



ST. JOHN PAUL II

Primary School & Nursery Class



SEPTEMBER 2026

From Mr Thomas...

Welcome to our first Newsletter of the new school year! I hope that you have all enjoyed seeing the children settle back into school life. If you are one of our new parents/carers, either from our P1 classes or another class, I hope that you are beginning to feel like part of our school community! You are very welcome!

As always, there are lots of items of information and dates for your diary within our newsletter. We have lots of exciting things happening in the coming term and beyond, as so I invite you to take some time to find out what is happening... there is something for everyone!

At this time of the school year, I draw your attention to our Mission, Vision and Values. These were reviewed and updated around 2 years ago by our children, staff and parents/carers. They form the basis for all that we are about as a school community. They are prominently placed at the front of each Newsletter as a reminder. However, sometimes, we might just skip over them! Please take a look and familiarise yourself with them. They are not just for the staff and children, but for everyone in our school community!

Our Mission, Vision & Values



MISSION

Inspired by the person of Jesus Christ and our Patron, St. John Paul II, our vision is to be a school community where everyone is included, listened to and valued. Our children will be at the heart of everything we do, as we support them to be the best version of themselves as Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors.



VISION

To nurture the faith, strengths, and talents of every child through high quality learning experiences in an inclusive environment, which prepares and equips them for learning, life and work. Through excellence and equity, we strive to meet the needs of everyone in our school community. Our Catholic faith will be nurtured, lived and celebrated.



VALUES

Faith | Respect | Inclusion | Achievement | Trust | Friendship

Reminder

A few wee reminders to get us started and keep us all on the right track for the year ahead...

LABEL YOUR CHILD'S PROPERTY

We already have a lot of lost property. Mrs McGhee has been trying to return this to the owners, but we can only do this if you have put your child's name on everything! If you have not managed to do this, please do it! It makes things so much easier when we find lost items... this include jackets, water bottles, packed lunch boxes, basically **everything!**

P6 & P7 LUNCHES AND BREAKFAST CLUB

We have been contacted by NLC regarding the amount of school meal debt which children in P6 and P7 are gathering. ***Please remember that you now have to apply for a free school meal.*** Some P7s are already into hundreds of pounds as this is carried on from last year. If you need help with this, please contact Mr Thomas.

You can find out how much you owe by going onto the Fusion App or through Parent Portal. If you need help accessing these things, our fantastic office staff are available to help.

If you would like some financial support, you can contact the Tackling Poverty Team via email on TPTeam@northlan.gov.uk

To apply for Free School Meals, or for a Clothing Grant, please click on the North Lanarkshire logo below.



PARKING IN HEATHER GARDENS

We have been contacted by the residents of Heather Gardens again, regarding people collecting children from school and blocking their driveways, parking in their private spaces and parking in unsafe places.

When drivers do this, it school staff who have to deal with the complaints. It is difficult to justify why people continually do this. I know that the car park is too small, but there is literally nothing I can do about this. Please consider the following:

- Do you really need to drive to collect your child?
- Could you park in the church car park and walk round to collect your child?
- Could you park elsewhere, that doesn't cause an obstruction or danger to others?

These people are our neighbours and they are simply asking that you respect their private property.

APPEAL TO CAR PARK USERS

When using the school car park, please consider the following:

- Use a space!
- Keep disable spaces available for Blue Badge holder.
- Double yellows and cones are there to keep specific areas clear.
- Don't block others in, especially if you need to leave your car unattended.

The SERVICE LANE is where our P1s are currently dismissed from. We have recently had cars drive up that road. We have a couple of Taxis who park there and wait until all of the children have gone before moving. This space should only be used by those Taxis.

If we work together, we can overcome at least some of these problems and ensure that our school arrival and dismissal is as safe as possible. Please help us!

Please keep Disable Spaces

**free for Blue
Badge Holders
only!**



Be considerate when parking!

