



NEWSLETTER

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

I am pleased to be sending you our March Newsletter. The very fact that we are arriving at the month of March, means we are entering into a period where mornings and evenings are lighter! The weather has been pretty changeable over the last few weeks. Please do try to send the children to school dressed for the weather. Please remember that:

- Outdoor PE will continue to be the preferred option (even in light rain)
- Outdoor intervals and lunch breaks will always be the preferred option (even in light rain)
- March can still be plagued by winter weather! We been experiencing a mix of rain/snow/high winds in recent weeks but this can be very changeable from one hour to the next.

There have been some changes to our in-school COVID guidance. You will no doubt know that the Scottish Government has announced the lifting of some restrictions but that they will still offer suggested "guidance" in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. We await further information from North Lanarkshire as we continue to navigate the Pandemic together. We are still very much in the midst of the Pandemic, but things are gradually easing. **Please take a look at the page with our COVID Mitigations and Guidance** so that you are up-to-date and familiar with what you need to do when visiting the school campus. For now though, we are still not permitted to have major events in school which Parents/Carers can attend.

Many thanks for your ongoing support and co-operation.
With renewed good wishes,

Mr Thomas
Head Teacher



WORLD BOOK DAY - 3rd March 2022

We are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day on 3rd March. It has never been our tradition to have children dress up for World Book Day. This is an added pressure and expense over and above everything that already happens throughout the school year.

Class Teachers will plan special activities throughout the day and children are encouraged to bring in their favourite book to share (or choose one in school). During the day, we will have a special DEAR time, where everyone will be encouraged to **Drop Everything And Read!**

Class Teachers and Children will be making good use of the digital offerings from World Book Day's Youtube Channel.

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

CHANGES FROM MONDAY 7TH FEBRUARY:

School starts for **ALL CHILDREN at 9am.** (This was already in place)

School finishes for **ALL CHILDREN at 3pm.**

In the morning, the pitch gate will continue to be open for the classes allocated to that area. We will continue to dismiss children from their current gate for the time being (Main Gate /Pitch/Dining Hall).

Please remember that arriving on time for school is very important. The first part of the day always involves an explanation of the day's activities and lessons, which sets the children up for the day.



THINGS WILL BE CHANGING AND RESTRICTIONS WILL BE LIFTING OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS...

We will keep you informed as to how these changes impact on NLC schools.

We do not make our own decisions regarding what remains in place (for the most part). We are guided by national and local government. Therefore, for the time being, we ask you to continue to do the following...

KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE FROM OTHER HOUSEHOLDS WHEN DROPPING OFF AND COLLECTING CHILDREN

One Adult only (per family) should be within the school grounds.



PARK AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL

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

Please keep the Bus Bay clear, so that the children can safely board and the bus is not blocked in!



Bring and wear a face covering unless you have a good reason not to

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.

DO NOT ENTER THE SCHOOL BUILDING WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT OR MASK!

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CONFIRMANDI

The Masses of Confirmation for our P7 children in both St. Columba's and St. Gabriel's were both very prayerful and moving occasions. The children were wonderful and we thank them for the excellent way they presented themselves. Their families must have been very proud of them, just as we were. Bishop Toal was very complimentary following both of the liturgies. Thank you to all of the families and the sponsors who supported the children so well. Thank you to Miss Williamson, Miss Agnew, Mrs MacFadyen and Mr McCann for their hard work in preparing the children. Thanks also to Mr Johnston and Mrs Cummings for all of their work behind the scenes to prepare things for us. ***Please either send in £3 or pay online for the Confirmation Workbook if you haven't managed!***



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (P3)

Our children in Primary 3 will soon be celebrating their First Confession (Reconciliation).

Children from St. Gabriel's Parish will celebrate this Sacrament in school on Thursday 17th March at 1:30pm. This will be for the children only.

Children from St. Columba's Parish will celebrate this Sacrament in the church on Saturday 19th March. Individual letters will be sent to children and their families to allocate them a time to arrive at the church, as agreed with Father Bogan at the enrolment meeting.

Payment for the Reconciliation Workbook is due if you have not already managed to do so. You can send £3 into school, or pay for this online through Parent Portal and the iPayment option.

Thank you for your support with this.



NURSERY & P1 TOOTHBRUSHING

Many of you may remember that before the pandemic, all of our children would brush their teeth on a daily basis. Dental Hygiene and the oral health of children in particular is showing a decline as a result of the pandemic.

NHS Lanarkshire are now re-starting the Toothbrushing Initiative. We have agreed to start this in P1. Our Nursery Class are already participating.

The Dental Nurse will visit the school during week beginning 28th February to set this up.

ROAD SAFETY AROUND THE SCHOOL

In the last week, one of our own Primary 1 boys was knocked down by a car on Laburnum Road. This took place as the family were crossing the road at the Zebra Crossing just outside our school gates.

Whilst this did not happen at drop off or collection time, it highlights the extreme danger there is at times. Many drivers do not pay attention to the Zebra Crossing and they do not give pedestrians the right of way.

Whilst our P1 boy is safe and well and escaped without serious injury, the incident has left the family traumatised and contemplating a lucky escape and what else could have happened.

