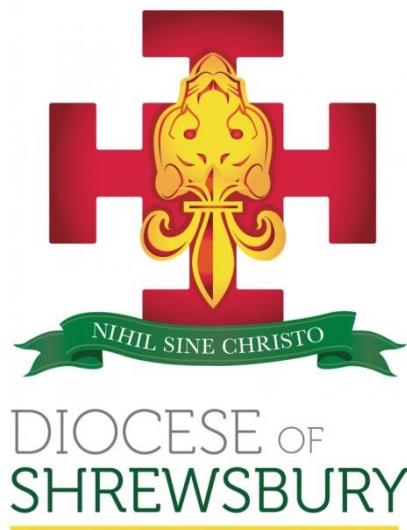
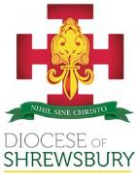


Diocese of Shrewsbury
Department of Education



NEWSLETTER

Spring Term 2025 No.2



DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025 No 2

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Colleagues

As we begin this half term together, the season of Lent appears on the horizon, and we continue to keep Pope Francis in our own prayers and the prayers of our school communities.

Lent will see us prepare once again for the great feast of Easter and provides us with renewed opportunities for reflection and reconciliation as we journey together towards Holy Week and the Easter Triduum within the Year of Jubilee. In his [2025 Lenten message](#) Pope Francis encourages us to journey together in hope, reminding us that we are sustained in a hope that does not disappoint and is the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul:

‘A first call to conversion thus comes from the realization that all of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact. Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilized by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity? It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathize with their experiences and in this way discover what God is asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father. This would be a good “examination of conscience” for all of us wayfarers.

This Lent, God is asking us to examine whether in our lives, in our families, in the places where we work and spend our time, we are capable of walking together with others, listening to them, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed and to think only of our own needs. Let us ask ourselves in the presence of the Lord whether, as bishops, priests, consecrated persons and laity in the service of the Kingdom of God, we cooperate with others. Whether we show ourselves welcoming, with concrete gestures, to those both near and far. Whether we make others feel a part of the community or keep them at a distance.’

We wish your staff, pupils and families a faith filled Lenten journey and the joy of the Easter season when it arrives.

Richard

2. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE – CREATIVE COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

The Department of Education is launching an exciting opportunity for our Diocesan schools to share their thoughts on what it means to be a Pilgrim of Hope.

What does it mean to me to be a Pilgrim of Hope?

Individuals, groups, schools are invited to respond to the question above in a creative way, for example, through art, creative writing, music or song. As school communities are celebrating this Jubilee Year and engaging with the theme chosen by Pope Francis, we know there will be many opportunities for our children and young people to explore this question in depth.



Schools may wish to hold a competition internally and then share the top three entries with the Department of Education. The deadline for entries is **Friday 26th September**.

Alternatively, schools may wish to enter the competition as a school, or as key stages. In these circumstances there is no need to hold a competition internally. Entries can be sent directly by the deadline.

NB: All entries must be submitted digitally (e.g. if the entry is a piece of art, please take a picture of it/scan it and send the digital image).

Please send all entries to education@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

Winners of this competition will be invited to our Mass for the close of the Year of Jubilee in November.

3. DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS VACANCY

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

Bishop Mark and the Diocesan Trustees are seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced candidate from primary phase to the role of Deputy Director of Schools for the Shrewsbury Diocese. Full details can be accessed [here](#).

4. 'TO LOVE YOU MORE DEARLY': PRAYER AND LITURGY DIRECTORY UPDATE

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | ✓ |

To support schools in keeping prayer central to the life of the school we have produced guidance notes referencing the PLD with exemplars that offer some signposting as to what that prayer might look like in a school context. This of course acknowledges that context is very important and that the prayer offered in school each day, week, term, liturgical season etc will be reflective of the community who gather to pray – something that will be clearly referenced in your prayer and liturgy policies and your annual plan of provision. You can access the [guidance here](#).

A reminder that the following CPDF sessions are planned for this term and year ahead:

| | | | | |
|------------|------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 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 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](#)

5. RESERVING THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IN SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

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| For information | |
| For action | ✓ |

We have received several queries from individual schools requesting clarification on the procedures for reserving the Blessed Sacrament. In response we are looking to provide guidance that will support schools in the future and **would ask that schools take a moment to complete the very brief questionnaire via the link below:**

[Does your school currently reserve the Blessed Sacrament?](#)

6. SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

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|-----------------|---|
| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

Further to enquiries we have received regarding resources to support Sacramental preparation, we advise that schools liaise directly with their Parish Priest regarding resources and process.

7. DIOCESAN PROTOCOLS

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| For information | |
| For action | ✓ |

During their Spring Term school visits, Diocesan Officers will be requesting on behalf of Diocesan Trustees, that minutes of the governing board meeting during which the Diocesan Protocols were received, noted and adopted are sent to the Diocese. These can be sent to Julie.English@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

8. ADMISSIONS

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| For information | |
| For action | ✓ |

2026-27 Admissions Policies

Thank you to all schools who have already sent a copy of their 2026-27 Admissions Policy to the Diocese. If you have not already done so we could ask that a copy of your 2026-27 Policy is posed on your school website and also sent to admissions@dioceseofshrewsbury.org by 15th March 2025.

