

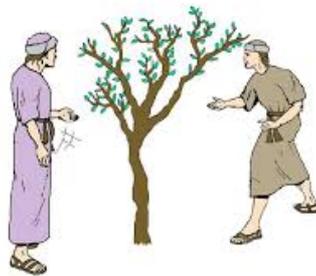
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## Education Department Newsletter

**9th March 2026**

**Joan McCarthy**  
Director of Education



This Sunday's Gospel (Luke 13:1-9) reminds us of Jesus' invitation to reflect, repent, and grow. In the parable of the fig tree, the gardener asks for more time to nurture it - to cultivate the soil, enrich it, and help it bear fruit.

As headteachers, this image speaks directly to our role. We are the "gardeners" of our school communities: creating the right conditions for pupils and staff to flourish, especially when growth is slow or challenges arise. The Gospel reassures us that patience, encouragement, and careful tending can bring about transformation in others - and in ourselves.

Lent invites us to pause and ask: *Where does our school community need nurturing? Where might we give more time, compassion, or support?* With God's grace, our daily leadership can help our schools bear fruit in hope, kindness, and renewed purpose.

I am looking forward to catching up with all of you at the Headteachers cluster meeting soon. Please make note of the dates.

Welcome back to Michael Boland who returned to work last week after his recent illness. It is great to see him so well.

Thanks to all those schools who had representatives attend the Counter Terrorism training offered last week by Merseyside police. Thank you to Gill Donohoe for coordinating these events.

On Tuesday and Wednesday this week, Liverpool will be hosting the Diocesan Schools Commissioners conference. Thanks in advance to the Widnes Catholic Children's choir who will be singing at the Mass.

Have a good week.

Joan

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## Headteacher Cluster Meetings

Please note the Headteacher cluster meetings are fast approaching and we look forward to seeing you there. Please note that the schools in Sefton are welcome to attend one of the other sessions. Please book your place [here](#).

DATE	TIME	VENUE	LOCAL AUTHORITIES
Monday 16/3/26	9.30-11.30am	St Margaret Clitherow Centre, L17 1AA	Liverpool
Monday 16/3/26	1.30-3.30pm	The Engine Rooms, Warrington WA3 6YN	Warrington & Halton
Wednesday 18/3/26	9.30-11.30am	Mercure Hotel, Haydock WA11 9SG	Knowsley & St Helens
Wednesday 18/3/26	1.30-3.30pm	The Edge, Wigan WN3 5AB	Lancashire & Wigan

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## Ben McMullen

Deputy Director of Education

### Towards 2027 – Review of the National Framework for the Inspection of Catholic Schools

Please find below a letter from the Chief Inspector to schools inviting contributions to the review of the National Framework for the Inspection of Catholic Schools, with any changes to be implemented from September 2027.

This consultation seeks the views of those involved in the life and mission of Catholic education, including school leaders, staff, governors, clergy, and parents. It focuses on the process, substance, and outcomes of inspection, while confirming that the fact, purpose, and areas of inspection are not under review.

I would be grateful if you could circulate the letter below widely within your communities, particularly with parents, governors and parish clergy .

#### [Towards 2027 - Letter for schools](#)

The consultation survey can be accessed here:

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=SSQzRY2fT0OpjMB_Xy63KLfjEZ6a7UxMnONEDY6s8p5UNEtRRUNCVTdKQTVUMzFXR0tITk1ENFINNy4u)

[id=SSQzRY2fT0OpjMB\\_Xy63KLfjEZ6a7UxMnONEDY6s8p5UNEtRRUNCVTdKQTVUMzFXR0tITk1ENFINNy4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=SSQzRY2fT0OpjMB_Xy63KLfjEZ6a7UxMnONEDY6s8p5UNEtRRUNCVTdKQTVUMzFXR0tITk1ENFINNy4u)

The deadline for responses is **1st May 2026**.

