



NEWSLETTER

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

As we reach the end of November, I am sending you some further news from our school community. Despite all of the restrictions and the reduction in extra curricular activities, the school is a busy place with lots going on!

I continue to be amazed by how well the children are doing whilst in school. They are coping well with our routines and are trying hard to follow all of the procedures with the help of our staff team. I couldn't be more proud of how our staff have also been pulling together as a team as well as working extra hard for our children. It should not be underestimated just how much pressure we are all under, regardless of whether we are a child, a staff member or a family member. However, by working together in the way that we do, we can ensure the continued safety of everyone.

As you know, we have had our first cases in school. Thank you to all of our Parents/Carers for approaching these instances with a sense of calm! This is SO important. Thank you for trusting us to do the right thing and for trusting our robust procedures and risk assessments. They have been proven to work well so far and we will continue to review them. Please remember that only information which has been shared directly from the school can be 100% accurate. Speculation and comments on social media cannot be guaranteed to be wholly accurate and so I would ask that you pay no attention to information which has **not** been shared by us. As I have mentioned before, we follow the exact guidelines as set out by the Scottish Government, North Lanarkshire Council and (in the instance of a positive case) NHS Lanarkshire Public Health.

If at any time you would like some advice on our procedures or if you would like some reassurance, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. I would be more than happy to talk to you.

I have included some information regarding our plans for Christmas. Obviously, the ongoing restrictions will mean a different kind of Christmas here in school. However, we aim to make it as magical a time as possible for the children!

Thank you, once again, for your continued support.

With renewed good wishes,

Mr Thomas

Head Teacher

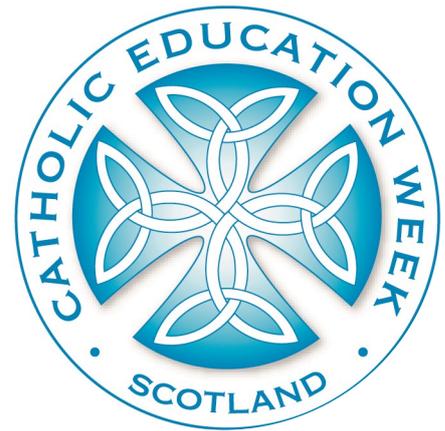
CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK *Honouring Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life*

Each year, Catholic Education week can be celebrated between the feast of St. Margaret (16th Nov.) and the feast of St. Andrew (30th Nov.) Given that this period falls when we have an INSET and that we originally planned for the Election INSET, we have continued to celebrate for the two weeks! We have focused on the theme during two of our assemblies and the children have used materials provided by the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) in class to explore the theme.

The Annual Diocesan Education Mass for the Diocese of Motherwell was originally planned to take place in the Cathedral on 24th November. However, due to the Tier 4 restrictions, this had to be scaled back with 20 people attending Mass in St. Gerard's in Bellshill. Bishop Toal was the celebrant. The Mass was live streamed and can also be watched on catch up. Why not take the opportunity to participate in this Virtual Mass to pray for our Catholic Schools and all of those who work and learn in them during these challenging times?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ao5qau2dBww&feature=youtu.be>

We are working hard to ensure that we do not lose our sense of identity and our Catholic Ethos whilst we cannot have Mass together in school or in one of our churches. Our prayer life and core Religious Education continues as well as our Pope Francis Faith Award involvement with some of our P6 and P7 children.



WE WELCOME SOME NEW FAMILIES TO OUR SCHOOL!

On 23rd November, we welcomed a further two new families to our school community.

It must be difficult for families to move to a new area and for children to settle into a new school when so much is different! Our children and staff have become very used to welcoming new children and their families to our school in recent months!

We hope that they will feel welcomed by everyone and that they will quickly feel part of our community. It is always lovely to welcome new people.



DIGITAL LEARNING

All classes are using a variety of Digital Learning resources, with our main platform being Microsoft Teams. We would encourage all children to get involved with this.

We realise that it can be stressful, but we are here to help in whatever way we can. Our Digital Champions are Mr McCann and Mrs MacFadyen and they are always on hand to help the children or indeed our Parents/Carers with Digital Learning at home.

We continue to liaise with NLC to work towards ensuring all families have access to digital devices and internet access during periods of isolation.

ANONYMOUS DONATION - THANK YOU!

One of our Parents recently donated £1000 to support the purchase of digital devices so that we can offer more support to our families. This is in recognition of the fact that many of our families do not qualify for free devices, or some of our families struggle when more than one child is isolating and perhaps the Parents/Carers are working from home. We cannot thank this Parent enough for their generosity, especially when school budgets and funds are stretched at the moment!

PLANNING FOR CHRISTMAS

Christmas will be different in so many ways this year. We are all encouraged to follow the restrictions we are under so that the aftermath of Christmas isn't too concerning. However, we want the children to enjoy Christmas in school. We have had our thinking caps on and are putting together a calendar of events. The good news is, we are aiming to do all of these free of charge and at no cost to families. The most you will need to purchase is perhaps a snack or a Christmas Jumper. We are not permitted to have Christmas Parties in the hall and so there will be no need to buy expensive party clothes this year. You will see within this Newsletter, some of the events we have planned to keep the Spirit of Christmas alive in St. John Paul II. We will be going all out on decorations this year to cheer us all up!



