



# ST. JOHN PAUL II

## Primary School & Nursery Class

April  
2020

# NEWSLETTER

*Dear Parents/Carers and friends of St. John Paul II,*

We are most certainly in the midst of strange and challenging times. I am writing to you, assuring you that my thoughts and prayers are with you all and with our families and wider school community. Having not seen many of the children for some time now, I am struck by how much we, the staff, are missing them and missing our personal interactions with everyone.

Despite the physical distance, we can remain connected in many different ways and in this Newsletter, I hope to draw your attention to some of those ways.

Despite there being very few children in school recently, apart from those of Keyworkers, there has been a lot of activity around our building. Our school campus was chosen as the venue for the Bellshill Locality Hub, where children from all over Bellshill, Mossend, Viewpark, Tannochside and Birkenshaw will attend to allow their parents and carers to work if they are considered to be Keyworkers. It is a very different place to be, with Teachers and Support Staff as well as Nursery staff coming from all over our locality to work with those children in our Hub.

It can be an unsettling time for those children who are most likely attending a strange school building with no familiar surroundings as well as no familiar staff to welcome them. Our own children who are attending are helping to make everyone feel welcome!

I believe that the welcoming and nurturing ethos which is evident every day in our school is continuing, even in the absence of our children and staff. I would like to take this opportunity to say that I hope you are all keeping safe, healthy and well and that, if you need us, we are here. Contact us via email, leave a message on our voicemail, or send a message via the app, Twitter or Facebook. These are checked as regularly as possible.

With renewed prayers and good wishes,

Mr Thomas  
Head Teacher

**STAY AT HOME**



**PROTECT THE NHS**



**SAVE LIVES**



Faith | Respect | Friendship | Trust | Kindness | Equality

## FREE SCHOOL MEALS DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES

A new payment system is being set up for pupils who receive free school meals - this includes all primary 1 to primary 3 pupils and all eligible P4-7 children.

It started on Friday 27 March and will run throughout the current health crisis.

Parents and carers of pupils who receive free school meals will be sent a message twice a week from the council. It will include a voucher code for £10.00 (you will receive a total of £20.00 per child per week).

The message will be sent either as a text message to your mobile phone, by email or as a printed copy if you don't have internet access.



You can use the voucher code at any shop that accepts Pay Point, for a list of your local Pay Point retailers visit <https://consumer.paypoint.com/> and enter your postcode.

For more information, please email the free school meals team on: [FME@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:FME@northlan.gov.uk).

Funding for the additional element of this provision has come from the £3m emergency fund, which has been set up by the council to deal with the health crisis.

### PLEASE BE AWARE:

We are aware of fraudulent emails circulating asking for bank details of those with children entitled to free school meals.

Please be aware that we do not require your bank details.

### What Do I Need To Do?



IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A TEXT/EMAIL FROM NORTH LANARKSHIRE, THE DETAILS WE HAVE ON FILE FOR YOU AT SCHOOL NEED TO BE ACCURATE!

If you receive Text Messages from us about your child's absence, etc. then we have the correct mobile number for you.

If you gave us an updated email address when we requested this a week or so ago, then we have the correct email address for you and we have updated your file.

If your contact details have not changed since the Annual Data Check in August/September 2019, then we have the correct details for you.

**HOWEVER—We advise ALL Parents & Carers to sign up to Parents' Portal. This way, you can check your details and update information whenever necessary and without contacting the school! More information about Parents' Portal is included in this Newsletter.**

### NEED TO CONTACT US REGARDING THIS?

Send an email to: [office@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk](mailto:office@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk) OR [ht@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk](mailto:ht@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk) and someone will be in touch with you as soon as possible.

### PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO APPLY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS?

**PERHAPS YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE CHANGED AND YOU NOW NEED TO MAKE USE OF THIS SERVICE?**

Simply go to [www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals) or email [FME@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:FME@northlan.gov.uk)



## DIGITAL LEARNING OPPORTNITIES DURING SCHOOL THE CLOSURE PERIOD

Whilst Home Learning Packs were issued, we realise that these will only last for a certain amount of time and that Parents/Carers may wish to engage their child in further activities as time passes. Digital Learning will undoubtedly be one of the most useful tools in the current situation. In the next page or two, there is an outline of all of the opportunities available. These are not all internet based and so therefore do not always

require the services of broadband! TV channels are all offering daily educational programmes as well as radio. We will continually review our provision and look for innovative ways to engage with our children and their families.

