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Education Department Newsletter

9th February 2026

Joan McCarthy
Director of Education

Thank you for taking the time to read the newsletter. I wish you a successful week as you approach the much-needed half-term break.

Thanks to those of you who attended our recent meetings and events. I hope you found them useful, and my thanks to the team for organising them.

Lent is starting soon, and I am truly grateful to all of you who are working hard in preparation for this special time. It would be wonderful if you could continue to take part in the **CAFOD Big Lent Walk** this year - a 200 km challenge over 40 days to help bring life-saving water and support to communities around the world.

👉 **Register here:** <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

Finally, the Winter Olympics began last weekend, reminding us that schools are a bit like winter sports - it takes teamwork, balance, and the ability to keep going even when things get slippery!

Have a great week and an even better half term break.

Joan McCarthy

Ben McMullen
Deputy Director of Education

Venue Change!

Planning Celebrations of the Word & Liturgies, Thursday 12th February

Please note that the venue has changed for the 12th February from St Margaret Clitherow Centre to the Wrightington Hotel, Wigan.

The courses on 9th and 10th February will take place at St Margaret Clitherow Centre as planned.

2026 Census

60 schools have still not completed their census. Please can all schools ensure they complete the process by 11th February 2026. Support is available via the CES Helpdesk [Support : CES Census Helpdesk](#).

Chaplains

Our Lent retreat takes place on Thursday 12th February at Hying Hall, Carnforth. Please can you use this booking link to book your place by Tuesday lunchtime at the latest [Chaplains Lent Retreat \(12-Feb-2026\): ChurchSuite Events](#).

Education Department Calendar 2025-26

Please find attached the latest version of our calendar of events, including booking links.

[Calendar 2025-26](#)

Gill Donohoe

Governance Officer

ACT [Action Counters Terrorism] Awareness

Two sessions on ACT Awareness for our schools (senior leaders or business managers), have been organised – **Link to sign up** - [ACT \[Action Counters Terrorism\] Awareness \(02-Mar-2026 and 03-Mar-2026\)](#)

Monday 2nd March 2026 – 10am till 12noon

St Joseph's Parish Hall, Wrightington, WN6 9PA

[To be delivered by Greater Manchester Police]

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 – 10am till 12noon

St Margaret Clitherow Centre, Liverpool, L17 1AA

[To be delivered by Merseyside Police]

The sessions are, 'a facilitated awareness presentation to a general

audience, which are designed to raise awareness of the threat from terrorism, and actions which can be taken to protect themselves, and their organisation from, or during an attack’.

It does not matter which session you sign up for as the message is the same from both Greater Manchester and Merseyside Police.

Ged Preston, Steve Coyle and Vikki Borlase Secondary School Improvement Team



Upcoming meetings

Tue 24 February 2026

09:00-11.30 **SENDCo Workshop**

Venue: The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please book here](#)

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD Business Workshop**

Venue: The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please book here](#)

Wed 25 February 2026

08:45 – 12.00 **PSHE Leads Workshop**

Venue: The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please book here](#)

13:15 - 15:45 **Safeguarding Leads Workshop**

Venue: The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please book here](#)

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD Criminology Workshop**

Venue: Carmel College, Prescot Rd, St Helens WA10 3AG

[Please book here](#)

Fri 27 February 2025

09:00 - 12:00 **Headteacher (All Clusters) Meeting**

Venue: The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please book here](#)



PSHE Leads meeting 25th February 2026: Ensuring Compliance with the 2025 Statutory Guidance

We are using this meeting to give Julie McCann BA (Hons) PGCE MSc NPQH the opportunity to support us with our preparations with recent statutory PSHE/RSE developments. Below is an outline of the first of Julie's sessions.

We strongly encourage all schools to attend.

This CPD is designed to support PSHE leaders and teachers in understanding and implementing the 2025 statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) as part of your broader Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) programme in time for September 2026.