Information for Schools: Foreign nationals' rights: school admissions

We have been asked by the CES and DfE to circulate the information below:

The Department for Education continues to receive reports of a small number of schools refusing to admit foreign national children, including refugees and asylum seekers, or delaying admitting them whilst they seek immigration documentation.

This practice breaches admissions and equalities law.

Whilst they reside in the UK all children have a right to attend school, irrespective of their immigration status. We encourage you to review the guidance provided on school applications for foreign national children and children resident outside England.'

Whilst they are in England all parents are under a statutory duty (section 7 of the Education Act 1996) to ensure their children, if they are of compulsory school age, receive a suitable full-time education.

Their parents have a right to apply for a school, and school admission authorities are under a duty to comply with that preference unless ‘prejudice’ applies, as defined in section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA), and to comply with the rules about processing applications and not seeking unnecessary personal information set out within the School Admissions Code.

Also, under section 86 of the SSFA, LAs are under a duty to provide advice to all parents in their area on their preferences. We have published information on our website that:

‘Admission authorities for state-funded schools:

- must not refuse to admit a child on the basis of their nationality or immigration status nor remove them from the roll on this basis
- must not ask to see passports or other immigration information as a condition of admission (this would be a breach of paragraphs 1.9(a) and 2.8 of the school admissions code)
- with the exception of children who are Irish nationals, must not actively recruit foreign national children who are still resident overseas as pupils’

We continue to receive reports of some schools refusing to admit refugees and asylum seekers and some refusing to admit children until their parents provide immigration documentation. Separately, we have found, from time-to-time, a small number of others recruiting cohorts of students, living abroad, from the EEA to study in their sixth forms (which would, since Brexit, be in contravention of those students’ visa/visitor rights and could lead to immigration enforcement action against them).

9. FOUNDATION GOVERNOR RE-APPOINTMENTS

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

Foundation Governors whose terms of office expire this August will be receiving communication via email, before the Easter break, asking them if they wish to continue. Governors will now only be asked to complete one form when applying to renew their term. Further details on this year’s renewal process will be sent in a separate communication later this half term.

10. VISITS TO SCHOOLS

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

I have had the privilege of visiting many of our Diocesan schools in my role as Deputy Director of Schools and also as a serving Headteacher in the Diocese. My ambition is to personally visit the many schools I have not yet had the opportunity to visit before the end of the 2025-26 academic year. Julie English will be in touch to arrange mutually convenient dates over the coming months.

11. CES SURVEY ON SEND NEEDS IN SCHOOLS

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

The CES has created a survey for headteachers and deputy headteachers to complete regarding SEND needs in their schools. The purpose of this survey is to gather valuable insights to inform their ongoing work with the Government on SEND. If you are able to assist by completing the survey below, it would be greatly appreciated.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CES-SEND-survey-2025>

12. DFE RESEARCH ON ACCOUNTABILITY, PERFORMANCE & REPORTING

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

The Department of Education is currently consulting on the overall approach to improving school accountability in England. To support better understanding, the Department for Education is conducting research, with school senior leaders and parents, to inform reforms to school accountability, performance, and reporting. There is no set criteria to take part, however, the research team is keen to engage with Head Teachers from a variety of schools – primary/secondary, inner city/rural and across the UK.

If you wish to take part in either research project, head teachers should complete the online [form](#) and a researcher will make contact. The research will begin w/c 3 March and the 1:1 remote session will last around 45mins and will be completely anonymous.

13. TERMLY MEETING WITH OFSTED & SUMMER BRIEFING

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

Thank you for the questions, queries and observations received to inform our termly conversation with Rachel Goodwin HMI. Rachel has accepted my invitation to deliver a virtual briefing to Headteachers in the summer term which will enable her to provide further details on the new inspection framework going forward and respond to the questions and views you have shared.

The briefing will take place virtually on **Tuesday 17th June 2025 from 9.30am to 11am.** To book your place at this briefing please follow the [link here](#).

A reminder that Ofsted are currently holding a period of consultation regarding the new inspection proposals which is open until 28th April 2025. You can access the consultation [here](#). Ofsted are also providing the following information for school leaders which you may find helpful:

[Ofsted's monitoring reports on commitments made in the Big Listen](#)
[Ofsted's Youtube channel, which now includes videos that are used for inspector training](#)

14. INVITING YOUR LOCAL MP INTO YOUR SCHOOL

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

A school visit from your MP a great way to demonstrate and showcase the achievements of your school and of Catholic education, and for your MP to become more involved in supporting education within their constituency. The CES have provided an online template for schools to use which can be accessed here: [Invite your MP to visit your school - Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)

15. CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS FORUM

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

Apologies that the Autumn Term meeting had to be cancelled due to staff illness, but we hope that colleagues are able to join us for our Spring Term meeting and details are provided below. As always, booking is available via the [Diocesan Website](#).

