

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



23rd January 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

Helen Roseveare, one of our tutorial patrons said, 'there really is no cost, only the privilege of serving the King of Kings'. This quote has been on my mind during this exceptionally busy week; what a privilege to know a calling and a purpose, what a blessing to be part of Team St Michael's.

We started Monday with a celebration of Year 11 pupils who had received excellent reports. Many of our young people work incredibly hard, but those who have demonstrated a particularly exceptional attitude to learning are invited to a breakfast together to mark their achievement. I so enjoy these occasions, as they offer the opportunity to chat to individuals and to talk about their hobbies, interests and future plans. As always, I was struck by how articulate our pupils are, something that has stood out for me since arriving at St Michael's. A huge well done to them all.

There's been a bit of a breakfast theme this week, as on Tuesday, we welcomed our local clergy into school again, for our first clergy breakfast of 2026. As a Christian school, it is vital that we work in partnership with our local churches, and meeting each term really helps to strengthen our relationships as we share updates, look for ways of working collaboratively, and worship and pray together; it was such a positive way to begin the day.

The day ended well on Tuesday, too, as I took the opportunity to pop into (board) games club after school. It was a bustling hive of activity; a wealth of different games are available for pupils to play, from strategy games to card games, there really is something for everyone. With a good number of staff there to support, it's a great way for children to get to know other pupils; do encourage your child to give it a go, if it sounds like something they might enjoy!

On my way to games club, I found myself surrounded by pupils dressed in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang costumes; they looked amazing! The show is really starting to come together now and tickets are selling fast. Tickets and programmes are available to purchase on School Gateway, don't miss out! We would also still be very grateful for any raffle prizes – if you would like to donate a prize these can be dropped off at the school office.

I joined Year 9 for Worship this week on Wednesday. The focus was Helen Roseveare, who I referenced earlier, and it was led almost exclusively by pupils from 04 tutorial (with support from Miss Simons). As we came into the hall, Hughes choir were singing, 'Shout to the Lord', beautiful as always, setting the scene exceptionally well. Pupil readers did a phenomenal job, speaking with such clarity and confidence, really helping us to engage with what was being said. Helen was an inspirational Christian missionary, doctor and author and her work in the Belgian Congo was incredible – do ask your children about the story of the hot water bottle and doll; quite a remarkable testament to the power of prayer.

Year 9 have been busier than usual too, as this week we have had a big focus on options. Mrs Hooley, who oversees this area of school life, said the following,

Thank you to all parents and carers who attended our Year 9 Options Evening last night, your support is truly appreciated. The options process has begun with real gusto this week, and our Year 9 pupils have been fully engaged in a series of informative assemblies covering triple science, BTEC performing arts, languages, geography, history, music, music technology, art, textiles, design and

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technology, and food preparation and nutrition. This morning, pupils also heard from BTEC Digital ICT and computer science, with further sessions on dance and GCSE business planned for Monday. Alongside these presentations, classes have started individual guidance talks, giving pupils the chance to ask questions and explore their interests in more depth. We also encourage pupils to attend the careers drop-ins, held in M7 on Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes during the final two weeks of term (3rd, 4th, 10th and 11th February). If you are the parent or carer of a Year 9 pupil, please take the opportunity to discuss option choices with your child, guide them with your experience, but also allow them the space to express their preferences and take ownership of their next steps.

Unfortunately, I wasn't able to be at options evening and to meet parents, as I made a fleeting trip to London to attend the National Society for Education (Church of England's) national conference. Entitled, 'FlourishED', we heard about inclusion in practice, SEND reform, putting young people at the heart of the mission of the Church of England, and what it means to belong and flourish (adults, as well as children). It was challenging and thought-provoking stuff, really echoing our own priorities here at St Michael's; it was well worth the trip.

This afternoon, St Michael's is hosting the Chorley School Sports Partnership boccia and curling competition. Venturing down to the sports hall, it was brilliant to see all of the different schools gathered, and to sense the excitement in the air; we so love partnering with others. 12 of our pupils are taking part and we will report on the results next week.

In other sports news, we are delighted to have learnt this week that several of our pupils who swim with Chorley Marlins, have achieved Lancashire County Championships 2026 consideration times. Well done to Maisie and Emily in Year 7, Oliver in Year 9 and Sophia and Jack in Year 10.

