

AUTUMN/WINTER 2021

The Venerable Bede News



Welcome

Dear Parent/Carer,

We have made it to the end of what has been an extremely busy and eventful term. Who would have thought on our return from the summer break what we would cram into these past 15 weeks! I think that we all hoped that the worst of the impact from the coronavirus pandemic was over, and that life might return to normal. We would like to thank our pupils, families and staff for the way in which we have pulled in the same direction and supported each other through what have been some very difficult times.

School will be closed over the entire Christmas period. This will

enable us to carry out essential cleaning and maintenance. If you need to contact us in an emergency, please use the "contact us" form on the school website ([Click here](#)). Be aware that this will not be monitored daily.

Remember that Monday 3 January is a Bank Holiday, and **school will re-open at the usual time on Tuesday 4 January.**

One of the highlights of this term was our Ofsted Inspection. The best part of this, as always, was the reaction of our pupils and families. We are humbled by how passionate and proud you all are of the Venerable Bede Community. The strong Christian values of the community are a strand which runs through the report. The report comments that:

"Pupils told inspectors how much they value their teachers. They are...

... proud of their school and so are staff".

Our pupils, staff, and Chaplaincy team have put together an Advent Reflection. This really does give us a different perspective on the season of Christmas to that which we see on the adverts on television. You can watch the video by following the link here ([Advent Reflection](#)). Please feel free to share this with friends and family.

Finally, we hope that the coming year is more settled for us all. We will keep everyone updated with any additional information which we receive from the DFE or Government over the Christmas period.

We wish you all a restful and safe Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best Wishes

David Airey

Headteacher

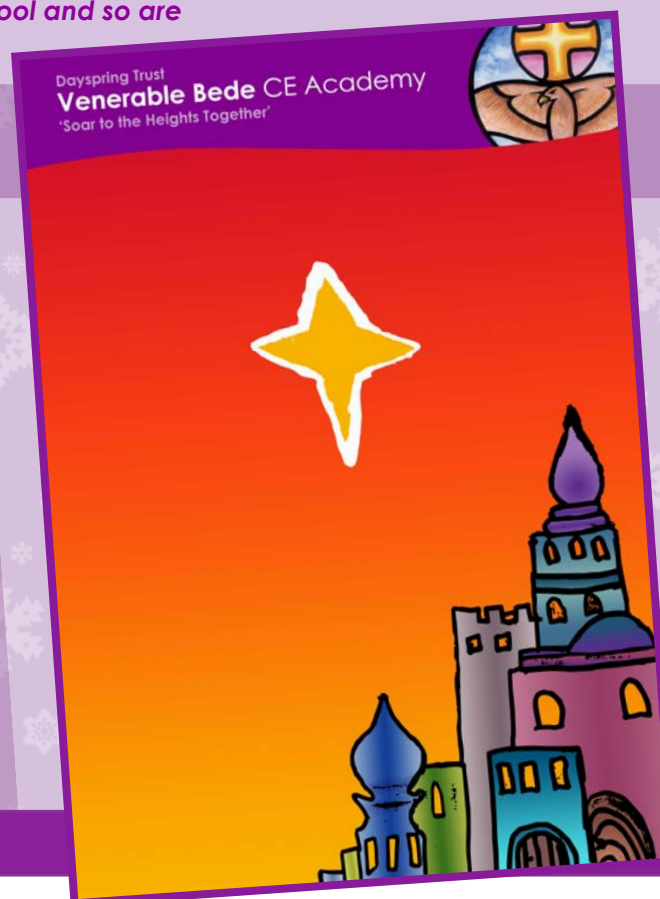
CHRISTMAS CARD 2021

Contributed by ACI

One of the highlights of the Festive season each year at Venerable Bede is our annual Year 7 Christmas card design competition!

This year, Austin won with this festive artwork. The design was sent out as the Venerable Bede official Christmas card.

Austin will receive professionally printed copies of their design as well as a gift voucher.



IN PERSON PD SESSIONS RETURN TO VB

Contributed by KMP

This term in Personal Development, all pupils have received a talk about Malicious Communications from the Violence Reduction Unit (part of the work carried out by the Northumbrian Police and Crime Commissioner).

Pupils received pertinent information about the legal implications of sending and receiving text messages via online platforms like WhatsApp - for example if they sent nude images or threatening content.

Pupils learnt about the communications that are illegal, the consequences of sending and forwarding such messages and what to do if they received these messages themselves.

This talk served to reinforce the learning in Personal Development that tackles being safe online, sexual harassment, anti-bullying and abuse.



