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Education Department Newsletter

5th May 2026

Joan McCarthy
Director of Education

Welcome back after another week. I do hope you enjoyed the Bank Holiday and were able to have some well-earned rest.

Thank you once again to all of you who attended the launch days with Archbishop John in Liverpool and Wigan. It was a joy to be able to launch the vision and strategy for our Catholic schools and colleges. Thank you also for your emails, conversations, and generous suggestions. These will support us greatly as we move forward into this new era of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

Our Gospel reading at Mass over the weekend came from the Gospel of John (14:10–12), where Jesus reminds us that faith is lived through action. He tells the disciples that his words and works flow directly from his unity with the Father, and that those who believe in him are called to continue this mission. As Jesus

says, "Anyone who believes in me will perform the same works as I do, and even greater works."

This Gospel challenges and encourages us in our shared vocation: to make our faith visible through what we say and what we do, ensuring that our schools and colleges are places where belief is actively lived out in service, compassion, and hope.



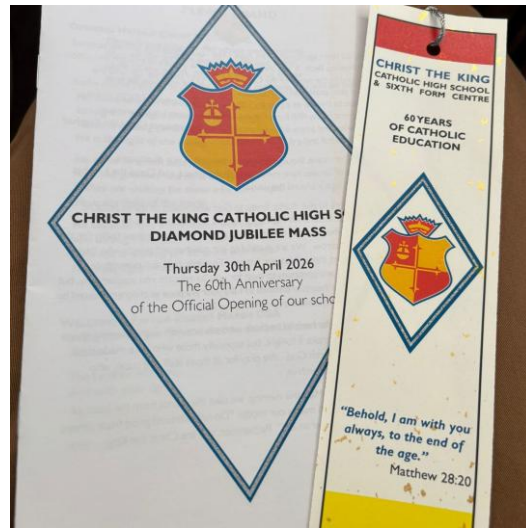


Ben McMullen
Deputy Director of Education

Christ the King High School 60th Anniversary Mass

Last Thursday evening I had the great pleasure of attending a Mass for former pupils and staff to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Christ the King, Southport. This was the school I attended for seven years, and I was delighted to share the occasion with a dozen of my friends from our year group. After a joyful celebration of Mass guests were invited to freely wander around the whole school. It was a surreal experience for me to revisit classrooms and recreational areas with my mates, recalling our memories and talking about how our experience of a Catholic school not only gave us an education but also formed us into the people we are today. A huge thank you to Erin Wheeler, Headteacher

and Dennis Jones, Chaplain and the whole 60th Anniversary Committee for organising a very moving evening for us all.



Senior Leadership Spirituality Day

Our retreat day 'Space for Grace' for Senior Leaders takes place next Wednesday at Theodore House, Stonyhurst. Led by Sheila McNamara, this will be an opportunity for time out, silence, reflection and prayer. Bookings are now closed but I added a few extra spaces when submitting the final numbers. If you would like to attend, please send me an email to j.ball@rcaol.org.uk.

Calendar for 2026-2027

I am working on our calendar of events, meetings and courses for next year. If you have any recommendations or suggestions for what you would like us to provide in terms of training and formation, please let me know.

Education Department Calendar 2025-26

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

Calendar 2025-26

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



Upcoming meetings

Thu 7 May 2026

1 5:30 – 1 7:00 **Physics Partners Programme (Space) Final Session**

Online meeting

[Please book here](#)

Wed 10 Jun 2026

9:00 – 1 1 .30 **Professional Learning Leads (All Clusters) Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

Wed 17 Jun 2026

9.00 - 1 5:30 **New to SENDCo (Primary and Secondary colleagues) Session 3**

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

1 5:30 - 1 7:00 **Aspiring SENDCo Course (Primary and Secondary colleagues) Session 3**

Venue: Via Teams

Thu 18 Jun 2026

09:00 – 1 6:00 **Safeguarding Leads Conference**

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

[Please book here](#)



**The National College CPD and Compliance Management
Refresher Online Session: Secondary Schools 4.00-4.45pm on
Wednesday 6th May 2026**

This session is for **secondary schools** and will provide a refresher on The National College platform, covering both **CPD** and **Compliance Management** — formerly The School Bus.

