

[View this email in your browser](#)



## Education Department Newsletter

**21st September 2026**

**Ben McMullen**  
Deputy Director of Education

“Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing. (Ezek 47:9,12)

### **Living Water – Season of Creation**

You may have heard of the ‘Season of Creation’ which occurs annually. Each year from September 1 to October 4, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where Christians celebrate God as Creator, and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created.

Pope Leo wrote:

“For believers it is also a duty born of faith, since the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed.”  
(taken from his Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2025)

The theme of this year’s Season of Creation is ‘Living Water’ - it brings life to dead areas and restores fertility to damaged or barren ecosystems. Schools are invited to celebrate this season in lessons and prayer and liturgy. I recommend you visit [Season of Creation](#) for the Celebration Guide

which contains prayers, liturgies, and practical suggestions for celebrating the season and exploring the theme of water.

---

### Catholic Schools Inspectorate

Inspections resume this week for this academic year. Just to remind you that we are now following version 5.0 of the inspection handbook. All inspection materials can be found at [Catholic Schools Inspectorate | Schools](#)

---

### Calendar for 2026-2027 Autumn Term

Please find attached our Calendar for the Autumn Term.

Calendar 2026-27

---

**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.

---

### DFC Allocations

We have uploaded the information around current allocations of **Devolved Formula Capital** to the Archdiocese website [here](#). We are also preparing a reconciliation for all schools to indicate allocations from the current year as well as the previous two years. This is with a clear intention to avoid schools retaining funds for longer than the three year limit. Please consult with area surveyors when considering minor works to have assurance that smaller works may not need their direct involvement.

*DFC is capital funding intended for schools to address their own priorities, such as improvements to buildings and other facilities, including ICT, capital repairs/refurbishment and minor works or contributing to a larger capital project to improve condition.*

Please contact Vicky Magill if you need any further help or advice with spending DFC monies [v.magill@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:v.magill@rcaol.org.uk)

---

### School Based Nurseries Capital Grant – Phase 3 2027 2030

The School Based Nurseries Capital Grant 2027 to 2030 can be used by local authorities to create or expand a school-based nursery in state-funded primary-phase schools, maintained nursery schools and on Best Start Family Hub sites. The projects identified by local authorities could be substantial and factor in multi year funding. They will have the capacity to identify and support projects which they feel would benefit local communities.

Further information on eligibility and guidance for local authorities can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-based-nursery-capital-grant-2027-to-2030>

**Please let us know** if you have been contacted by local authorities with the intention to develop nursery provision at your school using this funding. It

will be important that we have awareness and oversight of any capital works that are proposed.

---

## **Ged Preston, Steve Coyle and Vikki Borlase**

### Secondary School Improvement Team



#### **Upcoming Events**

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](#)



### **Foundational Knowledge/Nurture Group meeting 30th September**

Our first Foundational Knowledge/Nurture Group meeting will take place  
1.30 - 4.00pm on 30<sup>th</sup> September at Holy Family Catholic High School,  
Virgin's Lane, Thornton, Liverpool L23 4UL.

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

The event will cover:

Tour of the SEND Base at Holy Family Catholic High School;  
Matching need to provision (Mainstream and Base pupils);  
How do we support Foundational Knowledge in our school;  
Discussion: Identifying a cohort, Which year groups should we do this for;  
How do we assess impact;  
What does our intervention around Foundational Knowledge look like  
for our SEND pupils or non-SEND pupils.

---



### **Free event: BRILLIANT Festival 10th November at Exhibition Centre Liverpool**

Taking place at the Exhibition Centre Liverpool on Tuesday 10th November, the BRILLIANT Festival will bring together more than 2,000 educators for a completely free day of inspiring speakers, practical CPD, innovative technology and ideas to take back to their school, college or organisation.

The programme will explore the issues shaping education today, including artificial intelligence, SEND, EdTech, careers and industry engagement, STEAM, esports and gamification.

Delegates will hear from leading voices across education and industry, discover new approaches to teaching and learning and connect with educators from across the UK. They can also experience the Classroom of NOW, where teachers become the students and take part in technology-enabled lessons themselves.

Places are free, but registration is required.

