



Diocese of Shrewsbury

Department of Education



Newsletter

Autumn Term 2024 No.1



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NEWSLETTER – Autumn Term 1 2024

Dear Colleagues

1. INTRODUCTION

I very much hope that the summer break afforded you the time for some much-needed rest and relaxation with family, friends and loved ones, and that for secondary schools and colleges that your examination results days went well with our young people gaining the results they needed for the next stage of their education and training.

As we start the new term, which promises to be as busy as ever, we hope that we get the opportunity to meet many of you at the celebration of Holy Mass for the start of the new term. Details of these Masses are given below.

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF

During the Autumn Term, I will continue to serve as Acting Director of Schools, with Rob Hughes taking up the role of Acting Deputy Director and Julia Cunningham continuing to lead on Religious Education and CSI.

Damian Cunningham will work with the departmental team as a consultant for 3 days a week over the next 12 months as School Officer for a number of schools across the Diocese as well as supporting senior appointments, admission arrangements and assisting the department with other matters as required.

Carol Morgan will continue to support primary schools in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Warrington.

Rob Hughes will continue to support primary schools in Wirral, Halton and Cheshire East and parts of Cheshire West and Chester.

Jackie Walker will support primary schools in Trafford and Stockport.

Kevin Platt will continue to support primary schools in Tameside and Manchester.

A full list of schools' officers by school can be found at the link below:

[School Officers 2024-25](#)

2. CHANGES TO HEADTEACHERS

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the new Headteachers that have taken up post at the start of this term:

Serena Cubbin	St Anselm's College, Wirral
Christina Derwas	St John's Catholic Primary School, Shropshire
John Marciniak	Ss John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Manchester
Clare Pickles	Harrytown Catholic High School, Stockport
Catherine Sharkey	St John's Infants, Wirral
Mark Woolley	St James' Catholic Primary School, Tameside

We are grateful to the following people who have taken on responsibility as Acting Headteachers, Heads of School or Executive Headteachers:

David Bentley	Interim Head of School, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Warrington
Amy Butterfield	Interim Head of School St Joseph's, Winsford
David Gilby	Interim Head of School Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Warrington
Martine Gum	Interim Executive Headteacher St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Congleton
Steve Jevons	Interim Executive Headteacher St Augustine's Runcorn and Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Warrington
Michelle Kewn	Acting Headteacher Our Lady Mother of the Saviour, Runcorn
Elizabeth Lambe	Interim Head of School St Augustine's, Runcorn
Jo Langstaff	Interim Executive Headteacher, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Warrington

May we remember these colleagues in our prayers as they take up their new roles.

3. MASS TO CELEBRATE THE BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-25

We have organised 3 Masses to mark the start of the 2024-25 academic year on the 17th, 18th and 19th of September at differing locations across the Diocese. All Masses will begin at 4.30pm.

17th September: Our Lady and the Apostles Stockport- 39 Shaw Heath, Stockport SK3 8BD

18th September: St Michael and All Angels Woodchurch- 14 New Hey Rd, Wirral CH49 5LB

19th September: St Thomas More Catholic High School - Dane Bank Ave, Crewe CW2 8AE

We hope you and your staff will be able to join us to celebrate Mass on one of these dates and refreshments will be available after Mass.

4. VISIT OF THE RELIC OF BLESSED CARLO ACUTIS

Further to the Save the Date sent to schools before the summer holidays, full details regarding the visit of the Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis to our Diocese later this month have been emailed to schools this week.

Carlo Acutis, affectionately known as 'God's influencer', died from leukaemia in 2006 at the age of 15, and though he had only a short life, it was a life devoted to God. Now, as a second miracle has been attributed to him, Blessed Carlo Acutis' canonisation has been approved by Pope Francis!

We hope you will be able to join us on **Monday 23rd September at St Anthony's, Wythenshawe**, to learn more about the first millennial saint and to venerate this holy Relic. The Programme for the day will be:

9.45 Arrivals

10.00 Gathering Prayer

10.15 Veneration of the Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis.

(During this time schools will have the opportunity to take part in activities that will enable the children and young people to engage with this important event. School groups will be invited during this time to venerate the relic.)

