

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



Therefore, choose

16th October 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

And just like that, our first half term draws to a close. And what better way to celebrate our new pupils completing 7 weeks at St Michael's than with our Year 7 tutor evening yesterday. It was such a pleasure to meet and chat with so many of you again and to hear how positive your children have found the transition to secondary school. I loved hearing how they have thrown themselves wholeheartedly into all that we have to offer and are settled and happy to be part of Team St Michael's. We can't ask for much more than that.

It's been a mixed bag in terms of weather this week, which means that some of our Year 11 geographers enjoyed a river trip in the sun, whereas others had a slightly damper experience! You can read more about it at the end of this letter. Thank you to all of the staff who took the time to organise this essential curriculum trip.

What can I say about Worship this week? Miss Curtis planned and oversaw what was shared but it was delivered entirely by pupils. Hughes choir welcomed us in with a rousing rendition of 'Majesty' before handing over to our Head Pupils and Spirituality Leads who spoke about service. Starting with our mission statement, pupils asked us to consider what it meant to serve God and reminded us that serving others allows us to deepen our relationships with ourselves, others, creation and God. Reading from Luke 12:48, we were reminded of the responsibility we have to use our gifts and talents, whereas Galatians 5:13 prompts us to love, serve and seek the best for one another. We were left with the encouragement to choose small acts of kindness to make a difference and to look for how we can serve our wider community.

Tuesday saw the first of our lunchtime concerts. We love to celebrate the Arts at St Michael's and giving pupils the opportunity to perform to peers and staff helps us all to grow in body, mind and spirit. Our Head of Performing Arts, Mr White has shared more details below.

On Wednesday, we celebrated Eucharist and were delighted to be joined by Rev Matt Hornby from Coppull. We were blessed to have Robyn in Year 10 attend too, to play the piano for us, making the morning extra special. These services take place periodically during period 1, and three pupils from each tutorial are invited to attend. Eucharists are so important to us as a church school, which is why we have introduced annual whole year group Eucharists for Year 7 and 8. Year 7 will have a 'teaching Eucharist' in the Lent term and we will be joined by Bishop Philip and Father Paul who will talk through and explain the different elements of the service. Year 8 experienced this last year, and their year group event is scheduled for the first week back after the half term break; something to look forward to, for sure.

I've awarded several Gold Stamps this week, to Year 10 pupils for delivering speeches and to Year 8 pupils for making exceptional tote bags; a huge well done to them all.

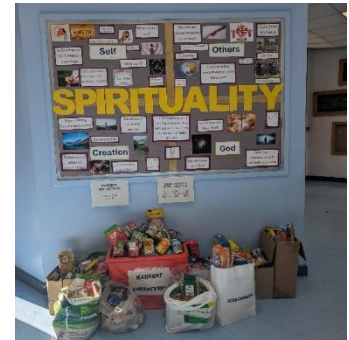
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We had more celebration this afternoon for the winners of last year's Year 7 chocolate project. We are so grateful to Andrew Harwood from Harwood's Patisserie in Wigan for making the time to come into school. Do read our more detailed report at the end of this letter.

Thank you to all families who have contributed to our harvest appeal. Donations will now be dropped off at Living Waters and St Laurence's. A small act of kindness that can make a real difference as highlighted in our Worship this week.

We have so much to look forward to after the holiday, but before then we are waving off pupils and staff on two trips during the break. Those on the Berlin trip leave this afternoon with Brussels trip participants departing (very) early on Saturday morning. We wish them all safe travels and the best of adventures. Keep an eye on our social media to see what they get up to whilst they are away.



Year 11 mock exams start a couple of weeks after our return, so no doubt there'll be revision taking place in the coming days, but please can I encourage everyone to factor in time to rest and refresh before we come back for the busy run up to Christmas.

We have so much to be thankful for, so I'll finish with the lyrics of a song that we heard at the lunchtime concert, Gratitude, by Brandon Lake,

*So I throw up my hands
And praise You again and again
'Cause all that I have is a hallelujah
Hallelujah
And I know it's not much
But I've nothing else fit for a King
Except for a heart singing hallelujah
Hallelujah*

With kind regards,



Mrs Rachel Rongong
Headteacher

Important Dates

Friday 16 October	Berlin visit departs
Saturday 17 October	Brussels visit departs
Monday 2 November	Return to school
Thursday 5 November	Shakespeare festival performance at the Contact Theatre Manchester
Sunday 8 November	Remembrance Sunday Service at the cenotaph Astley Park
Wednesday 18 November	Year 11 mock exams commence
Friday 27 November	Year 11 mock exams end
Wednesday 2 December	Careers Fair
Thursday 3 December	Awards Evening – presentation of last year's Year 11 GCSE certificates

Thursday 10 December	Christmas carol service at St Laurence's Church 6.30pm – all welcome
Tuesday 15 December	Community Christmas Party 12noon-1.15pm – contact the school office to book a place
Friday 18 December	End of term

EVENTS

Lunchtime Concert

On Tuesday, we enjoyed our first lunchtime concert of the year, organised by our Music Council. Despite some understandable nerves, the performers delivered wonderful performances. Congratulations to Angelmae, Mia, Poppy, Evie, Darrah and Amy, as well as to the ensemble group who gave a beautiful four-part harmony rendition of our current favourite worship song, *Gratitude* by Brandon Lake.

