

# 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

31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

I can't believe that January is over already, and I have now been at St Michael's for a month. I am really starting to feel at home and am thoroughly enjoying getting to know pupils and staff that little bit better.

On Saturday I had the privilege of attending the Holocaust memorial service in Astley Park, accompanied by our Head Boy, Ewan and Deputy Head Girl, Anna. It was a very moving occasion, made particularly special by pupils' lighting of memorial candles afterwards in the Town Hall. Holocaust memorial has been a focus for us throughout this week and Mr Egelnick has led our worship so well, highlighting the 2025 memorial day theme of, 'For a Better Future' and encouraging us to learn lessons from the past. I was so impressed with the respect that pupils showed, not only during the worship, but also in the way they came into the hall. Year 9 stood out particularly, as they modelled the excellence in their attitude and behaviour that we want everyone at St Michael's to pursue.

On Wednesday Fr Neil Kelly from St Laurence's Church joined us, and we celebrated Eucharist. Many pupils attended and behaviour was, once again, impeccable. That moment of reflection at the start of the school day was really very special. Strengthening links with our local churches is such a priority for me, and I am so thankful to Fr Neil for coming to lead us.

A real highlight for me this week was spending time with pupils in Year 11 who had 'excellent reports'. Having read the glowing comments written by their tutors and teachers, I could see why those I met had been chosen. It was lovely to have the opportunity to chat to each of them and to learn more about their varied range of hobbies and future aspirations.

My headteacher's gold stamp has been out again this week too, and yesterday we celebrated some brilliant book reviews written by pupils in Year 7 and some exceptionally creative 'Schultüte' also made by Year 7. For those of you who don't know, these are a cone-shaped container of gifts, traditionally given to German children on their first day of school. Pupils had done a fabulous job of recreating them.

Keen-eyed pupils will have noticed that Mr Neville has been sporting an array of maths themed ties this week, and on Wednesday some pupils in Years 9-11 took part in the Maths Challenge, an opportunity to really test and stretch their maths knowledge, with the hope of a gold, silver or bronze certificate once the results come in. It's brilliant to see the enthusiasm to participate in these fantastic events.

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Over the coming weeks I am planning to share some information about specific aspects of St Michael's, to help you to understand school life that little bit better. This week I spoke to our librarian, Mrs Allcock about the library and she shared the information below.

*"The library is as popular as ever, which is why each year group has a priority day scheduled each week (there is a timetable situated outside the Armstrong Centre). Many pupils are working their way through some of the most popular collections, including the Percy Jackson series, The Diary of a Wimpy Kid (19 books and counting!), and The Hunger Games trilogy and prequel (our avid readers are eagerly awaiting the next instalment, which will be published in March). We regularly order new books, and I am always keen to take note of any suggestions. New this week is 'When We Flew Away': a stunning exploration of Anne Frank's life before she and her family went into hiding.*

*As we continue to provide a sanctuary for everyone to read in peace, this term we extend a particular welcome to Year 11 pupils eager to get on with revision and quiet work. Silent revision and home learning takes place after school each day, so make use of this facility if you need a bit of group motivation to stay focused (and off mobile phones!).*

*With exciting activities and challenges being planned for World Book Day on 6<sup>th</sup> March, it's a great time to celebrate our wonderful team of pupil librarians, the calm atmosphere in the Armstrong Centre, and the opportunities to enjoy reading for pleasure during our busy days at school."*

I'm sure you won't be surprised to hear that our sporting success has continued this week. Our badminton teams represented Chorley in the Lancashire Schools' competition, with the Key Stage 3 teams placing 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Key Stage 4 boys placing 4<sup>th</sup> and the girls placing 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Chorley and District Swimming Gala was held this week, with the team claiming overall District Champions title, whilst individually winning 5 Bronze, 7 Silver and 16 Gold medals. Alongside this tremendous achievement, our Year 7 Aquasplash team achieved bronze medals. Finally, Year 8 girls became Chorley and District football champions. What a week!

Next week our Year 9 football team take on West Derby School, Liverpool, in the English School Football Association Cup (they have made it to the last 16). The game will kick off at 3.45pm on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February and is kindly being hosted at the home of Chorley Football Club (Victory Park, Duke Street, Chorley, PR7 3DU). It would be wonderful to see parents/carers and pupils supporting the team at this exciting fixture.

I've included events that are coming up next week at the end of this letter. One of those is Year 7 Consultation Evening. Some of you have been in touch to express frustration at not being able to secure appointments with all your child's teachers. This is always a challenge for secondary schools and is very different to how things worked at primary school. I want to reassure you that we have taken your comments onboard and are looking at possible changes that might alleviate this in the future. I hope as many of you as possible will join us on the evening and I am really looking forward to the opportunity to meet you there.

I'll finish with a prayer for Holocaust Memorial Day, shared by the Church of England,

*Eternal God,  
we come before You  
to remember the victims of the Holocaust.  
We lament the loss of six million Jews  
who were killed in the Holocaust,  
the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution,*

*and victims of all genocides.  
As we remember and lament  
all those whose lives have been lost,  
help us to work for a better future today.  
We pray for a day when all shall be free  
to live in peace, unity and love.  
Amen.*

Kind regards,



Mrs Rachel Rongong  
Headteacher

### **Events next week**

- **Tuesday 4 February** – Lunchtime concert for pupils
- **Wednesday 5 February** – Year 9 Boys' Football v West Derby School at Victory Park Chorley (3:45pm) – all welcome
- **Thursday 6 February** – Year 7 Consultation Evening in school