

# 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*



Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

This week has been a busy one, but such a good one. I suggest you get a cup of tea and a comfortable seat, as there is just so much I want to share. I am still overwhelmed every day by the wealth of wonderful experiences on offer at St Michael's, whatever your passion, there really is something for everyone!

On Monday I met a small group of Year 8 pupils to recognise their 'excellent reports'. There was a moment when I looked around the room and felt an immense sense of pride. The young people were selected because of their brilliant attitude to learning grades across their subjects, and I was able to chat to each of them about their achievements and interests whilst they enjoyed a slice of toast and a glass of juice. This commitment to their learning is so commendable, a massive well done to them all!

On Tuesday morning I attended worship with Year 8. This week we were led by the Head Boy, Head Girl and Deputies as they considered the period of Lent. They talked about the opportunity this season brings to pause amid our busy lives, to think and pray, and to consider our priorities; a timely reminder that was much appreciated. Pupils were so respectful during worship, and this is one of the things that has impressed me most since joining St Michael's. They showed that same mature and reflective attitude in the first of our Lent Eucharist services at lunchtime on Wednesday too. Rev David Ward kindly joined us to lead the Eucharist, and many pupils and staff benefitted from his encouraging words and the chance to stop and focus on God. I certainly felt incredibly blessed.

Year 7 and 10 finished their exams this week. Pupils have worked extremely hard to prepare for these and, again, impressed us with their resilience and determination to give of their best. Year 11 also completed practical GCSE assessments in both food and dance. I hope that everyone can relax a little this weekend now that they are over. Keeping that balance is so important.

Our vision at St Michael's is, 'growing in body mind and spirit'. We want every pupil to know the joy of, 'life in all its fullness' and to leave school equipped for the future, becoming all that God has called them to be. One of the ways we encourage this is through our opportunities for student leadership. Miss Watson is responsible for this area, and this week she joined me for lunch with the Head Boy and Girl and two Deputies to discuss the items on their agenda for the upcoming School Council meeting. Pupils had given such thought to each of the topics and spoke to me so

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articulately and with such confidence; I have no doubt they will chair their meetings extremely well when they take place.

Of course I've had the 'Headteacher's Gold Stamp' out again this week. Some pupils were nominated because of their fantastic volcanic creations, but I also met Lex who talked me through how he had translated some of the school website into code, just brilliant! Thank you also to the Year 7 pupils who shared their fantastic chocolate creations from Character for Life with me – I'm looking forward to seeing more of these over the coming weeks.

It is always a highlight to meet parents and carers, and yesterday it was the turn of Year 8, who joined us at Consultation Evening. We are so keen to get to know you and to strengthen those links between home and school, so it was brilliant that more than 94% of you attended. Thank you for giving up your time to be here, and in particular to those of you who took the time to say hello. As usual, we shared a survey link with you on the night and would really appreciate your feedback on how you found the event, and whether you prefer the in-person, rather than on-line format.

In sporting news this week, Year 8 have been fantastically successful, winning gold medals in both the boys' and girls' Chorley and District Handball competitions. These teams will now go forward to represent Chorley in Lancashire. Continuing the Year 8 theme, the boys' basketball team have also been crowned Chorley and District Champions after beating Southlands in the final. The success just keeps on coming! The football match we've all been waiting for happened this week too. Mr Lister has written the report below for us, as it was such a significant achievement. Many thanks to him to for the time and support he has given to the boys.

*'Monday unfortunately saw the end of our Year 9 boys' incredible journey in the English Schools' football competition. The boys bowed out at the last 8 stage after defeat against Meole Brace School from Shropshire. The journey has been an incredible one and making the last 8 of a countrywide competition (674 entrants) is an achievement that really cannot be understated, and the boys will always be the first team from St Michael's to ever reach this stage of the English School's competition but hopefully will not be the last. Along the way they haven't had it easy having to play the champions of Wigan, Cumbria, West Yorkshire and Liverpool and prevailing against them all. The enormity of the achievement is only magnified by the fact that the team contains no academy players, which at this stage of the competition is rarely, if ever, seen. We hope that this becomes the catalyst for other teams wanting to follow in their footsteps and we look forward to their campaign when they are in Year 10. A fantastic achievement boys, well done!'*

Thursday saw us celebrating World Book Day. I'm always grateful for a chance to promote reading and it's even better if it involves fancy dress! Many staff chose to entertain pupils dressed as one of their favourite characters, with pupils in Year 7 invited to join us too. We had a book swap in the library and teachers read an abridged version of Jane Eyre throughout the day. Many thanks to Mrs Magdi, Head of English, as well as Mrs Allcock, our librarian for all their work to make the occasion such a success!

Friday was a non-uniform day to raise funds for Zambia and specifically to support the Good Samaritan School to purchase chickens, equipment and food. Thank you for your ongoing support with this project – if you are yet to make a donation for non-uniform day you can do so on School Gateway.

