



ST LEONARD'S

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

PURSUE EXCELLENCE IN ALL
AND FOR ALL

TAKE CHRIST AS THE MODEL
FOR LIFE

STRIVE TO CREATE
COMMUNITY



WELCOME

to
St Leonard's Catholic School

HISTORY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES

The Catholic Church was the first provider of schools and universities in England.

The earliest schools were cathedral and monastic schools, established from the late sixth century onwards. This growing network was joined by schools based around larger collegiate churches and, from the twelfth century, by the foundation of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and their colleges.

Through its involvement in primary, secondary and higher education, the Catholic Church currently educates over 800,000 pupils across England and Wales in 2245 schools and accounts for around 10% of all schools. As such the Church's stake in education is not only deeply embedded in our country's history, but through its continued collaboration with the state, is something that remains at the heart of the Church's mission, serving the Catholic community and contributing to the common good.





HISTORY OF ST LEONARD'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Springwell Hall, a coal owner's mansion, set in spacious grounds, on the northern outskirts of Durham city, was purchased by the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle in 1935. One year later, on 26th August 1936, Springwell Hall became the home to St Leonard's Catholic Central School.

Changes in the educational system over the years meant that the school later became St Leonard's Modern School and then in September 1970 it changed status again to become St Leonard's School and Sixth Form. The growth in pupil numbers has necessitated building work over the years, but the original mansion house is still at the heart of this thriving school. The school has recently received funding for a state of the art new build on the original historic city centre site.

St Leonard's has ten main primary feeder schools and currently there are over 1450 pupils on roll and over 150 staff. Since those early days in 1936, St Leonard's has grown in stature and reputation, as well as in size: excellent traditions have been established and the school is currently over-subscribed and highly successful.

Sixth Form education started with small numbers in 1970, but at the moment there are over 250 students in the Sixth Form. The students are housed in a spacious new building – appropriately named The Martyrs' Building – as the land on which the Sixth Form block stands is the site where, over 400 years ago, Catholics were executed for the defence of our Faith.

HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

I am delighted to welcome you to St Leonard's Catholic School.

Choosing a secondary school is an important decision for all families. We want to share with you as much as we can about our school. We think St Leonard's is an excellent choice of secondary school, but to help you determine this for yourselves, I encourage you to meet the staff and talk to our pupils, and learn more about the excellent, all round education that we offer. I also recommend that you talk to families whose children attend St Leonard's. I am sure that they will speak positively about their experiences.





TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL TO ST LEONARD'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St Leonard's family of schools consists of:

St Bede's, Sacriston
St Benet's, Ouston
St Cuthbert's, Chester-Le-Street
St Godric's Durham
St Joseph's, Gilesgate

St Joseph's, Ushaw Moor
St Michael's, Esh Village
St Patrick's, Langley Moor
St Thomas More, Cheverley Park
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, Esh Winning

In addition, pupils are also welcomed from many other primary schools across the area.

Our family of schools work very closely with each other to ease the transition from primary to secondary school. We find that most children settle quickly and really enjoy life at St Leonard's, their new school. Parents are often surprised at just how easily their child manages the various changes such as joining a new tutor group, making new friends, travelling, navigating a larger building, and studying new subjects.

Our dedicated Pupil Support Team work hard to ensure that this part of school life is as smooth and exciting as it can be.

CATHOLIC DISTINCTIVENESS

Parents choosing to send their child to St Leonard's are opting specifically for education within the setting of a Catholic school.

We are part of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, and the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, and as such, we belong to the strong family of Catholic primary and secondary schools throughout the North East. This is a very supportive network of schools with whom we share the same ethos.

We are proud of our Catholic tradition and take very seriously our responsibility to nurture our Faith in our young people, and to support them on their spiritual journey through life. We have the huge responsibility of helping to prepare our pupils for this life and their life to come.

We are enriched by children and staff of other faiths, and we are proud of our inclusive approach to spiritual development. We actively seek opportunities in RE, form time, assemblies and the wider school life, to explore how the varying faith traditions complement each other and strengthen us all in our everyday lives.





A CARING SCHOOL

We pride ourselves on being a caring school. St Leonard's is a happy place, where respect for others underpins all of our interactions with one another.