We were delighted to see such a fantastic turnout, with pupils from all year groups and members of staff coming together to support our performers. The atmosphere was warm, encouraging and joyful, making it a very special twenty minutes in the middle of a busy school day.

Year 11 Geography River Wyre Fieldtrip

This week our Year 11 geography pupils have been out of school undertaking their second field study visit. Pupils travelled to the River Wyre where they collected data which will be used in their paper 3 exam in the summer. Our pupils worked brilliantly as a team, collecting information on the width, depth, bedload, gradient and velocity of the river at three different sites. Later in the afternoon pupils had the opportunity to visit Garstang where they were able to see examples of hard and soft engineering flood management. The visits were led by staff from Hothersall Lodge field study centre who were very complimentary about our pupils.





Chocolate Demonstration



Last year, our current Year 8 pupils took part in the Chocolate Project during their Year 7 Character and Spiritual Education lessons.

As part of their prize, today they have enjoyed a fascinating chocolate-making demonstration from renowned chocolatier and pâtissier, Andrew Harwood of Harwood's Patisserie in Standish. Andrew, who along with his business partner achieved an impressive second place in Professional Bake Off in 2023, generously shared his career journey, explaining how he first entered the industry and developed his passion for chocolate and pâtisserie. Pupils were captivated by his expertise and enthusiasm, and we are especially grateful for the opportunity to film in his workplace, giving our pupils a real insight into life as a professional chocolatier.



It was a truly inspiring experience, and our pupils thoroughly enjoyed every moment. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Andrew for his time, generosity and support in helping to bring learning to life.



SPORT

Cross Country

Congratulations to all who took part in the District Cross Country Competition at Holy Cross High School on 6th October. All our pupils demonstrated fantastic commitment, determination and endurance, completing the course in impressive times.

A special well done to our medal winners: Josie (Year 8), Thomas (Year 9) and Millie (Year 11), who all achieved first place; Amelia (Year 7), who secured second place; and Cian and Ava (Year 10), who both finished in third place.

We are delighted that a number of St Michael's pupils have been selected to represent Chorley at the Lancashire Cross Country Championships in December. Congratulations to everyone involved, and we wish them the very best of luck in the next stage of the competition!

Netball

This week saw the start of the Chorley and District Netball tournaments. We started with the Year



10 and 11 girls in their quest for victory at Holy Cross. After some fantastic play from Year 10, they were narrowly beaten into second place by the team from Holy Cross.

The Year 11 team were victorious and are now champions of the district after

conceding only one goal in the whole tournament under the leadership of captain, Martha. Some of the movement from the girls was excellent. We would like to congratulate them on their efforts this week and for the last four years at St Michael's.



We look forward now to the Lancashire tournament after half term where, as current holders, we are hoping to have a strong combined Year 10 and 11 team to fight to retain our trophy. Well done girls and best of luck for next half term.

Year 7 Netball teams – First Match for St Michael's!

On Thursday, our Year 7 netball teams were incredibly excited to play their first match against Bishop Rawstorne!

The girls were fantastic and demonstrated an outstanding level of skill, brilliant set plays down the court, and fantastic commitment to defending as a team. It was wonderful to see their teamwork, determination and enthusiasm shine through!

I am so excited to continue working with these wonderfully talented pupils as we develop our skills and prepare for the District Tournament in November. A huge well done to all the girls – you should be incredibly proud of yourselves!



Football

On Tuesday, the Year 8 boys' football teams hosted Parklands and in tough conditions managed a very impressive 4-0 win to see them through to the Chorley Cup final. On the same night the Year 11s started their defence of the Lancashire Cup against fellow Chorley school Holy Cross. A fixture that is far too good for round 1 of the Lancashire cup the boys knew they needed a solid performance to advance into the next round. A superb performance resulted in a 3-0 win and we will now face Leyland St Mary's in the second round.

On Wednesday, the Year 10 boys' football team hosted Balshaws in their opening round Lancashire cup game. A scrappy first half including a missed penalty by ourselves saw us come in at half time at 1-0 up but far from comfortable. The second half however, was much more controlled and we rarely gave our opponents a sight of goal. We added a further goal to make it 2-0 and progress into the next round. Who we will face is still to be decided.

A very good week in PE - well done to all!