

Our Ref:
Your Ref:
Contact:
Tel: 01698 522723
E-mail: office@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk
Date: Thursday, 17 September 2020



Education and Families

Kristofer J. Thomas BEd, PGDip, MSc
Head Teacher
St John Paul II Primary School &
Nursery Class
1 Laburnum Road
Viewpark G71 5DG
www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

Dear Parent/Carer

SAFETY CONCERNS IN AND AROUND THE SCHOOL CAR PARK AND SURROUNDING ROADS

You will perhaps be aware that, periodically, I mention road safety, car park safety, irresponsible parking and other concerns around the drop off and pick up of children as part of our school Newsletter. I am writing to all of you today, outwith the Newsletter, so that the message I am trying to put across to you all does not get lost within other items of news!

I realise that not everyone drives to and from school, however, I am writing to all Parents/Carers. I would ask that you make any child minders, grandparents or older siblings and family members who may come to collect your child aware of the content of this letter.

I have been approached by a number of concerned Parents/Carers and I myself have been concerned for some time now around some of the behaviours of drivers using the car park as well as the over-flow car park and those parking on Laburnum Road.

It goes without saying that we have far more cars in and around the school than we have the capacity to provide parking spaces for.

You will have seen recently that I am present at the vehicle entrance each morning. This is partly because I have requested that all pedestrians use the bottom gate as an entry and the top gate as an exit to help with social distancing within the grounds. I would like to thank everyone for the way in which you have shown courtesy when allowing our children and their accompanying adults to cross safely. This junction is very busy in the morning and the last thing we would want is for an accident to occur.

CONCERNS

- The volume of cars within the car parks in the morning but particularly at 3pm.
- The number of cars parking on the pavements on Laburnum Road.
- Cars are even parked in the zig-zag lines near the Zebra Crossing, which is illegal.
- Verbal abuse when drivers are asked to park elsewhere. Our Lollipop Man has been subject to this on a number of occasions.
- Cars parked and double parked around the car park.
- Cars mounting the pavements around the Zebra Crossing within the car park.
- Cars mounting the pavement where there are bollards to stop this.
- Cars blocking other cars into spaces.



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Accredited
Until 2021



- Disabled spaces blocked or used by people who do not technically require them.
- Cars blocking the Bus Stop where the children access the School Bus.
- The over-flow car park is regularly almost empty in the mornings. More people could make better use of this space in the mornings instead of driving into the school grounds.
- Children exiting cars and vans at random points within the car park.
- Wet weather simply adds to the problem!

From the list above, you can see why so many are concerned with the current situation within the car parks and surrounding roads. **It is only a matter of time before a serious accident occurs.**

FINDING A WAY FORWARD

Our Junior Road Safety Officers have worked hard to educate the children in school and their work has been commended by North Lanarkshire Council. However, educating some of the adults using our car park would seem to be more of a necessity!

In previous years, we have sought the support of our Community Police Officers. I know that at least one Parent is contacting them with their concerns.

It has been suggested to me that the school car park should be closed in the mornings from 8:45am to 9:10am and in the afternoons from 2:45pm to 3:10pm every day. No traffic would be permitted to move within the grounds during these times. I am reluctant to do this, as I fear that the surrounding roads would just become more of a hazard. However, it is something that I would be willing to try simply to see if it makes a difference. I would firstly take advice from North Lanarkshire Council regarding this.

I have had discussions with many of you since I became Head Teacher and I know that the majority of people share similar concerns. We cannot ignore the shared responsibility that we all have whether it be as a pedestrian or a driver to ensure the safety of ALL users. In the interim, I would kindly ask you to do the following:

- ✓ **Remember that the staggered start times (8:50am or 9am) and finish times (2:50pm or 3pm) are still being adhered to. Do not come to the school until your allocated time. This will ease congestion in the car parks and at the gate.**
- ✓ Follow the Highway Code! Do not park in illegal zones and adhere to the road markings in and around the school.
- ✓ Treat each other with respect and courtesy. If someone speaks to you because they are concerned by where you are parking, it will no doubt be out of genuine concern for the safety of our children.
- ✓ Consider not coming into the car park at all. Park away from the school (even in wet weather) and walk the last part of your journey. If you live relatively near the school, please do not drive – walk/scoot or cycle instead!
- ✓ Do not leave your car if you cannot find a safe space to park. Wait with your car in case you are blocking someone in.

Schools throughout the country have similar problems! I genuinely believe that we have a school community which works together and I thank you in advance for your consideration and co-operation in this matter. I am only too willing to discuss this matter should you wish to make contact with me. However, I do hope to see some positive changes in the coming days, with your support.

With renewed good wishes,

Kris Thomas
Head Teacher