

St Michael's Church of England High School

A Church of England Academy

Headteacher: Mrs Rachel Rongong BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH

Growing in Body, Mind and Spirit



17th October 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

As this week ends, we finish our first half term of the new school year. Let me start by thanking you all for your support and contribution to all that we do at St Michael's. We are so grateful that families, governors, clergy, and our wider community participate so fully in our life together; we so value you as part of Team St Michael's.

Mr Chadwick, Deputy Headteacher led our Worship this week, on the theme of stewardship. He challenged us to consider how well we look after our planet and how well we look after our school. We are so privileged at St Michael's; we have such wonderful facilities and it's so important we don't just take our buildings and surroundings for granted. As Mr Chadwick said, 'stewardship isn't just about picking up litter, it's about taking care of everything that God has given us.' He touched on spirituality too, that we can grow in spirit by showing stewardship. It has certainly made me think how often I walk past litter when I could easily play my part and pop it in the bin.

Talking about our beautiful planet, Year 11 geographers have been out on trips this week to the River Wyre. These visits form part of their GCSE studies and it was wonderful to hear about pupils supporting each other as they worked in groups. As always, their behaviour was impeccable.

Whilst Mr Chadwick led worship, Mr Allcock, Assistant Headteacher, was delivering assemblies on AI to all year groups. Artificial Intelligence is such a rapidly growing phenomenon, and it is so important that we educate our young people about how to manage it safely. On this occasion, Mr Allcock was talking about our need to be wise with AI. He gave a brilliant example of learning the recorder, explaining that he couldn't play it, because he had never practised. He drew a parallel with what happens if we allow AI to do our home learning or work for us; we lose out as we haven't trained our brains to think deeply and do the work (or the practice!) and consequently, we don't 'know and remember more'. Food for thought indeed. I'd encourage you to be talking to your children about these topics at home too, fostering these open channels of communication is so very important.

Wednesday was a real highlight of the week for me, as it was the first of our lunchtime concerts. We put these on in the library each half term, and they are an opportunity for our singers and musicians to showcase their talent. I was particularly struck by the number of pupils who chose to attend and listen so respectfully to their peers. Toby in Year 11 wowed us with a piece on the piano that he had composed himself, Matthew in Year 11 gave a rousing rendition of a grade 4 musical theatre piece, 'Electricity' from Billy Elliot, and a group of Year 10 GCSE music pupils entertained us brilliantly with a Rage against the Machine number. Mr White ended by saying that we'd love to hear from pupils who would like to get involved in future concerts; do encourage your child to take part. We'd also love to see more pupils taking up instrumental lessons again as this is something that has dipped post Covid. Music impacts positively in so many ways; do get in touch with the music team if this is something you might be interested in.

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On the theme of performing arts, Mr White has sent the following update on the production,

We have made a fantastic start to the academic year as we prepare for our upcoming production of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, scheduled to run from 4–7 February 2026. Our principal cast members are diligently learning their lines and rehearsing the show's wonderfully catchy musical numbers. Meanwhile, our chorus and dance teams are working at full pace, with pupils actively contributing to the choreography of the larger ensemble pieces. Due to the overwhelming number of enthusiastic young performers, we have divided them into two teams. Team A has successfully completed their first musical number, and we are now turning our attention to Team B as they begin rehearsals for the next major scene.

Our fundraising efforts to acquire a 'real' Chitty car for the production are well underway. On 31 October, over 20 cast members and staff will take part in an 11-mile sponsored walk from school to the summit of Rivington. Additional fundraising events are planned over the coming months, and we warmly welcome any further offers of sponsorship. If any parents or carers own a business and would be willing to make a small donation or contribute a raffle prize, please contact Mr White via admin@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk. All contributors will be acknowledged in our show programme, and advertising space is also available. Thank you for your continued support in making this production a truly magical experience for our pupils.

