



NEWSLETTER

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

I know that it says December at the top of this Newsletter and, if you're anything like me, you'll be desperately holding on to November as Christmas is coming a little too quickly!

However, as I write to you, I am aware of the many events that are about to unfold in our school community. It is always a time of great joy and excitement in school! It is also a time where we need to work hard to maintain some level of routine and organisation for the children, with the continuation of Learning and Teaching around all of the extra events in the calendar!

We work very hard to make sure that Christmas is a magical time in school and, more importantly, that the children learn more and more about the reason for Christmas and the true meaning of Christmas.

This time of year always brings some challenges for families, and if we can be of any help, please do let us know. We can access material and financial support if required and this can be entirely confidential.

I look forward to seeing many of you in the coming weeks.

With renewed prayers and good wishes,

Mr Thomas

Head Teacher



ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH - SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Local, confidential support for any families in need.

St. Columba's Parish Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) have asked that we share their contact details. They offer help (practical/financial/material) support to local families. They have helped many of our families in the past. If you want to make contact with them, please call:

0774788888. We can contact on your behalf if you would prefer.

They also have a furniture project which will both take donations and offer support to those who need help with furnishing their homes. They tell me that they can pretty much provide anything families may need, including white goods.

They assure you of confidentiality and discretion. Please reach out to them if you need help.



ATTENDANCE, LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY COLLECTION

IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL:

- Please contact the school to report this absence ASAP, either by phone, email or through the absence reporting option on **PARENT PORTAL**.
- Not reporting an absence will mean that your child's absence is marked as **Unexplained**.

THE NORTH LANARKSHIRE TARGET FOR ATTENDANCE IS **95%**. THE CURRENT AVERAGE ATTENDANCE FOR ST. JOHN PAUL II IS **91%** WHICH IS **LOWER** THAN THE TARGET.

ATTENDANCE LEVELS FOR AUGUST, SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

PRIMARY:	AUGUST:	SEPTEMBER:	UP OR DOWN?	OCTOBER:	UP OR DOWN?
P1	96%	90%	Down 6%	92%	Up 2%
P2	94%	91%	Down 4%	91%	Same
P3	93%	92%	Down 1%	90%	Down 2%
P4	96%	92%	Down 4%	95%	Up 3%
P5	95%	90%	Down 5%	89%	Down 1%
P6	90%	94%	Up 4%	92%	Down 2%
P7	90%	86%	Down 4%	85%	Down 1%

- P1, P2 & P4 have either maintained or improved their attendance levels.
- P3, P5, P6 & P7 have dropped albeit slightly.
- We know that this time of year brings lots of illness! Outwith that, we need to make the most of all school days. **Every day, all day!**

I MENTIONED EARLY COLLECTION AT OUR P4-7 PARENTS AS PARTNERS EVENTS RECENTLY!

This is a HUGE problem in our school and I appealed to those Parents/Carers who attended the events to work with us to reduce this. You can see that there were **125** occasions during the week of 11th—15th November 2024. That's not 125 children! The number of children would be higher, because many times there are multiple children in a

family. We have continued to monitor the number of children being removed from school before the 3pm bell. The odd occasion is acceptable. Habitual early collection is not so acceptable and the children and teachers are being impacted upon because of this disruption.

The picture is improving and so I thank you for that! However, it is by no means at an acceptable level!

During the Week 18th—22nd November: **81** children were collected early. (this was a 4 day week!)

During the Week Beginning 25th November: **71** children were collected early.

Please help us to make improvements with our attendance, late arrival and early collections.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS
All day. Every day.

It adds up... + EVERY late arrival early pick up absence

EVERY MINUTE COUNTS towards reading on grade level

Instances of early collection last week:

11th - 15th November 2024

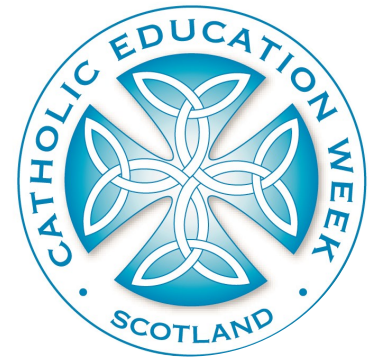
125 instances

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK 2023



Pilgrims of Hope

Each year, Catholic Education week can be celebrated between the feast of St. Margaret (16th Nov.) and the feast of St. Andrew (30th Nov.) We are continuing on from last year's theme (Pilgrims of Faith) and are now focusing on the theme for the upcoming Jubilee Year which has been called by our Holy Father, Pope Francis. This year's theme is ***Pilgrims of Hope***.



