



BISHOP BEWICK

CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

SPRING 2022



A great education has the power to transform lives.

AN UPDATE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



On October 1st 2021 our Trust grew to 31 schools; 5 High schools and 26 Primary schools. It is exciting to consider that by the end of the term (spring of next year), all 39 schools in our Northern region will have joined Bishop Bewick CET. As we approach this landmark, it is worth reflecting upon why embarking on such a venture will benefit the school communities who have taken this leap of faith.

Contained within this newsletter are a number of articles that highlight the many benefits of working within a larger Trust structure, perhaps the most significant one is the story of how St Michael's in Elswick has moved from a school graded Inadequate by Ofsted, to Good with Outstanding features.

The heart of what we want to achieve is to ensure that all our children have access to an excellent education, as through this they will truly have the opportunity to transform their lives. The journey of St Michael's is a powerful example of how by harnessing the strengths we have collectively we have the capacity to support and improve. Currently, similar work is being undertaken across schools who currently need this help and intervention.

Particularly powerful is how the leaders and staff at St Michael's are now themselves supporting colleagues in other schools and becoming the supporters themselves. Their experience of improvement has equipped them to be perfectly placed to take up this mantle of care.

A key value of our Trust is that 'we have to be greater than the sum of our parts'.

This does require a lot from our school leaders. It means they must be open to sharing their resources with other schools, they also need to be open to accepting new ways of working and making changes to their own practice. This does necessitate a lot of energy and determination, but the outcomes are very worthwhile.

I am pleased to be able to report that there are many examples of this happening already in daily practice. Within this newsletter you will see how by working across KS2 and KS3, leaders and teachers are developing high quality curriculums for a number

of subjects. Featured in this edition are KS2 Science and Art. Similarly, curriculum groups established across our 5 High schools are ensuring that middle leaders of many subjects are now collaborating closely around their curriculums, resources and collectively looking to solve any issues faced by their subjects and staff.

Over the course of this year, we will begin to focus on delivering more Trust level professional development to our school staff. Work is currently underway to audit what is already in place and where there are gaps to be filled. One of the lessons learnt from the pandemic has been around virtual meetings. These are now being used to deliver easily accessible sessions for staff.

This half term will include training on curriculum principles and best practice. There is so much talent across our schools, to harness this, we will be establishing a directory of best practice, so that when support is needed, we can quickly match the best people.

Our newly established Governance Advisory Group will be working on ways to collectively strengthen governance across Trust schools, collaborating to ensure the very best practice is shared and acted upon. Our newly appointed Governance Manager, Nick Sanders, will outline in this newsletter his role and the work of this group.

I hope you have a lovely Spring term.

Anita Bath



Governance

Nick Sanders joined the central BBCET team in September 2021 as Head of Governance after many years leading Newcastle's LA Governor Services.

Nick will support governance and promote its importance right across the Trust, working in conjunction with the Diocese, the Trust Executive Team, the Board of Directors, Local Governing Committees, Chairs and Headteachers. The role will bring cohesion, consistency and standardisation, to governance right across the Trust, with an emphasis on advocating and sharing best practice.

Specific areas of focus for Nick so far have been: building a set of generic resources and materials to help with the business of the local Committees - including the production of agenda plans and key governance guidance information; and training and awareness raising opportunities - this has involved the Trust purchasing

access to the National Governance Association's 'Learning Link' e-learning platform and its range of interactive modules aimed at developing governance skills and knowledge across the piece, for all of our LGCs.

Some BBCET training sessions have also been arranged, and further training is planned for the New Year and beyond. The Trust will also be looking at providing access to an online portal for the Board of Directors and all LGCs which will act as a secure central database, document repository and information storage site.

A particular innovation has been the formation of the BBCET Governance Advisory Group (GAG). Chaired by Nick and also involving the Chair of Directors and the Chief Executive. This group predominantly comprises LGC chairs (or other governors) - not acting as elected representatives but simply as 'good governors' - with the remit of 'sitting' between the main



layers of governance (the LGCs and the Board of Directors) to help with communications in both directions and to discuss and advise on cross-Trust governance matters.