### *St. JPll Digital Learning Opportunities*

## GLOW - SCOTLAND

Our staff have been working extra hard to ensure that all children have access to GLOW during this period of school closure. All children have an individual login and these have been issued to them in their Home Learning Packs. However, please contact Miss Agnew via facebook or email the school if you require login details for your child. On the next page, there is a full description of GLOW and what it offers.

## ACTIVELearn

When learning and teaching takes place within Numeracy, we utilize a suite of resources and strategies in school. Part of our Core Numeracy Curriculum is supported by Heinemann Active Maths, which combines traditional written tasks with more active, co-operative board games and interactive tasks on ipad/smartboard.

Each child has an ActiveLearn Login which they can use to play games. Games are available for all areas of the Maths Curriculum. There are hundreds to choose from, as well as tutorials and presentations which could be used as revision tools. Contact us if you require a login for your child.



## SUMDOG

SUMDOG provides users with personalised Maths and Spelling practice through fun and engaging



games. Teachers can monitor progress and set tasks and challenges. Children can play individual games, or they can link with other children across the school and even the country. There Are motivational tools included to encourage children to improve on their personal best.

Every child in North Lanarkshire schools has been provided with a SUMDOG login as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. SUMDOG will be a familiar thing for most of our children, but perhaps not our parents.

If your child does not have their login details, please email, call or contact us via the App or Twitter/Facebook.



**CATCH IT.**



**BIN IT.**



**KILL IT.**

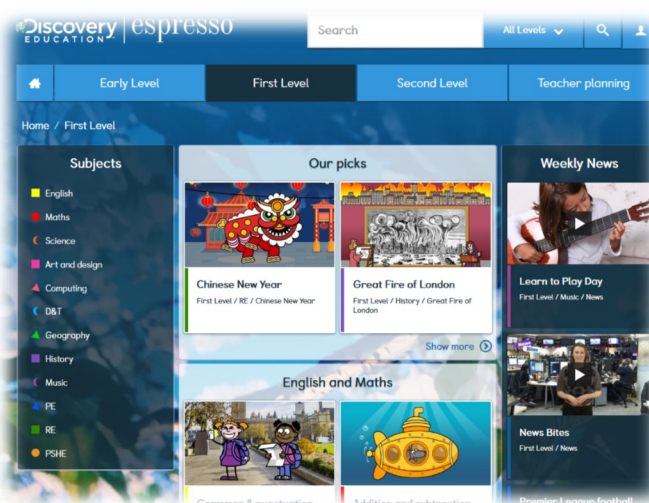
## ESPRESSO—DISCOVER EDUCATION

We have been offered a free subscription for Espresso. Espresso is an online cross-curricular service that provides video-rich resources to schools throughout the UK. It contains thousands of videos and multimedia activities, as well as a weekly news service - all designed by teaching professionals. Teachers all have login details now and will be able to signpost children to tasks within their level.

**To access Discovery Education Espresso from home:**

- ♦ go to [www.discoveryeducation.co.uk](http://www.discoveryeducation.co.uk)
- ♦ click 'login' button in the top right corner
- ♦ select 'Espresso'
- ♦ username - student13925
- ♦ password - johnpaul **Please note: the login details are the same for all children.**

This is a FANTASTIC and new resource for all children, so please make use of this. We have the subscription until the end of June. Let's use this as an opportunity to evaluate it as a potential resource to invest in in the future! Thanks to Discover Education for their kindness and support!



## ABC Music

Our children will be familiar with ABC Music from last year and the kind people at ABC have given all Parents/Carers/Children access to their materials! Why not try something a little different?! No music experience needed! Here is some information from Tom at ABC Creative...

ABC Creative Home School is now up and running at [www.abcmusichomeschool.org.uk](http://www.abcmusichomeschool.org.uk).