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| Spring Term | 20 th March 2025 6.30 – 8.00pm | St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Greenbank Lane, Hartford. CW8 1JW |
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16. SENIOR AND RESERVED POST APPOINTMENTS

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| For information | |
| For action | ✓ |

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 updated 2024 *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.

If schools are wishing to extend any temporary arrangements beyond existing timescales agreed with the Diocese, then please contact us at the earliest opportunity.

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

The following documents are available on our website:

- [The Bishops' Memorandum on the appointment of staff In Catholic schools \(2024\)](#)
- [Appointing a new Headteacher – Guidance for Governors & Directors](#)
- [Appointing a new Deputy Headteacher - Guidance for Headteachers & Governors](#)
- [Appointing a new Head of Religious Education - Guidance for Headteachers & Governors](#)

17. MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE 2024-25 ACADEMIC YEAR

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

Please note that our **Mass of Thanksgiving** for this academic year takes place at **St John Henry Newman Catholic Church Warrington** on **Tuesday 8th July at 4.30pm**. All colleagues are invited to join us as we thank God for all that this year has given us.

18. KEY DATES THIS HALF TERM

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| For information | ✓ |
| For action | |

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| 26/02/2025 | 9.30pm-3.30pm | RE Lead Hub Meeting | St John Henry Newman Parish Centre, Knutsford Road Warrington, WA4 1JE |
| 27/02/2025 | 9.30pm-3.30pm | RE Lead Hub Meeting | Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Floatshall Road, Baguley, M23 1HP |
| 28/02/2025 | 9.30pm-3.30pm | RE Lead Hub Meeting | St Winefride's Catholic Primary School, Mellock Lane, Neston, CH64 9RW |
| 03/03/2025 | 9.30pm-3.30pm | SHORE Hub Meeting | St Thomas More Catholic High School, Dane Bank Avenue, Crewe, CW2 8AE |
| 05/03/2025 | 9.30am-3.30pm | SHORE Hub Meeting | Harrytown Catholic High School, Harrytown Lane, Romiley, SK6 3BU |
| 06/03/2025 | 9.30am-12.30pm | New Headteachers' Induction Programme | Virtual |
| 10/03/2025 | 1.30pm-3pm | COAST HUB 3 (Warrington, Halton, Wirral) | Our Lady's of Immaculate Conception Parish, Cavendish Street Birkenhead, CH41 8AQ |
| 10/03/2025 | 9.30pm-3.30pm | SHORE Hub Meeting | St Anselm's College, Manor Hill, Birkenhead, CH43 1UQ |
| 12/03/2025 | 1pm-3.30pm | Secondary RSE Lead Meeting | Cardinal Newman High School, Bridgewater Avenue Latchford, WA4 1RX |

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| 13/03/2025 | 1.30pm-3pm | COAST HUB 2 (Cheshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin) | Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, Capenhurst Lane, Ellesmere Port, CH65 7AQ |
| 13/03/2025 | 3.30pm-5pm | Prayer and Liturgy Directory 4 - Mass – practicalities * | Virtual |
| 14/03/2025 | 1.30pm-3pm | COAST HUB 1 (Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Manchester) | St Bernadette's Catholic Church 1 Foliage Rd, Stockport SK5 8AL |
| 17/03/2025 | 3.30pm-5pm | Vine and Branches Y1 preparation for To the Ends of the Earth | Virtual |
| 17/03/2025 | 9.30am-12pm | Secondary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum Catholic Life and Mission | St Paul's High School, Firbank Road, Wythenshawe, M23 2YS |
| 18/03/2025 | 3.30pm-5pm | Vine and Branches Y2 preparation for To the Ends of the Earth | Virtual |
| 19/03/2025 | 3.30pm-5pm | Vine and Branches Y3 preparation for To the Ends of the Earth | Virtual |
| 20/03/2025 | 3.30pm-5pm | Vine and Branches Y4 prep for To the Ends of the Earth | Virtual |
| 20/03/2025 | 9.30am-12pm | Secondary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum Personal Development, Behaviour & Attitudes | The Catholic High School, Old Wrexham Road, Chester, CH4 7HS |
| 20/03/2025 | 6.30pm-8pm | Chairs and Vice Chairs Forum * | St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Greenbank Lane, Hartford, CW8 1JW |
| 21/03/2025 | 9.30am-3.30pm | Christ at the Centre- A Course for Primary Practitioners - Module 4 | Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish Centre, 2a Enfield Road, Ellesmere Port, CH65 8BY |
| 21/03/2025 | 9.30am-12pm | Secondary Deputy & Assistant Headteacher Forum Quality of Education | Cardinal Newman High School, Bridgewater Avenue, Latchford, WA4 1RX |
| 26/03/2025 | 9.30am-3pm | EYFS To the ends of the Earth and Dialogue & Encounter | Holy Angels Parish Hall, Wicker Lane, Hale Barns, WA15 0HF |

*These events are open to and appropriate for governors to attend.

To book please follow the link to [BOOK A CPDF COURSE](#)