

[View this email in your browser](#)



Education Department Newsletter

5th October 2026

Joan McCarthy
Director of Education

As we begin a new month, thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to our schools, pupils, staff and communities.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the Headteachers' Cluster meetings next week. These are a valuable opportunity to share experiences, discuss priorities and strengthen our partnership across the family of schools.

We are also delighted to welcome Lana Orr as our new Academy Project Manager. Lana will work closely with schools, trusts and colleagues across the Archdiocese to support the academisation programme. Many of you will meet her next week, and I know you will join me in giving her a warm welcome.

Pope Leo's visit to Lourdes last week was a deeply moving occasion. Seeing the Holy Father take part in the torchlight procession behind the statue of Our Lady was a powerful witness of faith, humility and devotion, and a reminder to keep Christ and Our Lady at the centre of our lives and work.

Last Thursday, we also gathered for our annual celebration of the priesthood. We give thanks for the service, guidance and pastoral care of our priests and ask that you continue to keep them in your prayers, especially those facing illness or other challenges.

Thank you also to schools that have contacted me regarding union meetings on school premises. The Archdiocese recognises the important role of trade unions, and schools should support reasonable requests for meetings. Please contact me if you need further advice.

Thank you once again for all that you do in service of Catholic education. I look forward to seeing many of you next week.

Joan McCarthy

Ben McMullen Deputy Director of Education

Oscar Romero Award

A huge thank you to Catherine Phillips, Deputy Headteacher at St Teresa's Primary, Upholland, for presenting at the Oscar Romero award briefing last Wednesday. Many schools attended this session, and the feedback has been hugely positive. Good luck to those schools who plan to pursue this award scheme this year. [Attached are slides from the presentation.](#)

Headteachers – Save the Date!

We are working with the Global Centre for Catholic Leadership and we will be hosting a Catholic leadership conference on **Thursday 14th January**. More details will follow in the coming weeks.

Advance Notice: RSHE Catholic Policy and Practice

Please note that the event on Thursday 15th October is designed for primary colleagues only. The training will run twice: morning and afternoon. Please book on one of the sessions using the booking links in the calendar.

Headteacher Cluster Meetings

Headteacher cluster meetings will take place during week commencing 12th October. Please see dates, times and locations below:

12th October

9:30 – 12:30 at LACE, L17 1AA (Liverpool Schools)

13:30 – 16:30 at The Engine Room at Birchwood Park, WA3 6YN (Warrington & Halton Schools)

14th October

9:30 – 12:30 at Mercure Haydock Hotel, WA11 9SG (St Helen & Knowsley Schools)

13:30 – 16:30 The Edge, WN3 5AB (Wigan & Lancashire Schools)

16th October

9:30 – 12:30 at Formby Hall Golf Resort, L37 0AB (Sefton Schools)

Click [here](#) to book your place.

A reminder that you can attend any session you wish, but it is advisable to stick to your cluster area.

Chairs of Governors Termly Meeting

14th October

6.30 pm (online) click [here](#) to book your place

Calendar for 2026-2027 Autumn Term

Please find attached our Calendar for the Autumn Term.

Calendar 2026-27

Gill Donohoe & Michael Boland

Published Admission Number

In order for admission authorities to consider a reduction in Published Admission Number (PAN) for admissions for 2028 2029, a period of consultation will need to be arranged. This would be for a six week period and undertaken between 1 October 2026 to 29 January 2027. Prior to this consultation, we would expect admission authorities (Governing Bodies, Local Academy Council/ Trust Boards) to have met to consider proposals and to have this minuted. We would then expect admission authorities to seek approval from the Archbishop (as per Diocesan Protocols) through the Director of Education as his representative.

The normal process of consultation would require admission authorities to consult with a range of interested parties, which would include a narrative to explain the reasons for a reduction. We would, of course be available to support admission authorities in this process.

Please contact either Gill Donohoe or Michael Boland for further advice.

Gill Donohoe g.donohoe@rcaol.org.uk

Michael Boland m.boland@rcaol.org.uk

Admission Policy 2027 2028

The majority of schools across the archdiocese have now consulted and determined the policy for admissions as recommended by the Catholic Education Service and adopted by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. A number

of schools, however, have not completed the process and so will be using policies from previous years for admissions in 2027 2028. The opportunity to align with the rest of the archdiocese will be available to these schools for admission in 2028 2029.

Admission Policy 2028 2029

The consultation period for this process will begin 1 October 2026 to 29 January 2027 and we would expect all schools who have not yet completed the consultation successfully to engage. We will be available to support admission authorities in this process and provide specific guidance to ensure that all schools in the Archdiocese of Liverpool have admission policies which reflect current guidance.

Please contact either Gill Donohoe or Michael Boland for further advice.

Gill Donohoe g.donohoe@rcaol.org.uk

Michael Boland m.boland@rcaol.org.uk

Admissions Training Autumn Term

We have delivered a number of training sessions to support school leaders and governors in meeting their responsibilities as admission authorities. These were available as refreshers or for those new to post who wanted further training and support.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time if you need any clarification on any aspect of the admissions process.

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.