[Colleagues can join this session via the Teams link here](#)

The session will cover:

Welcome and session overview

A brief introduction to the purpose of the session and what will be covered

Review of current usage and good practice

An overview of how secondary schools are currently using the platform, including examples of good practice and areas where schools may be able to increase engagement.

CPD membership refresher

A walkthrough of the Professional Development platform, including the breadth

of training available for secondary schools across safeguarding, statutory compliance, SEND, curriculum, subject-specific CPD, leadership, pastoral care, governance and role-specific development.

Compliance Management refresher

A demonstration of the Compliance Management module, including access to policy templates, checklists, risk assessments, guidance documents and other editable templates available to schools.

Platform setup, compliance tracking and reporting

An overview of new and existing functionality, including learning plans, user groups, assigning compliance training, monitoring completion and using reporting tools to evidence compliance across school teams.

Questions and discussion

Opportunity for schools to ask questions, discuss local requirements and clarify how to make best use of the platform.



**Student Public Speaking Competition 2026
Registration closes on 15th May**

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 15th May

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, Prescot Rd, St Helens, WA1 0 3AG

Wednesday 8th July 2024 (East Cluster) 1 0am until 1 2pm
at St John Rigby College, Gathurst Rd, Orrell, Wigan WN5 0LJ



Physics Partners Programme 2026/27

We will again be running the Physics Partners Programme for 2026/27 and programme dates can be found below.

This free programme is open to all schools who wish to have a science teacher(s) who will attend six sessions through the academic year (mixture of online and in-person sessions). It is aimed at colleagues whose science specialism isn't physics and the focus will be on teaching practical GCSE.

It is expected that colleagues will commit to all six sessions, but there is an option to advise if this is not possible. Additionally, this is open to colleagues who previously attended and missed a session. They are welcome to register again and attend an individual session.

[Bookings are now open via this link and a further reminder will follow in early September](#)

Online sessions run 3.30pm-4.30/5.00pm (Via Teams)

Face-to-face sessions run 2.00pm-4.30pm at St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School, Rookery Ave, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan WN4 9PF

Session 1 Thu 1st Oct 2026 - Particles, atomic structure, radiation and waves

at St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School

Session 2 Thu 5th Nov 2026 - Electricity (Teams)

Session 3 Tue 24th Nov 2026 - Energy

at St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School

Session 4 Wed 3rd Feb 2027 - Forces (Teams)

Session 5 Wed 10th Mar 2027 - Magnetism and Electromagnetism

at St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School

Session 6 Tue 4th May 2027 - Space (Teams)



Funded Training Opportunities for Staff in Liverpool Schools

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

Dave Smith, Sandra Martin and Andrea Gerrard
Primary School Improvement Team

Best Practice Network

30th June 9:15-11:30 - St Margaret Clitherow Centre

The Best Practice Network is a collaborative professional learning event designed to bring primary school leaders together to share effective practice, reflect on improvement journeys, and learn from one another in a supportive, non-judgemental environment.

The network prioritises high-quality practice and impact, rather than inspection or compliance, and is underpinned by professional trust, openness and meaningful local collaboration.

Each session showcases schools that are willing to share their improvement journeys honestly, including successes, challenges and key learning.

All presenting schools have recently been inspected under the new Ofsted framework and will be sharing their school improvement journey. Please see the link below for more info and to book your place.

[Booking link](#)

The National College CPD and Compliance Management Refresher Sessions —

Primary Schools

5th May 4pm

[Teams link](#)

7th May 4pm

[Teams link](#)

Agenda / Meeting Description:

This session is for Archdiocesan primary schools and will provide a refresher on The National College platform, covering both CPD and Compliance Management — formerly The School Bus.