We have a limited number of allocated Disabled Spaces in our Car Park and these are regularly used by people who shouldn't be using them. If you do not have a Blue Badge, you must find another space. Please do not park across these spaces when they are empty!



APPLY FOR FREE BUS TRAVEL*



REPORT ABSENCES



BOOK PARENTS' EVENINGS



SEE REPORT CARDS



GET PERMISSION SLIPS



MAKE SCHOOL PAYMENTS

SAY GOODBYE TO THE SCHOOL BAG RUN WITH PARENTSPORTAL.SCOT

PARENTS PORTAL - The one stop shop for daily school functions

Have you signed up for Parents Portal yet? If not, you should! Our Pupil Reports are issued in June through Parents Portal and, as well as this, you can report absences, make payments, check the menu (and what your child has ordered) and receive communications from the school. **CLICK HERE to access and sign up for Parent Portal.** **If you need help to sign up, please contact the school office and our staff will be able to provide you with support.**



Thanks to those who came along to the Information Meeting regarding our planned trip to Dalguise in Perthshire. This will take place from 24th to 26th February 2027.

Further information and registration forms have been issued and these, along with a non-refundable deposit of £40 should be returned by 24th September 2026. ***Please contact Mr Thomas if you need financial support.***



Reconciliation | Communion | Confirmation

Sacraments Meeting

Many thanks to those who attended the Sacrament Meeting on Tuesday 15th September. This was the first step to enrolling your child for the sacramental programme as they take their next step on their faith journey.

At the meeting, you were given a handout which contained all the information you need for the period of preparation and for the day itself. As you may know, our liturgies are simple, but beautiful! They do not focus on giving the children lots to remember, rather, they focus on the Sacrament itself.

As we prepare for the Sacraments, we continue to keep all of those children involved in our prayers.

REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

We have a number of ways in which we report to you on how your child is progressing with their learning at school. This year, we have had to change the order of these reporting events due to a planned inspection by North Lanarkshire Council in the final term (between April and June). We have no confirmation of the exact dates, but in order to ensure that staff are focussed on the preparation for this inspection, we have taken the decision to issue written reports in March. These will serve as a mid-year report and your final report will be face to face in June 2027.

Upon discussing this decision with other Head Teachers, they inform me that they have long since issued written reports around the Easter Holidays.

As part of your feedback from last year's Parents as Partners, some of you asked for more opportunities to come into school to see your child's work in their jotters. You felt that Parents' Night and Parents as Partners can be a little rushed or short for time and so we have added two dates for you to do that very thing!



THIS YEAR'S REPORTING:

SEPTEMBER: Parents' Night 1 on Wednesday 23rd September 2026. Thank you to those who managed along!

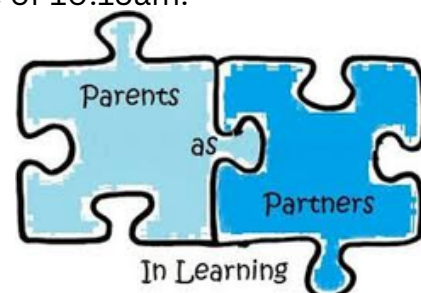
Jotter Drop In 1: Date TBC

Between October and March, we will also have our Parents as Partners events. More information is included in this Newsletter with all dates included. Part of the feedback last year was also the wish to be informed of a finishing time for those taking time off work. You will see from the information that we have an approximate finishing time of 10:15am.

MARCH: Written Report prior to the Easter Holiday

Jotter Drop In 2: Date TBC

JUNE: Parents' Night 2 on Wednesday 16th June 2026



P6 Outdoor Education Week at Palacerigg



I was contacted this week by the Outdoor Education Department who have managed to secure some funding which they can contribute towards the cost of schools' Palacerigg experience. We have moved our dates to the earlier time of 2nd - 6th November 2026. This means the children will have a 5 day experience and the funding will cover the entire cost of the week for all children who wish to attend. This means that Parents/Carers will not have to contribute anything to the cost! ***If you have already made payments, please contact the office for a refund.*** We are very grateful to have been considered for this funding! It will be a welcomed piece of news for our P6 families, I am sure!



