



Saint Augustine's RC High School

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Information for Applicants



Saint Augustine's is an oversubscribed mixed 11-16 Roman Catholic High School with 1,030 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 high schools in Lancashire. Our location is enviable. Surrounded by fields, with Pendle Hill as a backdrop, we enjoy a beautiful rural setting. Billington is a short walk from the ruined twelfth century Cistercian abbey of Whalley, one of the most attractive villages in the Ribble Valley. The school is also a short drive away from the market town of Clitheroe, dominated by its little castle, and the Pendle villages associated with the seventeenth century witchcraft trials. The Ribble Valley is a lovely part of the world, often listed in the "Best Place to Live in the UK" surveys, and despite being largely rural, its population is rising.

St Augustine's has a large catchment area. We have ten partner primaries, four of which are small rural schools. About 95% of the Year 6 pupils in our partner primaries move on up to us. Due to the distances involved, nearly all of our pupils are bussed in and out of Billington. We draw children from the villages of Dunsop Bridge, Hurst Green, Sabden, Langho, Osbaldeston, Rishton and Great Harwood. A large number travel from Clitheroe, 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 90% Catholic and over 98% European heritage. The 2000, 2006, 2009 and 2013 OFSTED reports all described our pupils' behaviour as "outstanding."

Our children are enthusiastic, well-mannered and biddable. We have clear rules and expect them to be kept by children and upheld by colleagues. Because staff enforce them and the vast majority of pupils comply with them, the effect, paradoxically, is that the atmosphere is relaxed and informal. 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.

Our staff is made up of 62 full-time teachers and a further contingent of part-time teachers, support staff, and colleagues with site, technical and administrative responsibilities which brings the total to about 130. Staff turnover is relatively low, but we have a regular and very welcome intake of new colleagues who are provided with an excellent induction programme and settle in very quickly. We are very proud of our strong track record for St Augustine's staff being promoted elsewhere. In recent years three former staff have moved on to Headships, two to Deputy Headships and one to an Assistant Headship.

The school has a strong academic record and has been identified over a number of years as a centre of excellence. In November 2013 we were delighted to be judged by OFSTED as "an outstanding school". Outstanding grades were given to all four key areas of school performance, Achievement, Quality of Teaching, Behaviour & Safety and Leadership & Management. The report comments that students show their maturity in the respect they show one another and the pride they have in the school and that attitudes to learning are excellent with students possessing a thirst for knowledge. Our Section 48 Salford Diocesan Inspection was conducted in May 2014 and described St Augustine's as "an outstanding Catholic school".

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. The extra-curricular life of the school is outstanding. We have a dynamic record in music, sport, public speaking and drama, and we offer our pupils a choice of other activities ranging from residential retreats and long-haul overseas visits to dancing and enterprise activities.

If you are the successful candidate, you will be a welcome addition to our school. You will be part of a strong, stable and supportive community held in affection and high regard by its parent body. Our staff hold deep loyalties to St Augustine's and willingly go that extra mile for our children. Many, including myself, are parents of our pupils. We in turn have much to learn from new colleagues who come to us with fresh ideas. In return for the contribution you will make to St Augustine's, we offer you a commitment to your professional development in an affirming and forward-looking working environment. Our school website, www.sarchs.com, has a wealth of information about life at St Augustine's so do please take a look at it if you would like to learn more about our school.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Michael Wright
Headteacher