I have been in touch with all of our local Councillors and I have highlighted, once again, my own concerns and the concerns stated by many of our Parents/Carers. The Roads Department have been contacted to deal with issues with the lights at the Zebra Crossing and also some concerns regarding the crossing on Old Edinburgh Road, in front of The Rolling Barrel. I thank our Councillors for their support.

Please be reminded - if you are a driver... the speed limit on Laburnum Road is 20mph. The speed limit in the school car park is 10mph. Pedestrians have the right of way on a Zebra Crossing and all vehicles should approach with due care and attention.

Please pay attention to our Crossing Patroller during drop off and collection times!



P1 DENTAL CHECKS

By now, all Parents/Carers of children in P1 should have received a letter informing them about the forthcoming Dental Checks which are planned for 16th March 2022.

Please do get in touch to let us know if you **do not** want your child to participate in this. If we do not hear from you, then we will presume you are keen to the check to go ahead.



ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASH WEDNESDAY & LENT 2022

Ash Wednesday - Wednesday 3rd March 2022

Following discussions with our school Chaplains, we have decided to mark Ash Wednesday with the following arrangements:

P4-7: Mass and Distribution of Ashes will be celebrated at 11am in the school hall for P4-7. We are currently still not gathering the whole school in one place at the same time. Unfortunately, we are unable to extend an invitation to Parents/Carers or the wider community.

P1-3: The children will attend a short service led by Fr Bogan in St. Columba's Church in the afternoon. Again, we are not able to invite Parents/Carers or the wider community to join us.

Lenten Stations of the Cross

P5-7 will attend Stations of the Cross either on a Monday or Tuesday during the weeks of Lent. These will take place in St. Columba's and are for children only.

More information about Lenten Activities will be issued next week.

Pope Francis invites everyone to make March 2nd
Ash Wednesday, a Day of Fasting for Peace.

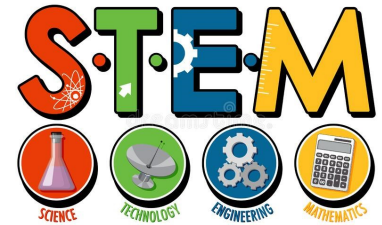
"I encourage believers in a special way to dedicate themselves intensely to prayer and fasting on that day. May the Queen of Peace preserve the world from the madness of war," he said.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATHS (STEM)

STEM is part of our School Improvement Plan for this school year and we have been working with one of the NLC Pedagogy Support Teachers in this regard. Earlier in the year, all Class Teachers were trained in aspects of planning for STEM and Scientific Enquiry.

On 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th March, Colin Dorman (NLC STEM Development Officer) will be in school to work with all children in P4, P5, P6 & P7. He will lead lessons in Engineering. I am grateful to Colin for supporting us in this way. He is working throughout North Lanarkshire and he recognizes the efforts we are going to with STEM. I am sure that the children will enjoy these sessions and that they will inspire our Teachers too!

I will look to put further dates in the diary to provide sessions for P1, P2 & P3. Our Nursery staff have also been participating in some extensive STEM training and this is being used within learning contexts with the children.



REPORTING TO PARENTS

Towards the end of this term (before the Easter Holiday), we will be sending out a written report for each child. We report to you formally on four occasions throughout the school year:

October: Interim Report

November: Parents' Night 1

April: Written Report (more detailed)

June: Parents' Night 2

This forthcoming written report contains more detail than the Interim Report you received in October. It will also serve as a basis for discussion during the second Parents' Night in June.

Our Teachers spend a lot of time preparing these reports. They will outline progress in Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing and R.E. There will be a comment on the Broad General Education, which encompasses all other areas of learning.

We look forward to the prospect of inviting Parents/Carers physically into the building as soon as possible!

PROGRESS REPORTS

FOOD BANK FRIDAY!

Many thanks to everyone who donated to Foodbank Friday on 25th February. You do not need to wait until the last Friday of each month to donate. We will take donations any time and send them to the Foodbank on your behalf. Once again, thank you so much for the continued support of this local lifeline.

FOODBANK FRIDAY

Suggested items for donating to our local foodbank.

- Cereal / porridge
- Soup (tins/packet)
- Beans/ Spaghetti hoops
- Tinned meats
- Tinned Fish
- Pasta/rice/noodles
- Tinned fruit
- Rice pudding
- Biscuits
- Jam/chocolate spread
- Tea bags/ Coffee
- Sugar
- UHT Milk
- Diluting Juice
- Basic Toiletries (toothpaste/toothbrush/deodorant)
- Cleaning Products



SPONSORED DANCE-A-THON

Friday 4th March 2022

Sponsor forms have been issued to all families for this annual event. Our plans are well in place for Friday, which will be fun and will help us raise some much needed funds.

This year, we will share what we raise with the Parent Council, since they have not been able to plan their usual calendar of events. As you know, all money raised by the Parent Council comes back to the school in the end.

Money can be brought to school on the day - or it can be paid into the Sponsored Dance-a-thon using the online payment system.