A Message from the Chair of Directors



One of my favourite individuals is Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine Monk, whose gratefulness practice instructs us to stop and then use all our senses to notice opportunities that arise around us. If we're too busy we'll never spot them. Opportunities are in some way like gifts that are presented to us; so it's no accident that Opportunity is one of our Trust Goals. A creative force that is constantly opening up new areas of potential for each of us, but we have to be watching out for them.

Our Trust as it matures, generates a wealth of different opportunities. Our success in some way, depends on us all operating in this realm of potential and it is entirely infectious. We know when we meet people who are fulfilling their potential, since they exude a positive energy that makes us feel somewhat more positive ourselves after our encounter with them. Sadly, the

opposite is true when we meet people who drain us as they bemoan the lack of opportunity in their lives. Accepting new opportunities that are open to us whether we are building relationships across schools or even facing difficult times ensures we can approach the future together with shared hope, wisdom and love rather than alone and isolated.

Therefore, we should celebrate the enormous amount of work being carried out by our Executive Team, Governors and Staff to open up these new opportunities each week across the Trust but remember to simply stop and look to notice them coming your way. As a new year begins, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish everyone success for the year ahead. As ever, a huge thank you to all for bringing new opportunities to life.

Dave Harrison



In September 2021, Ofsted conducted a section 5 inspection of St Michael's. As a result of this successful inspection, Ofsted graded St Michael's to be a good school. In addition, they judged behaviour and attitudes and the personal development of pupils to be outstanding.

The journey to this point has been remarkable. In 2017 St Michael's was graded inadequate by Ofsted which came as a huge disappointment to staff and parents. At this point St Michael's joined the early version of our Trust and was supported fully both financially and through key staff who ensured the very best practice was shared with the team at St Michael's. What happened next was a lesson in how, when professionals truly work together for the good of the children, rapid improvement can take place.

So, as a result of the dedication and hard work of staff, children and the wider community, St Michael's has been transformed leading to significant progress in all areas of school life. Our school is now a proud member of the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust and we are now able to offer support and help to other schools who are benefitting from the lessons we have learnt along the way.

'Pupils thrive at this highly inclusive and vibrant school'

Ofsted 2021

St Michael's provides a broad and exciting education, providing children with a secure environment that actively encourages their academic, personal, spiritual and social development. The school has developed a strong reputation for high standards and external checks prove that the school has rapidly improved. At St Michael's children are recognised as individuals and their unique personality, talents and interests are nurtured and developed. The dedicated staff know each child very well and are determined to work hard to ensure they excel in all areas of school life.

'That all pupils will excel. Subject leaders share that vision for the curriculum'

Ofsted 2021

St Michael's offers a positive challenging learning environment that inspires children to achieve high standards and become lifelong independent learners. The school sets consistently high expectations, builds children's confidence and ensures engagement for all.

'Leaders set out clear, aspirational goals in curriculum plans'

Ofsted 2021

At St Michael's the curriculum is ambitious. It is based on the

acquisition of knowledge and skills which are fundamental to learning and will enable children to be the best versions of themselves. Aspirational Campaigns at St Michael's support the children to learn about the world of work through first-hand experience and engagement with the local community. These campaigns emphasise the clear understanding of the link between achieving well at school and getting into an interesting job and career that is not bound by social mobility and gender stereotypes. Through these campaigns, children expand their knowledge and understanding of the world of work, the types of jobs there are and reflect on their own unique skills and qualities.

'Pupils' individual differences are valued and celebrated'

Ofsted 2021

St Michael's is proud to welcome families from a wealth of different cultures and backgrounds and greatly value the rich diversity of the school community. Over 20 languages are spoken at St Michael's, and as such, support for EAL is a big part of school life. The school achieved the EAL gold mark in 2021. St Michael's has an ethos of being fully inclusive and having unlimited aspirations for all its pupils. Furthermore, St Michael's achieved School of Sanctuary status in September 2020.



This recognises that fact that St Michael's is a school that helps its pupils, staff and wider community understand what it means to be seeking sanctuary and to extend a welcome to everyone as equal, valued members of the school community. St Michael's is a school that is proud to be a place of safety and inclusion for all.

