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Archdiocese of Liverpool

Education Department Newsletter

12th October 2026

Joan McCarthy
Director of Education

Yesterday's Sunday's Gospel, the parable of the wedding feast, is all about invitation - and about the generosity of God's welcome.

That feels especially fitting this week as we come together for our Headteacher Cluster Meetings. These gatherings are always a highlight of the term for me. They give us the chance to pray together, catch up, share what is happening across our schools and colleges, and talk openly about the joys and challenges of leading Catholic education. I am really looking forward to seeing so many of you over the coming days.

At the heart of our work is that same sense of invitation. Every day, we invite our children and young people to know that they are welcomed, valued and loved; to discover their gifts; and to recognise that they belong to something bigger than themselves - a true Family in Christ.

There is much to be thankful for at the moment, including the recent visit of the Apostolic Nuncio and the upcoming ordination of Father Dan Howarth. Both are wonderful reminders of the life, hope and mission of the Church, and of the important part our schools and colleges play within it.

I also have to admit that *Celebrity Traitors* has been providing some light relief! Watching everyone try to work out who can be trusted has certainly been entertaining. Thankfully, the only plotting at our Cluster Meetings this week will be about how we can continue to give our children and young people the very best Catholic education possible.

Thank you, as always, for all that you do. I look forward to seeing many of you this week and to continuing our work together as a Family in Christ.

Ben McMullen
Deputy Director of Education

Headteacher Cluster Meetings

Headteacher cluster meetings will take place this week. 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 Rooms 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

Mass for Headteachers, Senior Leaders and Chairs of Governors

We have a new date! Archbishop John will celebrate a Mass for all headteachers, senior leaders and chairs of governors on Thursday 26th November at 4pm at St. Mary's Church, Leyland. Fr Michael, Episcopal Vicar for Education, will write to all schools to invite you to this Mass and we do hope that all schools will be represented. Our new headteachers will receive a certificate of commissioning following Holy Communion. Light refreshments will be served after Mass.

New SEND & Inclusion Resources from the Oscar Romero Award

The Oscar Romero Award (Resources | Oscar Romero Award) has launched a new set of **SEND and Inclusion resources** to help schools make Catholic Social Teaching accessible and meaningful for a wider range of learners. Covering all **nine CST principles**, the resources are designed particularly with pupils with SEND in mind, while offering flexible ideas that can be used across **primary and secondary settings**.

Each principle includes a **teacher support resource and an adaptable pupil PowerPoint**, with practical approaches through song, action, prayer, Scripture, visual activities, discussion and creative learning. Simple core messages and supported activities sit alongside opportunities for greater challenge and reflection, enabling teachers to select and adapt materials according to pupils' individual strengths and needs.

The resources can be used flexibly in **RE, Catholic Life and Mission, prayer and liturgy, class or tutor time small-group or 1:1 work**, or as part of a school's wider Oscar Romero Award journey. Above all, they aim to help ensure that **every pupil can participate, understand and respond to Catholic Social Teaching — and discover ways to put faith into action.**

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.

Ged Preston, Steve Coyle and Vikki Borlase
Secondary School Improvement Team

Upcoming Events (Secondary Schools/Colleges only)

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

15:30 - 16:15 **CPOMS Modules (Teams)**

Please book here

Half Term Break 26 Oct – 30 Oct 2026

Tue 3 Nov 2026

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

Please book here

15:30 – 17:00 **Physics Partners Programme session 2 (Electricity) Teams**

Please book here

Mon 9 Nov 2026

09:00 – 11:30 **Literacy Leads meeting**

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

Please book here

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

Please book here

Tue 10 Nov 2026

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

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

Please book here

13:30 - 16:00 **HoD Art and Design Meeting**

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

Please book here

Wed 11 Nov 2026

09:30 – 14:30 **COP30 Student Event with Liverpool World Centre (Fully booked)**

Venue: Liverpool Archdiocese Conference & Event , Croxteth Drive, Liverpool L17 1AA

13:30 - 16:00 HoD Languages Meeting (Teams)

Please book here

Thu 12 Nov 2026

14:00 - 17:00 **Headteacher Residential Day 1**

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

Please book here

Fri 13 Nov 2026

9:00 - 12:30 **Headteacher Residential Day 2**

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

Please book here

Event Reminders: Secondary Schools and Colleges only

CPOMS Modules Presentation
3.30pm until 4.15pm via Teams

Following on from the Headteacher cluster meetings, Steve Coyle has arranged for a presentation by Wayde Brentnall Parma to promote CPOMS

modules for all our schools and colleges at 3.30pm (45 minutes maximum) on Thursday 15th October via Teams.

This session is open to Headteachers and Safeguarding Leads. Additionally, any members of your Safeguarding team are also welcome to attend.

Please use this link to confirm attendance or to send apologies

Those registered to attend will receive the Teams link in advance of the session.

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

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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

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Mental Health Support
for children & young people in Liverpool

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

Best Practice Network

10th November - St Helens

9:15 - 11:30

St Anne's Catholic Primary School, St Helens, WA9 3SP

Booking link

Schools Presenting and Focus Areas:

School 1 - St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, Sutton Manor, St Helens - Sara Johnson
Focus of presentation: Attendance and Behaviour

School 2 - St Aidan's Catholic Primary School, Huyton, Knowsley - Kathryn Fitzsimmons
Focus of presentation: Personal Development

School 3 -Presenter to be confirmed
Focus of presentation: Inclusion

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.

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

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National Poetry Day 2026: Free Classroom Resources

The National Literacy Trust has released free classroom resources exploring this year's theme, Wonder. Activities are available for Early Years, KS1 and KS2 and provide lots of inspiration for exploring, performing and writing poetry.
Explore the resources

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.

RE Leads Cluster Meetings
As these are imminent, please could you send me items for the agenda. Don't forget to book using the link.

The God Who Speaks!

Our October focus: **Scripture, Sense and Perception**.

We launch a new series on Scripture and the Senses by Professor Stephen Gomez.

Introduction - www.godwhospeaks.uk/sense-and-perception/

Faith Comes from Hearing - www.godwhospeaks.uk/faith-comes-from-hearing/

Faith Comes from Seeing - www.godwhospeaks.uk/faith-comes-from-seeing-light/

More Senses coming in November and December.

The Chosen – Special Preview Access for Churches.

Series 6: Episode 1 – Jesus' Arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

https://thechosentv.co.uk/601 - *sign up and follow this amazing series.*

Remembering the Strangeness of God -

www.godwhospeaks.uk/remembering-the-strangeness-of-god/

How does God reveal his strangeness to us? How does this draw us into the Divine Mystery today?

Divine Designs Competition & Exhibition Update

Our competition is now closed and we're selecting the 73 Book Covers for our Exhibition, to be held from Lent 2027.

More information in November.

CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES
CCRS

We want to thank all candidates for attendance, participation and a great atmosphere, in-person and online.

The assessments have for the most part been re-designed as reflective journals to be completed between sessions and submitted by the dates indicated. They can be written in the first person. Their styles should be rigorous, structured and informative of your professional practice. We would ask you to regard these works as the basis for ongoing development that could be used for training and presentation. Enjoy their creation!

Thanks for keeping an eye on the dates and times of sessions.

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

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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. 5/10/2026

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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