The session will cover:

Welcome and session overview

A brief introduction to the purpose of the session and what will be covered.

Review of current usage and good practice

An overview of how schools across the trust are currently using the platform, including examples of good practice and opportunities to maximise value.

CPD membership refresher

A walkthrough of the Professional Development platform, including the breadth of training available for primary schools across safeguarding, statutory compliance, SEND, curriculum, leadership, pastoral support, governance and role-specific development.

Compliance Management refresher

A demonstration of the Compliance Management module, including access to policy templates, checklists, risk assessments, guidance documents and other editable templates available to schools.

Platform setup, compliance tracking and reporting

An overview of new and existing functionality, including learning plans, user groups, assigning training, monitoring completion and using reporting tools to evidence compliance.

Questions and discussion

Opportunity for schools to ask questions, discuss local requirements and clarify how to make best use of the platform.

Disadvantaged Students - Ensuring inclusion, securing outcomes - POSTPONED

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we have had to postpone this training. to 30th November 2026.

We will be contacting all delegates who signed up with further information in due course.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

[Booking link](#)

EY2P Summer Term Training Sessions

Summer Term EYFS Leadership Network Meeting

Tuesday, 19-May-2026

1 :00pm - 4:00pm

[Booking link](#)

Connecting with Nature - The Growing Curriculum

Wednesday, 20-May-2026

1 :00pm - 4:00pm

[Booking link](#)

Summer Term Headteacher & Deputy Headteacher Briefing

Tuesday, 16-Jun-2026

1:00pm - 3:00pm

[Booking link](#)

Early Years Conference for Senior Leaders

Thursday 21st May 2026 | 9:30am–3:30pm | St Margaret Clitherow Centre

Senior leaders are invited to a full-day Early Years conference led by Ruth Swales, focusing on child development, current research and practical strategies to support high-quality EYFS practice. Drawing on extensive classroom, leadership and advisory experience, Ruth will share ideas that can be applied immediately while keeping children firmly at the heart of provision.

[Booking link](#)

Rescheduled Training Session: Securing Strong Progression for Pupils

The session "Securing Strong Progression for Pupils: Using Assessment Effectively in and Beyond Lessons" has now been rescheduled to **Thursday 18th June, 9:30am–12:30pm** at the St Margaret Clitherow Centre. This 3-hour course, led by Karen Morris (ECM), is designed for senior, middle and subject leaders looking to strengthen whole-school approaches to assessment. The session explores effective in-lesson and beyond-lesson strategies, examples of good practice, and what 'strong progress' looks like across Years 1–6. Delegates will leave with practical tools and a clear action plan to support improved outcomes back in school.

[Booking link.](#)



**Child Safety Week Resources - Child Accident Prevention Trust
1st - 7th June 2026**

[Child Safety Week 2026](#)

[Display Pack](#)

[Parents' Pack](#)

Deacon Paul Mannings
Secondary School RE Adviser

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

Support for non-specialists in Religious Education

As we continue this course in the next academic year the aim is to fine-tune planning by assuring that items to be covered are submitted in advance. The course itself will develop to include online as well as live sessions. It would be helpful please to gauge how many schools will be supporting this provision.

Thanks in advance.

New heads of Religious Education

This consists of a total of four sessions in the Autumn and Spring terms. If schools could contact me with details of any new department leads, once appointed, that means I can begin to get in touch.

Training Days for Key Stages 3 and 4

These will continue each term with a focus upon RED resourcing and all aspects of GCSE.

CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES CCRS

New Students

We are now ready to begin welcoming new students for September. Nine have already signed up. Please contact us as soon as you are ready because places will become limited.

Existing Students

Thanks so much for the prompt and careful submission of assignments. We have begun a very productive term!

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



Catholic Education Service
Since 1847

Judaism Q and A - May 2026

Anna Silver's monthly Q and A 'Any questions' zoom session to support teachers in their teaching of Judaism will take place on:

Monday 11th May, 2026 3:45-4:45pm

It's free and informative!