'Pupils' behaviour is exemplary'

Ofsted 2021

At St Michael's, every member of the school community feels valued, respected and treated as an individual, in accordance with the school vision which states:

"...I have come that you may have life and have it to the full." John 10:10

Central to this aim is the expectation

that the children and adults of St Michael's display the highest standards of behaviour and treat other people as they would wish to be treated themselves.

'Pupils told inspectors that school is like a family'

Ofsted 2021

St. Michael's strives to create a spiritual environment which is friendly, warm, caring and welcoming- a place where every child is given the best chance to fulfil their potential and achieve ambitious goals.

'Pupils have positive opportunities to develop in many diverse aspects of life'

Ofsted 2021

St Michael's school recognises the rich diversity of language, culture and religion across the school. They have various activities, which promote and enable the pupils to share their culture in school, such as multicultural weeks, language of the month assemblies, cultural art activities, workshops and other events which allow the community to get together and celebrate as one.

As an outward facing school, pupils and staff have strong links with the local community. Community Engagement Week encourages positive interaction with the community, helping children to develop skills, make contacts and improve the quality of life of themselves and others.



'Staff are overwhelming positive about working in this vibrant school. Staff morale is high'

Ofsted 2021

'The word 'vibrant' is a word that to me, defines St Michael's in everything we do. Our children have an eagerness to learn due to the enthusiasm and positivity of the staff. It is the positive culture of the school that drives everything we do. Due to the support from Senior Leaders to develop staff in all areas, the pupils of St Michael's are given the best chance to succeed and thrive in our school which is a joy to be part of each day.'

Sarah Fowler, Teacher at St Michael's



University Wednesday @ St Cuthbert's

Sixth Form students at St Cuthbert's High School have been sampling new activities in the classroom, ranging from cooking to learning sign language.

St Cuthbert's is holding weekly 'enrichment afternoons' as part of its Sixth Form curriculum, which offer a range of different activities for students to become involved with.

"By protecting time on Wednesday afternoons, we ensure that the boys have a common time during the week to do something different. It is a great time in the week and a positive experience for the boys. The students can choose from a range of activities for a rolling six-week period."

Daniel Murray, Headmaster

The idea is modelled on the traditional 'University Wednesday' afternoon where students are encouraged to take part in co-curricular activities.

At St Cuthbert's there is no teaching

or classes scheduled every Wednesday afternoon to allow the entire Sixth Form - more than 200 students - to get involved.

A huge range of activities are on offer to sample over a six-week period, such as cooking, sport, beginners sign language, beginners Spanish, beginners Italian, beginners Mandarin, Extended Project Qualifications (EPQ) and community service.

