

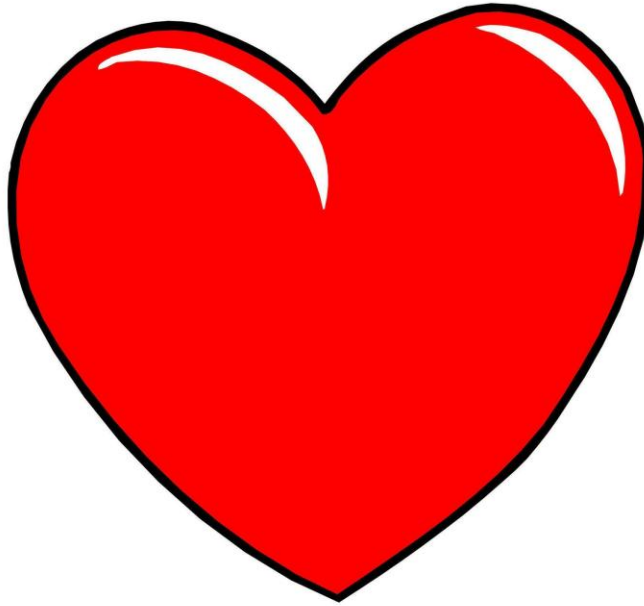


St Patrick's
Catholic Primary School
An outstanding Catholic School



Newsletter: 17th July 2026

Dear Families,



Good luck to our fantastic Year Six pupils as they leave for their new schools. Thank you for everything—you will always be part of the St Patrick's family.

Thank you, to you all: staff, pupils, families, governors, parishioners, trust and diocesan colleagues for another great year. St Patrick's is a wonderful school community, and it is the people who make it such a special place.

On a personal level, thank you for your incredible support over the years. It has been a joy and a privilege to be part of so many shared successes, happy memories and special moments.

You have all been incredibly kind in your gifts and in messages.

Have a lovely summer, everyone, enjoy some well-deserved rest and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Mrs Burgess x

General News

Thank you to our wonderful Year Six pupils for all they have given to our school over the years.



Goodbye from Mrs B1 and Mrs B2!



Parish Newsletter

Please click [here](#) to view this week's parish newsletter for St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's parishes. Here you will find news about upcoming parish events and news.

General News

Summer Reading Challenge

This summer, children are invited to take part in the *Read to the Beat* Summer Reading Challenge.

The challenge encourages young people to keep reading throughout the summer holidays while having fun exploring new books and stories.

By creating a free online profile, children can take part in activities, collect rewards and badges and track their reading progress throughout the challenge.

There is also a Pre-School Zone available, giving younger siblings the opportunity to join in with age-appropriate activities and stories.

Taking part is simple, just visit the website and create a free account to get started.

For full details and to sign up, please visit:

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk>

We encourage all families to get involved and make reading part of their summer adventure.



Online safety

We will give regular updates throughout the year regarding the need for vigilance with online safety. Please alert us to any concerns you may have.

Please see the following guidance and advice from National Online Safety.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SKIN BETTING

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

'Skin betting' is the term used when players gamble using virtual in-game items, such as weapon 'skins' or character cosmetics. Although these items appear purely decorative, some can hold significant real-world value. Research suggests that children as young as 13 have engaged in this type of betting, often on sites with limited age checks or safeguards, blurring the line between gaming and gambling.

UNREGULATED PLATFORMS

Skin gambling typically takes place on third-party websites that are not licensed or regulated. These platforms often lack age verification, making them easily accessible to children. By linking their gaming accounts, users can deposit skins, place bets, and withdraw winnings as cash or higher-value items – often without adults being aware these activities are happening.

REAL-WORLD VALUE

Skins may look like simple cosmetic upgrades to in-game items and characters, but some are worth hundreds or even thousands of pounds. They can be traded or sold on online marketplaces, meaning they function much like real money. When young people bet with skins, they are risking items of genuine financial value, even if no physical cash is exchanged directly.

INFLUENCER PROMOTION

Some gaming influencers and streamers have promoted skin betting sites in their content. This can make the behaviour appear normal or even desirable, potentially encouraging younger audiences to engage in these activities without fully understanding the risks involved.

SOCIAL STATUS PRESSURE

In games such as Counter Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) and Fortnite, rare skins can act as status symbols. Young players may feel the pressure to own high-value items to fit in with peers. This can lead them to take risks – such as using gambling sites – to obtain desirable skins, similar to how branded goods can influence behaviour offline.

LIMITED OVERSIGHT

Skin betting can take place both in-game and on external websites that parents and educators may not be familiar with. Because skin betting does not always resemble traditional gambling, it can go unnoticed until significant losses have occurred, in both items or money.

GATEWAY BEHAVIOURS

Skin betting mirrors many aspects of traditional gambling, including chance-based outcomes, reward systems and excitement. Early exposure to these mechanics can normalise betting behaviours from children and young people even reach legal gambling age. Research indicates that this may increase the likelihood of developing unhealthy habits later, particularly if early wins create a false sense of control or skill.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UNDERSTAND IN-GAME ITEMS

Familiarise yourself with the games young people are playing and learn whether they include tradable or sellable items. Titles like CS:GO and Rust are known for skin marketplaces, but similar systems are increasingly common across games.

LOOK FOR WARNING SIGNS

Be alert to changes in behaviour, such as secrecy around gaming, a strong focus on acquiring specific skins, or a sudden loss of in-game items. These could indicate involvement in skin gambling and provide an opportunity to start a conversation about it.