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 5 Oct 2026

09:00 - 16:00 **HoD English Meeting (All day)**

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

[Please book here](#)

14:00 - 16:00 **HoD Government & Politics Meeting (Teams)**

[Please book here](#)

Tue 6 Oct 2026

09:00 - 16:00 **HoD Maths Meeting (All day)**

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

[Please book here](#)

Wed 7 Oct 2026

09:00 – 11:30 **PSHE Leads meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

13:30 - 16:00 **Safeguarding Leads Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

Thu 8 Oct 2026

09:00 – 11:30 **HoD Science Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

14:00 - 16:00 **HoD Criminology Meeting (Teams)**

[Please book here](#)

Mon 12 Oct 2026

09:00 - 11:30 **Pastoral Leads Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD Design Technology Meeting**

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

[Please book here](#)

Tue 13 Oct 2026

9:00 - 11:30 **Post 16 Leads Meeting**

Venue: Carmel College, Prescot Rd, St Helens WA10 3AG

[Please book here](#)

13:30 - 16:00 **Creative i-Media HoD Meeting (Teams)**

[Please book here](#)

Wed 14 Oct 2026

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD History Meeting (Teams)**

[Please book here](#)

Thu 15 Oct 2026

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD PE Meeting (Teams)**

[Please book here](#)



Event Reminders

**PSHE Leads meeting 7th October,
9.00am until 11.30am at The Wrightington Hotel**

We are delighted that Julie McCann will be joining us once again to share her expertise and provide valuable input on RSE. Steve Coyle will also be providing an update from an inspection perspective, including examples of effective practice observed across schools

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

**Safeguarding Leads Meeting 7th October,
1.30pm until 4.00pm at The Wrightington Hotel**

We are please to advise that we have Lauren & Alicia, our colleagues from CPOMS joining us once again to share their expertise and provide valuable input. We also have a presentation from Mike Toole & Mark Gardner looking at an online version of the Single Central Record

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

RSE Post 16 Event 5th November
9.00am until 11.30am at Liverpool Archdiocesan
Conferences & Events (LACE)

We have a professional development opportunity for PSHE/RSE Leads, delivered by Julie McCann, focusing specifically on RSE in the post-16 context.

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



The PTI: Subject Expertise Certificate

The PTI are offering archdiocesan schools **a 50% discount**, on top of the early bird offer for their Subject Expertise Certificate. This means the entire course will cost **£122.50** (+VAT), or is free for PTI Unlimited schools.

[You can access the flyer for more information here](#)

There sessions are running on the dates below at Great Sankey High School:

Day 1 - Saturday 21st November 2026

Day 2 - Saturday 30th January 2027

Day 3 - Saturday 15th May 2027

Subject sessions running are:

English
Biology
Chemistry
French
Geography
History
Maths
Physics
Spanish

You can book your places via their website, using the link below:

www.ptieducation.org/events/?event=Subject%20Expertise%20Certificate

Use the code **Return50** when booking to unlock the discount.

The topics are different from previous years, so anyone who attended last year's course is welcome to attend again and refresh their subject knowledge on these new topics.

If you have a query, please contact Preeya Harte, Programmes Coordinator at preeya.harte@ptieducation.org

If you would like information about The PTI, please contact John Wilkinson at John.Wilkinson@st-edwards.co.uk



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.

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

8th October - Warrington - cancelled

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.

Children's Mental Health Week 2027 free resources

[You can download them here](#)

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.

RED Key Stage 4

Further to last week, the Bishops Department for Formation has now approved the first draft of RED Key Stage 4. The overriding principles will include religious literacy, intellectual development, spiritual reflection, moral responsibility and commitment to the common good. The provision for Judaism as the second religion remains. The content is a continued trajectory toward GCSE.

There are now three advisory strands, namely from higher education, advisers and teachers. Consultation amongst teachers will be formalised.

New RE Leads

Whilst currently we have one new RE Lead, the focus is also upon the support of relatively new leads.

Courtesy of Archdiocese of Birmingham

Here is a website you may find useful:

<https://www.philosophystudent.co.uk/>

CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES
CCRS

Sessions

We only started last week and there is so much going on betwixt core and specialist modules. It will calm down! Tomorrow, Tuesday 6th October, we welcome Year 1 for Specialist 1, the Distinctive Nature of the Catholic School. This is in person at LACE and begins at 6.30pm. Year 2 gathers online on Thursday 8 October for their third session of the core module on the Church. Please keep your schedule to hand.

Cameras

As instructed for online session you must be in view and in a professional environment, never in a car or any form of transport.

Attendance

Missed sessions are completed within the next cycle. This does not affect the submission of the assignment.

CCRS Contacts:

All academic, attendance and progress assistance or issues:

Deacon 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



Christmas card competition!

The archdiocesan Christmas card competition is back for 2026!

[Please find information pack here](#)

As usual, there are two categories – one for primary schools and one for secondary

Please send designs to communications@rcaol.org.uk by **5pm on Friday 6th November** along with the name of student, age, year group, school, and confirmation of parent permission.

There are no limits to how many students can enter from your school, so please encourage as many as possible to take part.

Submissions will be whittled down to a shortlist by our panel of judges. The shortlist of entries will then be shared on the archdiocesan social

media channels and the one from each category with the most comments will be declared the winner.

If you have any questions, please contact our communications team on communications@rcaol.org.uk

Good luck!

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. 28/9/2026

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

[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