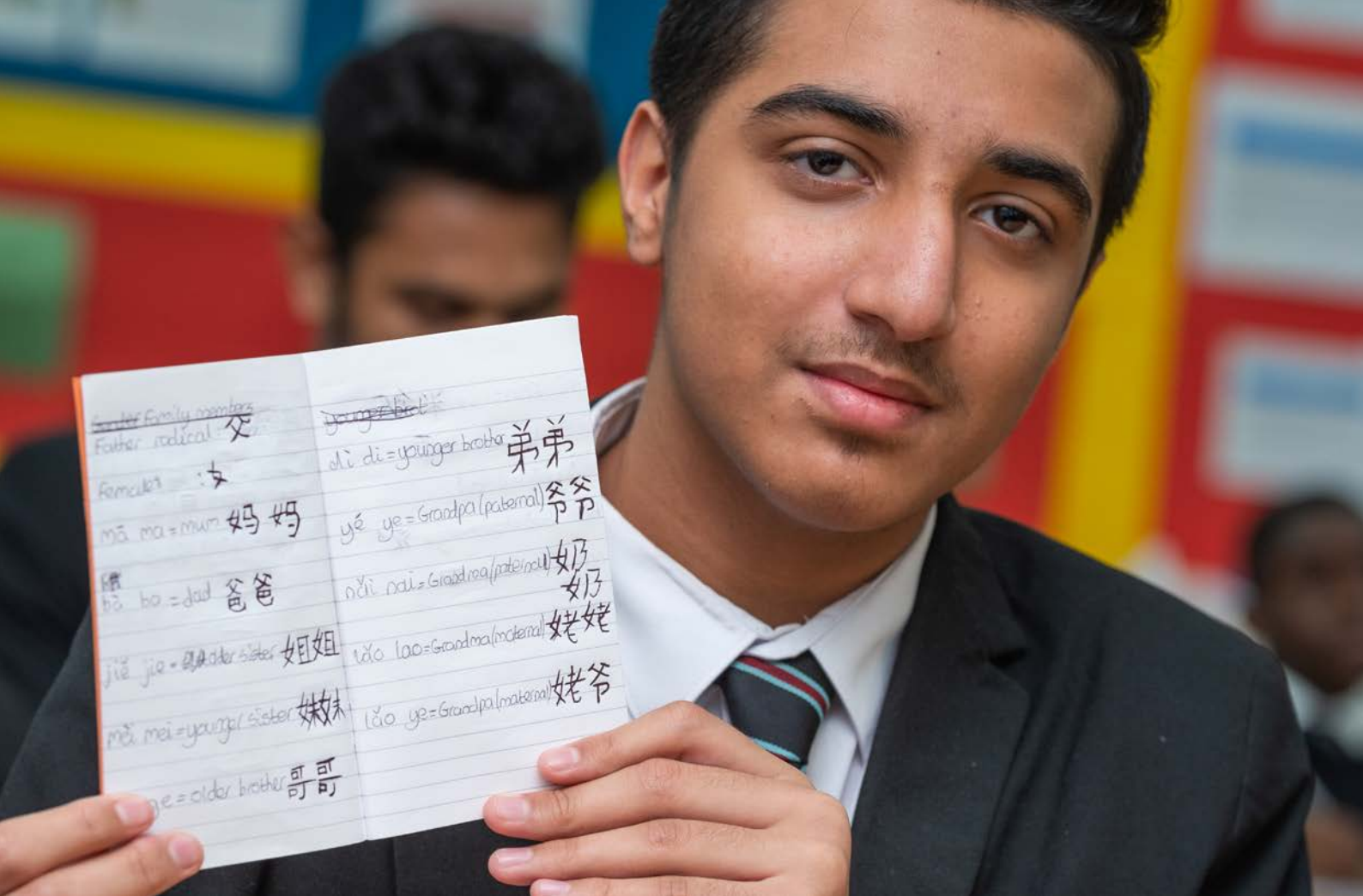
The sessions have been praised by students, who say the skills they are learning will be useful for the future.

The Sixth Form enrichment sessions are part of the school's approach to delivering an outstanding educational experience, which recognises the importance of examination success while developing young people in all aspects of their lives.



Sixth form students at St Cuthbert's say they enjoy being given the independence to learn and study at their own pace.





Quotes from the boys

“Sign language is a very interesting topic which may come up later in life, so it has improved my skills when talking to deaf people.”

“Cooking allows me to improve my skills in the kitchen. It is helpful as it gives me a guide and easy recipes in preparation for university,”

“We are treated as mature young men with time for independent study and reflection,”

“Completing the EPQ means I feel more prepared in the project and organisational skills I will need in the future.”



Key Stage 2 Curriculum Development

In September 2021, five primary curriculum groups were established with the aim of building on a collaborative approach to curriculum design in History, Science, Art, Design and Technology and Geography.

Membership of the groups includes five subject specialists from within Secondary schools and Primary Subject Leaders from 18 Primary schools.

