part of the St Bede's Improtech Footballing Academy will retain all core subjects and have a small reduction in some of the non-core lessons.

English – 8 lessons

Art – 2 lessons

Mathematics – 8 lessons

Spanish – 4 lessons

Science – 8 lessons

PE – 4 lessons

Geography – 3 lessons

Music - 2 lessons

PSHE – 2 lessons

History – 3 lessons

Religious Education – 4 lessons

Technology – 2 lessons

This time allocation is altered in years 8 and 9 in order to allow a balanced breadth and time allocation across the curriculum.

### **What can parents do to help?**

Although secondary school needs to be a time of increasing independence for young people, many of the ways in which parents helped at primary school still apply.

- Show a daily interest in what your child has been doing and has learned at school:
  - talk about what they have done each day and the friends they have made;
  - learn the names of the teachers;
  - know your child's timetable – put it up on the fridge door, for example.
  - look through their books every now and then and discuss their progress in each subject.
- Help them get organised so that they take the right equipment into school each day: pencil case, good pen, rubber, ruler, etc. Encourage them to use their school planner and keep a timetable of their deadlines. Praise them when they meet their deadlines.
- Keep in regular communication with the school; use your child's planner to follow up on any conversation you have had in a parents meeting. In particular, remember to communicate and celebrate any breakthroughs and achievements.
- Make sure there's a place to do homework and study, e.g. a desk in the bedroom, a quiet tabletop.

Know what topics they're studying each term and take them out and about on visits related to the topic. Watch out for TV programmes, videos and books related to their studies, e.g. history and natural world programmes.

- **Homework – It is vital that you check your child’s planner every day!**
- Know when homework is due and talk to your child about what they have been asked to do. Help - but don’t do it for them. You might search for information in books or on the internet, for example. If your child has forgotten what to do, encourage them to ring or email a friend in the same class who might help.
  - Agree a homework routine with your child.
  - Make sure your child has a comfortable place to work.
  - Check the planner with your child to see what homework needs to be done.
  - If your child is stuck offer support but don’t do it for them.
  - Take an interest in the marks and comments on the homework your child gets back.

### **Absences**

It is absolutely vital that your child attends 100% of each term. Any absence below 95% is considered a concern. Please phone the school if your child is ill or will be absent, preferably as early as possible. This will greatly help the smooth running of the system. They will also need to bring proof of absence such as doctor’s appointment cards. Wherever possible appointments such as dental treatment should be outside of school hours.

<b>Days off School add up to lost learning</b>					
<b>175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR</b>					
<b>175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments</b>					
<b>190</b> <b>SCHOOL</b> <b>DAYS IN</b> <b>EACH YEAR</b>  <small>190 days for your child’s education</small>	<small>10 days absence</small>  <b>180</b> <b>Days of</b> <b>Education</b>	<small>19 days absence</small>  <b>171</b> <b>Days of</b> <b>Education</b>	<small>29 days absence</small> <small>A term missed</small>  <b>161</b> <b>Days of</b> <b>Education</b>	<small>38 Days absence</small>  <b>152</b> <b>Days of</b> <b>Education</b>	<small>47 days absence</small>  <b>143</b> <b>Days of</b> <b>Education</b>
<b>100%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Good</b> <b>Best chance of success.</b> <b>Gets your child off to a flying start.</b>		<b>Worrying</b> <b>Less chance of success.</b> <b>Makes it harder to make progress.</b>		<b>Serious Concern</b> <b>Not Fair on your child.</b> <b>Court action!</b>	

## **Parental Support**

St. Bede's School also employs a Parent Support Advisor, Michelle Massey, and if you feel that you could do with some help in that area, then please contact your child's Head of House.

## **Transport**

There has been information passed already about how transport works – if you have any questions about school transport, please contact Durham County Council in the first instance.

## **School Meals**

Students have the opportunity to have breakfast, morning break and lunch at school. The cost of a two course hot meal is £2.30 from September 2020. Students can also choose to bring a healthy packed lunch to school. Pot Noodles, and fizzy/energy drinks are not permitted. We operate a biometric catering system, but students must bring cash to top up their individual catering accounts via the biometric machines.

## **Beginning of term**

We will advise you of this date in line with a further anticipated Government announcement.

## **Uniform**

Please read our strict uniform policy for further information and the guide provided from your Head of House. Also consider any decisions for hair style length or colour. If you decide to have your ears pierced, this must be done at the start of the holidays, ready to be taken out the first day back. No piercings of any type are permitted at St Bede's.

*Each House has a colour braiding to be worn above the blazer badge;*

Oswald House ( Mr Henderson) is **GREEN**

Columba House (Mr Martin) is **BLUE**

Hilda House (Mrs Hall) is **RED**

## **A Guide to the Organisation of the School**

In primary school the role and titles of staff are usually quite straightforward. In comparison, the structure of a large secondary school and the many adults involved can seem complex.

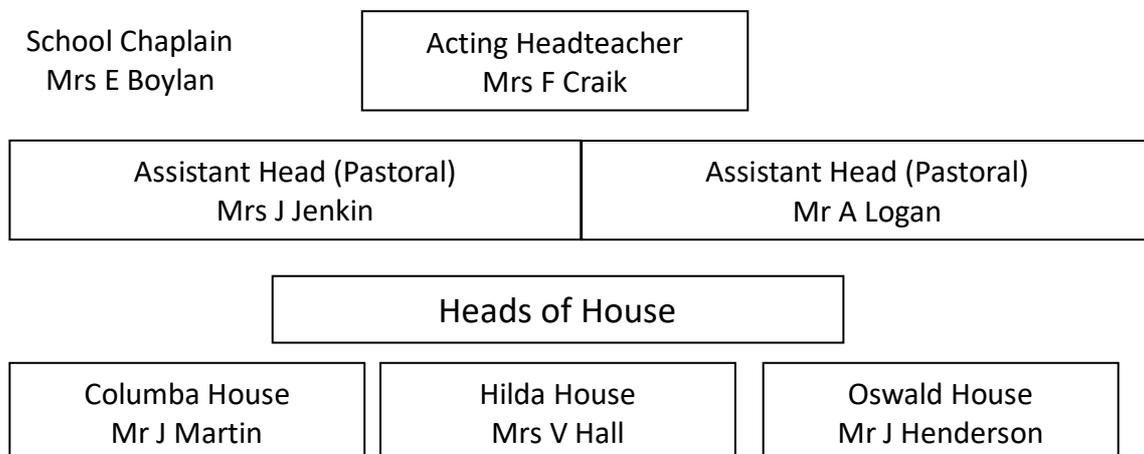
At St Bede's we have an Acting Headteacher, and Assistant Headteachers, each with an area of responsibility. All staff have a responsibility for an academic area and most have, in addition, responsibilities for students' well-being, which is their pastoral role. The school is divided into departments such as Maths and Science etc.

**They key person for you to contact will be the Head of House and your child's form tutor.**

On the pastoral side your child will be placed in a 'tutor group' of other Year 7 students and the tutor has responsibility for your child's overall wellbeing. Each tutor group will be part of our house system.

Generally, the staff you will have most contact with will be your child's tutor and their Head of House.

### **Pastoral Team**



Pupils are allocated to their House using sibling links, friendship groups and other key factors.

Finally, don't feel daunted – all new secondary student parents will feel exactly the same.

We are delighted your child will be joining us here at St Bede's and we look forward to a happy and supportive relationship with you and them for the next part of their exciting journey.

With very best regards  
Mrs F Craik  
Acting Headteacher