

EASTER 2023

Northern Lights Learning Trust

# The Venerable Bede News

Dear Parent / Carer

I would like to thank our pupils for their hard work and dedication this term, particularly those who have improved their attendance since Christmas as this is one of our key targets. Well done to anyone who achieved 100%! That is amazing.

Please keep our Year 11 pupils in your thoughts and prayers as they move towards their final term at Venerable Bede Academy and wish them good luck with their examinations so that they can go on to their next step, whether that is in employment, education or training.

Wishing you and your family a joyful Easter.

*GABooth.*

Mrs Booth

Executive Headteacher



Dear Parent / Carer

This term seems to have gone by so quickly since the February break. We almost made it through without major disaster – except for the burst valve in the heating system! I am pleased to say that this is now fixed. We return to school from the Easter break on Monday 17 April at 8.30 a.m. (7.45 a.m. for breakfast club). Pupils will be allowed to wear their summer uniform. This means that they can swap their shirt and tie for the school polo shirt. The polo shirt does not need to be worn inside pupils' trousers or skirt, it can be worn over the top. Our school blazer does still need to be worn.

I would also like to add my best wishes and say good luck to our Year 11 pupils. Their time in secondary school has been like no other over the past few years. As they enter the intense GCSE preparation period, I would remind them that their hard work will pay off. Once they get back to school after the Easter Vacation, they only have 3 weeks until their GCSE exams start in earnest. How time has flown for them. A reminder to donate any good quality pre-loved uniform so that it can be given a new lease of life with a different owner.

It is time to say farewell to Mrs Thornton (Maths), who leaves us to take up a new post at Castle View Academy. I am

pleased to report that last week we interviewed for staff and have now filled vacant posts in the Maths department. Unfortunately, the way teacher resignations work we will have to wait until September for these new staff to take up their posts. We have also successfully appointed a new member to our senior team. Mrs Chapman-Jones joins us for Ian Ramsey CE Academy in Stockton as Assistant Headteacher. I know that pupils and families alike will welcome her to our community. We still have a few vacant positions to fill in school – why not take a look at our appointments page for the latest vacancies ([click here](#)). Please do share with anyone who might be looking for work and might be a suitable candidate.

I hope that everyone is able to find some time to relax and unwind over the Easter Break. I would urge us all to think of the verses shared in John 13:34 "a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another"

*David Airey*

Mr Airey

Headteacher



## BISHOP VINNIE VISIT

Contributed by Mr J Exley

It was a great pleasure for our Trust to welcome Bishop Vicentia of the Lesotho Church of England Diocese on her most recent visit to the UK.

As the first female bishop of Lesotho; Bishop Vinnie, as she prefers to be known, is a remarkable lady, and we were delighted that she was able to take some time from her busy itinerary to spend an inspirational morning talking with pupils from Ian Ramsay Academy and Venerable Bede Academy.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



## BISHOP VINNIE VISIT

Continued from Page 1 - Contributed by Mr J Exley



Bishop Vinnie was keen to share with our pupils anecdotes from her life and experiences growing up in Southern Africa, during the time of apartheid. Having grown up in Soweto, a township in Johannesburg, Bishop Vinnie studied hard at school and earned a place at university studying Law. She later decided to dedicate her life to the Church and become a female priest. Bishop Vinnie pointed out to our pupils that this was unusual in Southern Africa at that time, and yet despite her father stating that,

"Women do not become priests"

she was undeterred in her belief that this was her calling in life.

The position of Bishop of Lesotho is a very prestigious post, in a country known for its strong Christian beliefs. The appointment of a female Bishop illustrates the progressive nature of this beautiful country. Nevertheless, Bishop Vinnie has faced numerous challenges and shared some of her stories with pupils. Leaving them in awe of this incredible and inspirational lady.

Our trust has worked with a number of organisations in Lesotho since 2006, when staff visited with a view to finding a global project that pupils could support. Venerable Bede Academy has been running an annual visit to Lesotho since 2008, until the COVID Pandemic prevented foreign travel for school trips.