How it works...

9am Tea/Coffee in the Hall

9:15am Intro from Mr Thomas

9:30am Showcase from Children

Children then share their work

Event ends around 10:15am

Please save the following dates for our **Parents as Partners Events** this school year. These events are spread across the school year, due to various other calendar events already planned.

P2B & P2C: Tuesday 27th October

P3A & P3B: Wednesday 28th October

P7A & P7B: Wednesday 11th November

P6A & P6B: Thursday 26th November

P5A & P5B: Monday 23rd November

P4A & P4B: Friday 20th November

P1A & P1B: Wednesday 24th March

P2A/P1C: *Further information to follow!*



The children will offer a showcase about an aspect of their learning and then you will be able to spend some time with them looking at their jotter work and giving them some feedback.

These are always very well attended events and so we hope that you can join us.

Congratulations to our House Captains and Vice Captains!

At St. John Paul II, we operate a whole school House System. Every child and member of staff belongs to a House. Siblings are usually assigned to the same house too. Houses are named after places of Pilgrimage dedicated to Our Lady. They are Lourdes, Knock, Fatima, Częstochowa and Guadalupe.

Throughout each week at school, children can win House Tokens for:

- Showing our school values
- Working to the best of their ability
- Making good choices
- Making an improvement
- Helping others
- Showing good manners
- Showing Respect
- Going above and beyond



These are counted each week by our House Captains/Vices and added to a running total. At the end of each term, there is a House Reward (normally a House Party!) to congratulate the winning house.

This is a great way for the children to get to know others. It instils a sense of teamwork in them. Each term, they meet in their houses to discuss certain aspects of School Improvement and Pupil Voice. It is also a great way to put our school values into action.

OUR PARENT COUNCIL NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

The Parent Council met on Monday 13th January. They are currently a **very** small group and they are appealing for more members! People may think that there is a huge commitment involved, but there is not!



St. John Paul II

Parent Council

SAVE THE DATE FOR MEETINGS: Tuesday 9th November at 6pm, Tuesday 11th January at 6pm and Tuesday 27th April at 6pm. All meetings are held in the Dining Hall.

Could you consider giving some of your time to assist the Parent Council?



stjohnpauliipc@gmail.com

Please email the Parent Council if you would like to get in touch to offer your help in any way. If you have ideas of what we could be doing together with the Parent Council, let us know!

NO ENERGY OR FIZZY DRINKS

An increasing number of children are coming to school with drinks which are unhealthy and unsuitable for school.

Cans of fizzy juice should not be brought for snack or lunch. Many of these are energy drinks, or are high in caffeine.

There is very clear scientific evidence to prove that these drinks impact upon mood, behaviour and heart rate.

Many of our children are already dysregulated at times and drinks like these only add to the problem.

We have two water coolers in school. Children can top up their water bottles when they need to.



A little diluting juice can help those children who don't particularly like water.
***Please do your best to support this request.
Thank you in advance!***

NLC BAN on Electric Scooters

A reminder that, last year, North Lanarkshire Council wrote to all parents and carers to remind them that it is unlawful for anyone to ride an Electric Scooter in any public space.

I remind you that this is still the case. No children or adults should be using an Electric Scooter in or around school grounds. Children are not permitted to bring Electric Scooters to school.

Please ensure that you follow this guidance to ensure that you remain within the boundaries of the law.



DROP OFF FOR BREAKFAST CLUB - THANK YOU

A reminder that children should not be dropped off too early at school for Breakfast Club, which opens at 8:15am. I wanted to thank those who have made an effort with this. It is much appreciated and it certainly makes a difference. **Please keep this up!**

Children being dropped off **before 8:15am are unsupervised**. There are no adults to supervise children before the start of Breakfast Club.

