



ST. JOHN PAUL II

Primary School & Nursery Class

September
2020

NEWSLETTER

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

I want to begin this Newsletter by firstly offering a word of thanks to you all. We have put many things in place for the health and safety of the children, their families and our staff team. I have been so pleased by the way in which the vast majority of our Parents and Carers (and those significant others who drop off and collect the children) have embraced the new situation we find ourselves in and how the majority try to follow our guidance and go the extra mile to ensure the routines we have in place go smoothly and have the desired impact.

As with anything; we had a few teething problems. However, we have worked to improve things and will continue to evaluate the situation.

It is important to highlight that **we have by no means returned to normal!** All of the new rules and routines we have put in place for children, families and staff are still there. In fact, with a recent rise in COVID cases across Lanarkshire, we must all still continue to play our part, be vigilant and continue to ensure that our community is remaining as safe and healthy as it possibly can be. Whilst the majority follow the new routines, some unfortunately do not. This can have an impact on everyone and so I ask you all to consider your own part in our efforts.

To this end, I have included some reminders within this Newsletter so that there can be no confusion as to the expectations placed upon us all.

It does not seem like things will be returning to 'normal' any time soon. However, it is important to take pride in the way that our children have returned to school so calmly and with such smiles! It has been wonderful to reconnect with the children and to begin working with them again. We really did miss them! They have taken everything in their stride, particularly our Primary 1 children!

Whilst we continue to deal with the situation as it is with COVID-19, I want to reassure you that we are working hard with the children to ensure routine and that the staff team are working tirelessly to ensure the smooth transition back into full time learning experiences for every one of our children.

Once again, thank you for all that you are doing to support the work of the school and to support your children.

With renewed prayers and good wishes,

Mr Thomas

Head Teacher

Some reminders as we continue our efforts to keep our school COVID-19 Free

Stay Safe | Stay Alert | Save Lives

KEEP A SAFE 2M DISTANCE WHEN DROPPING OFF AND COLLECTING CHILDREN
One Adult only (per family) should be within the school grounds.

OUR START AND FINISH TIMES STILL APPLY

Do not arrive at school before to your allocated time.
Make sure other family members know this if they take turns to do the school run!

PARK AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL

Our Car Parks and Laburnum Road are dangerously busy, especially at the end of the day.

MAKE SURE YOU USE THE ONE WAY SYSTEM FOR ENTERING AND EXITING

Some people think that this arrangement does not apply to them!

DO NOT ENTER THE SCHOOL BUILDING WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT

Do not wait inside the reception area. Call ahead and we will happily help!

ADULTS ARE BEING ENCOURAGED TO WEAR A FACE COVERING MORE OFTEN

You may want to consider wearing one at drop off and collection.

Any member of the public entering our building MUST wear a face covering.

If you or any of your household have any of the following symptoms

New persistent Cough | Loss of taste/smell | Fever

Your whole household should isolate...

10 days for the person with symptoms and 14 days for all others.

*If someone else develops symptoms, they must isolate for 10 days
(even if that takes them over the 14 day isolation period).*

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD CHILDREN ATTEND SCHOOL

If someone else in their household has symptoms or a positive test result or if you/they are considered a close contact of someone outwith their household through
Test & Protect.

*If we continue to work together, we can ensure that our school
does not contribute to the spread of COVID-19*

THE SCHOOL DAY – START AND FINISH TIMES REMAIN THE SAME UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Nursery children – please refer to your personal letter, as issued in June.

Lourdes House
Knock House
Medjugore House

School Starts: 8:50am
School Finishes: 2:50pm

Fatima House
Guadaloupe

School Starts: 9am
School finishes: 3pm



ST. JOHN PAUL II
Primary School & Nursery Class



OUR SCHOOL IS NUT FREE

All schools in Scotland are Nut Free schools. This means that items containing nuts (similar to the picture to the left) are not allowed in school. This does not simply apply to Peanuts!

We have adults and children in school with serious nut allergies.

This means that they could become seriously (sometimes life threateningly) ill if they come into contact with nuts.

It is not a solution to say that children will try to keep these items away from others. Even touching a hand or surface which has had a nut substance on it can bring on an attack.

Please do not send any dangerous items into school—either as snacks or as packed lunches.

Thank you for your support in this important Health and Safety matter.