**Sources of Support**
- Keeping Safe Online

SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY:
School staff, family, youth workers, coaches 

**UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE:**
For help on reporting social networking platforms visit www.saferinternet.org.uk

INTERNET WATCH FOUNDATION:
To report inappropriate images and have them removed quickly visit www.iwf.org.uk 

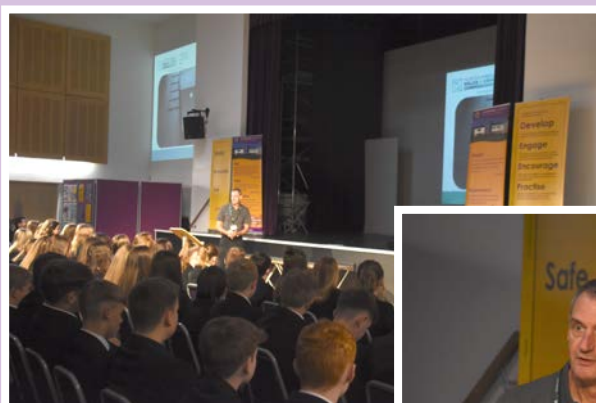
CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ONLINE PROTECTION:
Is someone asking you to engage in inappropriate conversations, meet up or send images and videos?
Visit www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

**NORTHUMBRIA POLICE:**
Call 101 for non-urgent issues and 999 in an emergency or visit www.northumbria.police.uk

FEARLESS (CRIMESTOPPERS):
For advice and to anonymously report crime visit www.fearless.org 

**CHILDLINE:**
For support and advice visit www.childline.org.uk

VICTIM SUPPORT:
Support victims of crime www.victimsupport.org.uk



MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Contributed by RBO

Music Week 2021 – A flying Start to the Year!

October 2021

Music got off to a flying start in Venerable Bede this academic year!


We run small group instrumental and singing lessons. There are almost 200 pupils taking lessons each week, along side our extra-curricular singing club and rock bands!

We re-launched our music offer to our new year 7s through the Music Week event which took place on Monday 20th September. Aimed at re-invigorating music in schools post COVID-19, the Music Hub gave funds to schools to enable us to have our peripatetic music teachers deliver a bespoke event featuring a range of musical performances, teacher demonstrations, question and answer sessions and a re-launch of singing together in worship.

MUSIC WEEK
2021

SUNDERLAND
MUSIC HUB

COMING TO YOUR NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL THIS SEPTEMBER



MONKWEARMOUTH ACADEMY
BIDDICK ACADEMY
CASTLE VIEW ENTERPRISE
A C A D E M Y
SANDHILL VIEW ACADEMY
OXCLOSE COMMUNITY
A C A D E M Y
SOUTHMOOR ACADEMY
- K E P I E R -
ST AIDAN'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY
ST ANTHONY'S GIRLS' CATHOLIC
A C A D E M Y
THORNHILL ACADEMY
VENERABLE BEDE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND ACADEMY
FARRINGTON COMMUNITY
A C A D E M Y

This September, secondary schools across Sunderland will deliver a series of exciting activities for Music Week. Join in to meet the instrumental and vocal teachers at your new school and find out which music opportunities you can get involved with in Year 7 and beyond.

- Try out a new instrument
- Watch a performance
- Find out about different instruments and ask some questions
- Learn about the instrumental and singing lessons at your new school

Each school will host their own Music Week activity, so check in with your new secondary school for dates. For more information about Music Week and music in your new school, get in touch with Sunderland Music Hub at sunderlandmusic@getbethenschools.org.uk

department, it has also given students a sense of excitement about their curriculum music lessons and promoted large group singing - something which children have been unable to do for over a year. The overall effect has been really positive, with uptake of lessons increasing rapidly. Our Music Week event has been the highlight of the academic year so far. Music tutors and departmental staff put on a live performance together, playing songs such as Walking On Sunshine, Footloose, Don't Stop Believing and Dance Monkey. Our new year 7 pupils loved listening and joining in. There was a real buzz in the atmosphere with lots of positive comments from both pupils and staff. We will definitely run assemblies like this in the future."

Our Senior Leadership Team added:

"We are incredibly lucky to have such a talented and dedicated team of musicians working at Venerable Bede Academy to educate our young people. Year 7 thoroughly enjoyed seeing the Music Team doing what it does best. The atmosphere was such that it left our students inspired to learn an instrument."



