



NEWSLETTER

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

Following the news of school closures due to a sharp rise in cases of COVID throughout the country, but particularly within the Lanarkshire area, the staff and myself have been working flat out to prepare our Digital Learning which begins next week on Monday 11th January 2021.

This is certainly not the way any of us wanted 2021 to begin and it is certainly not what we as a staff would want for our children and their families. I am sure that everyone agrees that our children are all better off in school, in their classes with their friends and with their Teachers where they can continue to learn in the best possible environment. However, it is our job to ensure that we work with all of our families and that we offer the best possible solution in a very difficult set of circumstances.

This Newsletter has been prepared in order to outline what we are planning to offer in the coming weeks. In doing so, I would ask for your patience as everything gets up and running. You know that we will do our best but that, with the best will in the world, there are always complications! Hopefully, these are few and far between.

The difference this time around is that our school will be open every day. We are keeping the number of adults in school to a minimum for everyone's safety but we will be available at the end of the phone or on email or Teams to answer questions and support the Digital Learning going on at home.

At this time, we will not be providing packs for you to come and collect. The First Minister has been clear that Digital Learning is what is on offer. However, we will support you in whatever way we can if you contact us.

Further details are included within this Newsletter. Please read it over carefully and do your very best to be online from Monday! I thank you all, in anticipation, for your support in the coming weeks.

With renewed prayers and good wishes,

Mr Thomas
Head Teacher





DIGITAL LEARNING OPPORTNITIES DURING SCHOOL THE CLOSURE PERIOD

Digital Learning will undoubtedly be one of the most useful tools in the current situation. Many of you engaged with this during the first Lockdown and we would encourage everyone to get on board this time around. In the next page or two, there is an outline of all of the opportunities available. Our main delivery platform will be **Microsoft Teams**. Every child has been issued with their login details on multiple occasions,

St. JPll Digital Learning Opportunities

however, if you do not have these at home, then please contact us via telephone, email or on our social media platforms and we will get them to you.

AS LONG AS YOUR CHILD CAN ACCESS TEAMS - THEY WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS ALL OTHER PASSWORDS AND RESOURCES.

EPIC

EPIC gives the children an opportunity to access 50,000 texts! They can choose their own texts, however, Teachers will also assign texts to them and these will be accompanied by follow up tasks. This can also be used as a source for audio books.

All passwords and login details will be made available to all children through the ASSIGNMENTS tab within each Class Team on Microsoft Teams. Check there before contacting us!

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.



WHAT WILL LEARNING LOOK LIKE DURING LOCKDOWN?

We have put together a suite of learning for all classes which will take account of the individual needs of children. Support will be on offer every day, both through Teams and also by email or telephone, should you need us.

St. JPll Digital Learning Opportunities

1. All learning tasks will be issued through Microsoft Teams.
2. Teachers will post a weekly overview (similar to the class timetable) so that children and adults know what is happening in advance.
3. Each day, following the timetable, tasks will be posted which will be a mixture of activities for your child's Literacy and Numeracy groups plus other curricular areas.
4. Teachers will be available throughout the day to interact with children. However, between **9:30am—10:30am** they will be available through the live chat (or perhaps through video link) to talk the children through their tasks and ask questions. **From 2pm - 3pm** each day, they will be available to answer questions or have what we call a 'plenary' with the children where we review the learning from that day.
5. Teachers will also offer 'check-in' times or live lesson times at various points, or they may even provide recordings to explain lessons and expectations.
6. Children will have a combination of the following:
 - ⇒ Spelling/Phonics (following our Literacy Plans)
 - ⇒ Reading tasks with comprehension activities
 - ⇒ A weekly Extended Writing Task
 - ⇒ Daily Mental Agility Tasks (through sumdog and other resources)
 - ⇒ Numeracy Tasks
 - ⇒ RE/Topic/Themed Learning activities
 - ⇒ Health and Wellbeing
5. All tasks will take account of ability levels and will be differentiated where appropriate. Specific support will be provided for children who require this.
6. Each Friday, we will have our Friday Feeling Assembly at 11am and a link will be posted for this on the Assembly Channel. After assembly on Fridays, we will issue no further formal tasks to be completed.

We hope that this shows our commitment to ensuring the learning continues and that it is progressive. Your child will experience a variety of learning through Teams and they will have opportunities to connect with their peers and with school staff.

As previously mentioned, please do contact us if you require any support with accessing the above.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES

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

Parents and carers of pupils who receive free school meals will be sent a message each week from the council. It will include a voucher code for £10.00 per week, per child.

The message will be sent either as a text message to your mobile phone or by email.

For more information, please email the free school meals team on: FME@northlan.gov.uk.

To apply for Free School Meals, please go to:

www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

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, 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!

NEED TO CONTACT US REGARDING THIS?

Send an email to: office@johnpaul.n-lanark.sch.uk OR 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 or email FME@northlan.gov.uk

NORTH LANARKSHIRE FINANCIAL INCLUSION TEAM

The aim of the North Lanarkshire Financial Inclusion Team is help families **MAXIMISE** their income and support them to achieve healthy finances. They can advise on benefits, housing, rent, financial difficulties of all kinds. They also provide budgeting help and support.

You can contact them by email and they will get in touch with you to see how they can help you. Many people are experiencing hardship and have had their circumstances change either due to COVID or some other reason. Please, please get in touch with the team or even contact Mr Thomas at the school and we will make a referral on your behalf. Email: FIT@northlan.gov.uk

OUR TEACHING STAFF

In Order to accommodate the provision for children who are in school, we have organised a staff rota to cover classes. This will mean that your child's Teacher will be in school every 3rd week and that they may not answer questions quite so quickly as they usually do! However, each year group has 3 Teachers assigned to it (to accommodate this) and therefore another Teacher may be supporting on particular days.

Please also remember that, when working from home, Teachers may also have their own children to deal with! Therefore, some Teachers will work at different times of the day to accommodate their own home situations - just as many of you will.

However, as you can see from the outline on the previous page, there are multiple times throughout the day when our staff will be online (over and above any other times that they arrange with children). This will ensure daily contact between home and school.



Members of the Senior Leadership Team will be in school every day as well as staff from the school office should require to speak with someone.

Welcome Back Assembly

11am

Monday 11th January 2021

Please join us for assembly through the Assembly Channel - information will be posted on each Class Team on Monday morning.



St. John Paul II Primary School & Nursery

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Faith | Respect | Friendship | Trust | Kindness | Equality