St. John Paul II
Parent Council

GET INVOLVED!

Our Parent Council are eager to get back to work! All parents are invited to join the Parent Council. You can either:

- Attend meetings as a Parent/Carer but without voting rights **OR**
- Become an Officer Bearer or a co-opted member with voting rights.

The first Virtual Parent Council Meeting
will take place on

Tuesday 22nd September 2020 at 7pm.

This will also be the AGM.

To join the meeting, please send an email to
ht@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk

Meetings will take place online through a platform called **Webex** and a link to join the meeting will be emailed to you. You can download the Webex App to your computer/tablet or phone.

STAFFING CHANGES

We recently said farewell to Mr Lambe and Mrs Rabone. Both of these members of staff were Additional Support Needs Assistants. They have both left us to go on to further studies at college.



Mrs Rabone has been a member of our staff since the school opened in 2006 and prior to that, she was a member of the team at St. Gabriel's Primary before it's amalgamation with St. Columba's. Mrs Rabone will be sorely missed by staff and children alike.

Mr Lambe has been with us for just over a year and in that time he has quickly become a popular member of our staff team. Despite his relatively short time with us, he worked hard with those children he was assigned to and built positive relationships with the others in the playground. We wish both of these lovely people all the very best of luck in their new chapters.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Many of our P4 children and quite a few of our P5, P6 and P7s should be entitled to Free School Meals. However, it appears that one of the following could be the case:

1. Parents/Carers with children who have transitioned **from P3 to P4** have not realised or have forgotten that they must now apply to North Lanarkshire Council for their child to receive Free School Meals. Only children in P1-3 are automatically entitled to Free School Meals.
2. A family's circumstances have changed in recent months and applying for Free School Meals hasn't been something the Parents/Carers have considered.
3. Parents/Carers are unsure of how to apply.
4. There has been a backlog of applications to NLC and Parents/Carers have not been informed of an outcome.

Whatever the issue, if you need some help with this, please contact us. Alternatively, go to www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals or you could email FME@northlan.gov.uk for more information.

IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT...

During lockdown, families were entitled to a voucher for £20 per child, per week which was texted or emailed if the children were in receipt of a Free School Meal.

IF YOUR FAMILY HAS TO SELF ISOLATE FOR 14 DAYS...

Those families who have children in receipt of a Free School Meal will receive a voucher to assist them during that time.

Please to take the time to look into this and contact us if you need support with this. It can make a huge difference and also entitles your child(ren) to free access to the Breakfast Club.

TOPPING UP YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH CARD

We are not currently using lunch cards in school at the moment. This means that you cannot send money into school for your child to top their card up. ***You must do this online (instructions included in this newsletter and they were also sent out at the beginning of the school year).*** There are quite a few children who are gaining a fair bit of debt on their lunch account, due to lack of funds being added online to their card. If you need assistance, please contact Mr Thomas or a member of our office staff.

THE SPARK

The Spark is a counselling service which is used in various educational settings. I have recently received information about a free counselling service for Parents/Carers and Teachers. The free service is being funded by the Scottish Government and is accessible to all of our Parents/Carers. It is recognised that, as well as the obvious challenges of dealing with the current pandemic situation, families are under other pressures and strains. I encourage you to make use of this service by calling **0800 802 2088** during opening hours (see below) or go to www.thespark.org.uk for further information.

- Monday: 9am – 9pm
- Tuesday: 9am – 9pm
- Wednesday: 9am – 9pm
- Thursday: 9am – 9pm
- Friday: 9am – 4pm
- Saturday/Sunday: closed



VANDILISM OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS

In recent weeks, we have noticed an increase in the number of young people hanging around the school in the evenings. We are used to seeing young people making use of the pitch when a let is not on. These young people are not only from our school, but from other local schools.

Over the weekend, we have been subject to some vandalism. Our Nursery play area has been vandalised with some of the play resources being broken. In the infant playground, chalk has been used to vandalise the walls and window ledges. Whilst this is low level, I am concerned that things will escalate if we are not vigilant. I encourage you all to keep a close eye as you pass the school and to report anything suspicious to the Police. Our CCTV is operational but we all have a responsibility to look after our school.