If your child arrives before 8:15am, you must ensure that you can supervise them until Breakfast Club opens. ***Otherwise, please do not drop your child off before 8:15am.***

If you would like to discuss this matter, please do contact me at the school. Thank you. Mr Thomas.

Breakfast Club Survey

We were recently granted some government funding in order to promote our breakfast club and encourage more footfall. This has come to us in two forms:

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Our school was one of 9 schools selected in North Lanarkshire to receive around £6300 in order to promote the Breakfast Club and encourage children to attend. The money can be used for resources and activities as well as additional adult support.

We have partnered with Motherwell Football Club, who are coming into school on a Wednesday to offer activities to the children. They are loving this! We have also purchased some resources and games, etc., following feedback from the children.

The Scottish Government also announced in the recent Budget that every school should have a Breakfast Club. We await more information on this and whether it will impact on P6/7 being free or not.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

NLC were already reviewing their current Breakfast Club arrangements, especially for the busier clubs. Any club who has an average of 50 or more children a day will now have another member of staff to assist with the running of the club. This is a fantastic addition to our provision and we look forward to appointing someone in the near future. This is only funded until June 2026, by which time, we should know what the Government plan to do in response to their budget announcement.

Breakfast



WE ARE SEEKING YOUR VIEWS ON OUR BREAKFAST CLUB PROVISION.

PLEASE [CLICK HERE](#) TO COMPLETE A VERY SHORT SURVEY. THIS IS FOR ALL FAMILIES - EVEN IF YOUR CHILD DOES NOT ATTEND BREAKFAST CLUB.

The more feedback we have, the more we can seek to improve thing! Thank you!

Cardinal Newman Transition Dates for P6 and P7

We work very closely with our colleagues at Cardinal Newman High School in order to offer a programme of events that help prepare our children for the transition to High School. In recent years, this has been extended to include Primary 6 children as well as some extra events for those children who perhaps need an enhanced transition for one reason or another.

I wish to offer my thanks to Mr Laing (HT) and Mrs McGhee (DHT), as well as all of the staff who work with the children during their transition activities. We appreciate the effort they put into this.

Primary 7 have already started their activities, with the Cardinal Newman PE Champions joining us with staff on a Thursday morning. The children are enjoying this very much!



Cardinal Newman HS Roadshow

Thurs 1st October 2026 at 3:15pm

Staff from Cardinal Newman High School will visit St. John Paul II to meet with Parents/Carers and Primary 7 children. They will provide some important information about the transition to High School. Please make every effort to join us on this day, as the CNHS makes it's way around all of our Cluster Schools.

CARDINAL NEWMAN CLUSTER OF SCHOOLS



St. Gerard's | Sacred Heart | Cardinal Newman | St. John Paul II | Holy Family

Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 1st October 2026 - CNHS Roadshow in St. John Paul II at 3:15pm for all Parents/Carers and P7s.

Friday 13th Nov and 11th Dec - P7 Visit to Cardinal Newman from 12:30pm - 2:30pm

Friday 12th March - P7 Commonwealth Games Event at Cardinal Newman

Wednesday 12th May - P6 Visit to Cardinal Newman

Wednesday 2nd June - P7 Welcome Mass & information Evening in Cardinal Newman at 6pm

We are awaiting further information regarding Sports Play Visits, Science Reciprocal Visits and English/Maths Visits. This information will be shared as soon as it is available.

There will also be Enhanced Transition Visits arranged for those children who will require additional reassurance and preparation for the transition to High School and these will be communicated to Parents/Carers in due course.

Update from the Building Site on Laburnum Road

I am in regular contact with the Site Manager from the new housing site across from our school. Most of the time, this is to alert him of workers from the site using the school overspill car park when that happens! I can assure you that he does try to keep an lid on this, but it can be difficult.

Local residents have been informed that the site will soon reach the next milestone, with work on the overspill car park taking place. Part of this work will involve closing the existing entry/exit point and reinstating it exactly where the entrance to the building site is. This will involve some resurfacing of Laburnum Road.