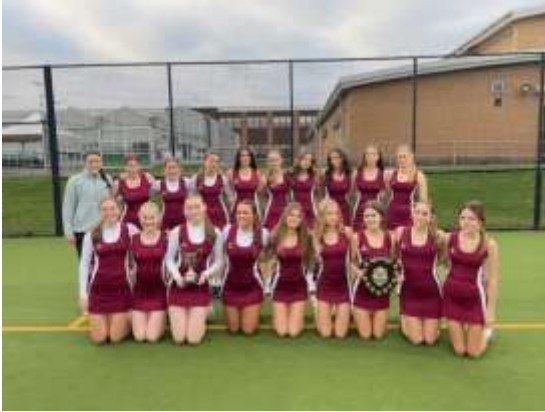
I had a wander around school yesterday, just to experience some of the fabulous stuff that happens day in, day out. At lunchtime I dropped into science club as they were working on a 'fire writing' experiment. I donned some safety goggles to watch the action; on this occasion, it didn't quite go to plan. I love the fact that pupils and staff then discussed why the chemical solution hadn't ignited as expected- that's science in action. I believe they are going to give it another go after the holidays, and I've no doubt they'll get the desired outcome next time. Then, in the afternoon, I joined a Year 9 enrichment group who were working on some cheerleading stunts with Mrs Hooley. I was so impressed with the attitude and determination of pupils; in such a short time they made incredible progress. Note to self, to take a photographer with me in future!

I've awarded some more Gold Stamps this week, to two young men in Year 9 who both hit an incredible milestone of 200 points in their Bedrock English. This is a brilliant achievement, and those Gold Stamps were well deserved. Bedrock is an online learning tool which we use to support pupils to develop their vocabulary and reading skills which in turn supports learning across the curriculum. Then today I've seen a wonderful creation by a Year 7 pupil; a box of Christian values themed crayons, created by hand.

It wouldn't be a week at St Michael's without sporting achievements to mention. Mr Holden updated us with the following news,

Four wins out of four so far this week for the St Michael's football teams! Tuesday saw two excellent victories against Albany in the Chorley Cup - one for Year 7 and another for Year 8. On Wednesday night, the Year 10s continued the winning streak with a 2–0 win over Corpus Christi in the first round of the Lancashire Cup. Last night, it was the Year 11s' turn, beating Southlands 5–2 in the Chorley Cup. Finally, good luck to the Year 9s, who are heading to the seaside this afternoon to take on Thornton Millfield in the first round of the Lancashire Cup!

Whilst Mrs Brunsden sent the following,



The Year 10 & 11 District Netball tournament was held on the 15th October at Holy Cross. The girls showed outstanding performances with all the squad contributing to our school's success. Both teams have amazing talent and were unbeaten throughout the tournament and they are now District Champions. Congratulations to them all for their commitment to practices and thank you to our ex-pupil Sofia who helped umpire for the Year 10 team, it was lovely to have her back with us.



And it's not just pupils' sporting accomplishments we are celebrating this week, it's staff too, as Mr O'Reilly, Mrs Nicolson and Mrs McDermott ran the Manchester half marathon last weekend. For Miss Nicholson and Mrs McDermott, it was their first ever half marathon; what an incredible achievement! We are so proud of them all.

Today we've had a lot of laughs at lunchtime, with our staff fashion show for Derian House. Staff dressed as a range of masked characters and had their moment on the stage whilst pupils tried to guess who they were. A very entertaining way to raise money for a worthy charity.

After the holidays we have so much to look forward to, including welcoming our Year 7 parents to Tutor Consultation Evening on Thursday 6th November. To the remaining families who haven't booked yet, this can be done on synergy.

Can I finish by wishing all those traveling to Milan a safe and fun trip.

Whatever you choose to do for the next two weeks may it be relaxing, rewarding and refreshing.

With kind regards,

Mrs Rachel Rongong
Headteacher

Important Dates

Monday 3 rd November	Start of half term
Thursday 6 th November	Year 7 Tutor Consultation Evening
Friday 7 th November	Period 1 Eucharist in the Armstrong Centre for pupils
Sunday 9 th November	Remembrance Sunday Service in Astley Park
Wednesday 19 th November	Year 11 mock exams commence