**Tickets can be secured here:** [www.brilliantfestival.com](http://www.brilliantfestival.com)



### **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

## Autumn term training

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](#)

---

## 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.

---

### **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

## Fully Funded Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship Opportunities

Captiva Learning is pleased to offer 20 fully funded apprenticeship places exclusively for Archdiocese of Liverpool schools. These opportunities are available to both Primary and Secondary schools and include:

Level 3 Teaching Assistant  
Level 5 Specialist Teaching Assistant, with pathways in:  
SEND  
SEMH  
Curriculum

Thanks to funding secured through the City of Westminster Local Authority, schools can access these programmes at no cost and without using their own apprenticeship levy.

Interested colleagues should contact Helen Daykin directly at:  
[helen.daykin@captivalearning.com](mailto:helen.daykin@captivalearning.com)

Application deadline: Friday 25 September.

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, so interested schools are encouraged to register their interest as soon as possible.

---

## Healthy Relationships: A Free Toolkit for Primary Schools

Anna Freud has published a new Healthy Relationships Toolkit designed for pupils aged 10 to 11 years. The resource aims to help children explore healthy friendships, emotional wellbeing and conflict resolution, supporting them to build positive relationships both in and out of school.

[Link](#)

---

## 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](#)

---

## **Pat Peel, Julie Rourke and Julia Ashton**

Primary School RE Advisers

### **Picture News Live Assembly: How Can We Make Our School Allergy-Aware?**

Monday 28 September, 2.15 - 2.45pm

Join Clare Bristow, from the Sadie Bristow Foundation, for a special 30-minute live assembly exploring allergies and how we can help everyone feel safe and included at school. Clare will explain what an allergy is, introduce the new allergy-safety requirements known as Benedict's Law and share simple actions children can take, including listening to others and telling an adult if someone feels unwell.

This sensitive, age-appropriate assembly will help pupils understand why allergy awareness matters and how the whole school community can work together to care for and include children with allergies.

Suitable for: KS1, KS2 and all school staff.

All schools will receive a certificate for all attendees.

**Join here: <https://picture-news.co.uk/training-register/picture-news-live-assembly-how-can-we-make-our-school-allergy-aware>**



Please see below article and new resources for Mission Together:-

<https://missiontogether.org.uk/our-first-mission-together-club/>

[https://mailchi.mp/missiontogether/northernbankingjuly24-8040447?  
e=799233edd3](https://mailchi.mp/missiontogether/northernbankingjuly24-8040447?e=799233edd3)

---

**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.***

**A-Level Philosophy, Ethics & Religion – Oxford, London & Cambridge**

Academy Learning's EthIQa A-Level events bring students face-to-face with leading philosophers, theologians and ethicists, giving them access to **university-level scholarship directly relevant to their A-Level studies.**

This year's speakers include **Professor Alister McGrath, Professor Daphne Hampson, Professor Brad Hooker, Dr Tim Mawson, Professor Daniel Moulin and Julie Arliss**, with sessions on Free Will, Utilitarianism, the attributes of God, science and religion, religious language and an interactive ethics debate.

Students receive **detailed bespoke notes and resources**, designed to deepen subject knowledge, strengthen evaluation and support examination preparation.

**Oxford:** Tuesday 24 November

**London:** Wednesday 25 & Thursday 26 November

**Cambridge:** Tuesday 8 December

**Student fee:** £38.50



**Scan the QR code to see the full programme and book.**

## **CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES CCRS**

### **To our new Year One People!**

See you tomorrow, Tuesday 22 September at 6.30pm, 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.

### **Year 2**

You had an early start in the term and thanks for arriving in such encouraging numbers. The face-to-face attendances are vital to maintaining a balanced link with our community. Technology is great but face-to-face completes the picture.

### **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)

---

### **Apostolic Nuncio Visitation to the Archdiocese**

Please read the Nuncio's addresses from last week's visitation:-

[Address 1](#) [Address 2](#)

The photos from the mass at St Mary's Church, Leyland, can be found  
here:-

[Apostolic Nuncio visitation to the Archdiocese of Liverpool | Flickr](#)

---

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)

---

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**

---

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

**Education Department Newsletter W.C. 14/9/2026**

---

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



---

This email was sent to [s.hughes@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:s.hughes@rcaol.org.uk)

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Archdiocese of Liverpool · Liverpool Archdiocesan Office · Croxteth Drive · Liverpool, Merseyside L17 1AA · United Kingdom