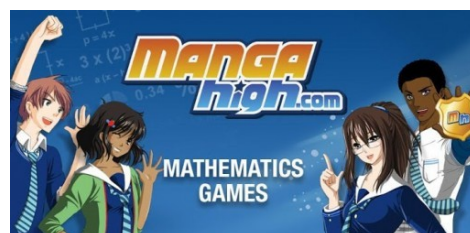
This resource is free to all parents – you just need to register and set up a password to use.

We have adapted our award-winning resources for schools and nurseries so that parents and other adult caregivers can confidently teach their children music at home. Even if you have no musical experience, we promise our resources are easy to use.



## MANGAHIGH

Mangahigh is an online, game-based learning site, where children engage in great



Numeracy and Mathematics games that offer a good balance of fun and learning. Your child will know if they have a Mangahigh account, but if not, contact us and we will let you know if there is an account for your child's class.

## STUDY LADDER

Study Ladder is an online Literacy & Numeracy learning tool. Many of the Class Teachers had already set their children up with accounts prior to school closure, but some of our classes ran out of time. Your child will know if they have a Study Ladder account, but if not, take a look as you may wish to try setting up your own account.

**Study***ladder*  
Inspire Motivate Achieve



Alternatively, contact us and we will let you know if there is an account for your child's class.



## THERE'S MORE TO GLOW THAN OUR CLASS BLOGS!

The following Blogs can be found on the school SharePoint, where all of the Class Blogs are. Take a look, there are some great ideas in them too!

### Mr McCann—ICT

Mr McCann has been posting some great ICT Tasks on the ICT Blog. One of the tasks is a **Home Learning Diary** using Powerpoint. The children have all been using this program with Mr McCann in ICT. It can be added to each day/week and Mr McCann can see them and comment as well as the other Teachers too. Go on... keep us up to date with what you have been up to!

### Mrs Bell—The Treehouse (Nurture)

This blog is not just for children who attend the Treehouse! There are great ideas for everyone about health and wellbeing and keeping a positive mindset.

### Miss Guidi - Spanish/Outdoor Learning

Ideas for both of these areas, shared by Miss Guidi are also available. There are ideas to help children consolidate and revise their Spanish vocabulary as well as ways to take their learning outdoors!

### Mrs Byers— Emotion Works

Mrs Byers has uploaded a PowerPoint Presentation for Parents to help them know what Emotion Works is all about. There are also suggested ways to help everyone to look after their **Emotional Health** during this time.

### Mrs McGregor - Kodaly Music

Mrs McGregor is our visiting Music Specialist and she has posted some singing games and rhymes for everyone to try.

### Mrs Mulgrew - Learning Support

Mrs Mulgrew has posted some ideas to support children who work with her too. However, they may be helpful to everyone!

## SCHOLASTIC READING PRO

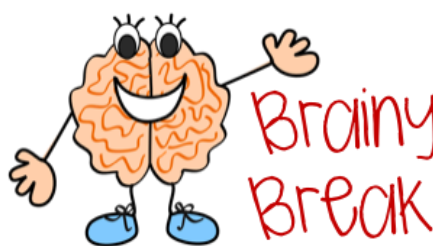
We are awaiting confirmation from Scholastic Books about our free access to **Reading Pro**. This gives staff and children online access to 1000s of levelled reading materials.

Before issuing the details, I will give staff some time to familiarise themselves with the website, etc., and let us get to grips with the easiest and most user-friendly way to work with this resource.

As soon as I can, I will be in touch regarding this. We need to evaluate it first before deciding to go ahead with it.

I am aware that there are many online options for children and their families being shared by our school and I am also aware of not over burdening families as it is important to take a sensible approach with sensible expectations.

## ACTIVITIES DURING THE EASTER HOLIDAYS



It is important to have down time no matter what is going on in our lives! All staff are

working from home just now or are on a rota within the Hub and therefore it is difficult to issue 'hard copies' or printed versions of tasks for children to complete at home. To this end, during the Easter Holiday period (Monday 6th April - Friday 17th April inclusive) there will be a reduction in our online digital presence as well as no additional tasks provided during this period.