Work will be carried out in two phases. **During this time, access to the car park may be either reduced or non-existent. The Site Manager is trying to reduce disruption as much as possible.**

During the time of the works, I ask for your co-operation and consideration. If there is even more limit space in the car park for a short time, then it is even more important that parents and carers find alternative places to park! Please use the Church Car Park (a 2 minute walk away from the school) or another alternative.

To see a map of the site and to gain more information about what is being done in the car park, click [HERE](#).

Works to the car park will be phased. Phase 1 will commence on Monday 9th November 2026 at 0800hrs and will last approximately two weeks. Phase 2 will commence on Monday 23rd November 2026 and last for approximately 2 weeks. **During this time, access may be limited or restricted and this could change on a daily basis.**

Traffic management will be in operation in the form of a full road closure from the roundabout at Old Edinburgh Road to the roundabout at Laburnum Road, at the school entrance. This road closure will be in place over the weekend of 28th/29th November 2026.

All works will be complete for Tuesday 1st December 2026 (This is the plan, anyway!)

School Photographer Arrangements

As you will know already, the School Photographer has been in school on 15th, 16th and 17th September 2026. Here is a reminder of our arrangements for photographs that were taken:

Class Photos: P1 and P7 only

Individuals: All

Siblings: You must have signed up for a sibling photograph.
These do not happen automatically.



Now that the photographs have been taken, there will be a period of preparation and editing of the proofs and then you will be able to access these online and order anything you would like to purchase,. Photographs will then be delivered to the school.

School Uniform

The children are looking amazing in their school uniforms. Thank you for supporting this so well. I remind all of you that PE uniform should be worn on PE Days. Children should not treat this as a dress down day!



The first is about applications for **Clothing Grants**. Please click [**HERE**](#) for information on how to apply and who is eligible.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- Light Blue Shirt & School Tie
- **Black** Trousers/Skirt/Pinafore
- Royal Blue Sweatshirt/cardigan/v-neck/tank top - no hoodies (these are for P7)
- Plain black shoes
- Having the school badge on garments is your choice!

PE UNIFORM

- **Only worn on PE days!**
- Light Blue Polo Shirt
- Black track suit bottoms/shorts/leggings
- Royal Blue Sweatshirt/cardigan/v-neck/tank top - no hoodies (these are for P7 Leavers)
- Trainers

Funding bid to replace our current Cycle Shelter

During the Summer Holiday, I invited a company into the school to assess our current cycle shelter. Although the steel structure is in perfect condition, the Perspex is not! Lots of it has had to be removed, meaning that any bikes or scooters are no longer shielded from the elements. It also means that children have ready access to the bikes and scooters which are there and this can sometimes be too much of a temptation!

I applied for a grant from Cycling Scotland and they have very kindly agreed to fund the project to replace the current structure. We are immensely grateful to receive this funding and we are looking forward to our new storage being installed.

Cycling Scotland

It was agreed that a completely new installation would be better than trying to replace the Perspex either with like for like, or with a more durable covering. To this end, we have sought funding for five **Velo Boxes**. There is an illustration of these below. They are lockable and weather proof. They will be installed in exactly the same location as our current Cycle Shelter. These have been used in other schools and you will see them installed in cities and towns around Scotland. They usually fit into a standard car parking space. As yet, we do not have an installation date, but I will let you know as soon as we do.



The children will likely not be permitted to bring bikes/scooters to school on the days that the installation will take place. More information to follow!

We are delighted with this success!



Understanding your child's attendance percentage



190 days in school (perfect attendance!)	100% No days missed	This level of attendance gives your child the best possible chance of making good progress and having success in their learning
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There are 365 days in a year, but only 190 school days. This leaves 175 non-school days to spend on holidays, family time, visits and other appointments.