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## Prayer and Liturgy

This week we are holding the third in our series of Prayer and Liturgy courses. ***Come to the Father – Singing and Music*** takes place today and Wednesday. We have had a great response to our previous two courses with 317 colleagues attending *Come to the table – Guidelines for Prayer and Liturgy* and 232 attending *Come hear his Word – Planning Celebrations of the Word*. On behalf of our team, thank you for supporting these events.

There are still places available on Wednesday 11th March, please book [here](#).

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## Headteachers' Spirituality Day: 'Space for Grace'

We look forward to joining Headteachers on Thursday for *Space for Grace* at Theodore House, Stonyhurst.

Please use the postcode BB7 9QB to find your way to the college.

If you would like to attend, please book [here](#).

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**Admissions Presenting Officer Training**  
**Appeals Training**

A reminder that we have two important training events coming up this week for the Appeals process. These are for individuals who represent their school or academy at school admission appeals:-

Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Admissions Presenting Officer Training	10am-12.30pm	St Margaret Clitherow Centre	All schools and colleges	<a href="#">Book here</a>
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Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Admissions Presenting Officer Training	6.30pm-8.30pm	Online – Zoom	All schools and colleges	<a href="#">Book here</a>
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We are also running training for Panel Members. This is suitable for new panel members or those who would like a 'refresher training'.

Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Appeals: Panel Members training	10am-12.30pm	St Margaret Clitherow Centre	All schools and colleges	<a href="#">Book here</a>
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### Education Department Calendar 2025-26

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

Calendar 2025-26

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## Ged Preston, Steve Coyle and Vikki Borlase

Secondary School Improvement Team



### Upcoming meetings

Wed 11 Mar 2026

14:00 – 16:30 **Physics Partners Programme Session 5 (Magnetism and Electro-Magnetism)**

Venue: St Edmund Arrowsmith CHS, Rookery Ave, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan WN4 9PF

Tue 17 Mar 2026

09:00 - 16:00 **Maths 'Engineering improvement v's improvement through intervention - Finding the balance' with Katie Kaye from Promise Education**

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

[Please book here](#)

Wed 18 Mar 2026

09:00 – 11:30 **HoD Health & Social Care Workshop**

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

[Please use this link](#)

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD Creative i-Media Workshop**

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

[Please book here](#)

Thu 19 Mar 2026

**09:00 – 11.30 HoD Computer Science Workshop**

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

[Please book here](#)

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

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

[Please book here](#)

Wed 25 Mar 2026

**09:00 - 11:00 Numeracy Coordinator meeting**

Venue: St John Fisher Catholic High School

[Please book here](#)

Thu 26 Mar 2026

**09:00 - 16:00 Making a difference for Year 11 outcomes in Science now...and in future years' event with Karen Parker from Holy Family Catholic High School**

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

[Please book here](#)

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**Computer Science Heads of Department meeting  
19th March 2026**

We have arranged for an external presenter to attend our upcoming Computer Science HoD meeting on 19th March at The Wrightington Hotel.

Sam Goodall-Walker from MGL World will present on the following:

- Understanding and baselining a child's experience of technology
- KS3 mapping, understanding staff and student cognitive load and well being
- KS4 Core Computing, how do we meet the National Curriculum strands if we don't have timetables?

[Please use this link to confirm attendance or to send apologies](#)

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## **New Events for Maths and Science Leads**

### **Maths 'Engineering improvement v's improvement through intervention - Finding the balance' with Katie Kaye from Promise Education 17th March 2026**

We have organised a session for Maths Heads of Department and your SLT line manager if appropriate (2 places available per school) to attend a full day 'Engineering improvement v's improvement through intervention - Finding the balance' with Katie Kaye from Promise Education.