11.45 Preparation for Mass

12.00 Mass

13.00 Relic Departs / Lunch

14.00 Schools depart

Please click on the link below to complete the Google form as your expression of interest detailing how many pupils you will be bringing with you.

<https://forms.gle/HMKfxwWvhDLqGoS89>

We very much look forward to seeing you there.

5. SEASON OF CREATION

The Season of Creation is a global ecumenical celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home which began on 1st September and finishes on the feast of St Francis, 4th October.

The theme for the Season of Creation 2024 is 'To hope and act with Creation' inspired by Romans 8:19-25 and Pope Francis' message, which can be accessed [here](#).

During this season we are encouraged to pray and engage in community events in order to deepen our relationship with God, our neighbour and the earth we share, being ever more attentive to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Further details can be accessed via the link below.

[Season of Creation - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk)

6. EDUCATION SUNDAY

Education Sunday is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in England and Wales, established 175 years ago in 1848. It provides an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks to all involved in making Catholic schools places of enlightenment, as well as to look forward in anticipation of the year ahead.

Education Sunday is marked this year on 8th September and the theme for 2024 is, “He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak”, taken from St Mark’s Gospel (7:31-37). Further details and resources can be accessed via the link below.

[Education Sunday Prayers and Resources - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk/education-sunday-prayers-and-resources)

7. ‘TO LOVE YOU MORE DEARLY: PRAYER AND LITURGY DIRECTORY

To support schools as they endeavour to love God more dearly, a series of CPDF sessions are planned for this academic year:

03/10/2024	3.30pm-5pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 1 - The Liturgical Year	What is it, why is it important, how does it inform our prayer and liturgy?	Virtual
27/11/2024	1pm-4pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 2 - Prayer	Exploring different ways to pray in the Catholic tradition. Practical help and support with classroom and whole school prayer	St Columba's Parish Hall, CH2 1PL
11/02/2025	1pm-4pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 3 - Mass-Liturgy and rubric	How do we celebrate the Mass as a school community?	Loreto Education Centre, WA14 4GZ
13/03/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 4 - Mass - practicalities	How do we plan for the celebration of Holy Mass? What is required?	Virtual
21/05/2025	3.30pm-5pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 5 - Celebration of the Word	What is a celebration of the word? What does it look like in class? What does it look like with a larger group? Who can do what?	Virtual
01/07/2025	1pm-4pm	Prayer and Liturgy Directory 6 - Formation, progression and ministry	An opportunity to explore engagement and participation in prayer and liturgy in school, including a focus on ministry. How can we form our school communities in their participation of prayer and liturgy? What does progression look like?	Loreto Education Centre, WA14 4GZ

NB: For the three in-person afternoons, lunch will be provided free of charge from 12.30pm. To book on to the sessions please follow this link [Book CPDF](#)

8. NEW 2024 GOVERNOR AND DIRECTOR CODE OF CONDUCT FORMS

The CES have provided Dioceses with updated Code of Conduct forms for schools, academies and Trust Boards to use this academic year. The forms now also include an additional Declaration & Undertaking section specifically for foundation governors and directors.

Please can you ensure that these updated forms are used with your governing boards this year - copies can be found [here on the education website](#).

9. ACADEMY STRATEGY UPDATE

Following my letter to Chairs of Governors and Headteachers on 1st July outlining the Trustees' decision regarding the Academy Roadmap, all documentation is now available on the education website for your information and reference.

I will be writing to those schools with indicative target dates of 2024-25 and 2025-26 this coming term to discuss next steps as we look to implement and secure Bishop Mark's vision for education across the Diocese together.

Thank you to those schools who have contacted us since our July communications, and should you have any questions then please do contact your school officer in the first instance.