Our school community demonstrates the beauty of faith in many ways:

- We place Jesus Christ at the centre of everything we do.
- We reach out to those in need at home and abroad by our charitable works and deeds.
- Our Pope Francis Faith Award children work hard to put into action the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and they try to inspire others to do the same.
 - We work with organisations such as SCIAF, MISSIO, Mary's Meals and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
 - We have a strong bond with our school chaplains and our associated parishes.

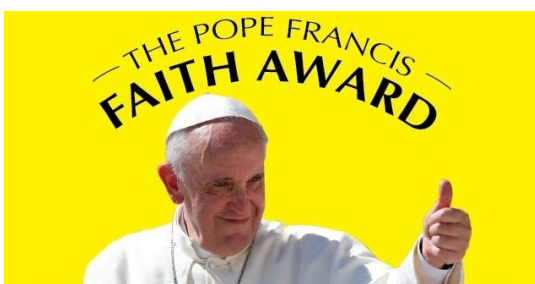


We will be planning some events for the Jubilee which starts on 29th December 2024 and will run until the end of 2025. We hope that as many of you as possible will get involved in some of the activities which will help us be ***Pilgrims of Hope*** together.

P6 POPE FRANCIS FAITH AWARD ENROLMENT

Many congratulations to the Primary 6 children who have been enrolled as candidates for the Pope Francis Faith Award! All of our Primary 6 children were given the option to join in this journey, with a group of them applying to take part.

Over the next two years, the children will work hard with Miss Williamson and Miss Byrne on a number of tasks and activities. This journey encourages the children to put the Gifts of the Holy Spirit into action in their lives. We look forward to sharing aspects of their journey with you all!



PUMA ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

ASSESSMENT



Children in P1 have recently taken part in a written numeracy assessment. P2—P7 are also taking part, but theirs is an online version.

This is the second year we are using this kind of assessment and it is used as a diagnostic tool to help us identify gaps in learning.

There has been a significant financial investment in this and the system also gives Teachers suggested areas to revise and revisit.

We use a suite of assessment in Literacy and Numeracy. We generally do not report back on specific scores, etc. These just contribute to the Teachers' Professional Judgement on pupil progress. If assessments flag up major concerns, we would contact families. Equally, if we feel support is required, we would aim to put this in place and also contact families.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROGRAMME 2024 - 25

PRIMARY 3 - RECONCILIATION:

Tuesday 11th March

St. Gabriel's will take place during the school day, with no need for Parents/Carers to attend.

St. Columba's will take place in the evening with allocated times given by Father Bogan nearer the time.

PRIMARY 4 - FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:

Saturday 31st May 11am in St. Columba's
1pm in St. Gabriel's



Reconciliation | Communion | Confirmation

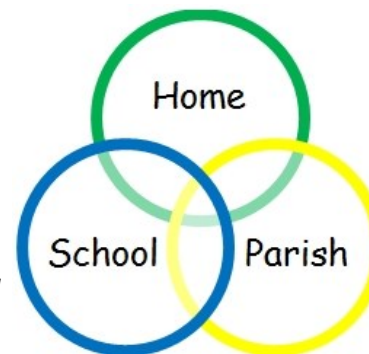
PRIMARY 7 - CONFIRMATION: 6th February at 7pm

We have been informed by the Diocese of Motherwell that Bishop Toal will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to **ALL** Primary 7 Confirmandi on **6th February at 7pm in St. Columba's Church**. There will be **NO** Confirmations in St. Gabriel's this year.

PURCHASE OF WORKBOOKS:

Children will be issued with Workbooks and there is a small charge of £3 per workbook. You can pay for this using your online account or you can send the money into school.

If you have any questions regarding any of the process or any of the actual celebrations, please do get in touch.



SPORTS LEADERS

Our School Sports Leaders have conducted a couple of interviews with children who have represented our school at the NLC Swimming Competition and also a Handball Competition. It is a great way for our children to hear about other sports and to witness the commitment and effort which goes in to this.

Thank you and congratulations to those children who have represented our school so well... they are great ambassadors for St. John Paul II. We continue to work towards our silver School Sport Award.



AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

We have a wonderful staff team who willingly give of their time to offer the children quality After School Clubs! I want to thank them sincerely for their efforts, without which there would be no After School Clubs!

ALL AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS WILL FINISH NEXT WEEK ENDING 6TH DECEMBER.

There will be no After School Clubs until after the Christmas Holiday. This is to accommodate the fact that the stage is up in the hall for our Christmas Show and this restricts the use of the hall.



READING SCHOOL AWARD PROGRESS

Mr McLaughlin and Mrs Dickson continue to work with our Reading School Leaders as we work towards becoming a Reading School and achieving the award. I was telling those who attended the P4-7 Parents as Partners that this work is going from strength to strength!