Sunderland Empire Theatre trip - School of Rock

October 2021

After a very long wait we were finally able to run our annual theatre trip to see a musical. Having set up 2 rock bands in VB as extra-curricular clubs in the

summer term of 2021, we decided to see School of Rock. Based on the cult film and with a rocking new score from Andrew Lloyd Webber, School of Rock follows slacker Dewey Finn as he turns a class of straight - A students into an ear-popping, riff-scorching, all-conquering rock band! Some of our GCSE pupils have not been



able to see any live performances since Christmas 2019! We all really loved this feel good musical - it's loud, funny and really enjoyable for all ages. The children's performances were perfect and so professional, the talent was incredible!

Extra-curricular clubs

We now have our singing club, Y8/9 rock band and Y10/11 rock band clubs up and running after school between 3-4pm. In January 2022 we are looking to set up a new Y7/Y8 rock band on a Monday night between 3-4pm as we have a number of enthusiastic Y7 pupils who are keen to get involved in the extra-curricular activities offered by the music department.

Mrs. R. Bonner, Head of Music at Venerable Bede CE Academy said:

"Music Week has not only raised the profile of instrumental teaching and extracurricular opportunities available within the

MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Contributed by RBO

Peripatetic Music Lessons

Autumn term

Small group and 1:1 small group instrumental and singing lessons restarted in September. Uptake this term has been phenomenal - we now have 20% of the school population taking part weekly. We offer tuition on guitar, drums, keyboard, singing, woodwind, strings and brass. In January 2022 we will be able to offer some additional spaces to pupils who are interested in signing up. If anyone is interested in starting lessons in January 2022, please contact the school/Mrs Bonner via the 'Contact' page on the academy website.

Music Exam Success!!

Summer & Autumn terms

Four of our pupils have completed and passed graded music exams at the end of the summer term.

Travis completed his ABRSM grade 2 piano exam with a merit having only started lessons in Y10. Alex and Sam completed their ABRSM grade 3 piano exams with a distinction. Charlie completed his grade 5 Rockschoool piano exam with a distinction having only started piano lessons in January - amazing effort from all four boys!

Three of our pupils have completed and passed graded music exams at the end of the autumn term.

Travis completed his ABRSM grade 3 piano exam having only started playing piano 15 months ago - a fantastic achievement. Alex and Sam completed their ABRSM grade 4 piano exams - excellent work and progress made during only a term!

Newcastle Theatre Royal trip - Pantomime - Snow White & The Seven Dwarfs

November 2021

After a very long wait we were finally able to run our annual theatre trip to see a pantomime.

We took 40 pupils out to an evening performance and what a show it was! The pupils were an absolute pleasure to take out on a trip and a credit to themselves. We all really loved this pantomime- it was brilliant with lots of energy, fun and excitement, full of laughter, music, special effects and magic!

Advent Reflection

December 2021

As part of the production of our 'Advent Reflection' video, several Pupils and staff participated in an evening of audio and video recording at St. Matthew's Church in Silksworth.

We converted part of the church into a recording studio to capture amazing vocal performances and then worked in other areas to capture video of these performances from different angles. By the end of the evening our pupils were professional film makers!

The finished version of the video was shared with the rest of our community on Wednesday 15 December. A special thank you to Reverend Tolhurst who not only provided the venue, but also featured heavily in the advent reflection video.

Mini Christmas Concert

December 2021

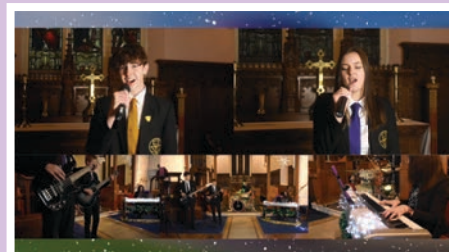
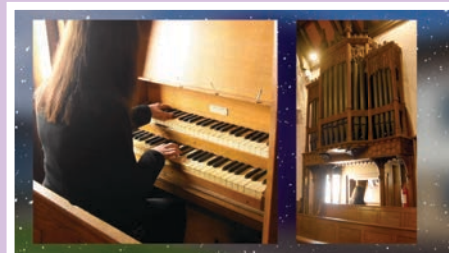
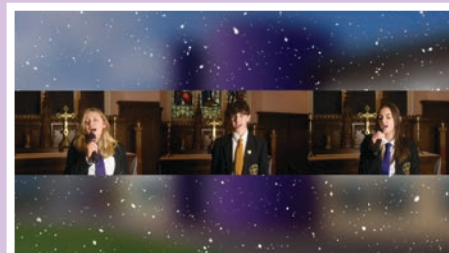
Following our 'Reflection Video' we were able to share in a surprise virtual Christmas Concert!