180 days in school	95% 2 weeks missed	This level of attendance gives your child the best possible chance of making good progress and having success in their learning
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171 days in school	90% 4 weeks missed	This level of attendance is worrying . It will make it harder for your child to make good progress and they are less likely to have success in their learning
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161 days in school	85% 6 weeks missed	This level of attendance is worrying . It will make it harder for your child to make good progress and they are less likely to have success in their learning
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152 days In school	80% 8 weeks missed	This level of attendance is extremely concerning . It will be very difficult for your child to make good progress in their learning and there is likely to be a serious impact on their success in school
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143 days in school	75% 10 weeks missed	This level of attendance is extremely concerning . It will be very difficult for your child to make good progress in their learning and there is likely to be a serious impact on their success in school
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ATTENDANCE MATTERS... every school day counts!

Attendance, Latecoming and Early Collection

Over the last two years, we have worked hard with you all to ensure our children maximise their time at school and that our attendance levels improve. We have made small gains in attendance, however, lots of attendance levels are still way below the expected target of 95%.

LAST YEAR'S AVERAGE ATTENDANCE FOR ST. JOHN PAUL II WAS 90%. THIS SEEMS GOOD, BUT LOTS OF INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE LEVELS WERE MUCH LOWER.

Attendance Letters

You may have received a letter from me recently, highlighting that your child's attendance is under 90%. I want to be clear that I am fully aware that there may well be valid reasons for school absences. At this stage in the year, attendance levels can appear low because we are so early in the school year. Levels can increase over the course of the year with sustained attendance at school.

If your child's attendance continues to be a concern, and you have received a letter this term, then I will contact you to see what we can do to help - if help is required.

North Lanarkshire Policy

North Lanarkshire Council has an Attendance Policy, which all Headteachers must follow. This is why some families will have received the standard letter regarding their child's attendance. School Attendance is a national and local priority. Across the country, there is an epidemic of poor attendance for lots of reasons, and the Government wants us to address this.

Every minute of every day COUNTS!

Late arrival and early collections continue to be a huge concern for us at St. John Paul II. Arriving late can cause distress and disruption in class for the child arriving late and also the other children in class. ***Please try to arrive on time!***

Early collection seems to be something some of our families do on a regular basis. This is just as disruptive.

Please help us to help your child maximise their time at school. Every minute of every day counts, so lets make that happen!

If your child is absent...

Please contact the school office to report an absence. You should do this as soon as possible and especially if you receive a text message informing you that your child has been marked absent.

Please make every effort to make appointment out-with school hours, if at all possible.

**ATTENDANCE
MATTERS.
ALL DAY, EVERY DAY**

We are always here to help and support. I know that attendance can seem like something I, as Head Teacher, am trying to enforce. However, I'd much prefer just to support and help. Please do get in touch if there is anything I can do to support your child's attendance at school.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date:	Event:	Details:
Wednesday 23rd Sep	Parents' Night	3:30pm onwards
Thursday 24th Sept	Non-Uniform Day	£1 donation for non-unifrom
Friday 25 th September	HOLIDAY	SCHOOL CLOSED
Monday 28 th September	HOLIDAY	SCHOOL CLOSED
Tuesday 29 th September	P5 to attend Mass in St. Gabriel's	9:30am in St. Gabriel's Church
Friday 9 th October	FUN DAY & Non Unifrom for last day of term	More details to follow
Monday 12 th - Friday 16 th October	HOLIDAY	SCHOOL CLOSED
Monday 19 th October	SCHOOL RE-OPENDS	Breakfast Club at 8:15am
Tuesday 27 th October	P2B & P2C Parents As Partners	9am in the Hall
Wednesday 28 th October	P3A & P3B Parents as Partners	9am in the Hall
Thursday 29 th October	Parent Council Halloween Disco	P1-3: 6pm - 7:15pm P4-7: 7:30pm - 8:45pm
Friday 30th October	Halloween Parade in school (afternoon)	Children can be collected at 12:15pm to home and change or they can bring a costume to school to change in to. <i>This is for children only.</i>
Thursday 5 th November	Bishop Toal to visit	