



St Helen's Primary School

NEWSLETTER

November/December 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of St Helen's,

As you know the school and nursery have had a very busy few weeks preparing for our visit from His Majesty's Inspectors and Care Inspectorate. This preparation involved updating our self-evaluation, gathering evidence for the inspection team, organising and facilitating meetings with pupils, staff and parents and preparing for professional dialogue focused on learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement.

The inspection team which consisted of five inspectors/assessors from Education Scotland and one inspector from the Care Inspectorate visited all classes in the school and the nursery. The report is being compiled and once all scrutiny/moderation checks are completed it will be shared with all stakeholders and published.

Feedback from the team was hugely positive, complimentary, and aligned with our own self-evaluation. The inspectorate recognised our strong Catholic ethos and clearly saw the commitment across the school to our shared vision and values, which underpin everything we do to support our children and families.

We look forward to sharing the final report with you along with some high level messages from the team.

As November is upon us, the countdown to Christmas has begun and this is one of the loveliest times to work with children.

Please take a note of some important dates such as Christmas Jumper day, class parties, Christmas lunch, the Christmas Fair and of course our Christmas show dates!

We are looking forward to seeing as many parents and carers as possible at Parents' Night on Thursday 6th Nov

Kindest regards,

Liz Kelly

WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS BEING AN ALLERGY AWARE SCHOOL

Our school is committed to being an **Allergy Aware School**, which means we focus on understanding and supporting *all* students who live with allergies — not just those related to nuts. Allergies can include a wide range of foods and environmental triggers such as dairy, eggs, sesame, shellfish, or even insect stings.

Being allergy aware means we:

- Educate our students about allergies and the importance of not sharing food.
- Encourage families to pack lunches and snacks that consider the safety of classmates.
- Promote inclusion and understanding so every child feels safe and supported at school.

For more detailed information about how parents and schools can work together to support children with allergies, visit Anaphylaxis UK's Safer Schools Programme page. By working together, we can create an environment where all students can learn and play safely — with awareness, care, and respect for one another.

MUGA

Our MUGA is now complete, and the children had their first visit today!

The official handover of the MUGA will take place on Monday 10th November and we will be joined by some elected members, the Convenor of Education and some of our pupils for photographs to mark this exciting occasion



CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT

The school closes for Christmas on Thursday 18th December at 2.30pm. Traditionally on this day the school gathers as a community to sing Christmas Carols in Our Lady and St Helen's Church. This will take place at 11.30am and classes will sing Christmas Carols on the steps of the altar.

Fr Paulinus attends the Carol Service which is always a lovely event and a great way to start the Christmas holidays.

FAITH COMMITTEE

We will once again be running out Reverse Advent Calendar during the month of December. Our Faith Committee will be sending out further information in due course.

COMMUNITY LINKS COMMITTEE

Our Community Links Committee will be visiting Rannoch Lodge Care Home on Friday 12th of December to sing Christmas songs and carols, chat to the residents and pass on some Christmas cheer.



CHRISTMAS SHOW

We are delighted to inform you that we will once again be hosting a Christmas show with the infant children performing the Nativity and our middle/upper primaries serenading us with some Christmas songs.

I am sure you will agree this sounds like a lovely Christmas event and a great opportunity to spread some Christmas cheer.

The Christmas Show will be held on the 9th, 10th and 11th of December. Tuesday and Wednesday 9th/10th of December will be afternoon performances starting at 1.30pm and the 11th December will be an evening performance starting at 7pm.

There will be an allocation of tickets to each family and following this additional tickets will be on sale. Further details will follow.

On the day of the shows, please ensure you park considerately in a fashion that does not inconvenience local residents.



CHRISTMAS FAIR

Our Christmas Fair—organised by our amazing Parent Council will take place on Saturday 6th December in the school hall. There will be stalls, performances from the choir, a bigger and better Tombola, raffle prizes and a lucky dip to name a few of the attractions on offer.