Songs from our two 'Rock Band' groups as well as our Staff Band, were featured and really got us all into the Christmas spirit!

One member of staff commented:

"It was wonderful to be on the corridors of the academy on Wednesday morning to hear such amazing, joyful performances coming from each of our tutor rooms as we shared in both the Reflection and Mini Concert

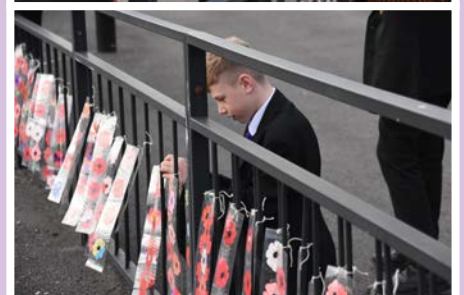
videos! Hearing members of our community singing and clapping along was really heart warming!"



REMEMBRANCE DAY PROJECT

Contributed by RSO

The History department wanted to do something special to celebrate Remembrance Day this year and felt it was only right to make it a whole school effort. Every pupil was given a poppy to design and colour, and add their own personal message to remember those affected by war. The poppies were then used to create a beautiful display at the front of school. With the help of some Year 7 pupils, and our senior prefects, the poppies were tied to the railings at the school gates for all visitors to see and commemorate Remembrance Day 2021.



LRC UPDATE

Contributed by CLH

BOOKBUZZ

At the beginning of this term Year 7 took part in the National Literacy Trust's Bookbuzz scheme. Bookbuzz aims to inspire a love of reading, by giving pupils the opportunity to choose a book to take home and keep.

In their Literacy lessons all our year 7s chose from an amazing shortlist of 17 titles. After several weeks of excited pupils asking if their books had arrived, we were delighted to be able to give them out just before October half term. There really was something for everyone – animals and androids, ghosts and gaming, space and superheroes. Our most popular choices were *The Haunting of Aveline Jones* by Phil Hickey and *Wonderscape* by Jennifer Bell.

Mrs Holmes, School Librarian said

"I've been getting lots of great feedback from the pupils since

they've returned after half term. Some of them have designed alternative covers for their books, and we will be adding some of their book reviews to the Reading Hub on the school website."

AFTER SCHOOL

We are really pleased to be returning to some of our normal routines and activities in the Learning Resource Centre, having had to put lots on hold last year. We are now open on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after school from 3-4pm. Pupils can drop in to do homework. Alongside this we will be running a games and puzzle club on a Monday, with our book club launching after Christmas on a Tuesday. Everyone is welcome to join us for some book chat, crafts and activities. Book Club members also help with jobs around the LRC, and are usually the first to get a look at new books that arrive!

BOOK FAIR

We are also preparing to host a Scholastic Book Fair, which will be our first one in quite some time. Pupils will have the opportunity to browse the Book Fair during the school day. There are always some amazing titles available and all purchases help us to earn some free books that can be added to the LRC.



MEMORIAL FOR LORD CREW

Contributed by RDG

On Saturday 18th September, a service was held at Durham Cathedral to celebrate the 300-year anniversary of Lord Crewe and the charity he set up. Lord Crewe was Bishop of Durham from 1675 to 1721. Lord Crewe's charity has contributed significantly to helping a wide variety of causes in the North East of England over the past 300-years. Our Senior Prefects represented the academy during the service and laid a wreath in honour of Lord Crew and the work that he did.



ANTI BULLYING UPDATE

Contributed by AJA

In November, our 'Bully Buddies', led the academy during national 'Anti-Bullying Week,' this year's theme was "One Kind Word".

Read on to find out some of the things that happened...

Monday 15th November "Odd Socks Day."

To celebrate and bring awareness to those things that make us all unique, Venerable Bede pupils and staff took part in 'Odd Socks Day'.

Participants took the opportunity to express themselves through their choice of (odd) socks!

Wednesday 17th November

During the Personal Development lesson, Year 7-10 pupils watched an online Anti-Bullying production entitled "Hope" which examined a

Venerable Bede Anti-Bullying

young girls' story of being bullied whilst at secondary school, and how she overcame the obstacles she faced. Following on from this, tutors led a whole class discussion about bullying.

Anti-Bullying Sale.

During break times of Anti-Bullying week, members from our Bully Buddy group organised a stationary and wristband sale which was a resounding success.

Pupils were able to buy goods during breaktime, all the proceeds of which went to the charity "BullyingUK."

The sale has proven to be incredibly popular. The organiser, Mrs Wilson, was "over the moon" with how popular it was and was really pleased with the event and is looking forward to many more events yet to come'.



