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## Education Department Newsletter

**7th September 2026**

**Joan McCarthy**  
Director of Education

### **Welcome Back**

As the new academic year begins, this Sunday's Gospel offered us a timely reminder of the importance of relationships, community and reconciliation. Jesus encourages us to speak with one another honestly, to support each other when challenges arise, and to remember that where people come together in faith, He is present among them. As our schools and colleges begin another year of service, learning and formation, this message speaks powerfully to our shared mission. We are strongest when we work together, support one another and keep Christ at the centre of all we do.

For those schools returning this week, I wish you a happy and successful new academic year. To those who welcomed pupils back last week, I hope your first week went well and that routines are already settling into place.

This is a particularly busy and exciting week for the Archdiocese as we welcome the Apostolic Nuncio on his pastoral visit. On Thursday, we look forward to celebrating our annual Education Day Mass at St Mary's, Leyland, with representatives from schools across Lancashire and pupils involved in our Schools Singing Programme. My sincere thanks to all schools for their support in helping to make this celebration possible.

During his visit, the Apostolic Nuncio will also spend time at St John Rigby College and attend an evening service with the Lay Chaplains of the Archdiocese. These visits provide a wonderful opportunity to showcase the many strengths of Catholic education across our diocesan family. There is much of which we can be proud, and we are honoured to share the excellent work taking place in our schools and colleges.

As always, please remember that my colleagues and I are here to support you. Included in this newsletter is a list of key contacts and email addresses should you need assistance during the year ahead.

I wish you all a happy and productive week.

## Joan McCarthy

### Education Team Key Contacts

|                   |                                  |                                                                      |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Julia Ashton      | Primary RE Adviser               | <a href="mailto:j.ashton@rcaol.org.uk">j.ashton@rcaol.org.uk</a>     |
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| Dcn Paul Mannings | CCRS / Secondary RE Adviser      | <a href="mailto:p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk">p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk</a> |
| Sandra Martin     | Primary School Improvement       | <a href="mailto:s.martin@rcaol.org.uk">s.martin@rcaol.org.uk</a>     |
| Joan McCarthy     | Director of Education            | <a href="mailto:j.mccarthy@rcaol.org.uk">j.mccarthy@rcaol.org.uk</a> |
| Maria McGarry     | Diocesan Schools Officer         | <a href="mailto:m.mcgarra@rcaol.org.uk">m.mcgarra@rcaol.org.uk</a>   |
| Ben McMullen      | Deputy Director of Education     | <a href="mailto:b.mcmullen@rcaol.org.uk">b.mcmullen@rcaol.org.uk</a> |
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| Dave Smith        | Primary School Improvement       | <a href="mailto:d.smith@rcaol.org.uk">d.smith@rcaol.org.uk</a>       |
| Jenny Truddaiu    | CSI/Governance Administrator     | <a href="mailto:j.truddaiu@rcaol.org.uk">j.truddaiu@rcaol.org.uk</a> |

## Ben McMullen

### Deputy Director of Education

### Catholic Schools Inspectorate

Please note that we are now working on Version 5.0 of the CSI Handbook to reflect the fact that we are now beginning the fifth year of CSI inspections. Please find the new version of the handbook and supporting materials at [Catholic Schools Inspectorate | Schools](#)

I will be delivering 'refresher' training tomorrow on CSI for schools that are due to be inspected in this academic year. Please use the booking link below:

|                              |                                                  |                     |      |                                  |                           |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tues 8 <sup>th</sup><br>Sept | CSI for schools due to be<br>inspected this year | 9.30am –<br>12.30pm | LACE | Catholic Schools<br>Inspectorate | <a href="#">Book here</a> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|

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## Chaplaincy

A warm welcome to our new school chaplains. I have written to all chaplains to inform them of the schedule of training and meetings for this academic year. All Chaplains are invited to Evening Prayer with the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain on Thursday evening at St Anne and Blessed Dominic Church, St Helens at 5pm.

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### Calendar for 2026-2027 Autumn Term

Please find attached our Calendar for the Autumn Term.

Calendar 2026-27

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**Michael Boland**  
Education Estates

### Annual Assurance Document - Education Estates Strategy

The Archdiocese of Liverpool has requested that **all schools** ( including academies, joint faith, independent, Religious Order schools and sixth form colleges that sit within the estate of the archdiocese) complete an **annual assurance review**. This has been developed to establish whether schools and academies are meeting their compliance obligations and are ensuring that the site is safe and suitable for learning. This was identified as part of the launch of the Education Estates Strategy at briefings held in June 2025.

Please note that **governors are responsible** (and **Trust Boards** within MATs) for the maintenance and compliance of schools and should ensure that they have appropriate contracts, processes and procedures in place.

Completing this document will align with the requirements set out within the **Archdiocese of Liverpool Estates Strategy** and associated documents such as the **Archdiocesan Protocols** and the **Occupancy Document**.

The assurance document will be a **Microsoft Form** distributed on an annual basis. The Archdiocese of Liverpool will **arrange visits to schools** to evaluate the responses and to establish whether appropriate processes, procedures and provisions are in place. This will initially be conducted on a random selection basis. The link to the form is:

[Microsoft Form](#)

We would ask that the form is completed and returned by **31st October 2026** as this is the first time of asking. In future, we would expect the form to be submitted by the end of the academic year. Any schools that do not submit the forms by the due date will be contacted directly by the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

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## School Capital Programme 2026 2027

The School Capital Programme has been approved by Trustees and is now available on the website [Capital Programme 2026 2027](#). Area surveyors will work with schools identified for support to enable projects to progress. We have tried to ensure a focus on making schools safe, warm and dry as a priority as reflected in our Education Estates Strategy. As you will be aware, we have a limited budget and would like to do much more if we had funds available. The information provided by schools and surveyors will be kept and used to form the basis for future projects in order to assure schools that the process is both ongoing and transparent.

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### Ged Preston, Steve Coyle and Vikki Borlase

Secondary School Improvement Team



#### Upcoming Events

Tue 15 Sep 2026

08:30 - 09:30 **Environment Network Group Meeting**

Via Teams

[Please book here](#)

Thu 17 Sep 2026

09:00 - 11.30 **New to SENDCo (Session 1) for Primary and Secondary colleagues**

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

[Please book here](#)

13:00 - 15:30 **SEND EYFS (Primary colleagues only)**

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

[Please book here](#)

15:45 - 17:00 **Aspiring SENDCo (Session 1) for Primary and Secondary colleagues (Teams)**

[Please book here](#)

Mon 21 Sept 2026

09:30 - 11:00 **East Headteacher Meeting**

Venue: St Peter's Catholic High School, Howards Lane, Orrell,  
Wigan WN5 8NU

[Please book here](#)

Tue 22 Sept 2026

08:00 - 09:30 **West Headteacher Meeting**

Venue: St John Bosco Arts College, Storrington Ave, Liverpool L11 9DQ

[Please book here](#)

Wed 23 Sept 202608:00 - 09:30 **Central Headteacher Meeting**

Venue: All Saints Catholic High School, Roughwood Dr, Liverpool L33 8XF

[Please book here](#)Monday 28 Sept 202609:00 – 11:30 **Professional Development and Curriculum Workshop**

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

[Please book here](#)13:30 – 16:00 **SENDCo Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)Tue 29 Sep 202609:00 - 11:00 **Exam Officer Meeting**

Venue: Hope Academy, Ashton Rd, Newton-le-Willows WA12 0AQ

[Please book here](#)13:30 – 16:00 **IT Manager Meeting**Venue: St John Fisher Catholic High School, Wigan, Baytree Rd,  
Wigan WN6 7RN[Please book here](#)Wed 30 Sep 202608:00 – 10:00 **Secondary School Improvement Advisory Group meeting (By invitation only)**

Venue: Liverpool Archdiocese Conferences &amp; Events, Croxteth Drive, Liverpool L17 1AA

13:30 – 16:00 **Foundational Knowledge/Nurture Group session**

Venue: Holy Family Catholic High School, Virgin's Ln, Thornton, Liverpool L23 4UL

[Please book here](#)**SEND Programme 2026/27 - Open to Secondary and Primary colleagues**

We are again running a Primary and Secondary SEND course with Danielle Moran. Both the New to SENDCo and Aspiring SENDCo are condensed versions of 2025/26 sessions. We also have a new SEND Programme. All dates, details and booking links are below.

**New to SENDCo Programme - [Please register here](#)****All sessions will run 9.00 - 11.30am at The Wrightington Hotel on the below dates:**

Module 1 - Thursday 17th September 2026

Module 2 - Tuesday 17th November 2026

Module 3 - Wednesday 13th January 2027

Module 4 - Thursday 25th February 2027

Module 5 - Tuesday 4th May 2027

Module 6 - Wednesday 16th June 2027

**SEND Programme 2026/27 - [Please register here](#)**

**All sessions will run 1.00 - 3.30pm at The Wrightington Hotel**

**Session titles and dates below:**

EYFS - Thursday 17th September 2026

Cognition and Learning - Tuesday 17th November 2026

SEMH - Wednesday 13th January 2027

Physical and Sensory - Thursday 25th February 2027

Communication & Interaction - Tuesday 4th May 2027

EBSA and School Attendance - Wednesday 16th June 2027

**Aspiring SENDCo Programme - [Please register here](#)**

**All sessions will run 3.45 - 5.00pm via Teams on the below dates:**

Module 1 - Thursday 17th September 2026

Module 2 - Tuesday 17th November 2026

Module 3 - Wednesday 13th January 2027

Module 4 - Thursday 25th February 2027

Module 5 - Tuesday 4th May 2027



**COP 31 Mock Student Events 2026**

**Registration now open!**

We are pleased to announce that the archdiocese have again partnered with Liverpool World Centre to run two mock COP 31 events for students. Each event is for a maximum of 16 schools, each sending a team of 8 students (This is aimed at pupils across KS3/4/5).

The cost of attending is £250 per school (The archdiocese is subsidising this event).

We have split the events based on locations of schools, so please check the links below to find the event your school is invited to attend. If you are unable to attend on the date allocated to your school, please get in touch and we will check capacity at the other event.

**Liverpool World Centre will host a briefing session for teachers in advance of the events in**

**November on either [Tuesday 22nd September or Wednesday 30th September at 3:45pm](#) so we ask that all schools wishing to take part register by 5pm on 17<sup>th</sup> September.**

[9.30am until 2.30pm on 11th November 2026](#)  
[at St Margaret Clitherow Centre, Archdiocesan Office, Croxteth Dr, Liverpool L17 1AA](#)

[9.30am until 2.30pm on 18th November 2026](#)  
[at Hope Academy, Ashton Rd, Newton-le-Willows WA12 0AQ](#)



### **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 or missed a session in the last programme. They are welcome to register again and attend an individual session.

[Bookings are now open via this link](#)

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

Face-to-face sessions run 2.00 - 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](#)

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**Secondary School Improvement Flyer**

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

**Welcome Back!**

Welcome back from the Primary Improvement Team.  
We hope you had a fantastic summer break and a successful start to the new academic year!



## The EEF New Guide on Inclusive Teaching

The EEF has released a [new guide](#) on inclusive teaching, intended to provide an evidence-led approach to supporting pupils with additional needs and strengthen teaching for every pupil. The guide is designed to help leaders develop inclusion strategies, which every school is now required to publish by the end of this year. Alongside the guide, the EEF have also developed some [scenario-based resources](#) to support training sessions on inclusive teaching.

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### Sefton SEN & Inclusion Service Offer

Sefton SEN & Inclusion Service has asked us to share their new offer for schools:

[Inclusion Health Check, Review & Audit Tool](#)  
[Building an Inclusion Strategy Workshop](#)

Please see the attached information for further details.

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### 'You're So Real': Launch of Film and School Resource Pack

The Anti-Bullying Alliance and Haringey Shed have partnered to create a school resource pack ([attached](#)) to support KS2 and KS3 teachers using the film 'You're So Real'.

Developed alongside young people, 'You're So Real' is a filmed live performance that aims to engage and educate children and young people, giving them space to explore and reflect on what challenges may come their way in the future.

The performance addresses themes of anti-bullying, mental health, mobile phones and social media, and emphasises the importance of being kind to others and yourself. It aims to help support children affected identify someone they trust to talk about their situation.

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### Nexus Education – Expression of Interest

Nexus Education provide expert support and guidance across key areas of school development, working closely with schools to meet their individual priorities and needs.

The new date for this meeting is 10th November at 10:00am. If there is sufficient interest (a minimum of 12 schools), Nexus Education will design and deliver the session based on the specific interests and needs of those who sign up.

If you are interested in attending, please register your interest using the link below:

[Sign up link](#)

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### SEND Training Offer

A reminder that we are again running a Primary and Secondary SEND course with Danielle Moran. Both the New to SENDCo and Aspiring SENDCo are condensed versions of this year's sessions. We also have a new SEND Programme. All dates, details and booking links are below.

**New to SENDCo Programme - [Please register here](#)**

All sessions will run 9.00am until 11.30am at The Wrightington Hotel on the below dates:

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- Module 6 - Wednesday 16th June 2027

**SEND Programme 2026/27 - [Please register here](#)**

All sessions will run 1.00-3.30pm at The Wrightington Hotel - Session titles and dates below:

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All sessions will run 3.45-5.00pm via Teams on the below dates:

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- Module 2 - Tuesday 17th November 2026
- Module 3 - Wednesday 13th January 2027
- Module 4 - Thursday 25th February 2027

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**Best Practice Network****24th September - Sefton**

9:15 - 11:30

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Lydiate L31 2LB

[Booking link](#)

**8th October - Warrington**

9:15 - 11:30

St Paul of the Cross, Milnthorpe Road, Burtonwood, Warrington, WA5 4PN

[Booking link](#)

**10th November - St Helens**

9:15 - 11:30

St Theresa's CPS, Cannon Street, Sutton Manor, St Helens WA9 4XU

[Booking link](#)

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.

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### Autumn term trainings

Please see below our autumn term training offer. If you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

29th September - [Is Everything OK with Your EYFS?](#)

6th October - [SEF workshop with John Atkinson](#)

7th October - [SEF workshop with John Atkinson](#) (repeated)

7th October - [Write from the start! Early Years Conference with Ruth Swailes](#)

12th November - [Developing High Quality SEND Practice in the Early Years](#)

16th November - [Attendance: for Primary School Leaders and Attendance Leads](#)

17th November - [EY2P Training Events - Autumn Term EYFS Leadership Network Meeting](#)

27th November - [Safeguarding: Quality assurance of the Single Central Record](#)

30th November - [Disadvantaged Students - Ensuring inclusion, securing outcomes](#)

1st December - [EY2P Training Events - Autumn Term HT & DHT Briefing](#)

9th December - [Safeguarding: Getting the Basics Right](#)

11th December - [Analyse Your New IDSR and ASP with Expert Help](#)

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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 Liverpool Archdiocesan Conferences and Events (LACE) or in the adjacent St Margaret Clitherow Centre.***

### The God who Speaks

Our September theme is: **Creation Care** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/creation-care/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/creation-care/)

**Jubilee Bible Garden Project** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/bible-garden-project/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/bible-garden-project/)

**Gardens in the Bible** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/gardens-in-the-bible/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/gardens-in-the-bible/)

**Biblically Wild** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/biblically-wild/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/biblically-wild/)

**Run Your Own Noah Day in schools** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/run-your-own-noah-day/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/run-your-own-noah-day/)

### 13<sup>th</sup> September: Education Sunday.

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/scripture-for-assemblies-and-meditations/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/scripture-for-assemblies-and-meditations/)

### 20<sup>th</sup> September: Home Mission Sunday – Scripture, AI and Magnifica Humanitas.

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/biblical-response-to-magnifica-humanitas/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/biblical-response-to-magnifica-humanitas/)

**27<sup>th</sup> September: Disability Awareness Sunday**

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/inclusive-catechesis-resources/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/inclusive-catechesis-resources/)

**29<sup>th</sup> September: Feast of the Archangels video.**

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/video-the-four-archangels/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/video-the-four-archangels/)

**30<sup>th</sup> September: Feast of St Jerome.**

[www.godwhospeaks.uk/saint-jerome/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/saint-jerome/)

**Monday Assemblies for primary schools - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/celebrations-of-the-word-primary-schools/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/celebrations-of-the-word-primary-schools/)**

Maria Hall has created 'Celebrations of the Word' for every Monday in the school year. Easy to follow and share each week.

**Further Education courses in Biblical Formation from Maryvale Institute.**

Old Testament Biblical Course: <https://www.maryvale.ac.uk/old-testament.html> - *Tracing the covenant history from Genesis to the Maccabees.*

New Testament Biblical Course: <https://www.maryvale.ac.uk/new-testament.html> - *Covering the Synoptic Gospels and the Pauline Letters.*

Both run online throughout the academic year for adults wishing to deepen their knowledge of Scripture.

**Individual appointments**

Those schools that have already requested ongoing support will be contacted early in the term.

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**CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES****CCRS****New Year 1 Candidates**

Our first session this term is on Tuesday 22 September live at 6.30pm here at LACE, and numbers are already very encouraging. Further information may be obtained from either Dcn Paul or Paul Crilly.

**An early start for Year 2!**

See you in-person on Thursday 10 September at 6.30pm. It is the same place, which has now been re-branded as Liverpool Archdiocesan Conferences and Events (LACE).

**Former Year 2**

Once your assignments are successfully completed and attendance requirements fulfilled, we shall issue digital certificates which you can immediately use for reference. Paper copies will be presented at the next Archdiocesan Mass during the summer term of 2027, when you will be invited to attend with your families. Please stay in touch!

**Assignment Submissions**

All are due by 11 September and should be submitted by email to Dcn Paul.

**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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## News from Around the Archdiocese



### **Formatio North West North West Catholic Dioceses Training Partnership (NWCDTP)**

#### **Vacancy - Formatio North West Project Lead**

Following a recent meeting of North West DSCs and Episcopal Vicars, we are recruiting for a fixed term NW Formatio Lead to support the work of the NW Hub. This will be a 80 day consultancy contract across the next academic year to scope and propose a NW regional offer aligned to national Formatio Strategic Priorities. Please find details [here](#).

#### **NWCDTP Courses 2026-27**

The following two courses are now able to be booked via the [NWCDTP website](#) – simply follow the 'register here' tab on the home page. Please share via your usual communication routes.

**1. The Senior Leader Formation Residential which will take place 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February at the Wrightington Hotel (cost £260)**

**2. The Aspiring to Headship or Deputy Headship Programme with two cohort windows:**

#### **Cohort 1 – Autumn Term**

- Session 1 – Application Process: Thursday 1st October 2026 4pm - 5pm (online)
- Session 2 – Interview Process: Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2026 9.30am - 4pm (in-person [St Margaret Clitherow centre Liverpool](#))

#### **Cohort 2 – Spring Term**

- Session 1 – Application Process: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2027, 4pm -5.00pm (online)

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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 link below to view it!

**Education Department Newsletter W.C. 13/7/2026**

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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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