10. OFSTED UPDATE

Following the 'Big Listen', you will be aware of a number of changes that have been announced regarding inspections for the 2024-25 academic year as well as proposed changes for 2025 onwards. The government and Ofsted have made the following key announcements for inspections this academic year:

- **Single headline grades for schools will be scrapped with immediate effect**
Initial information can be found via gov.uk [here](#)
- **Ofsted will give notice for all routine inspections on a Monday.** Notifications for all routine (graded and ungraded) inspections will take place on Monday, unless an inspection has previously been deferred. This will allow leaders to know by Monday afternoon if a routine inspection is planned. They will pilot this approach over the autumn term. It will not apply to monitoring visits or emergency inspections.
- **From September 2024, they will pilot a new approach for Safeguarding concerns found during graded inspections.** Where they consider that leaders are capable of resolving the issues within 3 months, they will withhold their judgement and revisit the school within 3 months to complete the inspection.
- **They will make immediate changes to their practice for ungraded school inspections.** Inspectors will now gather evidence more flexibly, in way that is right for the school's context. This means more time for inspectors to have richer conversations with leaders about where they have improved and where they still have work to do. This will come into effect this

September. The changes mean that 40% of inspections (nearly 3,000) will not include deep dives.

They have also provided the following information regarding CSI inspections:

- **Ofsted want to reduce the risk of concurrent inspections for schools with a faith ethos.** They have stated that some concurrent inspections will be unavoidable. But they want to alleviate this where they can and will work with the section 48 inspectorates to avoid section 48 and Ofsted inspections taking place concurrently, wherever possible.

Current information regarding inspection arrangements for this year and beyond can be found [here](#) and we await further details on the operational implementation of any changes.

Once again, we have managed to secure Rachel Goodwin, Senior HMI, to join us at the Headteacher Briefing on **25th September** and we anticipate her updating us on the current and proposed changes to the inspection framework.

In order to book a place please follow the link below:

[Booking Form Headteacher Briefing 25 September 24](#)

If you have any particular questions you would like Rachel to consider, please feel free to email me at Richard.Woods@dioceseofshrewsbury.org in advance of the meeting and I will compile these and forward to Rachel.

11. CSI UPDATE

CSI have updated the documentation for this new school year (v 3.0). You can find the most up to date documentation and a change log highlighting the key changes on our website.

In the light of the announcement that Ofsted are no longer using single word judgements for inspections, the CES have released a response which you can find [here](#).

12. KCSIE 2024

The September 2024 version of the keeping children safe in education guidance is now in force, replacing previous versions. The DfE initially published this information in May and a list of substantive changes from can be found in Appendix F on page 183 of the full document which can be accessed [here](#).

13. NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION & CIRCULATION

It was agreed at both DAPH and DASH last summer term that it would be useful for the Newsletter to be sent directly to School Business Managers and PAs as well as to Headteachers. To facilitate this, we will be asking schools to provide us with additional staffing information as detailed in item 14 below.

14. STAFF, GOVERNOR AND ADMISSIONS INFORMATION RETURNS

Governor Details

As detailed in previous newsletters, we will be asking schools to return the usual information regarding school governors this term with the addition of DBS details for the first time this year.

Staff Details

This year we will be asking schools to provide information for the following posts in their schools along with email contact details – Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher(s), Assistant Headteacher(s), Head of RE / RE Lead, School Business Manager, PA to the Headteacher and School Chaplain. This will ensure our distribution lists are up to date.

Admissions Details

Once again we will be asking each school to submit their annual return indicating the number of pupils admitted by admission category.

We have attached all these forms to the email with this newsletter and would ask that **schools return these forms to the Diocese by Friday 4th October**. We appreciate that Governor details may be delayed given that some Boards may not have their first meeting until after this date.

Please return to Maggie via malgorzata.kowalska@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

The Forms can also be accessed via the links below:

[Governor Details](#)

[Staff Details](#)

[Admissions Annual Return Form Primary](#)

[Annual Admissions Return Form Secondary](#)

15. GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE

Our Annual Governors' Conference will take place on Saturday November 9th at Blessed Thomas Holford College, Altrincham.