With significant updates introduced by the Department for Education, this event will provide essential insights into the new expectations and equip participants with knowledge and understanding to ensure compliance.

It will cover:

Key changes in the 2025 RSHE statutory guidance.

New content areas and changes in emphasis including around prevention, help-seeking, technology, personal safety, mental health, and violence against women and girls.

Embedding statutory changes into your existing PSHE programme and school policies.

The importance of knowing your school context and working in partnership with parents and carers and managing transparency effectively.

You will come away with a secure understanding of statutory updates and have developed your own implementation timeline for your setting ready for full compliance by September 2026.

[Please use this link to register](#)



**Developing Mark Boosting Depth in Language and Literature: Mitigate
Grade 3s and Boost Grades 7-9
27th February, 1.30pm until 3.30pm**

Course Overview

A02 is a lynchpin of the Literature and Language GCSEs but too often, although learners can identify writer methods, they cannot write well enough about the effects of writer choices. This session will share ways of developing depth, so that what learners write is not superficial or simply translation of a quotation. In addition, we will look at textual fluency and how learners might be trained to show this off to examiners in order to boost A01 scores.

Also, take the opportunity to learn about high impact resources available under your funded offer or to purchase.

Why Attend?

Last year, schools that worked with us on developing depth improved their results

The content in this session can be reused for team meetings, the development of non specialists, supply and ECTs. It can also be used for full year group master classes or singular classes that need a mark scheme awareness boost.

What will it cover?

Examples of 'how to' to develop depth in learner responses

Learner talk and its role in developing written responses

Making the most of punctuation as a method for analysis

Textual fluency and boosting top grades

Funded or purchasable high impact resources

Who should attend?

Head of English, Post Holders in English, English Teachers and Teams,
Senior Leaders with Line Management responsibility for English

Cost?

Up to four free places for Liverpool Authority Secondary Schools under the
Universal Offer;
£80 per delegate otherwise.

This training session to support English results will take place online.
Materials are provided so that whole teams and learner groups can benefit.

[Please use this link to register](#)



Dance Head of Department meeting
2nd March 2026, 1.30pm until 4.00pm

Company Chameleon
Practical session with
Kevin Edward Turner, Artistic Director

This session will equip teachers with a practical toolkit of tasks and choreographic approaches, carefully designed to unlock students' creativity and spark their imagination. Company Chameleon will share their extensive knowledge and expertise, guiding teachers through different creative processes and exploring how these tools and ideas can be applied to specific themes and the wider curriculum. While the workshops do not focus explicitly on the GCSE syllabus, the creative processes explored are transferable and highly relevant to all KS3 and KS4 qualifications and exam boards.

[Please use this link to register](#)



Secondary School Choir Competition

The Schools Singing Programme would like to invite all secondary schools within the Archdiocese of Liverpool to enter their school choir in the Annual Secondary Schools' Choir Competition.

This year's competition will be judged over two rounds

Round 1: Video Recording of your choir

(submitted by Friday 6th March)

Round 2: Grand final, hosted in the Crypt Concert Room at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, at which each finalist will perform on their own and as part of a collaborative.

(evening of Thursday 21st May)

Since it's reintroduction, the competition has seen three different winners.

2023 - St Bede's Catholic High School, Ormskirk

2024 - St Edwards College, Liverpool

2025 - St John Bosco Arts College, Liverpool

Will we see a new winner this year? Or can St John Bosco retain the title?

