



St Benedict's
Catholic High
School

1971

PROSPECTUS 2026 – 2027



Through love of Christ, delight in Virtue



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WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL

A very warm welcome to our school. As the new Headteacher, I am delighted to introduce you to our vibrant Benedictine Catholic community in the heart of Whitehaven through this prospectus.

At the very core of our school's identity is the Benedictine value of hospitality—the practice of welcoming every person as if they were Christ Himself. We pride ourselves on creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where every student feels a deep sense of belonging. We believe that when a young person is rooted in love and mutual respect, they develop the confidence to flourish both academically and spiritually.

As a school, we are committed to high expectations, a challenging curriculum, and a dedicated teaching staff who inspire a genuine love of learning. However, we also know that true success extends far beyond the classroom. Through our extensive extracurricular programmes, robust pastoral support, and an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity, we ensure that every child is seen, valued, loved, needed and encouraged to excel in their own unique way.

Choosing the right secondary school is one of the most significant decisions you will make for your child. I hope this prospectus offers a glimpse into our vibrant community, our proud traditions, and our forward-thinking approach.

The first teacher in a Catholic school is Christ. Our values, including dignity, humility, diligence, truthfulness, stewardship, and forgiveness are rooted in our Catholic faith. We also recognise that our pupils need to develop resilience, responsibility, flexibility, and a willingness to operate as part of a team.

Our mission is to provide an education where academic excellence and deep personal growth are harmoniously balanced, rooted in the timeless wisdom of the Rule of Saint Benedict. We seek to cultivate an environment of *Ora et Labora*—prayer and work—where students learn the value of discipline, reflection, and dedication, ensuring they leave us as well-rounded, compassionate individuals.

In keeping with the Benedictine tradition of stewardship, we teach our students to respect and care for the gifts they have been given, using them for the greater good. I look forward to partnering with your family as we journey together in faith, knowledge, and community.

If you are interested in visiting our school, please make an appointment and we will be delighted to show you around.

Mr JP Morrison
Headteacher



OUR CATHOLIC LIFE

Our Motto – “Through Love of Christ, delight in Virtue.”

Our Mission – At St Benedict’s Catholic High School, we are a community of faith and learning rooted in Gospel teachings and inspired by the Charism of St Benedict. Our virtues and values are entrenched in the wisdom gifted to us through the Rule of St Benedict and these permeate every aspect of our school life. Through our love of Christ, we serve our community and through that service we create global citizens who strive not only for academic excellence, but for a fulfilled life guided by Christ and Virtue.

Our Virtues – Our love of Christ leads us to a life of Virtue, and we truly believe that Virtue and Christ are synonymous with one another, and we embed this ideology into every aspect of our learning at St Benedict’s Catholic High School. Our virtues have been specifically chosen with the modern world in mind but also inspired by our school’s original motto ‘*Through knowledge to Truth and Beauty*’. The purpose of our virtues are to gently guide our students into a life of virtue and to give them the opportunity to view the world through the eyes of Christ. To strive for ‘Truth’ and ‘Beauty’ through the gift of knowledge. Our virtues are:

Stewardship

“Regard all utensils as if they were the sacred vessels of the altar” (Rule 31)

Humility

“Let him be humble” (Rule 31)

Truthful Living

“Through this love, all . . . will now begin to be observed without effort, as though naturally, for habit, . . . out of love for Christ, good habit, and delight in virtue.” (Rule 7)

Diligence

“They live by the labour of their hands” (Rule 48)

Dignity

“No one is to pursue what is judged best for oneself, but instead, what is better for someone else.” (Rule 72)

Forgiveness

“Listen...with the ear of your heart” (Rule Book Prologue)



Our school’s ethos is based on Christian principles and Christian ideals but we welcome children from all faiths and traditions and those from none

OUR CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed to take students from the secure close-knit feel of good primary schooling to high levels of independent learning. We always have high aspirations for all our students, support them to progress during their time at St Benedict's, and encourage them to achieve the best that they are able to. We regularly review and refine our curriculum so that it meets the personal needs and interests of all our students, supporting and challenging each individual. Student progress is tracked across all years with regular reports sent home to provide information to parents and carers.

For any student who may not be reaching their full progression potential, we implement a series of interventions to ensure that students achieve their best. We believe that learning should be interesting and enjoyable. While we support students to develop their knowledge and skills, we encourage them to ask questions, develop their understanding and build confidence in their own abilities. We provide our students with a wide range of opportunities for them to develop, both during their time at school, and also externally.

The values and virtues of the Roman Catholic Church are at the heart of everything we do at St Benedict's. We promote care and respect for all and expect high standards in all aspects of school life.

Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of our young people, preparing them for adult and working life in the 21st century. It also enables them to be the best they can be by providing a secure learning environment, a rigorous academic and vocational curriculum, high expectations and best practice in teaching and learning, enhanced by wide-ranging extra-curricular opportunities and excellent pastoral care.



SCHOOL LIFE

The school day starts at 8:35am, where Heads of Year and Learning Mentors will meet and greet each member of their year group with a smile and welcome them into the building.

They will go to their tutor room, where they will begin their day with registration, messages and a prayer.

After tutor time, your child will begin the first of 6 lessons (Monday to Wednesday) and 5 lessons on Thursday and Friday.

