

Notre Dame Catholic Academy

Transition Newsletter

Welcome from Miss Wishart, Transition Lead

I am delighted to welcome you to Notre Dame Catholic Academy. It is a joy to introduce you to our school community as you begin your journey with us. At Notre Dame, we are committed to Opening Hearts, Minds and Doors, ensuring every student feels supported, valued, and inspired.

Why is Easter term so important for a Catholic school?

As we journey through the Easter term, we enter one of the most significant periods in the Catholic calendar. This term invites pupils to reflect deeply on the story of Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection, the central mystery of the Christian faith. Through Lent, students learn about sacrifice, repentance and acts of kindness, mirroring the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert preparing for His ministry. As Holy Week approaches, the school community reflects on the events of the Last Supper, Good Friday, and ultimately the joy of Easter Sunday, when Christians celebrate Jesus rising from the dead. For Catholic schools, this is a time filled with opportunities to explore themes of forgiveness, hope, renewal, and service to others. It encourages students not only to grow academically but to strengthen their character, compassion, and spiritual understanding. The Easter term therefore becomes a meaningful journey of faith, encouraging pupils to open their hearts and minds as they prepare for the celebration of new life at Easter.

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Admissions and the Importance of This Term for Year 6

This term marks an exciting milestone for Year 6 pupils as their secondary school places are confirmed and the next stage of their educational journey begins to feel real. For many families, this moment brings a mixture of pride, anticipation, and understandable nerves. Over the coming months, you will begin to receive key information that will help your child feel fully prepared for joining us in September. This includes guidance on uniform, routines, subjects, support systems, and the transition events designed to help them settle in smoothly. At Notre Dame, we recognise that moving to secondary school is a significant step, and our dedicated Transition Team is here to support every pupil and family throughout this process. Our aim is to ensure that all children feel reassured, informed, and excited about what lies ahead as they begin their journey into Year 7.

Our Core Values in Transition

Courage: We support pupils in taking brave steps into secondary school through tasters, retreats, and confidence-building activities.

Confidence: Early routines, clear expectations and supportive adults help pupils feel ready and capable as they begin Year 7.

Courtesy: We embed kindness, respect and positive relationships through our Transition day, tutor meetings and pastoral support.

Charity: Through community, compassion and care, we ensure every child especially the vulnerable is welcomed, included and supported.



Preparing for Secondary School

Now is a great time to begin developing independence—organisation skills, reading regularly, and practising routines that will support a smooth transition.

Key Transition Dates

Enrichment programme to support students with Transition (information will be sent out to students who are attending in May) Starting Monday 8th June– Monday 29th June 2026

Transition Day: Wednesday 1st July (all day)

Information Evening: Wednesday 1st July, 3:30pm–6:00pm (Parent/Carer Speeches: 4:00pm and 5:00pm)

Coffee evening Wednesday 8th July for students who are joining Notre Dame Catholic Academy by themselves. This will be to meet other students in addition to Transition day.

Transition Day – Wednesday 1st July

On Transition Day, pupils will explore our school routines, take tours of the building, meet their form tutor and classmates, and take part in a reading assessment that helps us support them in Year 7. They will enjoy taster lessons, including a performance opportunity, and sample our excellent school lunches. In the evening, families are invited to our Transition Open Evening where we will share key information about starting school in September.



Year 5 Visits This Term

This term, our Transition Team has enjoyed visiting several primary schools to begin building early relationships with pupils who may join us in the future. One highlight was our visit to Trinity Primary, where we led a special Reading for Pleasure event as part of World Book Day. The children loved exploring new stories, sharing their favourite books, and taking part in lively discussions about characters and themes. Encouraging a passion for reading at this stage is incredibly important it helps develop imagination, strengthens vocabulary, and builds the confidence pupils need as they move towards secondary school.

In addition to this, we have visited several other primary schools to host Q&A sessions focused on Transition and life at Notre Dame Catholic Academy. These sessions give Year 5 pupils the chance to ask questions about lessons, routines, clubs, homework, and what makes secondary school different from primary. Many pupils told us they particularly enjoyed hearing about the exciting range of subjects, the school's welcoming community, and the opportunities to make new friends.

These early visits play a key role in preparing young people for the move to secondary school. They help pupils feel informed, reassured, and supported long before they begin their formal Transition journey in Year 6. By meeting staff, hearing about school life, and understanding what to expect, pupils begin to feel more confident and excited about their next steps.

We look forward to continuing these visits throughout the year and to welcoming all our new students and families very soon.



Every Child a Reader

We're really looking forward to welcoming your children into Notre Dame and the St Joseph Academy Trust and hope that they will be happy and successful here.

One of our key learning mottos is 'Every Child a Reader'. This is incredibly important because the ability to read well is the most important skill that children need to access the curriculum and succeed in school. Being an enthusiastic reader also opens up a world of knowledge and opportunity that ultimately leads to excellent learning outcomes for your child and develops them as thoughtful, thriving young people.

We offer a range of support at Notre Dame to support reading and wider foundational knowledge. By this, we mean the essential skills, concepts, facts and principles in all subjects that your child will need to enjoy our curriculum.

With reading, we offer catch up sessions with the teaching of phonics through our fresh Start programme for children who have not yet understood the basics. We offer further sessions to improve comprehension in our Reading Plus scheme and, for those who are more secure in their reading ability, we provide a universal offer of extended reading of both fiction and non-fiction in form time.