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ!

Each day, straight after lunch time, you could hear a pin drop in school! Every child in every class and all of the adults are involved in reading for enjoyment. You would see a mixture of the Teacher reading to the class, children reading their own book of choice,



children reading to each other. It is becoming a very popular time in school.

ASK ME WHAT I'M READING

Children and adults in school can volunteer to wear a Reading Schools Lanyard which has an *ask me what I'm reading* card attached. This is to encourage people to ask those people about their reading habits.



MY READING EXPERIENCE

Children and adults can also offer to share their reading experience with us at assembly. So far we have had a mixture of children and staff. Perhaps we could have some Parents offer to do this? Let us know if you are interested in participating in this.

As you can see, we have LOTS going on with this aspect of school life and we are enjoying it very much!

IT'S GETTING COLDER OUT THERE!

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. The weather is very changeable and sometimes we can see four seasons in one day! 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 enquiries-at-johnpaul@northlan.org.uk - All requests will be confidential.

LOST PROPERTY

We continue to have a high volume of lost property around the school, most of which has no name on it.

Please make the effort to label all items belonging to your child. You should do this throughout the school year and not just at the beginning. Each time a new garment or item is brought to school, it should have a name on it.

Some children wear expensive, branded items to school. We will do everything possible to assist when something is lost, but we are not always successful. Labelling your child's things is the first step to help us identify it. Many items look similar and so can be mistakenly taken by another child.

We will continue to display lost property throughout the year for you to claim it back!



Celebrating Christmas at

ST. JOHN PAUL II

Primary School & Nursery Class

INFANT NATIVITY

Our Infant Nativity Show will be performed by P1 – P3 on two occasions again this year. As with previous years, we will initially restrict the number of tickets to **2 per family**, to ensure that **every** family has some. Thereafter, the remaining tickets will be available for general sale.

Afternoon Performance: Tuesday 10th December at 1:30pm

Morning Performance: Wednesday 11th December at 9:30am

A Separate letter will be issued to all P1-3 children.



THORNIWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

The Thorniewood Community Council have asked us to support their community Christmas Decoration appeal again this year. The children will be making Christmas Decorations to hang around the Memorial Garden which is outside the Miners' Welfare on Old Edinburgh Road.

Why not pop along and see if you can find your child's creation?



CHRISTMAS PARTIES



Our Christmas Parties are always a highlight for the children.

On your child's day, the arrangements will be as follows:

- Children should attend in the morning (in school uniform) as normal.
- Children can go home at lunchtime to change for their party and have lunch.
- Those going home will be dismissed at 12:15pm through the main gate (no earlier). **All children should be collected by an adult.**
- **Children should return to school by 1:20pm. If they return earlier, they may need to play in the playground as there will be no supervision indoors unless it is raining.**
- Those not going home, will remain in school as normal and have their lunch. Staff will help children change for their party.

The dates are as follows:

Primary 6 & 7: Monday 16th December

Primary 4 & 5: Tuesday 17th December

Primary 2 & 3: Wednesday 18th December

Primary 1: Thursday 19th December



ADULT TOMBOLA DONATIONS

We are looking for donations for an Adult Tombola Stall. We would like donations of gifts, bottles, anything you'd like to win on a tombola stall really!

If you can help, please send them into the office by Wednesday 4th December 2024 so that we can prepare them for our Fayre on Friday 6th December.

IN THE WEEK LEADING UP TO FAYER FROM 2ND DECEMBER:

Children will go around the classes with:

- Guess the Elf's birthday and name
- guess the number of candy canes
- guess the number of baubles on the tree
- guess the teacher's baby picture (**all 50p per go**).
- Child's hamper raffles
- Adult hamper raffle (**Both £1 strip**)

CHRISTMAS JUMPER APPEAL

We will be inviting the children to wear their Christmas Jumpers **as part of their school uniform** on a few occasions in the run up to Christmas. We are appealing for donations of Christmas Jumpers. Perhaps your child has one they no longer need? Perhaps you could donate to our appeal? Recycling jumpers cuts down on waste and helps others save money! We are looking for Jumpers of varying sizes. You can send them into school from now and we will wash them and arrange for them to be distributed. Often, children forget their own jumper, and so if we have a small stock, we can always ensure nobody is left out.



DATES TO WEAR CHRISTMAS JUMPERS OVER UNIFORM OR ADD SOMETHING CHRISTMASSY TO SCHOOL UNIFORM:

- Friday 6th December (Christmas Fayer),
- Thursday 12th December (Christmas Lunch)
- Friday 13th December (Christmas Lunch)
- Friday 20th December (Last Day of Term)

Full uniform should be worn on other days, including PE Uniform.