***If you have not collected the ORIGINAL Home Learning Pack which was handed out earlier, you can still collect from the school. Just let us know you are coming to collect and we will ensure it is left outside reception.***

This will allow us to reconnect with fresh attitudes and fresh ideas and it will allow the children to feel like they have earned a break.

# GLOW – A Guide for Parents

## Glow - What is it?

Glow is the world's first national safe and secure online community for pupils, parents and teachers. Glow gives access to information and activities including interactive educational games, revision papers, links to other sites and news features. These resources support pupils to learn in innovative and exciting ways. Glow has a number of key features and access to, or restrictions to, these features is dependent on the permissions set by the local authority. Not all features are relevant to all users.



## How does it work?

Each child or teacher is given unique logins to access this trusted, safe environment where they can create personalised programmes of work, share resources or help parents understand and become more involved in their children's learning by keeping up to date with their progress and achievements.

## How does it assist my child's learning?

For children, Glow is:



- ◆ A tool to access the benefits of the internet and a range of online learning resources
- ◆ A space for collaborating with other learners
- ◆ A facility to connect with teachers about learning
- ◆ A space to create and innovate as you learn

## Why use it?

The constantly evolving digital world has transformed the way in which our children communicate, network, seek help and access information to learn. Glow provides tailored resources, appropriate to the children in a safe, secure and engaging way. It is particularly useful in exceptional times of school closures, extreme weather etc.

## What are the benefits?

Glow is a secure and safe setting. It will facilitate continuity of learning during school closures.

## How does my child get access?

Your child will be given access by the school via a secure username and password. This gives your child access to information and resources suitable to them.

A pupil's access to, and view of, Glow will be different from a teacher's view.

## Can my child access Glow anywhere?

As it is web-based, Glow can be used wherever an internet connection is available, such as on a desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile device.

All your child needs is their unique username and password.

## How can I, as a parent, use Glow?

You will be able to view and access the same information as your child.

Through your child's password, you have access to all the national material. Parents cannot be given separate user names and passwords for Glow.

## Wider digital access

Your child will also have been given usernames and passwords for other online learning platforms that the school has deemed appropriate; these could include Sumdog, Active Learn etc. These are unique to your child and teachers will continue to monitor these during school closures.



## **PARENTS PORTAL** *Please read this information carefully and act upon it!*

In support of North Lanarkshire Council's ambition to continue improvement in parental communications and its broader Digital NL plans we have been working with national organisations to develop a "Parents Portal".

The portal has been and will continue to be developed to provide parents with a clear insight to their child's education and to support transactional communications between parents and the school, this includes attendance, reports and school information.

A national consultation exercise was conducted to include the views of parents in the design of the portal. A copy of the report can be found here:

<http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/parent-views-of-school-engagement.html>

The development was piloted last session in a small number of schools, when it was within its first phase. Since then more features have been added and North Lanarkshire has moved forward its own digital communication

This first phase will introduce basic information about the school and include services such as

- ♦ online school payments,
- ♦ attendance,
- ♦ placing request forms,
- ♦ the annual data check
- ♦ general school information

parentsportal.scot

As the development of the Portal continues, it is hoped to add features such as reporting absences and permission slips for excursions, etc.

We are live **NOW** on Parents Portal... sign up and try using some of the features. All services... **ONE password!**

Further details will follow as these services become available and the best way to make them available to you is for you to sign up to the portal.

Instructions for this can be followed in video available via this link:

<http://bit.ly/ParentsPortalNLC>

This portal will become one of the main communications between schools and parents across North Lanarkshire Council and we encourage you to sign up to this service. It is a one stop shop to many of our current and future communications.

*We hoped to have drop-in sessions to allow Parents/Carers the opportunity to get support with signing up. However, in the current climate, this will not be possible.*

**FULL INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO SIGN UP ARE AVAILABLE ON THE LINK ABOVE AND ALSO ON OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE.**

## POPE FRANCIS - URBI ET ORBI - A MESSAGE TO ROME AND TO THE WORLD

Many of you may have seen the moving images of a solitary Pope Francis on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome last week as he led the world in prayer. Many people were so moved by the images and by what the Pope had to say to us.