DISCUSS VALUE AND RISK

Help children and young people understand that cosmetic items like skins can carry real-world value. Explain that losing them through betting is comparable to losing money, therefore reinforcing the connection between in-game actions and real financial consequences.

USE CONTROLS AND SAFEGUARDS

Make use of parental controls and platform settings to restrict trading, purchases, and access to external websites. Where possible, disable marketplace features on games and monitor young people's account activity to reduce the risk of unauthorised transactions.

July Wellbeing Activities

30 Family Wellbeing Activities to Celebrate Summer

- 1 Host a barbeque for family and friends.
- 2 Read a book outdoors.
- 3 Create some outdoor nature art.
- 4 Have a water fight outdoors!
- 5 Make a homemade Eton mess.
- 6 Go fruit picking.
- 7 Do yoga outdoors.
- 8 Plant carrots and lettuce.
- 9 Draw a summer picture for a loved one.
- 10 Go on a rainbow nature scavenger hunt.
- 11 Create a summer scrapbook.
- 12 Make junk model boats to sail on your paddling pool.
- 13 Head to an adventure playground.
- 14 Make a playlist of summer feel-good songs.
- 15 Row a boat.
- 16 Press fresh flowers.
- 17 Tidy an area of the house.
- 18 Have a sunflower growing competition.
- 19 Head to the library and find books about.
- 20 Make ice lollies.
- 21 Go camping.
- 22 Play rounders in the park.
- 23 Write a postcard and send it to a friend or neighbour.
- 24 Go to the cinema on a rainy day.
- 25 Write a summer adventure story.
- 26 Visit a museum.
- 27 Tie-dye a t-shirt.
- 28 Discover a castle.
- 29 Make paper aeroplanes.
- 30 Play tennis.

Take a Brain Break

Find a comfortable place to sit. Breathe in for a count of three and out for a count of five. Do this three times and then, with the next breath you take in, close your eyes if you feel comfortable doing so. Continue to focus on your breathing for as long as you need until you begin to feel calm, settled and relaxed. If your mind wanders and you start thinking about other things, notice this and then simply come back to focusing on your breath.



Take a Brain Break

Go outside or look out of a window. Find a comfortable place to sit and look up at the sky. Take time to really notice what it is like. What is the colour? How does it make you feel? Are there any clouds? If there are, can you see any shapes or pictures within them? Spend as long as you need just watching and noticing until you feel calm, settled and relaxed.



Strawberry and Quinoa Bars

Ingredients

- 2 ripe bananas
- 2 medium eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract
- 100g cooked quinoa
- 150g rolled oats
- 30g raisins
- 1 cup of fresh strawberries (or you could use another fruit, such as blueberries or raspberries)

Equipment

- oven
- traybake tin
- baking paper
- large bowl
- fork
- wooden spoon
- knife
- fridge or freezer
- airtight container or freezer bag

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C-180°C fan/gas mark 4.
2. Then, line a traybake tin with baking paper.
3. Place the bananas into a large bowl and use a fork to mash them.
4. Add the eggs and vanilla extract and mix well.
5. Next, add the cooked quinoa, oats and raisins and mix again.
6. Stir in the chopped strawberries.
7. Put the mixture into the traybake tin and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until firm to touch.
8. Leave to cool and then cut into squares.



Keep the squares in a fridge inside an airtight container for up to three days.

Alternatively, freeze in a suitable bag or container for up to six weeks.

Parent/Carer Information

The Just Love Protect

The Just Love Project are committed to supplying personal and home hygiene care packs to people and families in need, through Food Banks, Schools and other community projects. Packs are available from Dipton Community Centre on Wednesdays from 2pm.



**Anyone can fall on hard times
We all need a little help sometimes
The hardest thing is to ask for it**

To find out how to obtain a hygiene care pack, email us
help@thejustloveproject.org.uk
www.thejustloveproject.org.uk

Free School Holiday Travel for Children

Kids across the North East will get free travel for the school holidays!

Bus, Metro, and the Shields Ferry will allow free travel for up to three children aged 11 and under, when travelling with an adult with a valid ticket or concessionary pass holder during school holidays over the next year.

<https://www.northeast-ca.gov.uk/kidsgofree>



YEAR 5 & 6 OPEN EVENING



We are proud to welcome
you to our Year 5 and Year 6
Open Evening on
Wednesday 23rd September
5.30pm - 7.30pm

*"Pupils are safe, happy
and cared for at this
nurturing school"*
Ofsted March 2026



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St Bede's

Catholic School
& Sixth Form College

Serving Families in North West Durham



Parent/Carer Information



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service

REMEMBER

PHONE, FLOAT, THROW

NEVER enter the water yourself
to help a person or a pet in distress.

PHONE 999 and ask for the fire and rescue service. You
can use the 'What3Words' app to identify your location.

Tell the person in the water to **FLOAT** on their back with
their ears under the water and to use their hands to stay
afloat.

THROW rescue equipment, such as a life ring, to help
them float.

Knowing what to do can save a life.

Parent/Carer Information



If you get into difficulty in the water,

1. Lie on your back with your arms and legs spread in a star shape.
2. Tilt your head back with your ears under the water.
3. Move your hands and legs to help you stay afloat.
4. Try to stay calm and control your breathing.
5. Call for help when you have caught your breath.

Open water can be much colder than expected.
It can cause Cold Water Shock which can affect your
breathing and movement.
There may be hidden hazards like rocks and currents
that can overpower strong swimmers.

Don't get in.

You might not get out.