On Monday we return to normal dress - full uniform for everyone and our usual high expectations! One of the very few things I have found challenging since joining St Michael's is the minority of pupils who choose to disregard our rules about appearance. Unfortunately, a number of pupils choose to roll the waistband of their skirts up. As our skirts simply aren't designed to be worn this way, this makes them look very distorted and untidy. Our aim is for pupils to take pride in their appearance, to dress smartly and look professional. Our uniform list states the following:  
*Skirt: Regulation badged skirt, skirts no more than 3 inches from the knee (**waistbands must not be rolled over**). Shorts should not be worn under a skirt.*

If you know your child is not adhering to our expectations in the way they are wearing their uniform, we would really appreciate your support, as we do not want to have to issue detentions or other sanctions. A reminder too, that jewellery is not allowed in school, other than a wristwatch (no smart watches should be worn). Thank you so much for your help with this.

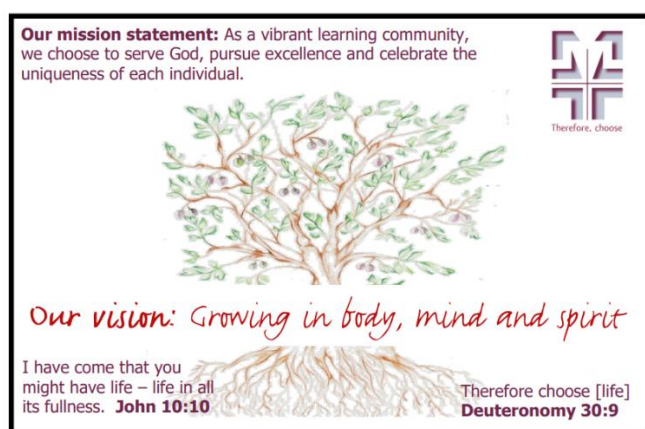
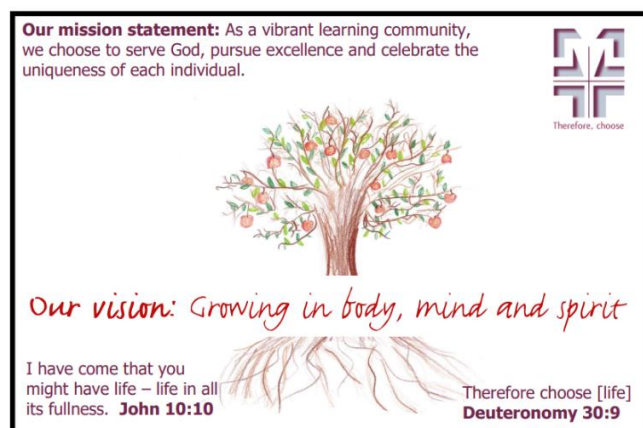
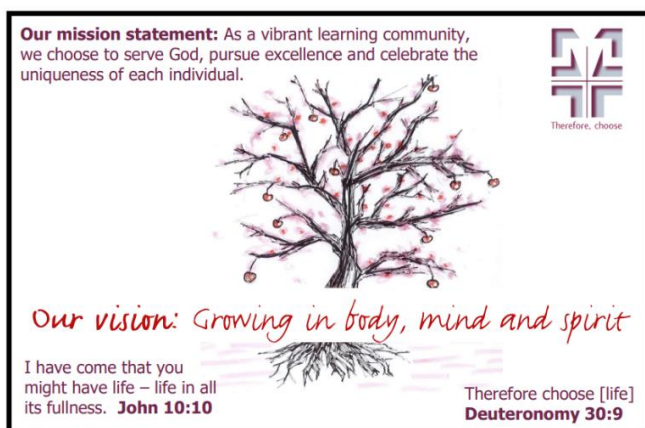
I mentioned our vision earlier and we'll be asking for your feedback on the Christian dimension of school in the coming weeks. Being new to the school, I really want to ensure that every member of our community knows and understands what our vision is, as well as the Bible verses that underpin it. To help with this, we have been running an art competition for Year 7 and 8 to design a new 'character tree'. We currently use this image around school and in our lessons and we now want to update this and create a postcard that can be distributed and displayed to reinforce our aims as a school.

We had close to 100 entries, all so varied and creative. Many of these have been on display in the entrance to school this week:



After several stages of shortlisting, we managed to narrow the entries down to a final eight - all of these will be used on Praise Postcards to celebrate pupil and staff achievements next academic year.

Members of the student leadership team helped us to pick our final three:



I'm sure you'll agree they all look fabulous! Top left was designed by Ethan, top right by Eva and bottom left by Robyn, all Year 8 pupils!

I'm delighted to announce here that **our overall winner is Eva (top right)**. Her design will be used for the whole of the next academic year, featuring on the website and various literature and communications around school. Well done Eva! We are hoping to make this an annual competition, so there'll be another opportunity for those in Year 7 to take part next year.

It's been an absolutely brilliant week and I do hope your children have enjoyed it as much as I have. As usual, I have included a list of upcoming events at the end of this letter. It's looking likely to be a lovely sunny weekend, I hope you get the chance to benefit from it.

With kind regards,

Mrs Rachel Rongong  
Headteacher

### **Events next week**

Monday 10 March  
Tuesday 11 March  
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Wednesday 12 March  
  
Friday 14 March

Year 8 MFL Option Form deadline  
Year 11 Short Report sent to parents/carers  
School Council Meetings  
Parents' Meeting for French Trip 6pm in school  
Lent Eucharist at lunchtime in the Armstrong Centre – all pupils welcome  
Year 9 DTP/ACWP vaccinations