Some of the young people that our students meet in Lesotho are

orphaned, and as such have experienced more of life than someone of their age should have to face. Their lives are a stark contrast to that of so many of our pupils and the experience serves as a humbling reminder for us all, teachers and students alike. It is especially heart-warming to watch these two groups of young people from such different backgrounds; share stories, toast marshmallows, sing camp fire songs and play football together without a care in the world.

It's easy to think that our annual visit to Lesotho is a "School Trip". I am very careful with the language I use when I discuss our work in Lesotho, I rarely refer to it as simply a school trip – I like to remind students that their time in Lesotho is part of a much wider and important project led from the North East of England by the Durham Diocese. It is a project that the whole of our trust and school communities work hard to raise funds for every year. Many of whom will not be able to visit, but nevertheless continue to give readily of their time and effort for a few ambassadors to experience some time in Lesotho.

Opportunities such as these are important for so many reasons: they offer a unique chance for students to learn outside of the classroom, for them to form new friendships, to push themselves and see their teachers in a different

light. But our project does this and so much more as well. It empowers our students to help those less fortunate than themselves, it offers a unique experience which at times can be quite daunting when you're only 14 and teaches them they can achieve more than they realise. It demands team work, patience and resilience to raise the funding to go and enables pupils to reflect upon their lives, to review the simple things that they sometimes take for granted such as, their education, their home life, and their faith.



In 2016, it was a great honour to welcome his Royal Highness, King Letsi III, along with the Royal entourage to Venerable Bede Academy and so it was with equal pleasure that we were able to host some time with Bishop Vinnie at Ian Ramsey Academy.

The experience of Bishop Vinnie's visit to Ian Ramsay has left pupils and teachers with excitement and optimism at the chance of relaunching our Lesotho visit in the very near future.





## LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH AND NEURODIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK 2023

Contributed by Mrs S Holt

### LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH



February 2023 marked LGBTQ+ History month. Since its launch in 2004, LGBTQ+ History Month's aim has been to increase the visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, as well as uncover previously untold stories.

Pupils took part in activities during tutor time to celebrate and recognise the achievements of key historical figures from the LGBTQ+ Community.

### NEURO DIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK

Neurodiversity Celebration Week is a worldwide initiative that challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences, whilst providing opportunities to recognise the many talents and

advantages of being neurodivergent. During Neurodiversity Celebration Week, we encouraged pupils to celebrate the strengths and talents of the neurodivergent community.

Pupils completed activities with tutors to raise awareness of Neurodiversity.

CELEBRATING ALL THE WAYS  
WE THINK DIFFERENTLY

EMBRACE  
NEURODIVERSITY



## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Contributed by Mrs R Bonner

### EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING SCHOOL NURSE VISITS

Y7 tutor groups have started taking part in a presentation on Emotional Well-Being delivered by our school nurse as part of their Personal Development Curriculum.