When? - Saturday 6th Dec

Where? - St Helen's Primary School Hall

Time? - 9.30—12.30pm

Come along for some festive fun and good cheer!

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The children's Christmas Lunch Day will be on Thursday 4th December. Tables will be dressed with Christmas table cloths and napkins and there will be Christmas music playing.

A letter will be sent out regarding this with menu choices. The letter will include a date for returning menu choices—**please ensure this is returned to the school as this will inform the food order placed by the catering staff. Letters that are returned beyond this deadline might mean that pupils are not be able to get their first choice of dinner.**

The Christmas Lunch is free of charge to all children in Primaries 1—5 and for any children out with those stages who are in receipt of free meals. For all other children the cost will be **£3.40**.

Please ensure children have money on their cards to avoid the dinner ladies having to spend time writing out receipts for money owed—as this is always a really busy day for the dinner school.



CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

The school will hold Christmas Jumper day on Thursday the 11th of December. Children are invited to wear their Christmas Jumpers to school on this day for a £1 donation to charity.

Rather than families going to the added expense of purchasing new Christmas jumpers—which are only worn for a short period of time—we have a system to access preloved Christmas Jumpers that still have some life left in them. Please get in touch with the school with sizes required and we will try to source these for you.



SNAPSHOT JOTTERS

We hope you enjoyed looking through the children's Snapshot Jotters when they were sent home on 6th October.

The Snapshot Jotters will be in use in all classes during w/b 10th November and will then be sent home on Monday 1st December for you to discuss learning and progress with children.

We hope these measures help you to feel involved and informed about your child's learning and progress.

PARENT COUNCIL PYJAMA DAY

There will be a Pyjama Day on Friday 14th November. This is a non-uniform day for a donation of £1 per child. The proceeds of this will go to our Parent Council and will be used to support the children.

The next PC Meeting will be on Tuesday 25th November at 6.30pm—All welcome!

The next Parent Council disco for the children will be on the evening of Thursday 4th December—so Christmas outfits at the ready!

WARM SPACE HUB

Our Lady and St. Helen's Church Hall is a recognised secure warm space in the community. This means the hall will be open on weekdays to provide a warm space for people, phone charging facilities and tea/coffee/toast as a means of helping with the cost of living crisis. The hall is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am—1pm. Everyone is welcome!

ADVERSE WEATHER PLANS

Hopefully we will get through another winter without being overly affected by snowy weather.

However if Mother Nature sends heavy blizzards our way and this results in a school closure the following action will be taken:

- We will inform you by text in the first instance to let you know this has been decided in the interests of health and safety
- Staff will remain in school with the children until they have all been safely picked up

In the event that there has been a heavy snow-fall during the night, you should consult North Lanarkshire Council's website on:

www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

prior to embarking on the journey to school.

Similarly if there has been a school closure the website will inform you if the school is open again.

Children will be able to continue their learning at home via Teams.

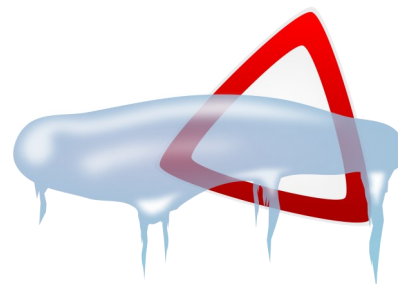


ENTERING/EXITING THE SCHOOL IN ICY—CONDITIONS

As we all know winter brings with it sub zero temperatures and icy conditions. This can make it hazardous on foot. The school playground can be particularly icy at these times.

In accordance with NLC guidelines, the Janitor will always ensure there is at least one gritted path for pupils and adults to enter/exit the school. This path leads from the Primary 7 gate—adjacent to the car park gate—and extends to the Main Entrance of the school.

If the conditions are icy—please use this path and enter through the Main Entrance of the school.