CAREERS UPDATE

Contributed by HPE

As well as focusing on their studies, our Year 11 pupils are also thinking about which post 16 provider that they would like to attend and what they would like to study.

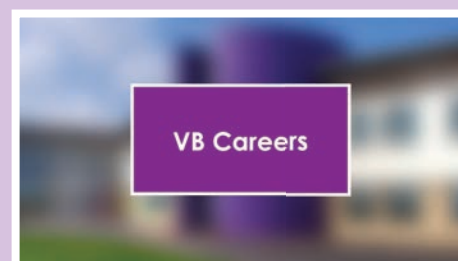
This year, our Careers Advisors are Gaynor Wells and Tony Davison. Gaynor and Tony have been holding 1-2-1 meeting with pupils to explore the opportunities that are available to them. All pupils will get a careers meeting before they leave Venerable Bede.

Our pupils have been applying to post 16 providers since September and it is really important that if they haven't already applied that they make

this their focus. It does not matter how many providers pupils apply for; a lot of pupils worry that they can only apply for one course. This is not true. They can apply for all that appeal to them and make a final decision later in the year.

Why not look at the different providers on our Virtual Careers page and look for the information that you require (entry requirement, subject choices, travel arrangements, extra-curricular opportunities, links to further education or job opportunities etc)?

If you require any extra support, please see Mrs Tracey.



DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Contributed by CDR

It was so wonderful to have our Y11 Duke of Edinburgh Award group finally set off for their expedition! It has taken months of planning and training, often interrupted by Covid, for our excellent team to be ready. The expedition, which was all set up for July, had to be postponed until September due to another Covid outbreak.

So, after just a few days back at school, we spent a pleasant Saturday hiking over the moors and through the forests of Northumberland between Slayley and Blanchland. The two teams did really well. For this practice expedition they were supervised at a distance by our committed staff; Mr Exley, Mrs Williams, Mr Earl and Mr Roberts. Very little intervention was required as the teams quickly learned how to use the maps they had been studying in the classroom and translate this into a real outdoor environment. There were, of course, some minor errors, but we eventually all met up together for lunch and a rehearsal of putting up the tents. We wondered if this lovely weather would last into the following weekend.

So just six days later the minibus pulled over at Brocolitia Roman Temple next to Hadrian's Wall to deposit our first intrepid group. They set off westwards towards the wall and their campsite for the night. Mr Exley, our assessor, asked them questions about their expedition, about safety, equipment and clothing. I was delighted to see that everyone had been paying close attention! Each group staggered off with heavy loads, full of

confidence in their own abilities.

The pupils are, of course monitored from a distance and as a supervisor it is always a joy to see them appear over the brow of a hill as they approach! This is particularly true when the last group heaves into view dragging their tired selves into camp. After an hour or two of socialising and making camp, the tiredness was forgotten, albeit temporarily. There was a buzz about the tents as dinner was prepared, sleeping bags rolled out and dishes washed. The tiredness was still there though, and all they needed was one word from the staff and that was it...a long restful sleep!

Sunday was hard. Muscles were tired and aching. The end was a long way off. The hills are never very high but always steep. The weather began to turn; a little rain was in the air. This day would require not only physical strength, but also mental

resilience. Would they be able to finish? Of course they would! Many lessons were learned, not only about maps, camping and the outdoor environment, but also about themselves.

Well done to the teams and thanks for additional help from Ms Holt, Mr Exley, Mr Earl and Mrs Williams.





SEND Recommended Apps



Breathe2Relax

Ages: 4+

About: A hands-on diaphragmatic breathing exercise tool.



Calm Harm

Ages: 12+

About: Provides tasks to resist or manage the urge to self harm.

Mindfulness⁽⁺⁾
Daily

Mindfulness Daily

Ages: 4+

About: For relaxation, stress management, support for depression and anxiety.



SAM

Ages: 12+

About: Designed to help users manage and track their anxiety and help identify triggers.



Smiling Mind

Ages: 4+

About: Guided meditations categorised by age. Helps with thoughts and emotions and to self check on mood.



Stay Alive

Ages: 4+

About: Pocket suicide prevention resource, full of useful information to help young people stay safe.



Virtual Hope

Ages: 12+

About: Designed as an accessory for treatment. Contains simple tools to help with positive thinking.



Wellmind

Ages: 4+

About: Designed to help with stress, anxiety and depression and to boost well-being.



WorryTime

Ages: 12+

About: Allows users to control everyday stress and anxiety by acting as a place to store your daily worries.