Christmas Lunch at
St. John Paul SJ
Thursday 12th
DECEMBER 2024

**Free for P1-P5 &
£3.25 for those in P6 & P7 who are not
entitled to a free school meal.**

*No other menu options will be available
and lunches must be pre-ordered.*

HAVE YOU ORDERED YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH?

Please contact the school office if you have not already ordered lunch for your child. Only pre-ordered lunches will be available on the day. Children can still bring a packed lunch if they wish. Letters were issued to all children some time ago.

ST. JOHN PAUL II PRIMARY SCHOOL



Christmas Carol Service & Sing Along

FRIDAY 20TH DECEMBER
11AM IN THE SCHOOL HALL
PLEASE JOIN US! ALL WELCOME

CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME

We have M&M Productions coming into school on Friday 13th December for an afternoon performance of **Aladdin**.

This will be free of charge for the children and I am sure they will thoroughly enjoy it!

SCHOOL CHOIR

The choir continue to work with Mrs McGreagor and Mrs MacFadyen (and sometime Mr Thomas too!) They will be performing to the residents of Rosepark. They will also be recording a track to be played on Celtic Music Radio. More information will be sent out so you can hear the children! They will also lead our own Carol Service.



PARENTS AS PARTNERS EVENTS - SAVE THE DATE!

Please take note of the forthcoming dates for this year's Parents as Partners events. You will note that some of these events will take place after Christmas. This is due to other demands within the school calendar.

DATES FOR JANUARY:

Tues 28th January:	P3A Miss Byrne P3B Mrs McKay
Wed 29th January: Moodycliffe	P2B Mrs Mulgrew/Mrs P2C Mrs McDade
Thurs 30th January:	P1A Miss Millar P1B Miss Savage P1C/2A Mrs Cooney

We realise that not everyone will be able to attend, due to work or other commitments. Perhaps an older sibling, grandparents or another significant adult could come along in this case?

PROGRAMME FOR EACH MORNING:

9:10am	Tea/Coffee Served in the hall
9:20am	Introduction from Mr Thomas
9:30am	Children showcase

The morning is normally over by about 10:15am. You will hear about one aspect of learning which the children have chosen to showcase and then you will have an opportunity to view their work and discuss it with them. Please come along and join in these events if you are able. They have been very well received in the past!

Please take a look at our school diary and take note of any events that involve you or child.
Some dates may be subject to change!

DATE:	EVENT:	DETAIL:
Monday 2nd December/ Tuesday 3rd December	P1-3 Nativity Show Tickets available to order (2 per family to start)	Letters have been sent out. Please return to school.
Wednesday 4th December	P1-3 Tickets on General Sale	
Thursday 5th December	Flu Immunisation	Letters previously issued.
Friday 6th December	Christmas Fayre	See details in newsletter Christmas Jumper/ Add something Christmassy
Monday 9th December	Infant Christmas Show Dress Rehearsal	School only
Tuesday 10th December	Infant Christmas Show (PM Performance)	1:30pm—ticketed event
Wednesday 11th December	Infant Christmas Show (AM Performance)	9:30pm—ticketed event
Thursday 12th December	Christmas Lunch	See details in newsletter Christmas Jumper/ Add something Christmassy
Friday 13th December	Christmas Panto	1:30pm In school. Christmas Jumper/ Add something Christmassy
Monday 16th December	P6/7 Christmas Party	See information in newsletter
Tuesday 17th December	P4/5 Christmas Party	See information in newsletter
Wednesday 18th December	P2/3 Christmas Party	See information in newsletter
Thursday 19th December	P1 Christmas Party	See information in newsletter
Friday 20th December	Carol Service	All Welcome. 11am in the school hall. Christmas Jumper/ Add something Christmassy
Friday 20th December	School Closes	2:30pm Please note earlier time.
Monday 6th January	School Reopens	8:15am for Breakfast Club or 9am
Monday 13th January	P3 to attend Mass in St. Columba's	10am—all welcome
Tuesday 14th January	Parent Council Meeting	6pm in the Dining Hall
Friday 24th January	Flu Immunisation Catch Up	
Wednesday 29th January	P3A & P3B Parents As Partners	See information in Newsletter
Thursday 30th January	P2B & P2C Parents As Partners	See information in Newsletter
Friday 31st January	P1A, P1B & P1C/2A Parents As Partners	See information in Newsletter
Thursday 6th February	P7 Confirmation Mass	7pm in St. Columba's
Friday 14th February	Fun Day	