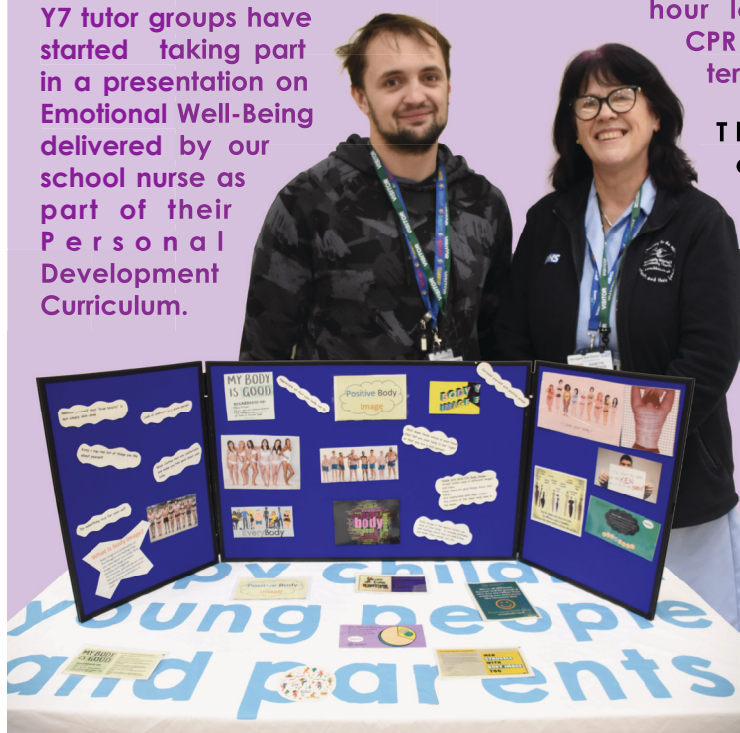
### CPR LESSONS

Y8 tutor groups are completing an hour long session on CPR over the summer term.

of survival following a cardiac arrest. Pupils are learning about the Push-Call-Rescue response and practising the CPR skills and techniques on dummies within their Personal Development lessons.

This is an opportunity for pupils to consider what they would do if they were with someone and they stopped breathing.

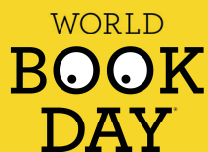
CPR combines chest compressions and rescue breaths to give a person the best chance



WORLD BOOKDAY 2023

Contributed by Our English Department

World Book Day is a global event that is celebrated every year designed to promote reading and the love of books. The day is a celebration of literature that is in over 100 countries around the world.



2 MARCH 2023

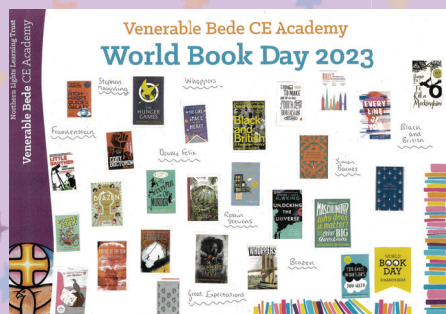
The aim of World Book Day is to encourage pupils to read more and build a lifelong habit of reading. It is a day when children are introduced to new books, authors and genres. They are encouraged to explore and enjoy the world of literature. The idea of World Book Day was first proposed in 1923 by the Spanish writer Vic Clavel Andres as a way to celebrate the anniversary of the death of two great writers, William and Miguel de Cervantes, both of whom died on the same day, albeit in different years. The day was later observed in Catalonia, Spain, and slowly started gaining popularity.

In 1995, the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared World Book Day as an annual celebration. Since, it has been celebrated worldwide to promote reading and raise awareness about the importance of books and what they bring to society.

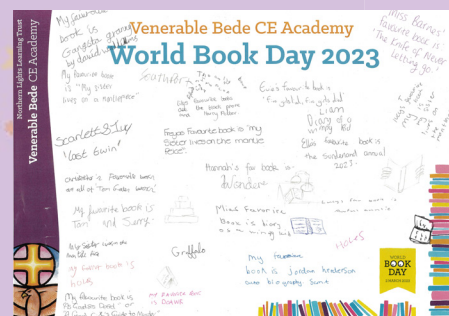
On World Book Day, we decided to share in the love of reading as a whole school community. All teachers were given the same short story to read, 'The Lottery' by Shirley Jackson (1948), with all of their classes where they would

read a page at the beginning of each period. This meant that, as a school, we were all enthralled in where the plot of the story would take us. It encouraged us to consider the message behind the story and students were eager to discuss their opinions at the end of the day.

Form classes were also asked to create World Book Day posters to display on the doors around the school with their most enjoyed and liked books that they have read. There were some forms that decided to share their love for one book with a review about what they enjoyed about it, whilst other forms printed book covers as suggestions or recommendations for their peers.

