



September 2017

Dear Parents

At the start of the academic year I want to write to all parents and carers with an update for school. I have been very pleased and impressed by the start of the term, (despite the poor weather), and particularly the Year 7 who have settled into life at St Bede's so quickly. They have certainly benefitted from the 3 day induction programme in the summer term.

Staff changes

At the end of summer term, we said farewell to a number of staff. Dr Glancey and Mr Ali both left the science department to take up promotions in new schools. In the maths department, Mrs Keogh has also left to join another school and Mrs Vercoe-Beattie from performing arts has moved on to a new role in a school in Manchester.

We also had to say goodbye to Mrs Vercoe and Mrs Tucker who are both retiring after many years of service and dedication to St Bede's. Mrs Vercoe has served the school as a teacher, head of year and most recently as the head of English with 27 years spent at the school in its various forms. Similarly, Mrs Tucker was a teacher of French and Spanish, head of languages and head of Southworth College. We wish both Mrs Vercoe and Mrs Tucker a long and happy retirement and to all our staff who have left us we give our thanks and best wishes for their future careers.

Mrs Vercoe is replaced as head of English by Mrs Diffley and her role as head of Plessington College is taken by Mrs Carr.

We also welcome several new staff to the school. In science we have a new leadership team of Miss Renshaw, Miss R Lingard and Mr Hinton. In geography we have added to our staffing with the appointment of Miss Hobbs as we have in IT/Computing with Miss Douglas. In maths we welcome Miss Hussain and in English Miss Sibbitt. In PE, Ms Beaumont will be joining us on a part-time basis.

Examination results

I want to congratulate all our Year 11 leavers on their successes in their GCSEs. The new measures against which schools are judged are not available immediately to schools but St Bede's will have maintained its reputation for high levels of academic success this year; approximately 80% of pupils achieved passes in English and maths with approximately 73% achieving a pass in both subjects. This compares very well to last year's performance, despite the increased difficulty of these and other GCSEs. Experience has told us that with exam remarks, there can be increases to the school's overall performance but these will not become clear until the start of October. Our exam full performance, and other key measures, will be published on the school's website as soon as they are available.

Open Evening

This year's Open Evening will be on Tuesday, 26th September from 5.00pm – 8.00pm. This is an opportunity for parents of Year 5 and 6 pupils to visit the school as part of the important decision about which high school they want to choose for their child. To enable the staff to prepare the school **we will be closing at 12.00 noon for all pupils**. Many pupils help in the Open Evening as guides or assisting in classrooms and they will be given a letter asking for parental permission if they are helping. Buses will be ordered for 12.00 noon.

Parking

I am asking for parents' cooperation when picking up and dropping off children from school. We ask parents not to park on the school car park at the end of the day to collect their child and also not to use the bus lanes on Green Lane. There have been occasions when buses have been unable to park in the bus lane and drop pupils off safely.

Parental contact details

I would ask all parents and carers to ensure that we have accurate contact details so that we can make contact quickly when required. I appreciate mobile phone numbers can change frequently for some and it is easy to forget to inform school, but it is very important for the welfare of your child that we can contact you if necessary. It also enables us to send out group text messages with information, prompts and reminders about events in school. I would also encourage parents to sign up to the school's Twitter account (@StbedesRCHS) as this is an excellent way of keeping informed about the huge number of activities that are taking place in St Bede's. The PE department also have a Twitter feed (@StbedesRCHS_pe) for sports fixtures.

Show My Homework

The school now sets homework online through the online package called 'Show my Homework'. Details of the system are available on the school's website. All new pupils will be shown how to access their homework with a personal login, in the next few days. The system also allows parents to see clearly what homework has been set and to support their child's learning when appropriate. All pupils have been issued with a St Bede's note book for parents to communicate routine issues with house tutors.

Calendar and Holiday Dates

The school's calendar is also on the website along with the holiday dates for 2017/18 and 2018/19. There are some sites on the internet which state that they are 'St Bede's Holiday Dates' however they are not. The only reliable source for our holiday dates will be the St Bede's website; www.stbedesblackburn.com

Two dates worth bringing to the attention of new parents are the **Year 7 photographs on Wednesday 13th September** and the **Mass of Welcome for parents and pupils on Tuesday, 10th October at 6pm**.

Thank you for your continued support



D Callaghan
Headteacher