SEPTEMBER WEEKEND - NON UNIFORM DAY

The September Weekend is already upon us, which means that:

Thursday 24th September - INSET DAY

Friday 25th September - HOLIDAY

Monday 28th September - HOLIDAY

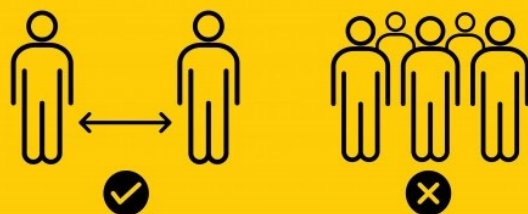
Wednesday 23rd September
will be a
Non Uniform Day

Children do not need to wear uniform on this day. However, no football colours/strips should be worn to school.

We are trying to raise some much needed School Funds and so a donation (normally around £1 per child) would be much appreciated. However, no family should feel under pressure to donate and all children can take part regardless of whether a donation is made.

You can make your donation online through iPay Impact or your child can bring a donation to school. These will be handled safely by staff members.

SOCIAL DISTANCING



Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing
cover mouth and nose with
flexed elbow or tissue



Throw tissue into closed bin
immediately after use

Clean hands with alcohol-based
hand rub or soap and water
after coughing or sneezing and
when caring for the sick



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT BEST START GRANT - Early Learning or School Age Payment

The Best Start Grant School Age Payment is a new £250 payment to help with the costs of preparing for school when a child is first old enough to start Primary school.

Eligibility is based on the age of the child.

- The application window for children who were born between 1 March 2014 and 28 February 2015 is now closed.
- The application window for children born between 1 March 2015 and 29 February 2016 opened on 1 June 2020 and closes on 28 February 2021.
- Even if the child's school start has been deferred until next year, or if the child is not going to start school at all, parents or carers of children born between 1 March 2015 and 29 February 2016 should still apply for the payment by 28 February 2021. If they do not apply within this window they will not be able to receive the payment.

For more information and to apply online, go to: <https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/>

HAVE YOU LABELLED ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS?

We are well used to dealing with issues around lost property. Children lose things everyday, however, a great deal of effort is put in by staff to ensure lost property is returned to the rightful owner!

One way you can assist us is by labelling **EVERY ITEM** that belongs to your child. All clothing, school bag and lunch bags/boxes.

We currently have multiple children with the same lunch bags. You would be surprised to know how many of these have no name on them. This makes our task a little trickier! Therefore, please take some time to ensure your child's belongings are labelled in some permanent way to save any confusion.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Our Primary 5 children who should have made their First Holy Communion in May 2020 have recently received a letter regarding decisions which have been made about the way forward. Obviously, we all want the children to make this special sacrament. However, the circumstances are challenging! We have two parishes associated with our school. They are both in a different position in terms of what they can offer and when they can offer it.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH is still under-going major renovation following a 5 month back-log in the programme. Therefore, Fr Bogan will make arrangements for the children to receive the Sacrament of First Holy Communion in 2021.

ST GABRIEL'S CHURCH will welcome our P5 children on the weekend of 3rd & 4th October. This will be a very different celebration than what we are used to! There are very strict rules and procedures in place to ensure that our churches across Scotland do not contribute to the spreading of COVID-19.

There will be no singing; everyone will wear face masks (**including children**); there will be limited numbers (St. Gabriel's can hold 40 in the church as lots of the pews are cordoned off to accommodate for Social Distancing; there will be no photographer.

Whilst this will be different, we are sure that Father Morris will make every effort to offer a warm welcome and celebrate a beautiful and prayerful Mass. When it is the turn of St. Columba's, we look forward to gathering in our newly renovated, beautiful church when Fr Bogan will extend a similar welcome. We thank everyone for their understanding.

HOMEWORK

We have been considering a review of our homework policy and provision for some time now and Lockdown has provided a great insight into the possibilities of how to provide homework and what the content of this is. I hope to consult with Parents/Carers and our children over the next couple of weeks.

Regardless of the outcome of this consultation, COVID-19 means that items coming to and from school are having to be limited. Anything coming into school from home should be quarantined for 72 hours before it can be corrected or before it can be given to another child to use.

We have special arrangements in place for our P1 children, as we are aware of the need for the children to begin to be supported at home with their Literacy and Numeracy in particular.

Please look out for the Homework Survey which will be publicised through our website, App and Social Media. Your views will most certainly be taken into account. Regardless, Microsoft Teams has been adopted across North Lanarkshire and we will continue to use this both in school and for at least part of our Homework provision.