There will be two breaks, one which lasts 15 minutes in the morning and then a longer lunchtime break.

	08:35	08:35	08:55	09:50	10:45	11:00	11:55	12:50	13:35	14:30
		08:55	09:50	10:45	11:00	11:55	12:50	13:35	14:30	15:30
Monday	Start of School Day	Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	P6
Tuesday		Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	P6
Wednesday		Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	P6
Thursday		Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	
Friday		Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular clubs & activities here at St Benedict's, which are usually launched in September with our Clubs & Societies Showcase event. From sports, to gardening, languages and much more - we have something to suit everyone!



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal Development at St Benedict's is part of everything we do. Our aim is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, dispositions and habits to promote and support them in leading healthy, happy and fulfilling adult lives. We are ensuring they are understanding of their safety, beyond the school gate.

The entire PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economics) curriculum, which includes Careers and Citizenship develops pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills, relationships, and resilience to enable them to be successful, happy, and confident members of our society with ambition and belief that achievement is for all.

We aim to educate our young people by providing them with a wealth of opportunities, both inside the classroom and beyond the classroom. Our goal is to enable all our students to develop a strong moral code so that they are able to take their place as active citizens, ready to contribute positively to their communities and the wider world around them. We aim to ensure that our students develop into virtuous, confident, and compassionate young adults, who are effective contributors to society, successful learners, and responsible citizens.

We encourage our students to develop a commitment to serving others, to participate in a wide range of activities (both in and outside school), to develop the ability to lead others and, of course, the skills to effectively learn.

We aim to develop character through a variety of approaches including:

- Our school virtues
- An ambitious curriculum for all
- PSHE and HRSE
- Assemblies
- Chaplaincy
- Cumbrian Award
- Charity Work



RELATIONSHIPS

Learning can only take place when there is a strong professional relationship between the teacher and the pupil.

Everything we do here at St Benedict's is geared towards pupils learning right from wrong and taking responsibility for their actions.

We instil into our pupils three key phrases:

Be READY, Be RESPECTFUL, Be SAFE.

These three phrases are the cornerstone of our school code of conduct.

As a parent you will recognise that being ready to learn, being respectful to peers and keeping yourself safe as the elements of a successful learning experience.

GETTING IT RIGHT

When a pupil does something wrong, there is a consequence of restorative justice. When a pupil follows the rules and tries their best they will receive a reward.

Our rewards system is based on attaining achievement points. The more achievement points gained the more rewards that will be given. Our rewards system is based around our virtues medal.



Demonstrating humility, dignity, truthfulness, diligence, forgiveness, stewardship are all the key ingredients of being a good human being and when we see these skills we will promote and reward our pupils.



STUDENT SUPPORT

Our school is fully inclusive and students with additional needs are included in all aspects of life here.

All staff, including the learning support department, work with those students who need additional support within school either academically, socially, emotionally or physically.

This support is largely offered within mainstream classrooms to ensure that all students are able to access inclusive learning and quality first teaching at an appropriate level. Tasks may be modified or scaffolded for individual students. Students are also supported at social times if appropriate.

Some of our students have a wide range of needs, including difficulties in reading, writing, spelling, numeracy, understanding, communication, self esteem, self confidence, behaviour, hearing impairments, visual impairments, co-ordination, mobility, learning difficulties, autism, physical and medical difficulties.

Smaller Teaching Classes

As a school we recognise that there are a small number of pupils who transfer to us, who have been highlighted as requiring additional support by our primary feeder schools. We understand that for some pupils the jump to secondary is a very stressful time both academically and emotionally.

At St Benedict's we have some smaller teaching classes, taught by experienced teachers, who deliver the core curriculum to a small number of pupils at an appropriate level. This class is supported by teaching assistants. This ensures a smooth and successful transition to St Benedict's for all.

On top of this, we also offer additional activities such as horse riding, Forest School and Farm Life to students who may benefit from non-classroom based activities.



OUR FACILITIES

Since 2019 we have been based at Campus Whitehaven in our new £33m school, which was individually designed (not an 'off-the-shelf' model!)

We have fabulous state of the art facilities including a full size, floodlit 4G astroturf pitch, sportshall & activity studio, pool, new grass pitches and tennis courts.

We also have fabulous new science labs, library, music rooms, performance space, design technology facilities and IT suites.



TRANSITION PROGRAMME

Here at St Benedict's, our transition programme begins early in Year 6. The transition from Primary to Secondary school is a significant educational step for our young people, it is both exciting and daunting in equal measures.

This is why at St Benedict's we have a dedicated 'Transition Manager' who leads an experienced team of staff to ensure families are supported throughout the whole admissions process.

Our aim is to ensure parents are informed and students are optimistic and excited about becoming part of our St Benedict's community.

We have an extensive transition programme which commences in the summer term of Year 5 and offers families continued support until students are fully integrated into the care of our excellent Year 7 Pastoral team in September.

If you have any questions or require any more information please do not hesitate to contact us on the dedicated email address below:

transition@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk

OUR TRANSITION TEAM

Mrs Grealish – Transition Manager/Acting Head of Year 7

Mrs Young – Head of Year 7

Mrs McCarten – Assistant Head of Year for Year 7





CONTACT INFORMATION

WEBSITE:

www.st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk/primary-transition

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