

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

7th November 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

After what felt like a long break, it's been great to be back in school this week. Most pupils seem glad to be back too, and it has been lovely to catch up with so many of them and to hear how they spent their holidays.

Some of our pupils had some time away together, heading to Milan on our school trip. Mr Holden has sent through the following report.



During half term we took 48 pupils on an amazing football tour to Milan where all our pupils made memories to last a lifetime!

Our teams played fixtures against local opposition, with our tour rep commenting that the performances of St Michael's, across all groups – were among the very best he has ever seen from a school on tour. Pupils also enjoyed two fantastic training sessions at the Inter Milan Academy, led by the Inter Milan coaches who were full of praise for their attitude, teamwork and enthusiasm.

Between training and matches, there was time to explore beautiful Milan, including a tour of the iconic San Siro Stadium and an unforgettable afternoon watching a Serie A fixture between Verona and Cagliari. On the final morning, pupils had the unique opportunity to visit Inter Milan's headquarters and trophy room, a privilege not normally open to the public.

Throughout the trip, our pupils received glowing feedback from coaches, staff and the public for their behaviour, respect and spirit, something we are incredibly proud of.

A huge thank you to Mr Holden, Mrs Brunsdon, Mr Kennedy, Mr O'Reilly and Miss Watson for giving up their time to make this unforgettable experience possible.

Whilst some were enjoying sport in foreign parts, Mr Cree was representing St Michael's at the VE garden in Chorley where Chorley in Bloom and Chorley Council paid tribute in remembrance of those who died in the wars. Poppies and crosses were laid at the garden.

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We also had a tremendous turnout for our Chitty Chitty Bang Bang fundraiser. Mrs Hooley sent the following report,



We are incredibly proud of the pupils who took part in our sponsored walk to raise funds. The walk, which followed the route from school to Rivington Pike and back to the Lower Barn, was completed in record time, with all pupils showing fantastic determination and team spirit. Thankfully, the weather held off just long enough for us to enjoy the full route before the rain arrived!

The walk was intended to be a 'be the light' walk, taking place on Halloween, one of the darkest days of the year. In the Bible, in Matthew chapter 5, verses 14-16 it says: "You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world. God is not a secret to be kept...I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine!" In keeping with our theme several pupils dressed in neon and carried LED lights, creating a vibrant and uplifting atmosphere and their efforts have brought us closer to bringing the magic of Chitty to life on stage. If you would like to sponsor those who took part in the walk, you can make a donation through School Gateway. We are very grateful for your contributions in support of the production.

Worship this week focused on one of our Tutorial Patrons - Bubba Watson. For those new to St Michael's, we choose 9 Tutorial Patrons each year. They are selected because of their example and Christian witness, giving insight and inspiration into how others live or lived out their faith. Mr O'Reilly led us this week and talked of the moment Bubba found faith, saying, 'I listened, thought about it, and gave myself to the Lord'. Despite being a professional golfer, Bubba suffered with anxiety, and it was encouraging to hear how he surrounded himself with people who supported him, read the Bible and recognised his identity of a child of God. We had a great take-away message - that we don't need to be perfect to be used by God; what an encouragement!

We had a busy day on Tuesday. 17 of our Year 7 pupils took part in Bikeability Level 3, a course that follows on from the earlier levels offered at primary school and requires participants to plan a cycle route as well as navigating busier roads and more complex junctions. The day was run by Chorley School Sports Partnership and the instructors (including former pupils Will and Aaron) said that the pupils were a credit to the school. Well done to all our budding cyclists.



Later in the day, we had a visit from Bishop Philip who joined one of our Year 11 RE lessons for a Q & A session. It was great to hear that they asked some thought-provoking and challenging questions. We are always delighted to have Bishop Philip visit us and are so grateful for his time; we really do notice the difference he makes to our community.

On Wednesday five of our librarians, accompanied by Mrs Allcock and Mrs Murray, visited Chorley library as part of the 40th Lancashire Book of the Year Award. Pupils are reading a selection of books to shortlist and will meet again in the coming months to discuss their

thoughts; we look forward to hearing about their recommendations.

Unbelievably, we are already into exam season for Year 11, and this week GCSE dance exams have been taking place. I was so impressed with how calm and prepared pupils appeared as they waited to go into the hall for their performances; I have no doubt they will have given it their very best effort; we are so proud of them all.



On Thursday Mrs McCaffrey represented school at the RHS North West in Bloom Awards. Chorley achieved a gold award in the small city category and in the large parks category for Astley Park and Yarrow Valley Park. We were delighted that St Michael's and St James' Primary were awarded certificates for their school gardens. On Thursday afternoons, Year 9 pupils and staff work hard in the garden as part of our enrichment programme and it was wonderful to have their efforts recognised.