VIRTUAL PANTOMIME

We are in the process of booking a Virtual Pantomime. Classes will be allocated a date and time to go along to the hall to view the Virtual Panto. There are lots of these available online and they are reasonably priced. We will not be charging families for this Christmas treat! We will ensure the dates are issued so that you are aware of your child's day for the Virtual Panto.

GIFTS & CARDS FOR STAFF

Some Parents/Carers have been asking if they are still allowed to send in gifts and cards for staff. We would hope that nobody felt obliged or pressured to send anything in for staff. However, we would never want to offend anyone by rejecting their kindness. If you wish to hand something in, it can be quarantined. We know that there are so many financial pressures on our families at this time of year and we know that many of you have additional strains due to COVID-19.

CHRISTMAS JUMPER APPEAL

We are looking for donations of Christmas Jumpers which your child perhaps no longer uses or has grown out of. We would like to offer these to anyone



who could make use of them, particularly on days when we are giving permission for Christmas Jumpers to be worn in the run up to Christmas. This year, there will be around 4 opportunities to wear Christmas Jumpers. For children who do not want to wear a Christmas Jumper, they can wear a Christmas Hat or some tinsel, etc. In order to keep this COVID-friendly, children will not be asked to hand these garments back. They can keep them for future use. Please feel free to hand these into the school at any point!

GIVING OUT CHRISTMAS CARDS— THE COVID SAFE WAY!



We know that, at this time of year, the children want to give out Christmas Cards to their friends and the staff. We initially thought about stopping this from

happening due to the sheer amount of cross-contamination which could happen. You know that the Government and NLC guidelines state that we should be reducing the amount of things going home and being returned to school.

However, we know that this is something the children enjoy doing! Therefore, we have a plan... Children can bring cards into school from Monday 30th November until Friday 4th December.

These will be placed in a class post box and left until Monday 7th when the Teacher will distribute them.

Please do not send cards in after these dates to assist us with our COVID protective factors.

CONGRATULATIONS MR & MRS MACFADYEN

You may well be wondering who Mrs MacFadyen is, if you have heard your child mentioning her. She is, in fact, our very own Miss Guidi who was recently married.

Mrs MacFadyen and her husband had spent a long time planning their wedding, just as most



couples do. However, a World Pandemic managed to disrupt many of their plans!

Nevertheless, we hear that they had a wonderful day with their close family and friends. I am sure you would all wish to join us in wishing them a long and happy married life together.

I know that Miss Guidi would like me to pass on her thanks to those who sent her their best wishes for the wedding. Everyone at St. John Paul II is delighted for the happy couple.

THANK YOU FROM THE PARENT COUNCIL

The Parent Council wish to thank everyone who took part in the Halloween Raffle.

They managed to raise a whopping

£560

which, as you know, will be put to great use to support the school and, in particular, the children.

This would not have been possible without your loyal support and your financial input. I thank everyone involved with the Parent Council for the financial and practical support they offer the school. Thanks also to our wider Parent Forum (all of our Parents/Carers) who so generously support the work of the school and of the Parent Council in so many ways.



PARENT COUNCIL CHRISTMAS

As part of their ongoing efforts, the Parent Council are holding a further raffle and a guess the Elf's Birthday Competition.

*Guess the Elf's Birthday
to win a Giant Elf*

&

Christmas Hamper Raffle

The cost will be £1 per ticket or per guess and these will be on sale in school from Wednesday 2nd December.

Please note that your child will not be given a ticket to keep (so as to minimise cross contamination!)

The name will be written on the back of a ticket and placed in the bucket for drawing of the raffle.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We are planning to have our school Christmas Lunch on **Thursday 17th December 2020**. We will send out options for ordering in due course. The Catering Staff always put on a beautiful Christmas Lunch for the children with our staff offering 'table service' on this day!

Children can choose Turkey, Steak Pie or a Vegetarian option which is accompanied by all the trimmings, a drink and ice-cream as well as a chocolate treat. Lunch costs £3 and money should be added to your child's account in advance, unless they are in P1-3 or receive a Free School Meal.

No other options will be available on that day and those not having lunch should bring a Packed Lunch.

CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAYS

We will be inviting the children to wear their Christmas Jumpers as **part of their school uniform** on

11th December 2020 (National Christmas Jumper Day)

17th December (Christmas Lunch Day)

22nd December (Last Day of Term)

If your child does not have a Christmas Jumper - please do not feel the need to go to any expense. We can provide a jumper for them.

If your child does not want to wear a Christmas Jumper, they can add something Christmassy to their uniform (e.g., a Santa Hat, a hair band or a piece of tinsel).



AN APPEAL FROM CALDERBRAES FC

Calderbraes 2012's football team are looking to recruit new players. Anyone in the age group stated above who would be interested in trying out for the team are welcome along to training on:

Wednesday and Thursday 6pm to 7pm.