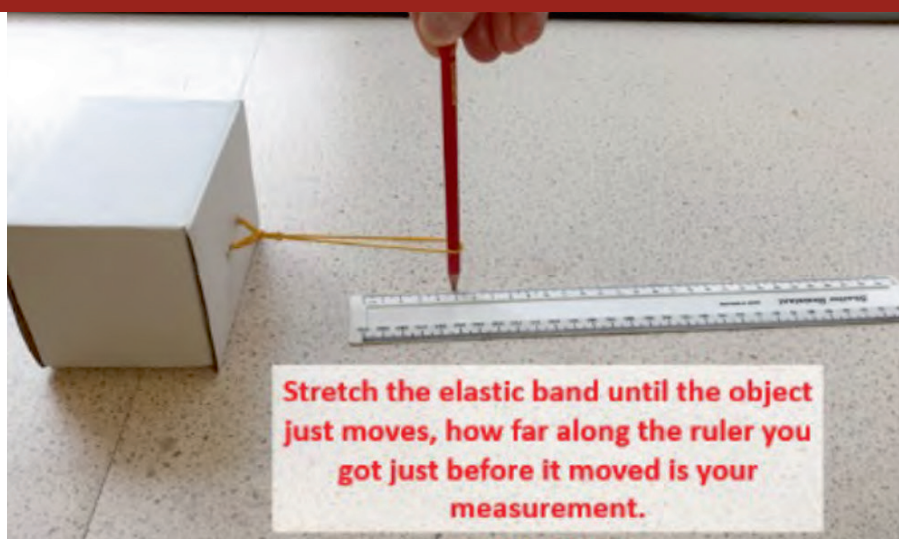
There are two elements to the work so far: firstly, the development and trial of resources for Key Stage 2 which are knowledge rich, well sequenced and support the transition of students

to Key Stage 3. The second element is the provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Primary Subject Leaders by subject specialists to enable them to return to their schools and train staff on a wider scale.

FOCUS ON SCIENCE

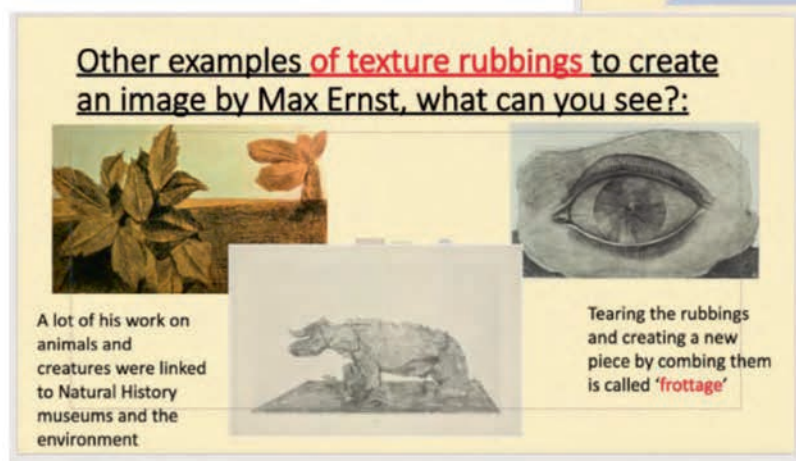
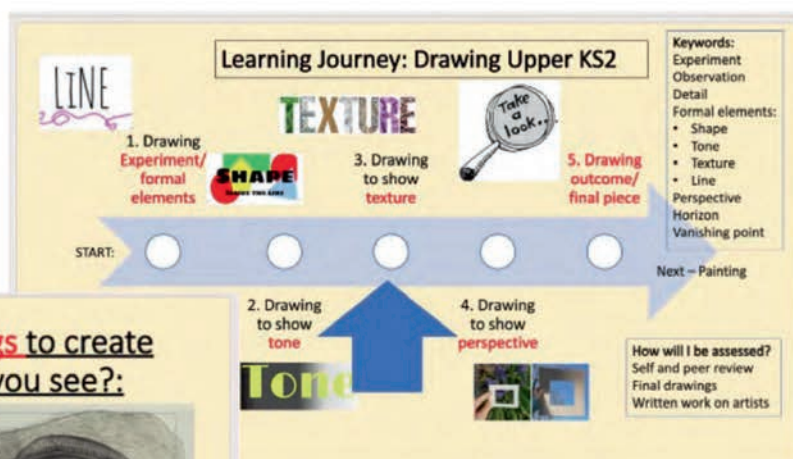
The Science KS2 curriculum group are currently focused on the theme of “working scientifically” which covers planning, running and evaluating experiments.

It is an essential part of the subject in preparing students to be future scientists and must be modelled carefully to allow students to master the basics. The CPD session provided an opportunity to have best practice in conducting experiments and address misconceptions.



FOCUS ON ART

The Art group have been focused on trialling resources within the theme of “drawing”. A CPD session which focussed on using drawing experiments as an engaging way to record texture, line and tone from observation was delivered to support the teaching of this skill.