The day will begin with Mass celebrated by Bishop Mark.

Our Keynote Speaker this year is Philip Robinson who is Chief Inspector for the Catholic Schools Inspectorate. Philip will share his experience and insights as to how schools can effectively evaluate their Catholic life and Mission, and the role that governors have in undertaking this most important of tasks.

There will also be a selection of workshops including: A practical guide to evaluating your school's Catholic Life and Mission; The role of foundation governors in a Multi Academy Trust; National Developments in Religious Education & Catholic Life: Implications for Diocesan Schools; Diocesan Protocols for Schools and Academies: Revised guidance from the CES.

16. CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS FORUM

Following a successful series of meetings last academic year, we will continue to offer Chairs and Vice Chairs the opportunity to meet together this coming year and details of the termly meetings are given below.

Booking is available via the [Diocesan Website](#).

Autumn Term	20 th November 2024 6.30 – 8.00pm	St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School, Well Lane, Alsager. ST7 2PG
Spring Term	20 th March 2025 6.30 – 8.00pm	St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Greenbank Lane, Hartford. CW8 1JW
Summer Term	26 th June 2024 6.30 – 8.00pm	St Peter's Catholic Primary School, St Peter's Way, Noctorum, Prenton, Wirral. CH43 9QR

17. SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

A reminder once again that the Diocesan Department of Education **MUST** be involved in Headship, Deputy Headship, Heads of RE and Chaplain appointments. In addition, if schools and academies are seeking to appoint to posts that have a responsibility for Catholic ethos, then again, the Diocese must be involved.

The *Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers* also extends Diocesan involvement to all **temporary** positions, including Executive Headships and Heads of School. If schools are making **temporary leadership arrangements**, they must also have these approved by the relevant Diocesan officer and have gone through an approved recruitment process.

Please ensure that the Diocese is contacted prior to any recruitment process commencing.

18. FAITH REFERENCES

Having made a significant number of senior appointments again last term it is timely to remind all colleagues of the Diocesan definition of a practising Catholic. When requesting a faith reference the priest is asked to confirm that the candidate attends weekly Sunday Mass and lives their life in accordance with the teachings of the Church. The priest will be asked to confirm practice for at least twelve months, and this will also apply to those who have recently been received into the Church. Guidance on obtaining a faith reference can be found using the link below:

[Guidance on obtaining a Faith Reference](#)

19. REGISTER OF ECTs

Thank you to schools who informed us last term of ECTs starting this September. If there are any schools who wish to inform us of any late appointments, please can you use the link below **by Friday 13th September**. As in previous years we will then write to welcome any ECTs joining the Diocese this term.

[ECT Contact Details Form](#)

PRIMARY ECT INDUCTION

Following feedback from last year, we have arranged face to face days for Primary ECTs.

1st Year Primary ECTs Induction will take place on Thursday 10th October from 9.30am to 3.30pm

2nd Year Primary ECTs Induction will take place on Thursday 14th November from 9.30am to 3.30pm

Please use the links below to book a place:

[1st Year Booking Form](#)

[2nd Year Booking Form](#)

SECONDARY ECT INDUCTION

This session will take place virtually on Thursday 7th November from 3.45pm to 5pm.

Please use the link below to book a place:

[Secondary ECT Booking Form](#)

20. OUT OF HOURS CONTACT DETAILS

Very occasionally it is necessary to make contact with a school either out of hours or during the weekend or holiday period. We have previously asked if schools would be willing to provide an out of hours contact number to be used by the Diocese in exceptional circumstances. I am very grateful to the schools that have lodged an out of hours contact number, and if you are happy for the Diocese to have out of hours contact details then please submit them using the link below:

[Out of hours contact information](#)

21. CPDF

Our Programme of CPDF has now been finalised and CPDF details can be accessed by following the link below:

[CPDF Offer 2024-2025](#)

Please always check [our website](#) in case of any updates.