Please follow this link for all of the [detailed information you will need to know.](#)

And follow this link to [sign up now!](#)



What Lights Up Your Love of Physics? Competition entries close on 24th February

Only 3 weeks to go! Year 12 students can still enter the 'What Lights Up Your Love of Physics?' Short Video Competition - submissions close 24 February 2026 at 11:59 pm. To inspire your students, here's the **vlog from the previous overall winner**, sharing highlights from her incredible trip to CERN:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/uf6Gdxcdqwk?si=aoJHsNW5a28Us4EG>

Full details and how to apply: <https://physicspartners.com/competition/>

Key details:

1 entry per school (you might hold an internal competition to decide your entry)

Open to Year 12 students in state schools and colleges in England

Solo or Teams of up to 3

Prizes include an overnight event at King's College Cambridge, Amazon vouchers, physics equipment for your school, and the chance to visit CERN

Please get in touch via competition@physicspartners.com if you have any questions



Pearson: Accessible Training Booklet

Pearson exam board have produced an updated booklet of accessible training which is organised by subject and has interactive links direct to the training.

[You can access this via this link](#)



Funded Training Opportunities for Staff in Liverpool Schools

[You can access resources and all free training here](#)

Secondary School Improvement Flyer

Ged Preston and Sandra Martin

Primary School Improvement Team

EY2P Spring Term HT & DHT Briefing

Sign up link: [EY2P Training Events - Spring Term HT & DHT Briefing.\(17-Mar-2026\) · ChurchSuite Events](#)

The Leadership Meeting will...

- Share updates on current national priorities, including: Ofsted Updates & Inspection Toolkit; School Readiness for 2026/27; Nutrition – Food Activities; and sign posting to new documentation / guidance
- Focus on Foundational Knowledge to support reflection on current practice and guide ongoing development in line with the new Ofsted Inspection Toolkit. Key messages and discussion points will include how to:
 - Secure essential foundational knowledge so all pupils make strong progress from their starting points.
 - Track pupil progress across foundational knowledge using secure, manageable assessment and tracking procedures to identify and address gaps in learning.
 - Narrow the attainment gap by removing barriers to learning and enabling successful progression for all pupils.

Provide networking opportunities to share good practice and discuss implications for your school

Securing Strong Progression for Pupils: Using Assessment

Effectively in and Beyond Lessons

12th March 9:30-12:30, St Margaret Clitherow Centre

A 3-hour session for senior, middle and subject leaders to develop a whole school approach to assessment considering how strategies can be used within lessons and beyond the lessons. Leaders will share and consider examples of good practice so that they can develop new systems and approaches or refine existing good practice.

[Securing Strong Progression for Pupils: Using Assessment Effectively in and Beyond Lessons \(12-Mar-2026\) · ChurchSuite Events](#)

Mental Health Xpress KS1 and KS2

Join LLP and the Mental Health Support for Children and Young People in Liverpool Partnership for a livestream especially designed for KS1 and KS2 pupils to explore the Children's Mental Health Week theme of 'This Is My Place.'

This interactive half hour workshop will include interactive activities, videos created by Liverpool school pupils about belonging and lots of opportunities to get involved.

As this is part of our ICB-funded work, this session is available to all Liverpool schools at no additional charge.

[Mental Health Xpress KS1 – Liverpool Learning Partnership](#)

[Mental Health Xpress: KS2 – Liverpool Learning Partnership](#)

Safer Internet Day – 10th February 2026

Education Resources

[Education Resources - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Deacon Paul Mannings

Secondary School RE Adviser

p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk

When booking diocesan CPD events please see the calendar and brochure for details and links. Unless otherwise stated most courses take place here at the St Margaret Clitherow Centre, with any exceptions clearly noted.

The God Who Speaks

Here are the February resources and those for 1-7 of the month have been deliberately included:

Our February focus: **Leaning into Lent: Not my will, but yours...**

Matthew 26:36-46

www.godwhospeaks.uk/

New Biblical Resource for 'Dilexi Te: On Love for the Poor'
For Parish Group Discussions - www.godwhospeaks.uk/dilexi-te-parish-bible-resource/

And attached.