For more information contact
Louise Banfield

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Our Estates & Environment

Anthony Gollings, Head of Finance and Estates

We all aspire to have great spaces for our young people and staff to work in. The advantage of our schools coming together is that we gain control over the trust buildings and the management of their development and maintenance.

Our Estates strategy states that we want:

- *All of our school buildings to be the physical example of our high standards and ethos.*
- *Every child to benefit from facilities designed to enable and inspire quality learning and young person development.*
- *Our schools to be safe and secure spaces for everyone who uses them.*
- *To do our part to help address the global climate emergency – continually seeking ways to reduce our energy consumption, using sustainable sources of energy and in doing so minimising our carbon footprint*

To help us meet this responsibility and realise our vision, we receive additional funding from the Department for

Education called “School condition allocations” (abbreviated to SCA). This money is in addition to the annual revenue funding schools receive to maintain their buildings, but it will enable us to address the bigger projects some of our schools have.

Having agreed the strategy, we are now in the exciting phase of beginning to make plans to use the SCA funding that will see £8.5 Million invested in our schools over the next three years - with £4 Million of that to be spent in 2022.

These plans will be significantly informed by independent condition surveys of all of our schools by Silverstone, a specialist firm of Chartered Building Surveyors. These surveys were conducted in the Autumn term of 2021 and we'll be sharing these reports with each school once we have

them and asking schools if there's anything else that needs to be done. The plans we develop for our schools will be targeted, transparent and transformational.

One of the things we already know will come out of this exercise is the need to replace old and inefficient halogen tube lighting with new LED lights. Installing LED will not only improve the quality of light in classrooms, offices and corridors, but will also significantly reduce electricity consumption and hence help mitigate the energy price increases we are beginning to see. We anticipate supporting at least a third of our schools with this project and this is just part of the exciting plans for 2022.

We'll keep you informed!

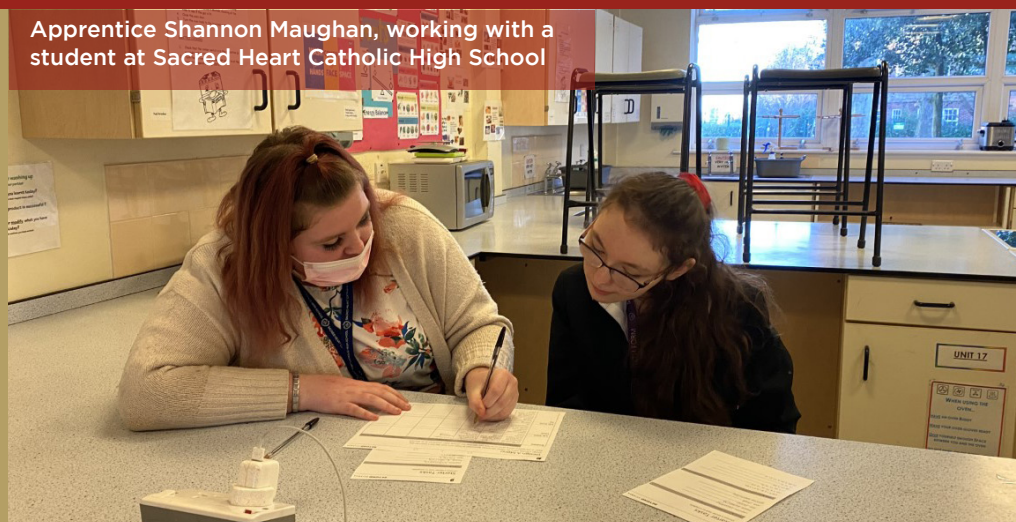
Apprenticeship Schemes

The Trust wide management of all apprenticeship programmes across our schools is a great way to ensure consistency, but also ensures every apprenticeship programme provides value, not just to the Trust and the individual school, but importantly to the apprentice themselves. Thus, there has been Trust involvement for every new and existing apprenticeship programme since September 2021.

The Trust utilises the government apprenticeship service portal and manages the payment of levy charges and training costs on behalf of each school. There are currently eight apprentices across the Trust, doing roles from teaching assistants to business admin, and there are many more in the pipeline.