We also have some updates on the Year 7 girls' football team. Mrs Dempster sent the following report,



The Year 7 girls' football team entered their first District tournament last Friday after school. The girls were fantastic, scoring some fabulous goals against teams from Holy Cross, Parklands and Bishop Rawstorne. They won three of their four games convincingly but lost a very tight game against Holy Cross A team, who were the eventual winners. And all this with only having had the chance to practice once in the last 6 weeks due to waterlogged and frozen pitches! The girls' attitude, effort and team spirit were excellent throughout. I am very proud of their first outing - a very promising start!

And keeping with football theme,

Last night, the Year 9 Football team competed in the Chorley and District tournament at Parklands. The girls played some fantastic football, carving their way through the opposition defense to score 9 goals in 3 games. Despite losing our normal striker and keeper to injuries, the girls remained unbeaten throughout the competition. They showed outstanding teamwork, attitude, and sportsmanship in all games. I would like to give a special mention to Evie, who normally plays in defense, as she volunteered to go in goal when our keeper could not play; a fantastic demonstration of teamwork. Well done on retaining your crown from last year, ladies!



Lots of pupils have earned Gold Stamps this week, in the main for incredible creations in RE by Year 7, celebrating Christmas around the world. In the last couple of weeks, I've been to several lessons

to watch pupils talking about their makes and bakes and have been so very impressed by their efforts. I also wanted to mention a very special Gold Stamp that went to a young lady in Year 7. This was awarded for her honesty when finding money that had been dropped and handing it in to staff, showing exceptional character, a huge well done to her.

I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, that 2026 is the National Year of Reading, and our featured staff reader today is Mr Banks, one of our RE teachers; this is what he said,



I have been re-reading Inheritance, the final book in the epic Inheritance Cycle. It follows the farm boy turned hero Eragon as he embraces his destiny as a dragon rider, his dragon Saphira, and the fate of his world as it hangs on one final struggle - exploring themes of loyalty, sacrifice, and what it truly means to wield power. It is an accessible and modern take on fantasy in the vein of Lord of the Rings or the Hobbit, but with a young hero in which young people may see themselves. I love the adventurous nature of this whole series, and the ability to escape into a vivid fantasy world, of good and evil and grace and nature, and highly recommend these books for anyone who wants a little more magic in their reading!

What are you reading, currently? Do let us know!

On a more serious note, the safety of our pupils is paramount, and we remain very concerned about the number of cars parking on Astley Road. There are over 1,100 pupils leaving the premises at the end of the school day, 7 buses which serve our pupils and vehicles accessing the main drive to collect pupils with mobility needs. Could we kindly ask parents and carers who collect children at the end of the school day, to arrange for them to walk to an agreed meeting point that considers our local residents. Can we also ask, that families who need to drop off or pick up their child during the school day, use the short stay parking at the top of the main drive. If picking up, please come into Reception to collect; we will not be able to release pupils otherwise. Thank you for your understanding and working with us in these areas, so that we can keep everyone safe.

I'll finish with a mention that tomorrow, school will be represented at the annual Holocaust Memorial Service by two of our senior Year 11 pupils who are studying GCSE History, accompanied by Deputy Head, Mr Tierney. The service is taking place at the Cenotaph in Astley Park at 10:45am and the theme this year is bridging the generations. As a Holocaust Beacon School, Holocaust education and working towards a better future, is a powerful contributor to our curriculum, aiming to inform, engage, empower and inspire our learners; quite simply, we take it very seriously.



Colossians 3:12 says, 'Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.' Let's all aim to do that as we go into the weekend.

With kind regards,



Mrs Rachel Rongong
Headteacher

Important Dates

Saturday 24 th January 10.45am	Holocaust Memorial Service at the cenotaph in Astley Park
Monday 26 th January 6pm	Parents' Meeting for Germany trip
Tuesday 27 th January	Holocaust Memorial Day – the theme of worship throughout the week is Holocaust Memorial
Wednesday 28 th January	P1 Eucharist with Rev Paul Robinson
Wednesday 28 th January	Intermediate Maths Challenge (Y9-11 pupils who have entered)
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
Thursday 12 th February	Year 9 Consultation Evening