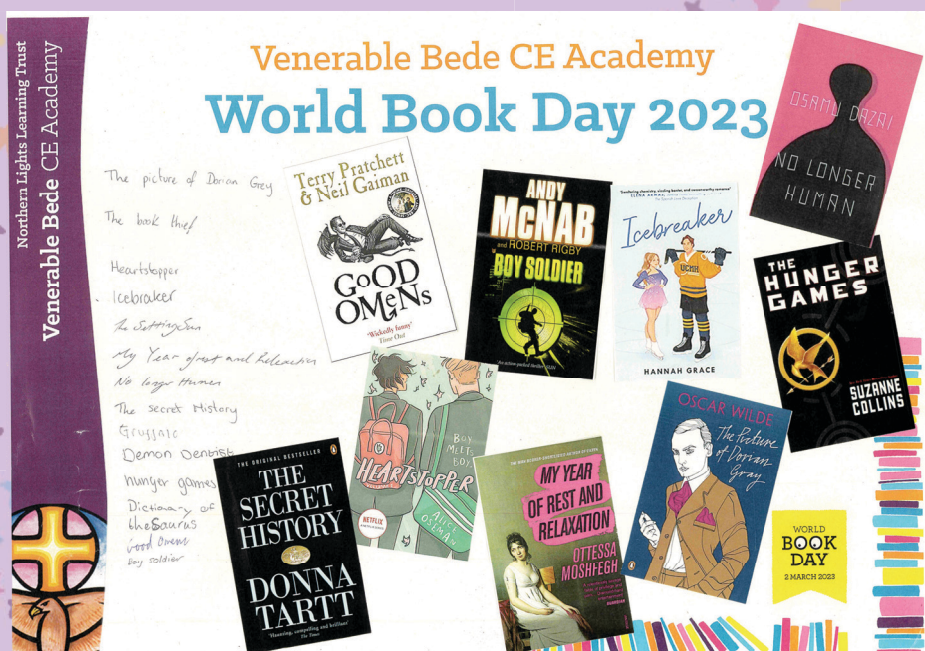


The English department had also shared a World Book Day quiz with KS3 students to test their



knowledge about old, new, and classic books! It was interesting to see how much knowledge students had, alongside who had a competitive streak!

World Book Day is a day that celebrates the love of books and promotes reading as a lifelong habit. By engaging with books, we expand our minds, develop our imagination and find a new perspective on life. It is this that encourages children to embrace the written word and discover the joys of reading, which is an essential skill that provides knowledge, enlightenment, and entertainment. We hope that our students can be encouraged to continue their reading and explore adventurous journeys!





## SHORT STORY COMPETITION 2023

Contributed by Our English Department

Students in Year 9 were set a short story writing competition within the action genre in honour of World Book Day, which took place 2nd March. We asked Year 9 as their topic of study has been Creative Writing as part of their English lessons this past half-term.

This is a module set to explore the conventions of the action genre, types of settings and characters, as well as having a particular focus on the structure of a short story. Year 9 have been learning how to use a range of sentences, punctuation, and paragraphing for particular effect. This has included the understanding of fragment sentences, one line paragraphs, and semi colons in order to develop suspense.

The competition was set upon a 'Would you rather...?' choice which was used to help inspire students to express their writing voice in their personal writing style. We used this question to explore a variety of scenarios in which someone may find themselves when faced with challenges or problems and how they may overcome these. We felt that this was a great opportunity for our students to display their talent.

As part of their entry, students had to write their own short story of what challenges they thought may happen when faced with the 'Would you rather...?' scenario. We had a vast collection of submissions and we are very proud to announce that Neve is our winner! Neve has developed her creativity and skills in writing a talented short story!

Congratulations! Her story is all about someone trying to find information using a narrative voice to create a tense atmosphere with a witty tone. We can see how much thought and

effort went into her personal response and it reads wonderfully.