If you are thinking of taking on an apprentice, now is good time to do so, as the government is running an additional incentive which pays out £3000 for apprentices with an

Apprentice Shannon Maughan, working with a student at Sacred Heart Catholic High School



employment start date before 31st January 2022. This is in addition to the existing bonus of £1000.

The Trust pays for all associated levy and training provider costs so individual schools only pay salaries and these vary depending on the hourly rate offered.

Apprenticeship schemes are a great way to “grow” your own talent pool and ideally develop an individual into a valued member of your team. There are a vast number of programmes out there and all are supported by trainer

providers, which individual schools select. Some may provide day release to attend college whilst others are designed for the student to complete their 20% study whilst in school.

Whatever your circumstances, if you are looking to recruit, consider whether an apprentice could fulfil that role.

Please contact Louise Douds for more information and support
Louise.Douds@st-marys.newcastle.sch.uk



St Alban's Catholic Primary School Fundraiser

Thanks to kindness of donors to a recent fundraiser, a non-school uniform day and massive contribution from the local football team, St Alban's Catholic Primary in Newcastle now have a Defibrillator installed in

school. It can be found hanging within the school entrance, keeping the children of St Alban's safe.

The local Newcastle East End Boys football team presented the school with the sponsorship cheque for £200.



Mini Vinnies of St Cuthbert's joined the COP26 Pilgrimage

St Cuthbert's Catholic First School, Berwick

St Cuthbert's Catholic First School Mini Vinnies, joined pilgrims walking from across Europe on their way to COP26 in Glasgow. The school joined in CAFOD's 'Go Green' and 'Eyes of the World' campaigns this year and then our Mini Vinnies looked at how they link to COP26.

The Mini Vinnies decided to make posters of support for the pilgrims,

which were then presented to them at a prayer service in Berwick Baptist church.

The pilgrims were delighted to see the children and thanked them for their support. The children then joined the pilgrims as they journeyed through the town onto the town walls before leaving them to continue to the Scottish Border.



Welcome to the Trust

**A very warm welcome to the schools who joined the Bishop Bewick Trust on 1st October 2021.
We are now a trust of 31 schools and our final cluster of schools will join us in April 2022.**

1st June 2020	Sacred Heart Catholic High School	St. Benet Biscop Catholic High School	St. Michael's Primary School Elswick
	St. Mary's Catholic High School	Sacred Heart Primary School	St. Peter & Pauls Catholic Primary Academy
1st December 2020	St. Cuthbert's Catholic High School, Newcastle	St. Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Newcastle	St. Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Blyth
	St. Thomas More Catholic High School, North Shields	St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Walbottle	St. Bede's Catholic Primary School, Bedlington
	Our Lady and St. Anne's Catholic Primary School Newcastle	St. Lawrence's Catholic Primary School, Byker	
1st April - 1st May 2021	St. Bede's Catholic Primary School, Newcastle	St. Alban's Catholic Primary School, Newcastle	St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, North Shields
	St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, Westerhope	St. Charles' Catholic Primary School, Gosforth	St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, North Shields
	St. George's Catholic Primary School, Bells Close	St. Paul's Catholic Primary School, Alnwick	St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Cullercoats
	English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Fenham	St. Aidan's Catholic Primary School, Ashington (Delayed)	Star of the Sea Catholic VA Primary, Whitley Bay
1st October 2021	St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School, Gosforth	St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Heaton	St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Wallsend
	St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Elswick	St. Aidan's Catholic Primary School, Wallsend	St. Columba's Catholic Primary School, Wallsend

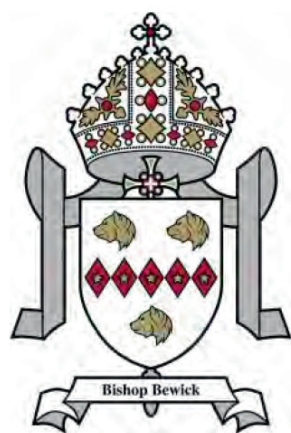
**Newcastle
Schools**

**Northumberland
Schools**

**North Tyneside
Schools**



St. Mary's High School



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St. Mary's High School