PROVISION OF DEVICES AND INTERNET CONNECTIVITY BY NORTH LANARKSHIRE

We are aware that some of our families may not have access to adequate technology and devices to allow for digital learning at home. We also know that many households do not have access to Broadband or home internet, unless this is through a mobile phone data allowance. Data allowance is not the best way to access the necessary resources, especially if this requires long periods of time online.

North Lanarkshire Council want to begin to provide devices and internet to families who are in receipt of a Free School Meal in the first instance.

This does not automatically mean every P1-3 child however.

If you would like to benefit from this provision, please contact Mr Thomas or Mrs Martin at the school and we will happily chat it through and see about putting your name forward.



WHAT IS THE PROVISION IF MY FAMILY IS HAVING TO ISOLATE?

North Lanarkshire Council has put in place a comprehensive strategy to support families if they have to self isolate for any period of time.

This involves...



1. The school informs North Lanarkshire.
2. North Lanarkshire writes to Parents/Carers.
3. Community Assistance contacts the family to support (e.g., Free School Meals so that vouchers can be sent to families to continue the provision of daily meals, Financial Inclusion Team if support is required, Community Assistance if other special support is required (e.g. special prescription delivery, dog walking, etc.)
4. The school writes to families to inform them of what Learning Materials will be on offer and how to access these.
5. The school will contact the family by telephone each week of isolation.

Help and support will be available throughout and we encourage you to contact us if you need anything... even something not related to school!

POISITIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND BEHAVIOUR

During the last school year, we relaunched our Positive Relationships and Behaviour strategy. We simplified it to make it easy to understand and remember. It is underpinned by our school values, which the children are all very familiar with. The situation we currently find ourselves in means that some aspects of our strategy will have to be changed. For example, we cannot issue House Tokens and we currently cannot have 'Tea with Mr T', which is a real shame. We will look at alternatives. At the beginning of each school year, I always remind our Parents/Carers of our Positive Relationships and Behaviour strategy. We like it because:

1. It is simple and easy to understand.
2. It is underpinned by our School Values and our Rights Respecting Schools work (we are a Gold Award Rights Respecting School).
3. It sits nicely with our Emotion Works strategy, where children learn about their emotions, how to regulate them and how to react to them. This is particularly important when issues with friends arise.

The poster below is prominently displayed throughout the school and it is referred to at every opportunity and, in particular, at Assembly each week.



The children are encouraged to go 'Above and Beyond' in all aspects of school life and this is acknowledged by the staff in many different ways throughout the school day. The children are encourage to be 'All About Respect'. Respect of others, ourselves and property (whether that be school property, their own property, or the property of others).

We refer to **Positive Relationships and Behaviour** rather than RULES or a CODE OF CONDUCT. Much of our strategy comes from a book call 'When the Adults Change, Everything Changes' by Paul Dix. The behaviour adults model **at home and in school** and how we approach situations has a massive impact on our children. We try to remember this in our daily interactions with the children.

PE PROVISION

The Scottish Government and Education Scotland have issued a guidelines recently to say that limited indoor PE can now take place, but that it must be hugely risk assessed and that Outdoor PE is always the preference. However, North Lanarkshire Council has issued guidance to schools to say that they **do not want Indoor PE to begin**, particularly when there is a significant rise in COVID-19 cases within the Lanarkshire area.

Therefore, for the time being, Outdoor PE will continue to be our offer within St. John Paul II. This means that you should ensure that your child is appropriately dressed. They can still come to school in their PE kit but this should also be appropriate for outdoor learning (even if there is a little rain!)

We will obviously ensure that decisions are made based on the weather to ensure that children are not sitting in wet clothes for the remainder of their school day if the weather is inclement.

PLEASE KEEP DOGS AWAY FROM SCHOOL

We know that a morning walk with your dog is a great way to start the day and that some of the children may enjoy walking to school with the dog. However, North Lanarkshire has a strict NO DOGS policy.

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of dogs being brought into the school grounds.

No everyone is comfortable with dogs. Some children and adults have a phobia of dogs.

Dogs can become stressed in busy places and sometimes agitated. Some children do not know the boundaries around dogs and may approach without permission.