It was also World Poetry Day on the 21st of March! Please read our last submission from our Y7 Poetry Competition. We encourage all of our students to admire and reflect upon the true meaning of a poem and to appreciate the wonders that can be held in such a short text!

### Creative writing competition winning entry

How could she be this clumsy? The maps for the building were wrong; the maps she had studied for months to find a way in. She had practiced for this mission for what felt like forever, she couldn't stop now.

Time was running out. She needed that information.

She sprinted down the corridor, making sure to take in all the signs as she went. She finally found the office. She had less than ten minutes to get through the locks that held the door closed and to retrieve the information from the computer. She also had to get back out, but she could overcome that problem when it came. She slid a set of lock picks out from her gloves and started with the locks. After a bit of struggling she finally got through the lock and into the office. She held the knife she stored in her back pocket out in front of her just in case, then gently kicked the door open.

Seven minutes to go.

Luckily no one was there. It looked like any old office, could this be the right place? She shut the door behind her and wondered around until she found the computer. Guided by her friend over the phone, she found her way past all the security measures. "I'm in" she whispered to the phone.

"Well done Jane." A voice replied sarcastically "You have five minutes to get everything from that computer and make your way back"

"I know. You do know the maps were wrong?" She sighed whilst fumbling over the equipment she had been given. She knew what she was doing; but with five minutes? That wasn't nearly enough time.

"What?" Said the frustrated voice over the phone. Jane could imagine her friend sitting in the chair with her hands in her head.

"Anyway, I have more pressing matters than a few maps being wrong. I need..." she was cut off by the sound of her friend panicking over the phone.

"Jane hurry up. He is in the building. Get the information and get out!" Her friend nearly shouted over the phone.

"Freya? What are you... are you there?" She heard static and then her phone cut out. Why does this happen to me? She questioned herself. Anyway she had no time, she needed to get this done.

Three minutes (maybe less) before those doors burst open and she was found.

But worst of all, the information was taking longer to transfer than it should. She looked around for ways to get out. The footsteps were getting louder, echoing through the empty corridors. She decided her best chance to get out was from the balcony. But from 10 stories up, could she make it?

She found the rope in her bag just as the information was finally transferred. She tied it around the fence blocking her from a long fall.

The lock of the door clicked. She grabbed the information and ran...

## YEAR 10 MATHS FEAST

Contributed by Miss L Gourlay

On Wednesday 29th March 4 Year 10 pupils, accompanied by Miss Manning attended the Year 10 Maths Feast, hosted by AMSP at St Wilfrid's School in South Shields.

Whilst there, they took part in three rounds of Mathematical challenges, which required them to call on their

metacognitive skills to be able to solve a range of problems.

The challenges culminated with a relay round, where teamwork was essential to be able to advance to the next question.

We would like to say a huge well done to Jessica, Grace, Layla and Matthew who not only are

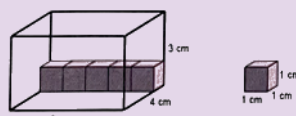
fantastic mathematicians, but are also a credit to the school with their impeccable behaviour and interpersonal skills.

As a bit of fun, see if you can complete one of the challenges that the pupils completed at the Maths Feast.

### AMSP Maths Feast 2023 Relay Round – A1

A 3 by 4 by 5 cuboid constructed from unit cubes, sits on the flat surface of a table.

W is the total number of square unit cube faces that are hidden when the cuboid is sat on the table.



(The diagram doesn't show all of the cubes)

What is the value of W?



## YEAR 11 GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP

Contributed by Mrs L Pallas

As part of the of the current GCSE Geography specification, the Geography Department organised a visit to Sunderland and Blyth for Year 11 pupils to enable them to complete the two required geographical fieldwork enquiries for their GCSE course. Pupils completed two enquiries in contrasting environments enabling them to show an understanding of both physical and human geography fieldwork for their GCSE Geography qualification. This trip enabled pupils to write

about their fieldwork in one of their exams.