Key Dates This Term

CCRS

Thursday Classes in person at Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port:

Old Testament Module – 19/09/24 and 3/10/24 from 9am-3.30pm

New Testament Module -21/11/24 and 28/11/24 from 9am-3.30pm

Self-study with 2 seminars in person- please see website for details [here](#)

Church Module – September/October 24

Sacraments Module – November/December 24

Induction For New Foundation Governors

24/09/2024: Induction for New Foundation Governors – Autumn Term 2.00 – 3.30 Virtual session

24/09/2024: Induction for New Foundation Governors – Autumn Term 6.00 – 7.30 Virtual session

Governor Briefings

8/10/2024: Governors' Briefing – Autumn Term 6.00 – 7.30 Virtual session

9/10/2024: Governors' Briefing – Autumn Term 6.00 – 7.30 Virtual session

10/10/2024: Governors' Briefing – Autumn Term 2.00 – 3.30 Virtual session

Induction for New R.E. Co-ordinators

1/10/2024 New RE Coordinators' Induction – Primary 1.00 – 3.30 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington

Termly Headteacher Briefings

25/09/2024: Headteacher Briefing – Autumn Term 2.30 – 4.00 Virtual session

26/09/2024: Headteacher Briefing – Autumn Term 2.30 – 4.00 Virtual session

Christ At the Centre Course for Primary Practitioners

26/09/2024: Christ at the Centre – A Course for Primary Practitioners – Module 1 9.30 – 3.30 Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port

COAST

25/09/2024: Autumn Term 10.00 – 3.00 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington

Induction for Recently Appointed Chaplains

8/10/2024: Chaplain Induction 9.30-3.30 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington

New Headteacher Induction

2/10 – 3/10/2024: New Headteachers' Induction – Session 1 (Residential) 9.30 Weds – 3.30 Thurs
The Park Royal Hotel, Warrington

Support for CSI

27/09/2024: Support Under the New CSI Framework – Autumn Term 9.30 – 12.00 Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port

Induction for new Secondary Heads of RE (SHORE)

24/09/2024: Induction for New Secondary Heads of RE 1.30-4 St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Warrington

Please visit our website to book [here](#)

22. NORTHWEST CATHOLIC DIOCESES TRAINING PARTNERSHIP 2024-25

After a very successful relaunch of the leadership programmes, we will offer similar programmes again this year at a **price of £600**.

You can register your interest [here](#)

Catholic Middle Leadership Programme

Day 1: Thursday 21 November 2024

Day 2: Residential - Thursday 13th March 2025 (from 4pm) and Friday 14th March 2025 (all day)

Day 3: Wednesday 11th June 2025

Catholic Senior Leadership Programme

Day 1: Thursday 14th November 2024

Day 2: Residential - Thursday 6th March 2025 (from 4pm) and Friday 7th March 2025 (all day)

Day 3: Thursday 12th June 2025

Catholic Headteacher Programme

Day 1: Thursday 17th October 2024

Day 2: Residential - Thursday 30th January 2025 (from 4pm) and Friday 31st January 2025 (all day)

Day 3: Thursday 1st May 2025

In addition to the above specific leadership programmes there is an *Aspiring to Senior Leadership Programme*, which is **free of charge** to those actively seeking a leadership role in a Catholic School. It consists of a virtual session on the application process followed by a face to face session which consists of a series of workshops as well as a mock interview with feedback.

Aspiring to Senior Leadership

Cohort 1:

Session 1 - Application Process: Wednesday 2nd October 2024, 4-5.30pm (virtual)

Session 2 - Interview Process: Wednesday 6th November 2024, 9.30am-4pm (in-person)

Cohort 2:

Session 1 - Application Process: Thursday 9th January 2025, 4-5.30pm (virtual)

Session 2 - Interview Process: Thursday 23rd January 2025, 9.30am-4pm (in-person)

With every good wish and blessing for the term ahead,

Richard