We have found that these interventions are having a really positive impact in engaging children and developing them into enthusiastic readers. To support this, we ask students to complete a short reading assessment before they start at Notre Dame. This takes around 30 minutes and is an online assessment that gives us, and you, important diagnostic information and a current reading age. We can then put in place the interventions that individual students require to ensure that they have a smooth transition into their time at Notre Dame and are able to achieve right from the start in all curriculum areas.

This formative assessment will be completed during the morning of Transition Day. It's nothing to worry about; in fact, most students find it quite an enjoyable experience as the online test adapts to the ability of the child as they complete it.

In the meantime, if you could continue to encourage your child to read at home then that would be very helpful. I've put in a link to the National Literacy Trust that gives you some ideas if, like many children in this age of social media, getting them to read can seem like a bit of an uphill struggle!

[National Literacy Trust | UK Literacy Charity](#)

Many thanks, Mr R O Appleton

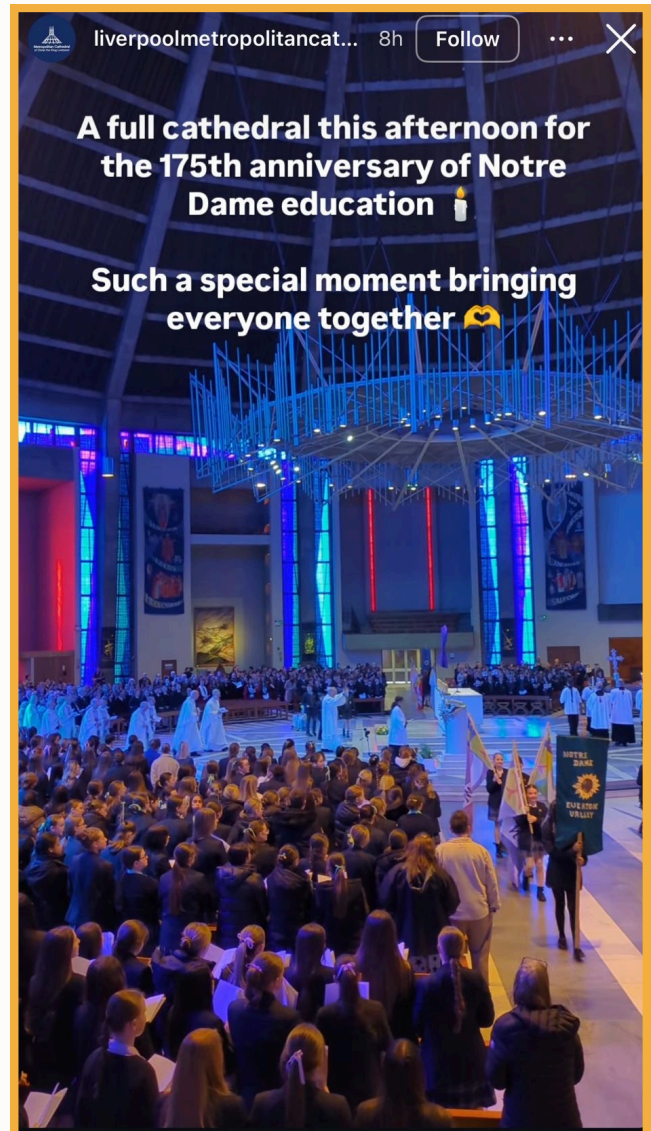


Celebrating 175 years of Notre Dame

This year, we are proud to join the wider Notre Dame community in celebrating 175 years of Notre Dame education in Liverpool, a milestone marked with a special Celebration Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King. Representatives from Notre Dame schools across the UK, the Sisters of Notre Dame, clergy, staff, and students gathered to honour the extraordinary legacy of the Sisters, whose mission first took root in the city in the mid-19th century. Their work began in 1869 when the Sisters established what would eventually become Notre Dame Catholic Academy, shaping generations of young people through a commitment to faith, service, and academic excellence.

The 175th anniversary celebration at the Cathedral highlighted the profound impact the Sisters of Notre Dame have had on education in Liverpool, transforming countless lives through their dedication to nurturing the whole person spiritually, academically, and socially. The Mass, presided over by Archbishop John Sherrington, was a powerful reminder of the unity, heritage, and mission shared by Notre Dame schools. It also provided an opportunity for students to learn more about St. Julie Billiard's vision and the enduring charism that continues to guide our work today.

As we mark this historic anniversary, we celebrate not only the past but also our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional Catholic education for the young people of Liverpool opening hearts, minds, and doors just as the Sisters have done for 175 year



THANK YOU FOR READING AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU ALL ON TRANSITION DAY. WE WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A VERY RESTFUL BREAK
MISS WISHART



Notre Dame
Catholic Academy
Established 1869

Charity, Courtesy, Confidence, Courage

EASTER WORDSEARCH

U P H G B K E G G S
 R X U M U S C E G N
 I U N Y N L F P A O
 T H T C N A P A M W
 C A N D Y M B Z E Q
 H V O F T B X P S C
 I O S R H A P P Y O
 C K A P R I L C O N
 K W G C N T M B T K
 H O P I N S U V M W



WORD LIST

APRIL
 BUNNY
 CANDY
 CHICK
 EGGS

GAMES
 HAPPY
 HOP
 HUNT
 LAMB



Homemade
GIFTS MADE EASY



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