Yesterday, we had our tutor consultation evening for Year 7 parents and carers; a chance for them to meet with pupils' tutors and to talk through how they have settled into life at St Michael's. I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to see so many of you, and to hear how happy families are to be part of Team St Michael's. For the first time at this event, as well as the wonderful Bridge Buddies welcoming parents, we had some pupils entertaining those waiting for their appointment by playing the piano; massive thanks to Leia and William; it really added a lovely touch. Thanks too to all of you who joined us; it really does mean a lot that you attend these evenings, not least because it allows us to get to know one another better, which is such a priority for us.

This morning, we celebrated Eucharist during period 1. Rev Matt Hornby spoke to us about the Remembrance Service being held in Coppull at the weekend and encouraged us to reflect on John 15.13; "greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Rev Matt gave us the example of Lance Corporal James Ashworth, who was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his service in Afghanistan; crawling forward under cover of a low wall and showing extreme bravery as he made the ultimate sacrifice. Thank you to Rev Matt for leading our service today.

It has been a joy to award a good number of Gold Stamps this week. First, I saw a group of Year 10 pupils who achieved all A*/A grades in Attitude to Learning on their recent tracking; what a reason to celebrate! I also awarded a Gold Stamp to a young lady in Year 11 who was recently recognised as Most Improved Sports Leader from St Micheal's High School. She has spent 42 hours supporting and coaching children and running events for Chorley Schools Sports Partnership and was highly praised for her attitude, commitment and all-round hard work. Other worthy receivers of stamps were a young lady in Year 11 for excellent piece of English descriptive writing, as well as a young lady in Year 10 who was nominated for her poached fruit dessert in food. Wow, what a week!

We've got a lot to look forward to this half term, but prior to the holidays I missed a wonderful event out of my letter that does need a mention. Mrs Burgess, one of our dance teachers, sent the following report,

Before half term, pupils in Year 10 and 11 dance and drama classes had an amazing opportunity to work with a practitioner from Frantic Assembly, who are an internationally renowned theatre company. The workshop gave pupils new and exciting ways of creating and developing movement in physical theatre, which connects dance and drama. Pupils said, " we just wanted it to be longer!"

We have a really busy half term ahead, with so much to look forward to. We are excited to be hosting our Careers Fair on Tuesday 2nd December, for Years 10 and 11. This event is a fantastic opportunity for pupils to explore a wide range of future pathways, and we are delighted to be welcoming representatives from local colleges, businesses, and apprenticeship providers. The fair will run during the school day from 11.45am to 3.25pm for pupils, and parents/carers are then

warmly invited to attend after school from 3.25pm to 5.00pm, either with or without their children. To make the fair even more enriching, we are inviting parents/carers and friends of St Michael's to share their own career journeys and expertise with pupils. If you work in a field that could inspire or inform our young people, we would be very grateful for your involvement. If you might be able to support us by attending between 11.45 and 5.00pm on this day and sharing your career story, please do get in touch – your contribution could make a real difference. You can contact Miss Curtis via admin@saint-michaels.lancs.sch.uk

As we look forward to Advent, I wanted to mention our annual Community Christmas Party which will be held on Tuesday 16th December 12-1.15pm in school. We look forward to welcoming our senior friends of St Michael's with music, entertainment and refreshments. If you have older relatives, neighbours or friends who would like to attend, please contact Mrs Walsh in the office on 01257 264740. We will also be holding our Community Carol Service at St Peter's Church on Wednesday 10th December at 6.30pm. This is a beautiful service; accompanied by Hughes and readings by pupils it allows us time to reflect on the message of peace and joy at Christmas. All are warmly invited to join us for this special evening, simply come along.

This Sunday I have the privilege of accompanying our Head Boy and Head Girl to the Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph in Astley Park at 10.45am. Laying a wreath, on behalf of school, we are reminded of the ultimate sacrifice made by so many. I will leave you with the words of the Kohima Epitaph;

*When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow, we gave our today.*

With kind regards,



Mrs Rachel Rongong
Headteacher

Important Dates

Sunday 9 th November	Remembrance Sunday Service in Astley Park at 10.45am
Tuesday 11 th November	11am in school – Act of Remembrance
Wednesday 19 th November	Year 11 mock exams commence
Wednesday 10 th December	Community Carol Service at St Peter's Church 6.30pm
Tuesday 16 th December	Community Christmas Party - 12-1.15pm in school