For families with more than one child at school - one form can be submitted. If you would prefer, you can simply make a donation, rather than collecting from family members. All donations, no matter how much, will be welcomed. **All children can participate, regardless of whether they bring a donation... nobody is left out!**

Children can dress down on this day (no charge) and they do not need to wear uniform.



NO ENERGY DRINKS PERMITTED!

An increasing number of children are bringing energy drinks into school. I want to make it clear that these drinks are **not permitted in school.**

These drinks are filled with additives and colourings which have a direct impact on the behaviour of children. There is clear medical evidence to suggest that these drinks are not something which children should consume.

It can be difficult to separate what is and what is not an energy drink, given how many of them there are on the market.

Please be vigilant about this and support us in creating the best possible learning environment for our children... with calm children!

NO DOGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Over the last year, there has been an increase in the number of people bringing their dogs to school at drop off and collection time.

It is North Lanarkshire policy that no dogs are permitted on any school grounds.

I realise that many of these are family pets. However, dogs themselves can become stressed in large crowds and busy places. Not all children and adults are comfortable around dogs. If more than one dog is in the area, they can become aggressive towards each other.

I have had a number of complaints from people in recent weeks and, therefore, I am appealing to everyone to ensure that all dogs are kept away from school grounds.

This is not a new thing or a new rule... it is one which has always been in place. I apologise if this is inconvenient and I thank you all for your co-operation with this.



COST OF LIVING

EVERYTHING SEEMS MORE EXPENSIVE

Many, if not all of our families will be noticing that the cost of living is increasing. This is set to worsen with an increase in energy bills. This section of our Newsletter is aimed at reminding you of what help there is out there and where you may turn to if you need help or support.

Many of us do not like to admit when we need support. However, we all need it at some point, whether it be emotional or material support. Of course, our school staff are always available to chat and to offer a listening ear if required.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE FINANCIAL INCLUSION TEAM

Our Financial Inclusion Team help North Lanarkshire residents with money advice and welfare benefits. The team includes a combination of debt advisers and welfare rights staff.

Our services include:

- rent/mortgage arrears
- council tax arrears
- payday loans
- personal loans
- store/credit cards
- gas/electricity arrears

How we can help you?

If you are worried about debt or experiencing financial difficulties, our debt advisers can provide free, impartial and confidential advice.

We will review your finances, prioritise your debts and complete a financial statement which includes details of your income and expenditure. Depending on your personal circumstances, we will advise you on what options are available to you and find the best solution possible.

Budgeting

We can also offer advice on budgeting. We can help you take the first steps in taking control of your finances by giving you advice on how to reduce outgoings and maximise your income. By doing this you may be in a better position in avoiding debt, reduce the risk of unexpected costs or you could even have some money left to save.

Call on : **01698 403170**

Email on : ***fit@northlan.gov.uk***

BELLSHILL & DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE

The Citizen's Advice Bureau is an independent service which offers advice to local people on so many different topics. Because they are independent, they are impartial and work with you to ensure you have the right information and the right support. They advise on:

- Housing
- Benefits
- Consumer advice
- Family
- Health
- Debt & Money
- Work
- Immigration
- Law & Courts

You can contact their office in Bellshill by calling:

[01698 748615](tel:01698748615)

Or go to

www.bellshillcab.org.uk



SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

We have received the following information from the Photographer. This information has also been emailed to you (if we have an address for you!) All of the school photographs have now been sorted, checked and uploaded to the system. These have now been released to view/order. All parents/carers who registered will receive an automated email informing them of this. You can click on the link below to log in to your account.

<https://order.chrismcintyrephotography.co.uk/login>

The deadline for free school delivery will be 11th March 2022. All orders placed up until then will be held and released for processing and printing after this date and a single bulk delivery to the school will then be made. Alternatively, parents/carers have the option to order and select direct shipping to have the order delivered straight away from the lab. There is an additional charge for home delivery.

If parents/carers have misplaced the access code we can provide this so long as they have registered the code by inputting their email address and creating an account. If this is not the case we would direct them to the school to obtain a replacement code.

Date:	Event:	Information:
Wednesday 2nd March	Ash Wednesday	Services for children only.
Friday 4th March	Sponsored Dance-a-thon	
Friday 11th March	Mr Hall's Retirement Day	
Wednesday 16th March	P1 Dental Checks	
Thursday 17th March	P3 First Confession	St Gabriel's Parish - in school - children only
Saturday 19th March	P3 First Confession	St. Columba's Parish - in church
Week Beginning 21st March	God's Loving Plan	Relationships Education Programme (P1-7)
Thursday 31st March	Reports Issued to Parents	
Friday 1st April	End of Term—Easter Holiday	School closes at 2:30pm
Tuesday 19th April	School reopens	8:15am for Breakfast Club
Monday 2nd May	May Day Holiday	
Thursday 5th May	INSET Day	This coincides with the Scottish Elections
Friday 27th May	HOLIDAY	
Thursday 2nd June	Queen's Platinum Jubilee HOLIDAY	
Friday 3rd June	Queen's Platinum Jubilee HOLIDAY	



St. John Paul II Primary School & Nursery Class

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Faith | Respect | Friendship | Trust | Kindness | Equality