The visit took place on Wednesday 22nd of March 2023. Pupils left school at 9.00 am and will returned at the end of the school day. Pupils took part in environmental quality surveys, measuring heights of groynes and looking at rates of longshore drift.

Pupils have not been able to take part in fieldwork outside of the school grounds for a number of years now so it was fantastic to be able to give pupils this experience. Pupils were very well

behaved and a credit to the school.





## MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Contributed by Mrs R Bonner

## VB'S GOT TALENT 2023



Once again we celebrated the many and varied talents of our pupils! We held our annual talent show, 'VB's Got Talent' on Friday 10th March at Silksworth Youth & Community Centre – a new venue for us to perform in and we had great support and feedback from family and friends who attended. The evening featured a variety of musical performances from our rock bands, choir and a few solo performances too. The standard of performance is improving year on year. It was a great opportunity for students to showcase their talents and I am extremely proud of the pupils who took part in the show.

## SEARCH FOR A STAR 2023

Sunderland Music Hub are organising their annual talent show competition, 'Search for a Star'. We gave pupils the opportunity to sign up for an audition and the response was phenomenal! Acts ranging from singing, bands and instrumental performances all enthusiastically took part. This year we will be taking our newly formed girl band to represent Venerable Bede. The band features pupils from Y7, Y8 and Y9. The event will take place on April 25th 2023 at Sunderland College and tickets to attend will be available in due course.

## EXAM SUCCESS!

Well done Sam and Alex in Y9 who recently passed their ABRSM Grade 5 Piano exam this half term – the boys have worked extremely hard to prepare for this exam and it is a fantastic achievement!



## MUSIC LESSONS

Once again, we've had a number of students sign up and begin lessons during the spring term. They are proving extremely popular with still over 200 pupils accessing lessons on a weekly basis. If anyone is interested in starting peripatetic music lessons during the summer term, please

contact Mrs Bonner for further information.

## EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS

We now have our singing club and a variety of rock bands running before and after school. Due to our Y11 pupils preparing for their exams, there will be a number of changes made to rock bands and rehearsal days/times during the summer term. Please complete the ParentMail response form to give consent to the new band rehearsals. All will restart from Monday 17th April 2023.

SUNDERLAND EMPIRE THEATRE  
THE LION KING

On Wednesday 22 March 2023 we visited Sunderland Empire Theatre for the evening performance of the musical 'The Lion King'. The show was amazing and the pupils were a credit to the school and had a fantastic time.



## FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT ROUNDUP

Contributed by Miss R Wynne



For two weeks every year, thousands of schools, colleges and universities come together to learn from the people who grow what we eat, drink and wear!

Unfortunately, many of the people who do these jobs are often exploited and underpaid. That's why Fairtrade is so important, it allows the workers to be paid fairly for their work. This year's theme for Fairtrade fortnight is all about how "choosing Fairtrade can help save the future of our favourite treats."

We at Venerable Bede have celebrated Fairtrade fortnight. During Fairtrade fortnight we gave

the students an opportunity to think about their future, to look into the work Fairtrade does and its impact on those who need their help and protection to thrive. Students looked at which food in the future could be endangered, if we do not support producers in protecting the future of our favourite food, including coffee, bananas and chocolate.

## PUPIL VOICE UPDATE

Contributed by Miss A Jackson

In March, members of Pupil Voice (School Council and the Bully Buddies), led a whole school worship in the hall in front of their peers on the theme of the week "Respect." We looked at several aspects including what respect means, the idea of respect for others, yourself, the planet and peoples' different beliefs.

All pupils did extremely well and didn't show any nerves, despite it being a very daunting task. Well done again to all who participated!



## YEAR 11 UPDATE

Contributed by Mrs L Pallas

There are only 14 weeks to go until Year 11 Leavers celebrate in style at their school Leavers' Ball. Details are being finalised including dinner menu's and seating arrangements. There will be a letter coming out soon outlining how pupils will be invited to attend and they will then be able to purchase a ticket. Watch this space! Any enquires, please contact Mrs Pallas.





## YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY 2023

Contributed by Mrs R Scott

**Can you relate to any of the statements below...**

- ▶ I can't see my friends or do other activities
- ▶ I sometimes miss school
- ▶ I find it difficult to do homework or study to the best of my ability
- ▶ I can't attend after school clubs
- ▶ I struggle if I can't leave school on time

**If you answered yes to any of these, you might be a Young Carer.**

**A young carer is...**

"a **child or young person** who helps to look after someone in their family who has **got a disability**, an illness, or a mental health, alcohol or drug problem"

As young as 5, up to 18

Most children help out sometimes – but young carers have responsibilities more usual for adults. There is often no one else to take over if they want to stop.

**Young Carers Action Day – Wednesday 16th March**

- ▶ To recognise young carers and the difficulties they face.
- ▶ To gain more support from MP's, organisations, schools and individuals.
- ▶ Pick up a copy

**CARERS TRUST** **SAVE THE DATE!** YCAD 2023 will be on 16 March

**YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY 2023**

Are you a carer or do you know a young carer?

Find out more about how you can support young carers in your school and community. There are many ways you can help, from providing a safe space for them to share their experiences to offering practical support like a place to stay or a car.

Who are young carers?

Young carers are children and young people who have to take care of someone in their family who has a disability, illness, or mental health problem. They often have to do things that are not their job or schoolwork, like cooking, cleaning, or shopping. They may also have to look after someone who is drunk or on drugs.

Wednesday 16th March was Young Carers Day across the country. Venerable Bede marked the occasion through Bistro Workshops.

## What is a Young Carer?

"A child or young person who helps to look after someone in their family who has got a disability, an illness, or a mental health, alcohol or drug problem"

## Who do Young Carers care for?

Most young carers look after their mum. About 15% look after their dad. Some care for both.

Just under a third care for a brother or sister, although many

who care for parents also take on child care.

A small number of young carers look after a grandparent or someone else.

It is our continued aim, as a school, to ensure that Young Carers feel there is provision in place and we meet their needs. We hope to reduce stress around homework, exams, staying after school along with providing a safe place for pupils to access if they feel they are struggling.

If you think your child is a Young Carer, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Mrs Scott at school or send an email:

[CLICK TO SEND EMAIL](#)

## CAREERS UPDATE

Contributed by Mrs G Carr



During the week of March 6th to 10th, we celebrated National Careers Week as a school. During this week, pupils explored the range of career options open to them in the future with their tutors and explored activities around National Careers Week and the theme of careers in general.

Throughout school, we have displayed information for pupils around the skills necessary for future employment and, within their subject lessons, pupils have watched videos on these skills and their relevance both now and in the future.

This was a fantastic opportunity for pupils across all year groups to learn more about life beyond

school and perhaps start to think about their own choices in the coming months and years.

## Year 9 Sunderland College Apprenticeships Talk

During Bistro Worship in February, Year 9 pupils had the opportunity to find out more about Apprenticeships and T Levels as post-16 options when a representative of Sunderland College came in to speak to them.

This has widened the possibilities for pupils and given them more information about the range of post-16 options available to them. This has inspired pupils to start thinking about what might be the right pathway for them and how they can ensure they gain the necessary skills and qualifications to reach their goals at the end of Year 11.



Representatives of Sunderland College have been available in our Bistro during a Year 11 lunch this month in order to answer any questions pupils might have about the courses and experiences open to them at the college. This is part of our ongoing drive to ensure pupils are aware of all of their options come September and that they make the right choice for them.

This was a great chance for pupils to speak one-to-one to representatives of the college and ask any questions that are specific and personal to them.

DEADLINE FOR HANDING IN WORK EXPERIENCE FORM:

**TUESDAY 18 APRIL 2023**