

St Michael's Church of England High School

A Church of England Academy

Headteacher: Mrs Rachel Rongong BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH

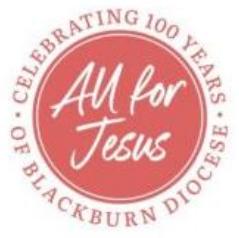
Growing in Body, Mind and spirit



16th January 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

We have had a great week in school this week, with so much to celebrate once again; there is something about being in a school with Jesus at the heart of all that we do, that makes every day so much brighter. Last week, Blackburn Diocese launched their centenary year, 'All for Jesus', and what a brilliant reminder of our purpose as part of Team St Michael's. If you have children at primary school, you may well have already heard of different activities taking place, and there are plans for secondary schools to be involved too. This is what the Diocese says,



The year 2026 is our centenary year as a Diocese.

It will be a chance to give thanks for all that God has done through his people in the Diocese of Blackburn since William Temple founded it in 1926, and an opportunity to commit ourselves anew to mission and ministry in the service of Jesus Christ across Lancashire.

Why "All for Jesus"?

All for Jesus explains in three simple words why there is a Diocese of Blackburn and what our purpose is. The Centenary will be an opportunity for everyone to come together to celebrate and also give us opportunities for mission across the County.

We will keep you updated on the events as they come up throughout the year.

This week, our worship was led by Mr Neville, who spoke to us on the theme of thankfulness. He started by asking us what we are thankful for, reminding us of the verse in 1 Thessalonians 5:18. 'give thanks in all circumstances'. We heard some surprising facts too; did you know that having food in our fridge, clothes to wear, a roof over our heads and a place to sleep makes us richer than 75% of the world's population? Mr Neville reminded us how in Zambia, our pupils and staff witnessed a culture where people had so little, yet had so much joy - thought provoking stuff indeed. He finished by highlighting God's greatest gift of his son, who he sent to save us; how very blessed we are.

Year 8 and Year 9 have been busy with exams this week; these more formal moments of checking pupils' knowledge and understanding are vital in helping us to support progress and also in helping pupils become accustomed to expectations of more formal exams in the future. We are incredibly proud of how they have conducted themselves and the determination they have shown; well done to them all. Once again, we are also very grateful to the exams team and invigilators who have contributed so much during this time.

Last week I mentioned the array of props I'd seen passing my office; on Tuesday this week, I heard the sound of tap dancing in the entrance hall. 12 months ago, this might have surprised me, but now I know it's just what happens at St Michael's. We place a high value on the expressive arts, so it's commonplace to see pupils practising one art form or another. What was so lovely this time, was that I was able to witness the phenomenal teaching and leadership skills of one of our Year 11 pupils, Lilah, as she choreographed the dancing and encouraged pupils so brilliantly; it was a real highlight of my week.



On Thursday Miss Williams took a group of twelve Year 9 pupils to Runshaw College for an exciting day exploring AI. Miss Williams sent through this report,

Pupils investigated real-world issues linked to the UN Global Goals and used these as inspiration to design their own AI-powered product or app ideas. Pupils then experimented with a range of prototyping tools to quickly turn their ideas into early designs. To finish the day, they brought everything together in a clear and engaging presentation, explaining their concepts and pitching their ideas, building confidence, creativity, and teamwork along the way. It was a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to experience cutting edge technology in a real college environment, and they represented school brilliantly throughout the day.

On Thursday afternoon some of our Year 9 enrichment pupils welcomed guests to school for an afternoon of entertainment. Working towards the physical and volunteering sections of their bronze Duke of Edinburgh, some of our young people have been rehearsing with Mrs Burgess over the past weeks, to prepare a dance which they performed yesterday afternoon. As well as the performance, guests enjoyed bingo and refreshments. Pupils, supported by Mrs Johnson and Mrs Wild, did a fantastic job of hosting and we really hope our visitors enjoyed the occasion.

Walking round school on Friday, I popped into a Year 10 food technology lesson, where I was amazed to see pupils about to take on the challenge of making pasta from scratch. Knowing this is no easy feat, I made sure to go back into the lesson later to see how things were progressing; I was so impressed! From ravioli to tagliatelle, pupils had done a brilliant job.

In sporting news, Mr Lister sent through the following,

The Year 9 boys travelled to Parklands on Monday for their final Chorley cup game of the year. They started strong in an attempt to control the game, but Parklands proved to be a tough opposition. That was until a wonderful strike from Jonah, with about five minutes left of the first half, found its way into the back of the Parklands' net. The half time talk focused on taking control of the game and building on our lead and this is exactly what they did. The second half contained prolonged periods of dominance from the boys in maroon and a number of very well taken finishes took the score to 4-0. A great way to end the Chorley cup campaign for Year 9.

There have been Gold Stamps aplenty this week! Of course there was recognition for the pasta that was created, but the majority of the stamps have gone to Year 7 for their creative RE work. Pupils have been exploring how Christmas is celebrated across the world and as part of their festive home learning have created their own 'make or bake' treats inspired by different countries' traditions as well as researching the reasons behind them. Not only have classes learned about unique customs, but they've also discovered that food is a universal language of celebration. Each pupil presented their creation to the rest of the class and delivered a short speech, wow!



Whilst young people have been taking on new experiences, I have also been out of school, spending two days on the Christian Leadership Course, a year-long course which runs for leaders in schools in the Dioceses of Blackburn, Liverpool, Manchester and Carlisle. It is such a privilege to lead a church school, and it is a priority for me to ensure that we are doing all that we can to help

our young people and their families, staff, governors and our wider community to flourish. Taking the time to reflect on our collective worship, spirituality, and how we can know 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) even in the more challenging times, really helps to shape our direction and is so purposeful and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity.

As I was away this week, it meant that I was not present at Year 11 consultation evening, however I hear that it was a very positive evening. Thank you so much to all who attended; school really does work best when we all work together.

Time to think about our school vision, our hope that all our community can '**grow in body, mind and spirit**', the Diocesan centenary launch and reminder that it is 'all for Jesus', along with Mr Neville's worship have combined to make this a week filled with purpose. Jeremiah 17:7-8 says, '*Blessed are those who trust in the Lord... they are like trees planted by the water... their leaves are always green, and they never fail to bear fruit*'. My prayer for you, is that whatever season you find yourself in today, that you can draw on God for all that you need.

Have a good weekend.

With kind regards,



Mrs Rachel Rongong
Headteacher

Important Dates

Monday 19 th January	Parent Meeting for pupils on West End Theatre Trip
Thursday 22 nd January 6.30pm	Year 9 Options Evening
Saturday 31 st January	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang rehearsals
Sunday 1 st February	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang rehearsals
Wednesday 4 th - Saturday 7 th February	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (tickets will go on sale in the coming weeks)
Thursday 12 th February	Year 9 Consultation Evening