News from around the Archdiocese



Could your school benefit from a Cathedral Chorister?

Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral is welcoming applications for children in Years 2–5 to join its Cathedral Choir. Alongside developing exceptional musical skills, choristers bring valuable experience back into school life.

Benefits to your school

- Strengthened links with Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral
- A confident, well-trained pupil able to support school music
- Enhanced leadership and peer mentoring among pupils
- Increased musical aspiration and participation
- Opportunities for your school to be represented at major events
- Clear contribution to personal development and cultural capital

What to do next

Sign up for a Chorister Recruitment Assembly, and a member of music department staff will come to your school and tell your children all about chorister life. <https://forms.gle/yaQVnwSYiXzGrXYZ7>

Events at Liverpool Hope University

Event 1: Marketing Network Event

Target Audience: Business Managers, HR Managers and Marketing Leads in Schools/MATs.

The Marketing Breakfast Network

 Thursday 4th June 2026
 Creative Campus, Liverpool Hope University,
Shaw St, Liverpool L6 1HP
 8.00am - 11.00am

Join our **FREE networking breakfast** for Marketing professionals and Business Managers to discuss industry trends and scale your marketing talent.

Register today at:
www.hope.ac.uk/apprenticeships/newsandevents/

Hosted by:



In an increasingly competitive educational landscape, effective marketing is no longer optional - it's essential. Join the Apprenticeships Team at Liverpool Hope University at their upcoming Marketing Network Event, perfect for Business Managers, HR Managers and those leading marketing efforts within Schools, MATs and Trusts.

Why attend?

- **Peer networking:** Build valuable relationships not only with education-based peers but also with marketing professionals from the wider business world. This is a unique opportunity to exchange ideas, build connections and gain fresh perspectives from outside the 'education bubble.'
- **Expert insights:** Learn how modern, cross-industry marketing strategies can be tailored to improve school visibility, staff recruitment and community engagement.

- ◆ **Collaborative learning:** Share challenges and discover innovative solutions regarding digital delivery, brand management and strategic communications.

Don't miss out on this chance to strengthen your school's voice.

- ◆ **When:** Thursday 4th June 2026, 8.00am - 11.00am
- ◆ **Where:** Creative Campus, Liverpool Hope University, Shaw Street, L6 1 HU
- ◆ **Register today** or visit: www.hope.ac.uk/apprenticeships/newsandevents/ for more information.

Event 2: Special Education Network Forum

Target Audience: Headteachers, Education Leaders and SENDCos (Primary & Secondary).



Special Education Network Forum

Friday 3rd July 2026
Hope Park Campus, Liverpool Hope University,
Taggart Ave, L16 9JD
8.45am - 2.00pm

Join our SEND Forum for Education Leaders to explore digital innovation and specialist staffing strategies.

Register today at:
www.hope.ac.uk/apprenticeships/newsandevents/

Hosted by: 

Join the Apprenticeships Team at Liverpool Hope University this July for expert-led discussion focused on high-quality SEND provision. Open to leaders across both special and mainstream settings (in both Primary and Secondary settings), this forum features a line-up of expert speakers and workshops dedicated to supporting SEND delivery in schools and academies.

- **When:** Friday 3rd July 2026, 8.45am - 2.00pm
- **Focus:** High-quality provision and leadership in SEND.
- **Location:** Hope Park Campus, Liverpool Hope University L16 9JD
- **Register today** or visit: www.hope.ac.uk/apprenticeships/newsandevents/ for more information.

**These events are hosted by The Apprenticeships Team at Liverpool Hope University. As part of our commitment to supporting the education sector, we provide these networking opportunities alongside our specialist apprenticeship programmes to help schools and academies build a sustainable, highly-skilled workforce.*

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

Education Department Newsletter W.C. 27/4/2026

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!

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 | L1 7 1 AA



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