Anyone interested can contact:

Kevin Gunn - 07824443979

Jordan Gunn - 07913403340



Oh ^{THE} WEATHER
outside is
FRIGHTFUL

IT'S GETTING COLDER OUT THERE!

This week the temperatures have taken a dip, especially in the morning. Even with the winter sun, parts of the playground and pitch can be colder than others because of the shade, or because the area is exposed and has no shelter.

Please ensure your child has a warm jacket and perhaps a hat, scarf and gloves to wear. As you know, we are trying to ensure that the children are outdoors where possible. PE lessons are all outdoors (weather permitting). Sometimes the children get caught in the rain if a heavy downpour comes on and other times they are outside if it is only slightly wet. A waterproof would also be helpful.

If anyone is struggling to provide these garments, we can help by providing some. Please call Mr Thomas or email ht@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk - all requests will be confidential.

PRIMARY 7 OUTDOOR EDUCATION WEEK

North Lanarkshire Council are offering a week of Outdoor Education experiences for P7 pupils and we have been offered the week of 15th—19th February 2021. The week costs £75 and the cost includes daily transport to and from Strathclyde Park. All activities are carried out within the park area and they include Bushcraft, Sailing, Mountain Biking amongst other things. All specialist equipment will be provided. The children will be provided with further information within the coming week. Whilst this is not the same as a residential week away to Kilbowie, the schools which have already taken part in the experiences have said it is an excellent week for the children! **We would encourage all of our Primary 7 children to get involved.** The information being sent out will explain things further. **Please do not let finance stop you for signing your child up for this.** The school will look at ways in which we can subsidise this. Please contact Mr Thomas if you are concerned about the cost. We will open an option to pay this up within the online payment system for those who would like to start paying small instalments.



A VISIT FROM VIRTUAL SANTA!

We are hoping that Santa will make an appearance here at St. John Paul II, but via Microsoft Teams! We wouldn't want to drag Santa into school, just in case he gets too unwell to make his journey on Christmas Eve!

Our P1s always have a visit from Santa at their party, but given we can't have parties in the hall or visitors in school, we had to come up with another plan! Who knows, he may even leave a gift for the rest of the school too!

PARENTS' NIGHT

As you should already know, Parents' Night is scheduled for Wednesday 2nd December 2020. You should book your appointment by following the link below:

<http://www.parents-booking.co.uk/stjohnpaulii>

As always, our office staff are happy to help you make an appointment, but these should be made by 5pm on Monday 30th November so that we can then make any final adjustments or arrangements.

Appointments will be carried out over the telephone and further details were emailed out to all Parents/ Carers or (for those without an email address) a letter was sent home in bags. The full details are also available on our school app. We hope that as many of you as possible will make use of this opportunity to receive an update on your child's progress and achievement.

THANK YOU FROM THE FOOD BANK

The ViewCare Foodbank has asked us to pass on their sincere thanks to everyone who donated to our recent Foodbank Friday appeal. Some of their volunteers came to collect the items in a van (there was so much!)

Whilst many have donated, we realise that many also will make good use of the Food Bank. It is by no means a good thing that we should even need a Food Bank in this day and age, however, it is great to see the community pull together to support those who need it.

One donor actually shared that they themselves knew how important a resource the Food Bank is to the community, as they themselves had to use it last year for a while when their own circumstances changed. This year, they are back on their feet and able to donate back to such a worthy cause.

Thank you all once again!

NORTH LANARKSHIRE FINANCIAL INCLUSION TEAM

The Financial Inclusion Team exists to help families to **maximize** their income. They work with families to ensure that they are receiving everything they are entitled to and can very often bring new resources and finance to families. Sometimes, families are unaware of grants and benefits. Sometimes, there is a sudden change in circumstances for families which is unexpected. Sometimes families are just about managing to make ends meet and a small boost to funds (where possible) can make all the difference. You do not need to be unemployed or even in dire straits to make use of this resource. Mr Thomas can refer families, or families can self refer. Please contact Mr Thomas if you would like further information or call the Financial Inclusion Team directly yourself:

01698 403170

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 continue to 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!

**ALL ADULTS SHOULD WEAR A FACE COVERING AT DROP OFF/COLLECTION TIMES
PLEASE WEAR THESE ON PAVEMENTS AROUND AND WITHIN THE SCHOOL/GATES**

*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. Only identified contacts should isolate.

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



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

DATE:	EVENT:	ADDITIONAL INFO:
Friday 11th December	National Christmas Jumper Day	Children can wear a jumper as part of their uniform
Thursday 17th December	School Christmas Lunch	No other items available on menu for this day
Tuesday 22nd December	Last Day of Term	School Closes at 2:30pm Children can wear a Christmas Jumper
Wednesday 6th January	School Reopens at 9am	Breakfast Club open from 8:15am

Holidays for Schools in North Lanarkshire

December 2020 - January 2021

Christmas and New Year Holidays: Wednesday 23 December 2020 to Tuesday 5 January 2021 (inclusive).
School closes at 2:30pm on Tuesday 22nd December

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 2:30pm 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