1st February – Racial Justice Sunday

Church for all People - www.godwhospeaks.uk/church-for-all-people/

Racial Justice in our Parishes - www.godwhospeaks.uk/racial-justice-in-our-parishes/

Table Fellowship in the Kingdom of God - www.godwhospeaks.uk/table-fellowship-in-the-kingdom/

Lazarus Come Out: Living the Authentic Self - www.godwhospeaks.uk/living-the-authentic-self/

2nd February - Feast of the Presentation of our Lord

www.godwhospeaks.uk/presentation-of-jesus-in-the-temple-reflection/

www.godwhospeaks.uk/poems-for-the-feast-of-the-presentation/

7th- 14th February - National Marriage Week resources

Marriage Week Bible Novena - www.godwhospeaks.uk/novena-marriage-week/

Marriage of Mary to Joseph in Art - www.godwhospeaks.uk/marriage-of-mary-to-joseph-in-art-and-tradition/

Covenant Love: Marriage in the Bible - www.godwhospeaks.uk/marriage-in-the-bible/

18th February – Ash Wednesday & Lent

Lent Resources - www.godwhospeaks.uk/lent-and-eastertide-resources/

Lent Powerpoint Prayer & Action Resource - www.godwhospeaks.uk/lent-calendar/

Lent and Holy Week Posters - www.godwhospeaks.uk/lent-and-eastertide-creative-resources/

From Liga Pare: Resources for Racial Justice

I want to make sure you are provided with the link to the school resources for Racial Justice Awareness, published and available for download on the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales website: [Resources for Racial Justice Sunday 2026 - Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)

We would be very grateful if you could share them widely, so they can reach as many schools and students as possible.

From Rainbows/Spectrum (Bereavement Care)

If you are not a Rainbows/Spectrum school and would like to know more about our work, there will be facilitator training on 18th March at the Resource Centre, Maricourt Maghull. Please see the [attached information](#). If you are a Rainbows/Spectrum school and need additional facilitators trained, please complete the [attached form](#).

CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES CCRS

Assignment Resources

As we move towards half term and enter the period of assignment preparation, here is some guidance for the use of resources. Each of the core modules has a recommended text, which is optional yet reliable as a foundation reference. Be selective when using online information and ensure the content upholds Catholic teaching. Never hesitate to use session notes and to offer examples from your own professional experience. When citing references, try as far as possible to refer to those in your bibliography, using your own commentary to justify their inclusion.

Specialist Modules 1 and 2

Note that these occur during March and each session is of two hours duration. There is one session for each year group.

Dates of remaining sessions for the current academic year

A copy of the schedule is [attached](#).

CCRS Contacts:

All academic, attendance, progress
issues: Dcn Paul Mannings
p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk

Finance, registration and all
contact details renewals: Paul Crilly
p.crilly@rcaol.org.uk

Update: Archdiocese of Liverpool's presence on X

Thank you to our schools who took part in our communications survey regarding the school's use of X (formally Twitter).

The results of the survey demonstrated that a number of our schools have moved or are planning to move away from the channel due to ethical and moral reasons. A high percentage of our schools (79%), would follow us if we removed ourselves from X.

It has been decided that due to these reasons, the archdiocese will no longer be posting on X.

The account will temporarily remain open with a message directing users to our other active social media accounts.

If your school would like any support with moving away from X, or training on how to use other social media platforms, please contact our communications manager Lizzie Williams on: e.williams@rcaol.org.uk

To view current school vacancies, please click on the link below:-

Vacancies

If you would like to add a vacancy or a news article to the newsletter, please email j.ball@rcaol.org.uk

If your school would like a hard copy of the Catholic Pic Newsletter please contact communications@rcaol.org.uk

Catholic Pic Newsletter

Missed the last newsletter? Click on the button below to view it!

Education Department Newsletter W.C. 2/2/2026

Thank you for taking the time to read the newsletter. Wishing you every blessing for the week ahead.



St Margaret Clitherow Centre

Liverpool Archdiocesan Office | Croxteth Drive | Liverpool | L17 1AA



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