

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

5th September 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to a new school year, and an extra special greeting to all our new Year 7 families. We have had a wonderful first week and it has been so lovely to see pupils again. I am so pleased to know an increasing number of pupils by name now; it's the relationships with our young people that make it such a joy to work in education.



In August our outgoing Year 11 picked up their GCSE results, and we have so much to celebrate once again. Our average Attainment 8 score was 58.9, making the average grade achieved by pupils a grade 6, with 34.2% of all grades being a 7 or above. Almost 91% of our pupils achieved a standard pass or above in both

English and maths, which is just phenomenal. It was a delight to see the joy on pupils' faces as they opened those oh so important envelopes, and to know that most were going onto the education or training of their choice. More than that, they were leaving as well-rounded, confident and articulate young people, ready to make a difference in our rapidly changing world.



There was more excitement during the holidays for a number of our new Year 11s who completed their Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition last week. With three days of walking from Hornby to Garstang including hiking over Nicky Nook, and two nights of camping, 39 of our pupils demonstrated huge determination and resilience. They experienced mixed weather, with heavy downpours at times, suffered excruciating blisters and navigational challenges, including fields full of cows and a few wrong turns along the way, and we are so proud of them all for persevering and making it to the end! We are also so grateful to the staff who gave up their time during the holidays to support this wonderful group of young people. It is through experiences like this that our pupils truly have the opportunity to grow in body, mind and spirit.

School is looking particularly fabulous at the moment, as the site team have worked wonders during the holidays, decorating and cleaning. We've also upgraded many of our computers, so that we can optimise learning and ensure pupils have the best possible experience in lessons; so much to be thankful for!

Although pupils came back on Tuesday, St Michael's staff were in school on Monday for the first of our INSET days. These days are traditionally thought of as teacher training days, but for us it meant starting the term with a staff Eucharist, wonderfully led by Rev Ian Sarginson from Buckshaw Village Church. What a way to start the new school year, placing God at the centre of it all. We

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then spent some time looking again at our school vision, '**growing in body mind and spirit**' and considering how we as a team, as well as individuals, want to develop over the course of the next 12 months. Of course, we also focused on making sure staff are upskilled and ready to support pupils in the classroom too, but it is these foundations of faith that set this school apart for me. I've been talking about vision in worship this week too (and will continue next week with the remaining year groups). I have been reminding pupils of the importance of knowing where we are headed and how this then influences our actions along the way. We talked about our school motto- **therefore, choose**, too and the power of making positive choices in reaching our goals.



Of course, Year 7 have had a particularly busy week. They've tackled CATs tests, navigated their way around a big school, met new friends and adults, had their photographs taken, hunted down their lockers, and experienced a wide range of new lessons. Period 6 falls just before lunch and Year 7 have been coming to the dining room 20 minutes earlier this week, so they have time and space to get used to lunchtime routines. That shortened lesson has been dedicated to our behaviour curriculum - explaining to pupils what our expectations are at St Michael's. We've talked about behaviour at break and lunch and discussed our 5 behaviour mantras:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Follow the instructions of staff the first time
- Show stewardship
- Be punctual
- Move quickly, quietly and calmly between lessons

Having simple and consistent rules like these makes it much easier for everyone to understand what they need to do. I've had the pleasure of teaching two of these lessons to Year 7 myself and have been so impressed with the exceptional attitude and enthusiasm pupils have shown.

Of course, we then had Year 7 Information Evening last night; thank you so much for taking the time to come along, it really was such a pleasure to meet so many of you. During the evening, Mr Chadwick mentioned pupil premium. If your circumstances have changed, or you think you may be eligible, it is certainly worth checking (whatever year group your child is in). You can find more information on the school website [Free School Meals and Pupil Premium | St Michael's CE High School](#). If you meet the eligibility criteria, please use the following link to apply directly through Lancashire County Council [Free school meals - Lancashire County Council](#).

We've had other exciting things happening too this week, as the cast list has just been released for our upcoming production of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. Even if pupils aren't playing a leading role, there are so many opportunities to get involved over the coming weeks. I'm so looking forward to the performances when they happen in February (Wednesday 4th February - Saturday 7th February 2026). I've been told that school productions at St Michael's are always incredible, and that's before you add in a flying car!

This week marked the start of the Global week of prayer, which is taking place from 1-7th September this year. The event is being organised by 24/7 Prayer, with a vision to see every nation on earth hosting a physical prayer room with non-stop prayer happening day and night. As part of Pray4Lancashire, Christian communities are hosting activities in their area, and we are delighted to have been able to link with Buckshaw Village Church and be part of the Chorley event today. At 12 noon, Chorley churches took over from Blackburn (who did the previous 24 hours) and church leaders came together at St Michael's to pray for our town and community. Pupils and staff were

invited to join in at lunchtime too, with the opportunity to visit a number of prayer stations in our Armstrong Centre.

There is so much to look forward to this half term! Next week we launch our inaugural freshers' fair to encourage Year 7 and 8 to get involved in wider curricular activities and clubs, and we also have our Open Evening on Thursday from 5:30-8:00pm. To prepare for this, please remember that school closes at 1:00pm that day. On that note, if you are applying for a child to join us next September you must complete the Lancashire County Council Admissions Application form, as well as our Supplementary Information Form which is available on our website. The application deadline is 31st October 2025.

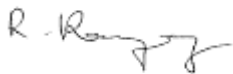
On Sunday, I'll be joining a number of staff and our choir for Education Sunday at St George's Church. The service starts at 9:30am, should you wish to come along. I also need to make you aware that parts of Synergy will be unavailable this weekend, so if you can't see your child's timetable, or home learning, it is a necessary 'down time' whilst we refresh things for our Year 7s and their new classes. All will be back up and running as normal on Monday!

Jeremiah 29:11 says,

'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a hope and a future'.

We embark on this next chapter of a new year with the knowledge that God has a plan for our lives and we aren't journeying alone. I couldn't ask for a better school to lead than St Michael's and I am so looking forward to partnering with you in the coming months!

With kind regards,



Mrs Rachel Rongong
Headteacher

Important Dates

Sunday 7 th September	Back to school Sunday service at St George's Church 9:30am – Hughes choir will be singing – all welcome
Thursday 11 th September	School closes early for pupils at 1pm in preparation for Open Evening (buses have been ordered for 1pm)
Thursday 11 th September	Open Evening 5:30-8pm – all prospective families welcome
Friday 12 th September	Open Morning 9:30am-12noon – all prospective families welcome
Monday 29 th September	Staff training day – school closed for pupils
Tuesday 19 th November	Advance warning, Year 11 mock exams start