*He began...*

"When evening had come" (Mk 4:35). The Gospel passage we have just heard begins like this. For weeks now it has been evening. Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets and our cities; it has

taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void, that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice in people's gestures, their glances give them

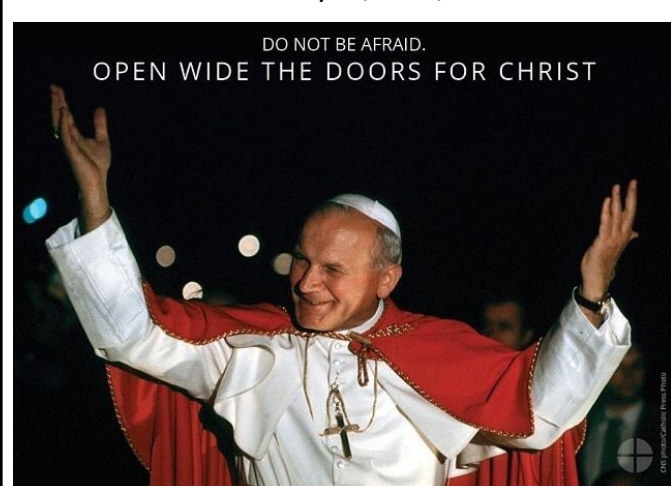


away. We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are all of us. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying "We are perishing" (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this.



*The Holy Father led us in a period of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, before offering us his prayer and blessing...*

"Why are you afraid? Have you no faith"? Dear brothers and sisters, from this place that tells of Peter's rock-solid faith, I would like this evening to entrust all of you to the Lord, through the intercession of Mary, Health of the People and Star of the stormy Sea. From this colonnade that embraces Rome and the whole world, may God's blessing come down upon you as a consoling embrace. Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm. Tell us again: "Do not be



afraid" (Mt 28:5). And we, together with Peter, "cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us" (cf. 1 Pet 5:7).

*The prayer and message of Pope Francis echos that of our very own Patron, St. John Paul II. We ask the intercession of St. John Paul II at this time and always.*



## KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US... WE ARE STILL HERE TO HELP!

Whilst things may be very different and we are not in our building together, we are still all St. John Paul II Primary School & Nursery Class! Our staff are still here for you and we will do all we can to ensure that questions, pleas for help with learning/work, support with Free School Meals, etc. are all answered as soon as possible. By now, I am sure that you will know the various ways to keep in touch, but just to remind you, our contact details are below. You can also...

- ♦ **SIGN UP TO OUR SCHOOL APP.** This is an excellent way to stay in touch and provides links to the website for News and Glow.
- ♦ **SIGN UP FOR PARENTS' PORTAL.** We want ALL of our Parents/Carers to do this, so please follow the instructions in this newsletter.
- ♦ **FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK** if this is a platform you use and are familiar with **OR FOLLOW US ON TWITTER.**



## BLOGS FROM MR THOMAS & WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE COMING WEEKS

Every now and again, Mr Thomas will add to the school Blog which is found on the HOMEPAGE of our school website (see address below). This can include general updates, information, signposting to resources or just a general hello!

### The Senior Leadership Team

Our SLT, which includes Mr Thomas, Mrs Martin, Mr McCann, Mrs Murtagh, Miss Guidi and Mrs Byers had their first ever digital Leadership Meeting this week (using a popular video-conferencing platform)! We discussed progress with Digital Learning and how we are supporting our children. We discussed ways of encouraging more children and families to engage with the resources Class Teachers are offering.

### Making more and best use of all of the digital content

Many of our families are engaging with the resources we have offered. However, we still do not know how long this current period of 'Lockdown' will last and when our schools will reopen to the general population. Whilst we encourage everyone to get on board with our digital offerings, we also recognise the need for down time and relaxation! Please do not stress about things in terms of school work, but please do try to get your child to engage with some learning every school day! ***Why not even ask your child to keep a digital journal each day which could be added to their own GLOW blog?***

Remember to keep in touch - even if it is just to share a photo of something fun!



## St. John Paul II Primary School & Nursery

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Head Teacher: Mr Kristofer Thomas

Faith | Respect | Friendship | Trust | Kindness | Equality