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Education Department Newsletter

11th May 2026

Joan McCarthy
Director of Education

Prayer for Those Doing Exams

Loving God,
Be with all who are preparing for and sitting exams at this time.
Grant them calm hearts and clarity of mind.
Help them to recall what they have learned,
to manage their time wisely,
and to approach each challenge with confidence.
Bless all teachers and staff who support them,
giving them patience, encouragement, and strength.
May all our school communities be places of care,
hope, and perseverance.
We ask this in your name.
Amen.

.....

As we enter a significant period in the academic year, with examination season now underway across our schools and colleges, and with Year 6 SATs week having begun, we hold all of our pupils, students, and staff in our thoughts and prayers.

This is a time that brings both challenge and opportunity. We recognise the dedication, resilience, and hard work shown by our young people in preparing for their assessments, and the unwavering commitment of school staff who support, guide, and encourage them every step of the way. Your leadership and care continue to make an invaluable difference within your communities.

We also extend our sincere condolences and prayers to the school community of St Mary's School, Little Crosby, following their recent bereavement. At times like this, our collective compassion and solidarity are especially important, and we keep them close in our thoughts.

Thank you to all who have submitted questions and comments regarding the recent academisation launch. Your engagement is appreciated, and we encourage you to continue these conversations. Further information and updates can be found in the academisation section of our website [Academies](#).

Thank you again for your continued leadership and dedication during this important time in the school year.

Ben McMullen
Deputy Director of Education

Spirituality Day for Senior Leaders

Thank you to those who attended last week's Spirituality Day at Theodore House. It was a lovely day and feedback has been very positive about this retreat experience. The final day in the series is on 9th June for RE Leads (primary and secondary) and Chaplains.

Catholic Schools Inspections

Please note that there are no inspections this week due to SATs.

Non-attendance on Events and Courses

If you have booked on one of our events or courses and are unable to attend, please let us know with as much notice as possible. Last week 6 people did not attend the Spirituality Day but we still get charged by the venue for catering.

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

Michael Boland

Education Estates

Emergency Response Buildings

For major incidents (e.g. a fire or major flood) where a significant clean-up or making-safe operation is required, schools have access to a disaster recovery firm. The relevant disaster recovery contractor for all Archdiocesan schools is **Rainbow Restoration, Unit 50 Weaver Industrial Estate Blackburne Street Liverpool L19 8JA**. Rainbow's 24-hour contact details (in the order in which you should seek to make contact) are:

Vicky Elder 01623 422488, 0151 486 0606 or 07747 093 984

For any wider out of hours emergencies, schools have access to contractors that have completed the Archdiocese of Liverpool vetting and pre-qualification process – contact details in the information [attached](#) which you may wish to print out and keep handy.

Insurance Claims

If you are unfortunate enough to need to make a claim for damage to the school building, it will be vital that you **inform area surveyors** of any damage, contact from insurers and any proposed works to be carried out. These works will need to be administered through our process for projects so that we can maintain oversight on capital works that are being carried out on school buildings.

Ged Preston, Steve Coyle and Vikki Borlase

Secondary School Improvement Team



Upcoming meetings

Wed 10 Jun 2026

09:00 – 11:30 **Professional Learning Leads (All Clusters) Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

Wed 17 Jun 2026

09:00 - 15:30 **New to SENDCo (Primary and Secondary colleagues) Session 3**

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

15:30 - 17:00 **Aspiring SENDCo Course (Primary and Secondary colleagues) Session 3**

Venue: Via Teams

Thu 18 Jun 2026

09:00 – 16:00 **Safeguarding Leads Conference**

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

[Please book here](#)



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, WA10 3AG

Wednesday 8th July 2024 (East Cluster) 10am until 12pm 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](#)

Secondary School Improvement Flyer

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](#)

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 Swailes, 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](#)

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.](#)



AI and Cyber Security for UK MAT Leadership - 15th May 2026

We've been made aware of this free event. Please see the link below if you wish to sign up.

[Booking link](#)



Rail safety education materials for pupils aged 3–16 are available via the Switched On programme, led by Network Rail. The website provides free, age-appropriate, curriculum-linked resources to support personal safety education, including lesson materials, videos and classroom activities. These resources are designed specifically for schools and can be accessed [here](#).

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!

Our May theme is **The Coming of the Spirit** – www.godwhospeaks.uk/

The In-Between Times Poster: Easter to Pentecost

www.godwhospeaks.uk/easter-to-pentecost-free-poster/

14th May: Feast of the Ascension

www.godwhospeaks.uk/beyond-the-cloud-the-ascension-of-christ/

Ascension: The Cloud of Knowing

www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-cloud-of-knowing-the-meaning-of-clouds-in-scripture/

24th May: Pentecost Day: Birthday of the Church

www.godwhospeaks.uk/pentecost/

Pentecost Novena for Young People

www.godwhospeaks.uk/pentecost-novena-young-people/

Pentecost Activities

www.godwhospeaks.uk/pentecost-activities-resource/

A Guide to the Holy Spirit

www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-acts-of-the-apostles-a-guide-to-the-holy-spirit/

Pentecost, Liturgy and some Pastoral Ideas

www.godwhospeaks.uk/liturgy-celebrate-pentecost/

31st May: Feast of the Most Holy Trinity

www.godwhospeaks.uk/sign-of-the-cross/

Celebrating Trinity Sunday

www.godwhospeaks.uk/liturgy-celebrate-trinity-sunday/

May is the Month of Mary – why is she associated with the Lily and the Rose?

www.godwhospeaks.uk/mary-month-of-flowers/

Visual Commentary on Scripture: Abraham's Early Life and Journey into Canaan by Professor Susan Docherty

<https://thevcs.org/abrahams-early-life-and-journey-canaan>

Specialist assignment submissions

These are due in on 11th September according to the usual requirements for sending and for presentation. Clearly, like all school terms, this one is particularly busy so we would ask you to consider a stage-by-stage approach to completion, so ensuring you have plenty of time for a well-earned summer break. This might enable you to enjoy the practicality of the assignment tasks.

Headteachers

If school is generously supporting your CCRS fees, please ensure the head is kept informed of progress. We shall do the same.

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

News from around the Archdiocese



**YOUTH PILGRIMAGE
50TH ANNIVERSARY
SHARE YOUR
MEMORIES!**

This year marks **50 years** of the **Archdiocesan Youth Pilgrimage** to Lourdes, and we'd love your help to celebrate this special milestone by sharing your memories.

Please send your memories and/or photos to
communications@rcaol.org.uk
by **13 May**.

communications@rcaol.org.uk

Share your Youth Pilgrimage Memories!

This year marks 50 years of the Archdiocesan Youth Pilgrimage to Lourdes, and we'd love your help to celebrate this special milestone by sharing your memories.

Did you meet your partner on the pilgrimage?

Have several generations of your family travelled to Lourdes?

Were you part of the very first pilgrimage, or did you experience a moment there that stayed with you forever?

Whatever your memories or experience – we want to hear from you!

Please send your memories and/or photos – to communications@rcaol.org.uk by **13th May**.

Selected submissions may be featured in The Pic, on the archdiocese and Animate's website and social media channels, and in a special scrapbook of memories being created for the youth pilgrims travelling this year.

Please note: *By sharing photos with us, you confirm that you are happy for them to be used in archdiocesan publications and that you have obtained permission from everyone pictured, or from their family if they are deceased.*

The flyer features a blue background with a photograph of three children in white choir robes. One child is holding a red book with a gold logo. The text is in white and yellow. Logos for the Metropolitan Cathedral and the Archdiocese of Liverpool Music are at the top.

Metropolitan Cathedral
of Christ the King Liverpool

Archdiocese of Liverpool
MUSIC

SING. LEARN. BELONG.

Could *your* child become a cathedral chorister?

Children in **years 2-5** who love to sing are invited to apply to join the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir.

Why join?

- Make new friends*
- Build confidence*
- Receive a fully-funded world-class musical education*
- Perform in an iconic cathedral*

SCAN HERE

Applications are still open for children to audition for the Cathedral Choir at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral.

Choristers receive a high-quality musical education and take part in regular services and special events in one of the country's most iconic cathedrals. Children also have the opportunity to grow in confidence, develop lasting friendships, and be part of a supportive and inspiring community.

We would be very grateful if you could share the attached flyer with your school community, particularly with pupils in Years 2–5 who enjoy singing.

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:  **Apprenticeships**
AT LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

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 1HU
- **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:



Apprenticeships
AT LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

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. 5/5/2026

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 | L17 1AA



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