



Saint Augustine's

A brief introduction



Saint Augustine's is an oversubscribed mixed 11-16 Roman Catholic High School with 1,070 pupils on roll. From our original intake of 450 pupils in 1963 we have grown steadily in popularity and are now one of the largest Catholic 11-16 high schools within Lancashire.

Our location is enviable. Surrounded by fields, with Pendle Hill as a backdrop, we enjoy a surprisingly rural setting for a comprehensive school. Billington is a short walk from the ruined twelfth century Cistercian abbey of Whalley, which is one of the most attractive villages in the Ribble Valley.

The school is also a few minutes' drive away from the market town of Clitheroe, dominated by its little castle, and the Pendle villages associated with the seventeenth century witchcraft trials. This is also the heartland of recusant Lancashire with Stonyhurst and other landmarks of an enduring Catholic presence during penal times.



The Ribble Valley is a lovely place to live and, despite being largely rural, its population is rising. As a result, funding to accommodate additional pupils at our school has been granted over the past few years. We have also attracted additional capital grants to improve the fabric of the building. The school's interiors are attractive, bright, and excellently maintained. Our grounds and playing fields are extensive and the views are stunning.

Saint Augustine's has a large catchment area. We have ten partner primaries, four of which are small rural schools. Virtually every child in the Year 6 cohort of our partner primaries moves on up to us. The vast majority of our pupils are bussed in and out of Billington due to the geographical spread of our intake. We draw children from the villages of Dunsop Bridge, Hurst Green, Sabden, Langho, Osbaldeston, Rishton and Great Harwood. A large number travel from Clitheroe, from Padiham (near Burnley) and from the edges of Blackburn.



The socio-economic profile of our intake is diverse and reflects our comprehensive nature. It is, however, over 97% Catholic and largely of European heritage. Our staff is made up of 64 full-time equivalent teachers; a further large contingent of academic and pastoral support staff, and colleagues with site, technical and administrative responsibilities. In OFSTED's words, "an impressive collegiate approach to providing care and support for students and staff pervades." (OFSTED 2013).

As a Catholic school community, our first priority is to provide a supportive and affirming Christian ethos in which our pupils can grow and learn. We encourage all our pupils to share in the life of our Church, spiritually through prayer and liturgies, and in action by our support for aid agencies. All year groups, for example, are involved in raising money for CAFOD and for others who work with the poor, the oppressed and the marginalised. This ethos is reflected in our School Mission Statement. It permeates the life of our community and it gives us "reasons for living and hoping."



We are proud of our identity as a comprehensive school and of our partnerships with Salford Diocese and Lancashire County Council. We belong to a family of diocesan schools and work closely with our ten associated primaries and our partner sixth form college, Saint Mary's in Blackburn, where many of our Year 11s continue their studies and where so many of them achieve excellent results. We have built extensive and exciting networks and partnerships with a range of schools within and beyond the County.

The extra-curricular life of the school is also very rich. We have an internationally famous profile for our music. We have a dynamic record in sport, an excellent drama club, and we offer our pupils a choice of other activities ranging from public speaking to Master Chef classes. The school website will provide you with more regularly updated information about our school and we hope you enjoy browsing through our many pages.

Every OFSTED report the school has had so far has described the behaviour of our pupils as "outstanding". We provide a friendly, inclusive and welcoming environment for children within a framework of strict discipline, including high expectations on good manners and compliance with school uniform and appearance rules.

Our rules are clear and because all staff enforce them and the vast majority of pupils comply with them, the effect, paradoxically, is that the atmosphere is pleasantly relaxed and informal. In OFSTED's words "Relationships are good-humoured and students show their maturity in the respect they show one another and the pride they have in the school." We also have very supportive parents. Given our rural location, the huge range of extra-curricular activities we offer is dependent on the willingness of parents to ferry pupils to and from various after-school activities and this is always forthcoming.

In November 2013 we had a superb OFSTED Inspection with all aspects of the school judged to be "Outstanding". This was followed by a Section 48 Inspection undertaken by Salford Diocese in May 2014 which also found all aspects of the school's Catholic life to be "Outstanding".

The school has an excellent track record of strong academic results at GCSE level, with pupils of all abilities achieving outstanding grades and making excellent progress. The main reason we are oversubscribed is because of the high expectations we have of our young people, whatever their abilities. We want to raise these expectations even further.



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Updated; September 2014