This will take place 9.00am until 4.00pm (lunch included) on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March at The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please use this link to confirm attendance or to send apologies](#)

### **Making a difference for Year 11 outcomes in Science now...and in future years' event with Karen Parker from Holy Family Catholic High School on 26th March 2026**

We have organised a session for Science Heads of Department and your SLT line manager if appropriate (2 places available per school) to attend a 'Making a difference for Year 11 outcomes in Science now...and in future years' event with Karen Parker from Holy Family Catholic High School.

This will take place 9.00am until 4.00pm (lunch included) on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at The Wrightington Hotel, Moss Ln, Wrightington, Wigan WN6 9PB

[Please use this link to confirm attendance or to send apologies](#)



## **Introducing the Pearson Invigilation Service**

Pearson are piloting a new invigilation service, providing DBS-checked, trained and certified invigilators who can be used for any exam or assessment – not just Pearson.

[You can access the flyer and draft contract here](#)

Costs are £23.50 per hour, based on minimum of 2.5 hour with hourly increments following that and 30 min increments charged at £12.00.

Price includes enhanced DBS and Safeguarding/Conflict of interest is also covered.

**If you would like to sign up for this service or would like further information please contact David Hill at [david.hill@pearson.com](mailto:david.hill@pearson.com) Tel - 01709 660052**



**REMINDER**  
**Student Public Speaking Competition 2026**  
**Registration now open!**

You can now register your interest for this year's Student Public Speaking Competition [here](#). The confirmation email will contain a link to the topic list and rules.

Please note this form will close on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May and we will then contact those who have registered an interest to ask for further details (Student names, topics chosen etc.)

Contestants must be between 11 and 14 years of age on the day of the contest, Years 7, 8 and 9 only (maximum of 2 students from each school)

**The list of topics:**

1. How will artificial intelligence and technology affect future jobs, and what skills should students focus on?
2. "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." – John F. Kennedy
3. Would a four-day working week make society better?
4. We are drowning in information and starving for wisdom.
5. Mars vs. Earth: Should we spend our money reaching for the stars or saving our own home?
6. Does it matter whether our leaders are honest and trustworthy?
7. Should children under 14 be allowed on social media?
8. Does society only listen to loud voices?

**Competition Dates and Venues**

Tuesday 30th June 2026 (West Cluster) 10am until 12pm at Archbishop Beck Catholic College, Long Ln, Liverpool L9 7BF

Wednesday 1st July 2026 (Central Cluster) 10am until 12pm at Carmel College, Prescott Rd, St Helens, WA10 3AG

Wednesday 8th July 2024 (East Cluster) 10am until 12pm at St John Rigby College, Gathurst Rd, Orrell, Wigan WN5 0LJ



**Funded Training Opportunities for Staff in Liverpool Schools**

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

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## Dave Smith and Sandra Martin

Primary School Improvement Team

### **ECM - Securing Strong Progress 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](#)

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### **Headteacher Quads**

We are inviting expressions of interest for our new Headteacher Quads initiative, launching later this year. Each Headteacher will visit the schools within their Quad. The aim is to create small groups of headteachers from different local authorities so they can visit one another's schools, share experiences, explore different contexts, and support each other's leadership journey. Before the visits begin, we will hold a short virtual meeting in the final term of this academic year to introduce each quad, and give time for groups to agree possible dates, focus areas, and what they would like to see or share during their visits. Please complete this short form if you would like to take part. Your responses will help us match schools in the most meaningful way. Thank you for your interest in supporting this new collaborative opportunity across our Archdiocesan family of schools.

EOI form: [Headteacher Quads – Fill in form](#)

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### **Early Years Conference for Practitioners with Ruth Swailes**

17th March 9:30-15:30, St Margaret Clitherow Centre

Join us for an inspiring conference designed for Early Years practitioners, bringing together the latest research and real-world practice to explore how we can offer the highest quality education for our youngest children in an ever-changing landscape. Ruth Swailes will share valuable insights into child development, current research findings, and a wealth of practical strategies that delegates can implement immediately.