Our aim is to create an environment where every child is loved and known. The welfare of our pupils is vitally important and if there are any concerns, we are committed to dealing with them effectively and swiftly.

Form Tutor

Pupils are assigned to their tutor groups before they arrive at St Leonard's. This is an opportunity for pupils to develop new friendships and form a relationship with their tutor, who will guide them through their whole time at St Leonard's. Within this group pupils will meet daily for prayer and personal development lessons.

Pupil Support Team

We have a dedicated team of both teaching and support staff, who are skilled and qualified in all aspects of pupil care such as counselling, mental health, pastoral and SEND support. As a team we will support all pupils throughout their time at St Leonard's so that every pupil may thrive.

CURRICULUM

The taught curriculum is the way in which we deliver the mission of the school, our aim is for a broad and balanced curriculum.

Key Stage 3

Our teaching class arrangements are a balance between classes which are set based on academic achievement, and mixed ability classes. Pupils can move between sets based on their hard work and progress. Throughout Years 7-9 pupils are gradually taught in more setted classes, in preparation for the GCSE examinations.

Key Stage 4

In Year 10 and Year 11 pupils begin to study a more refined curriculum, tailored to meet their needs. All pupils study for a GCSE in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Religious Education. Pupil's study one of the following Science courses: Triple Science (3 separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) **or** combined Science (pupils still study Biology, Chemistry and Physics and are awarded 2 GCSEs)

Pupils then select 3 options, their first currently being a guided EBacc option: a choice of either Geography, History, French, German or Computer Science and their second and third being from a selection of high-quality GCSE courses including: Music, PE, Art & Design, Technology, and Food Nutrition.

We also offer BTEC & Tech awards in Sport, Health & Social Care and Creative Media.





ENRICHMENT

We encourage all pupils at St Leonard's to become involved in the wider curriculum.

There is so much more to gain from school life than examination success. We want all of our pupils to develop into confident, happy, responsible, well rounded individuals, armed with a wealth of experience to help them achieve and enjoy success and happiness in life.

We run over 60 clubs and enrichment opportunities in school; for example

Chess Club
Art Club
Science Club
Folk Group
Cooking Club

Top Trumps Club
History Club
Magistrates Mock Trial
Warhammer Club
CAFOD Club

Dungeons and Dragons Club
Drama Club
Ancient Greek Club
Debating Club
Crafting Club

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We are amongst the top performing schools in the region. In 2022, St Leonard's was featured in The Times Parent Power rankings for the first time.

Our academic progress is exceptionally high with all pupils exceeding the national average in all subjects by between a half and almost one full grade. This measure, called 'Progress 8', is a measure that indicates how much progress children make between KS2 SATs and GCSEs and is a reflection of the strength of all subject areas across St Leonard's.





ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Outstanding Academic Achievement at St Leonard's.

GCSE Results

89% 9 - 4: Overall

83% 9 - 4: in English and Maths

86% 9 - 4: Maths

91% 9 - 4: English

88.9% 9 - 4: RE

100% 9 - 4: Physics

98.7% 9 - 4: Chemistry/Biology

91.2% 9 - 4: Geography

85.2% 9 - 4: History

83.3% 9 - 4: French

78.4% 9 - 4: Computer Science

100% 9 - 4: PE

100% 9 - 4: Art

100% 9 - 4: Textiles

94.7% 9 - 4: Food & Nutrition

87.5% 9 - 4: Music

SIXTH FORM

Our aim in St Leonard's Sixth Form is to provide both the academic and pastoral support to enable all students to achieve their full potential. Most students at St Leonard's will either study 3 A Level subjects or a BTEC Extended Diploma.

Outside of lessons we have numerous enrichment opportunities for students to take advantage of such as our fantastic senior orchestra and choir, a very successful rowing club and lots of different trips through the year, Opwall expeditions and visits to the theatre. We also have lots of super-curricular opportunities including student-led societies such as the Medical, Engineering and Green Societies, a debating group and Common Roomers our Sixth Form magazine written by students.





OUR MISSION

*Pursue excellence in all and for all.
Take Christ as the model for life.
Strive to create community.*



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Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust