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Education Department Newsletter

14th September 2026

Joan McCarthy
Director of Education

Education Sunday

As we celebrated Education Sunday yesterday, we gave thanks for the gift of Catholic education and for all those who play a part in helping our children and young people flourish. In Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 18:21–35), Jesus teaches us about the power of forgiveness, mercy and compassion through the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. These values are at the heart of our Catholic schools. Every day, our staff, governors, clergy, parents and parish communities work together to create environments where young people are known, valued and encouraged to become the people God calls them to be. Catholic education is about far more than academic success; it is about forming hearts and minds, nurturing faith, and helping our children grow in wisdom, service and love. As we begin this new school year, we thank everyone who supports this shared mission and for the difference you make in the lives of our young people each day.

A Wonderful Celebration of Catholic Education

Last Thursday, we were honoured to welcome His Excellency Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía, Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain, for a special Education Day celebrating the richness and vitality of Catholic education across the Archdiocese.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to making the day such a memorable success. We are particularly grateful to the diocesan schools from Lancashire who joined us for Mass at St Mary's, Leyland. It was a joyful occasion that celebrated the faith, commitment and shared mission of our Catholic school communities across the Archdiocese.

Special thanks go to Danny Townley and the Catholic Schools Singing Programme for leading the beautiful music throughout the liturgies, and to Pat Peel, who worked tirelessly throughout the summer to prepare the celebrations. We are also grateful to the RE Team and Ben McMullen for their hard work and support in organising the day's programme.

Our sincere thanks to the staff and students of Saint John Rigby Sixth Form College for their warm welcome to the Nuncio and his entourage. We are equally grateful to the school chaplains who joined us for Evening Prayer and to Fr Joe Bibby and the parish community of St Mary's, Leyland, for their generous support and hospitality throughout the day.

The visit was a fitting celebration of all that is best about Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. It provided an opportunity to showcase the strength of our schools, the witness of our faith communities and the dedication of all those who serve in Catholic education. We thank everyone who played a part in making the day such a success and for helping to present such a positive and inspiring picture of our Archdiocese to the Holy Father's representative.





Ben McMullen Deputy Director of Education

Evening Prayer with the Apostolic Nuncio

Thank you to our school chaplains for joining us in Evening Prayer led by Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia, Apostolic Nuncio. It was a lovely occasion and was enhanced by some beautiful music led by Jo Higgins (St Julie's) with accompaniment from John Baron (Our Lady Queen of Peace). Our chaplains were introduced to the Apostolic Nuncio before the time of prayer and there was the opportunity for photographs. It was lovely to meet some of our new chaplains at the evening service. We have six new chaplains – please keep them in your prayers as they begin their ministry.



Education Sunday

If your school has celebrated Education Sunday over the weekend, or throughout this week, with your local church then we would love to hear about it. Please do send us any photos that you have.

Catholic Schools Inspectorate

Thank you to those of you who attended our training sessions this week for schools due to be inspected this year. Thank you also to our team of dedicated inspectors who attended our Autumn Briefing. I would like to remind you that we are now working on version 5.0 of all CSI documentation. The main change to the framework for this year has been the shift from 'pupil leadership of prayer and liturgy' to 'pupils helping to prepare prayer and liturgy'. You can access the revised handbook and templates at [Catholic Schools Inspectorate | Schools](#)

Inspections will resume week commencing Monday 21st September.

Headteachers' Mass of Commissioning – Advance Notice

We changed the date of this due to the visit of the Apostolic Nuncio. Please note the new date of Thursday 22nd October at 4pm. **All headteachers and senior leaders are invited to this Mass**, celebrated by Archbishop John at St Mary's Church, Leyland, PR25 1PD, where new headteachers will receive a certificate of commissioning. It will be a lovely celebration with refreshments served afterwards in the parish community centre.

Oscar Romero Award – Advance notice

You may remember that I presented an introduction to the Oscar Romero Award (Catholic Social Teaching) at the headteacher cluster meetings last term. We have scheduled an online twilight session where you can find out more about the award on Wednesday 30th September from 4pm – 5pm. Please use the booking link in the calendar.

Calendar for 2026-2027 Autumn Term

Please find attached our Calendar for the Autumn Term.

Calendar 2026-27

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.

Request for Photographs

As we begin a new academic year, the archdiocesan communications team is looking to refresh the education images we use across our internal and external communications.

If you have any professional photographs that showcase life at your school and would be happy for our communications team to use, please email them to communications@rcaol.org.uk.

Please note, that by submitting images, you are granting the archdiocese permission to use them across its communication channels.

Thank you for your continued support.

Michael Boland
Education Estates

Annual Assurance Document Schools

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 CMATs) 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 Estate 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 **31 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.

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 2026**08:00 - 09:30 Central Headteacher Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)Monday 28 Sept 2026**09:00 – 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 2026**09:00 - 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 2026

**08:00 – 10:00 Secondary School Improvement Advisory Group meeting
(By invitation only)**

Venue: Liverpool Archdiocese Conferences & 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](#)

Screen Careers Event with Bafta

We have been approached by Into Film with an opportunity for archdiocesan schools. Full details can be found below.

Join us for a special Screen Careers event with BAFTA and Into Film, at the iconic BAFTA HQ in Piccadilly, London. We are offering an inspiring event to schools and colleges to provide industry encounters, real-world tasks and careers conversations, giving young people the opportunity to learn from professionals working across Film, TV, Animation, Games and VFX (visual effects).

Date: Friday 20 November 2026,

Venue: 195 Piccadilly, London, W1J 9LN

Timings: 11am – 3:30pm.

Doors open 10:30am for a prompt 11am start.

Learner Cohort: Participating students must be in a secondary school setting, aged **12-14 years of age**. (KS3 England or equivalent in devolved nations).

Sessions will include talks and interactive activities where screen industry professionals across film, TV, games, animation and VFX (visual effects) will provide insights into their education and career paths, share the skills that are important in their roles and showcase some of their work as well as set work relevant tasks for students to complete.

By the end of the visit, your students will have a clearer understanding of the opportunities available to them in the screen industries, and how to develop their skills to take charge of their own career journey.

This event support schools and colleges to meet UK wide careers benchmarks, including (in England):

- **Gatsby Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees.**

The event will provide a meaningful encounter with the opportunity for attendees to learn about what work is like, the skills valued in the workplace, recruitment processes or what it takes to be successful.

- **Gatsby Benchmark 6: Experiences of workplaces.** Young people will take part in an authentic workplace task linked to real industry practice.

Book your places:

To express interest in bringing your students (maximum of 30) to this event, please complete this [expression of interest form](#) no later than **Thursday 24th September**.

An Into Film team member will be in touch w/c 28th September to confirm whether you have been successful in securing places.

Food: Schools are requested to provide their own packed lunches, snacks and refreshments and must sign a disclaimer before their place is confirmed. Please note that BAFTA HQ has a strict **nut free** policy.

Travel bursary: If your setting is based outside of the M25 and your school has an above average percentage of students eligible for free school meals (25.7%) you may be eligible for a travel bursary of up to £500. *(Schools and colleges are required to book and pay for their own tickets/coaches in advance and will be provided with an expense form to be completed after the event to claim reimbursement up to £500).*

Please don't book travel until your place is confirmed. An Into Film team member will be in touch with further event details, including travel bursary information once places have been allocated.

Please note:

- *You will need an Into Film account to make a booking for this event. If you don't currently have an account, it's completely free and only takes a moment to set up. You can set up your account [here](#).*
- *This invitation is specific to your school and is not transferable to other schools/colleges.*
- *This event prioritises bookings from schools where 25.7% (or more) pupils are eligible for Free School Meals/meet SIMD criteria.*
- *This event prioritises bookings from schools/colleges who have not previously participated in careers events at BAFTA HQ.*
- *A maximum of 30 student places per school are available. Students must be aged 12-14 years, KS3 or equivalent.*

Into Film reserves the right to amend or withdraw your booking if the above criteria are not met. If no one from Into Film has been in touch by 2nd

October then unfortunately we weren't able to secure your place.



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 17th 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](#)

Secondary School Improvement Flyer

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

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:

- 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

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

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[Booking link](#)

10th November - St Helens

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

[Booking link](#)

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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.

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](#)

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](#)

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

Judaism Drop-in Q & A Session

The new school year sees the return of the monthly drop in webinar on teaching Judaism. The next date: Wednesday 16th Sept 2026,

3.45 - 4.45pm

Zoom link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88208609168?
pwd=EpeZaPWyxmPVuKagvWOdfpVFKXgWP.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88208609168?pwd=EpeZaPWyxmPVuKagvWOdfpVFKXgWP.1)

Meeting ID: 882 0860 9168

Passcode: 531430

New Heads of Religious Education

For our first meeting this term please book promptly. This meeting is also open to any who may be leading departments temporarily.

First session for non-specialists in Religious Education

Those attending (new and established) please send in advance the items you would like to be included.

Our first cluster/area meetings of the term

Please send any items for the agenda.

CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES CCRS

To our new Year One People!

Dear All,

May we offer you the warmest welcome to our first session to be held on Tuesday 22 September at 6.30pm and ending at 7.45pm. The venue is Liverpool Archdiocesan Conferences and Events (LACE), Croxteth Drive, Liverpool, L17 1AA.

The focus of this session is orientation; a brief journey through the modules, assessments, procedures and best practice. This is the chance to ask any questions. If you have not already signed up, please come along and do so on the night.

Looking forward to meeting you.

Deacon Paul Mannings
On behalf of the team.

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

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 link below to view it!

Education Department Newsletter W.C. 7/9/2026

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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