[Early Years Conference with Ruth Swailes for Practitioners \(17-Mar-2026\) · ChurchSuite Events](#)

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### **Free inclusive maths CPD for primary schools in Merseyside**

We're pleased to share that nasen has secured funding from the [Pilkington Charitable Trust](#) to support primary schools in Merseyside to improve numeracy outcomes for pupils with SEND.

As part of this project, your school is invited to access **free CPD** from nasen. This includes the following recordings which are part of the Inclusive Maths for Primary Settings series:

- Strategies to support learners with SEND
- Approaches to working with learners who have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Techniques to support autistic learners with mathematics and problem-solving

You can access the recorded webinars via the Vimeo link below, until 15th May. Please ensure that you fill out the [pre-evaluation link](#) first.

[Access webinars](#)

Once you've watched the recordings, and [completed the evaluation](#), you'll have the opportunity to attend a [live drop-in session](#) with one of our Education Officers (19th May, 4pm until 5pm, on Zoom). This session is designed to give you time to ask questions and reflect on the content.

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## Pat Peel, Julie Rourke and Julia Ashton

Primary School RE Advisers



### Picture News Special Resource – Middle East

With the recent news about the Middle East, Picture News has created a special resource for you – please find [attached](#).

*This story should be shared in a calm, factual and reassuring way. Avoid graphic details, images of conflict or political debate. Emphasise that the events are complex, happening far away, and that many adults and organisations are working towards safety and peaceful solutions. Provide reassurance to pupils and allow space for questions, as some children may have personal connections to the region.*

We hope this is all useful at this time.

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## Deacon Paul Mannings

Secondary School RE Adviser

[p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk](mailto: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

Our March theme is **Reconciled through the Cross** as we explore reconciliation this Lent -

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/reconciled-through-the-cross/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/reconciled-through-the-cross/)

15<sup>th</sup> March: Mothers' Day and Mothers in the Bible - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/mothers-in-scripture/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/mothers-in-scripture/)

19<sup>th</sup> March: Feast of St Joseph - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/saint-joseph/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/saint-joseph/)

25<sup>th</sup> March: Feast of the Annunciation - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/women-in-scripture/mary/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/women-in-scripture/mary/) and [www.godwhospeaks.uk/celebrating-our-lady/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/celebrating-our-lady/)

29<sup>th</sup> March: Palm Sunday - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/symbols-in-holy-week/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/symbols-in-holy-week/)

Scriptural Meditation on Bellini's painting of 'The Agony in the Garden' - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/setting-us-free-agony-in-the-garden/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/setting-us-free-agony-in-the-garden/)

All our Lent resources here: [www.godwhospeaks.uk/lent-and-eastertide-resources/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/lent-and-eastertide-resources/)

Fleur will be leading 'Prayer for the Day' on BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds from 21<sup>st</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> March.

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**CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**CCRS**

- **Year 2 Specialist 2:** This scheduled session takes place on **Tuesday 17th March from 18.30 online.** Remember to allow two hours because this module runs at the rate of one session per term. To qualify, all three sessions must be completed. Details and the link will be sent to you early next week.
- Specialist module assignments are not due until the end of summer term for Year 2 and early in the autumn term for Year 1. We shall send specific dates in due course. Please note there is just one assignment due for whichever module you are completing.
- We have started a very effective contact system between students and tutors should any help be required. Contact Deacon Paul initially.
- Please keep Paul Crilly updated with any changes of addresses or schools.

#### CCRS Contacts:

All academic, attendance, progress  
issues: Dcn Paul Mannings  
[p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk)

Finance, registration and all  
contact details renewals: Paul Crilly  
[p.crilly@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:p.crilly@rcaol.org.uk)

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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](mailto:j.ball@rcaol.org.uk)

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If your school would like a hard copy of the Catholic Pic Newsletter please contact  
[communications@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:communications@rcaol.org.uk)

#### Catholic Pic Newsletter

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

#### Education Department Newsletter W.C. 2/3/2026

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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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