Please keep dogs out of our grounds and away from our gates. We apologise if this is inconvenient.



REPORTING TO PARENTS

Throughout the school year, we report your child's progress to you on four official occasions. The normal arrangements are:

Term 1 (October): Written Interim Report

Term 2 (November): Parents' Night

Term 3 (April): Written Pupil Report

Term 4 (June): Parents' Night

We are currently awaiting information from North Lanarkshire Council and Teachers' Unions about how Parents' Nights will proceed if it is not possible to meet in person.

We have a little time to formalise these arrangements, however, the first written Interim Report will be issued just before the October Holiday. We will keep you fully informed of other details as they are known.

CHILD ONLINE EXPLOITATION—THINK YOU KNOW?

I was recently contacted by Police Scotland regarding some incidents of young people in our community accessing an App called Omegle. The whole point of the app/website is to summarised in their tagline/advert... **"Hey kids... wanna talk to strangers?"**

Children as young as 9 have been contacted by grown men asking them to expose themselves online. Users do not need to create an account in order to use this app. I promised to bring this to the attention of our Parents/Carers and spread the word about the dangers of this App amongst others. This is the third year in a row where children in our community have been subject to this kind of online exploitation. The fact that the Police contacted us should give you an idea of how concerning this App is. Please be vigilant, ensure your child is accessing age appropriate material and apps and check their devices for suspicious activity. Support with this and other aspects of online safety can be found at www.thinkuknow.co.uk where there is information for Parents/Carers and appropriate information for young people too.



ONLINE CONTENT

10 tips to keep your children safe online

The internet has transformed the ability to access content. Many apps that children use are dependent on user-generated content which can encourage freedom of expression, imagination and creativity. However, due to the sheer volume uploaded every day, it can be difficult for platforms to regulate and moderate everything, which means that disturbing or distressing images, videos or audio clips can slip through the net. That's why we've created this guide to provide parents and carers with some useful tips on keeping children safe online.



1 MONITOR VIEWING HABITS

Whilst most apps have moderation tools, inappropriate content can still slip through the net.



2 CHECK ONLINE CONTENT

Understand what's being shared or what seems to be 'trending' at the moment.



3 CHECK AGE-RATINGS

Make sure they are old enough to use the app and meet the recommended age-limit.



4 CHANGE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Make accounts private and set content filters and parental controls where possible.



5 SPEND TIME ON THE APP

Get used to how apps work, what content is available and what your child likes to watch.



6 LET CHILDREN KNOW YOU'RE THERE

Ensure they know that there is support and advice available to them if they need it.



7 ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING

Talk about what people might post online and why some posts could cause distress.



8 LEARN HOW TO REPORT & BLOCK

Always make sure that children know how to use the reporting tools on social media apps.



9 KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

If a child sees distressing material online; listen to their concerns, empathise and offer reassurance.



10 SEEK FURTHER SUPPORT

If a child has been affected by something they've seen online, seek support from your school's safeguarding lead.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS FOR NORTH LANARKSHIRE 2020/21



September 2020

In-service day: Thursday 24 September 2020

September weekend holidays: Friday 25 September 2020 and Monday 28 September 2020

October 2020

October break: Monday 12 October 2020 to Friday 16 October 2020 (inclusive)

School closes at 3pm on Friday 9th October

November 2020

In-service day: Monday 16 Nov 2020

December 2020 - January 2021

Christmas and New Year Holidays: Wednesday 23 December 2020 to Tuesday 5 January 2021 (inclusive)

School closes at 2:30pm

February 2021

Mid-term break: Monday 8 February 2021 and Tuesday 9 February 2021

In-service Day: Wednesday 10 February 2021

School closes at 3pm on Friday 5th February 2020.

April 2021

Friday 2 April 2021 to Friday 16 April 2021 (Inclusive)

(Good Friday 2 April 2021 and Easter Monday 5 April 2021)

School closes at ?? On Thursday 1st April.

May 2021

May Day holiday: Monday 3 May 2021 In-service day:

Thursday 6 May 2021

May weekend holiday: Friday 28 May 2021 and Monday 31

May 2021

June 2021

School closes: Thursday 24 June 2021 at 1pm



St. John Paul II Primary School & Nursery

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Head Teacher: Mr Kristofer Thomas

Faith | Respect | Friendship | Trust | Kindness | Equality