Over the course of the day—the janitor will assess the conditions and if needed there will be alternative arrangements in place for dismissal at 3pm. Parents will be informed of this through the usual communication channels.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS—SAFETY REMINDER

We have noticed an increasing number of children and families accessing the school grounds via the car park entrance. This is a growing health and safety concern, as the car park is a busy area used by staff, visiting agencies and school buses throughout the day.

To help keep everyone safe, **we ask that all pupils and parents use the main pedestrian entrance when arriving at or leaving school.** Using the car park entrance places both children and drivers at risk, particularly during the winter months when icy conditions can make the surface slippery and reduce drivers' ability to stop quickly.

We would appreciate your support in reinforcing this message with your children and encouraging safe habits when travelling to and from school. Together, we can help ensure that everyone remains safe on school grounds.

I wish to extend my thanks to the many parents who support the school by not accessing the school carpark between the hours of 8.30am and 3.30pm. This is to manage the amount of traffic in the car park when children and families are making their way to and from school.

During the winter months there is increased adverse weather and it is tempting to use the school car park to drop children off.

I would ask you not to slip into these habits. By parking out with the school car park you are supporting the school and you are helping to keep all our children safe.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Date:	Event:
<u>November</u>	
Thursday 6 th November 2025	Parents' Night
Sunday 16 th November 2025	Catholic Education Sunday Mass
Monday 17 th November 2025	INSET 3—school closed to pupils
17 th November – 21 st November 2025	Catholic Education Week
<u>December</u>	
Thursday 4 th December 2025	School Children's Christmas Lunch Parent Council Disco
Friday 5 th December 2025	First Friday Mass
Tuesday 9 th December 2025	Christmas Show—Afternoon Performance
Wednesday 10 th December 2025	Christmas Show Afternoon Performance
Thursday 11 th December 2025	Christmas Jumper Day Christmas Show Evening Performance
Monday 15 th December 2025	P5-7 Christmas Party
Wednesday 17 th December 2025	P1 -4 Christmas Party
Thursday 18 th December 2025	Carol Concert 11.30am School closes at 2.30pm
19 th December 2025 – 2 nd January 2026	Christmas Holiday
<u>January</u>	
Monday 5 th January 2026	Children return to school
Friday 9 th January 2026	New Year Mass
Monday 26 th January 2026	PLP 2 home to parents
<u>February</u>	
Friday 6 th February 2026	First Friday Mass
9 th – 13 th February 2026	Health Week
16 th – 17 th February 2026	February Holiday
Wednesday 18 th February 2026	INSET 4 Ash Wednesday
<u>March</u>	
2 nd – 6 th March 2026	Fairtrade Week
Thursday 5 th March 2026	World Book Day
Friday 6 th March 2026	First Friday Mass
9 th – 13 th March 2026	STEM Week
Thursday 19 th March 2026	Parents' Evening – Snapshot jotters available to parents

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Date:	Event:
<u>April</u>	
Thursday 2 nd April 2026	School closes at 2.30pm
3 rd – 17 th April (inclusive)	Easter Holiday
<u>May</u>	
Friday 1 st May 2026	First Friday Mass
Monday 4 th May 2026	Holiday
Thursday 7 th May 2026	INSET 5
Thursday 14 th May 2026	Ascension Thursday
22 nd – 25 th May 2026	Holiday
<u>June</u>	
Friday 5 th June 2026	First Friday Mass
W/b—Monday 8 th June 2026	Final Reports to Parents Snapshot Jotters home to parents
Monday 15 th June 2026	P1-3 Final Assembly—1.45pm
Tuesday 16 th June 2026	P4-6 Final Assembly—1.45pm
Friday 19 th June 2026	Leavers' Mass at 10am in the Church
Monday 22 nd June 2026	P7 Final Assembly—1.30pm
Friday 26 th June 2026	End of term Mass at 10am

KEEP IN TOUCH

There are a number of ways you can keep up to date with school events and information:

Through the school website: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/nl/sthelens/>

Through Twitter: @StHelensNLC

Email: nlkellye@northlan.org.uk

Phone: 01236632068