

### Thank you!

As we enter the Christmas season, we want to extend our sincere gratitude for your ongoing support and partnership. Your generosity and involvement help make our school a truly warm, welcoming, and nurturing environment where our children can learn, grow, and thrive. We appreciate everyone's contributions to our community and the role they play in supporting a positive environment for every child.

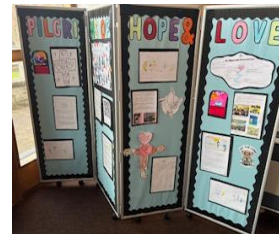


Again, this year, in light of the ongoing cost-of-living challenges many families are facing, we kindly ask that parents and carers do not purchase Christmas gifts for teachers and staff. While we truly appreciate the generosity shown in previous years, our priority is to ensure that all families feel comfortable and included. Thank you for your understanding and for the many other ways you support our school community every day. If anyone requires confidential financial assistance, please reach out, we will do our best to offer support where possible.

We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to the Parent Council, Saint Vincent de Paul, and The McKinstry Company for their continued support throughout the year. We are also grateful to the Information & Advice Hub and Aberlour for joining us at our recent Parents' Evening and offering valuable guidance and support to our families.

### Catholic Education Week

Over the past few weeks, our school community at St John's has joyfully celebrated Catholic Education Week. This year's theme, Pilgrims of Hope and Love, tied beautifully into the Jubilee Year. Throughout the week, each class contributed thoughtful and creative work, culminating in a lovely whole-school display showcased at St Margaret's Cathedral and St Paul's Church during the Catholic Education Week Masses. Several of our current and former pupils played an active role in the services, assisting with collections, distributing hymn books to parishioners, and presenting gifts at the offertory. A highlight of our week was gathering as a faith community for our Catholic Education Week Family Prayer Breakfast. Led by our Faith in Action Pupil Voice Group, this special event brought us together to celebrate our call to be Pilgrims of Hope and Love as a community.



## **St John's Primary Advent Calendar 2025**

This Advent, the St John's Primary School Faith in Action Pupil Voice Group has created a special Advent Calendar featuring 25 days of prayer and reflection from our pupils. You can access the calendar through the link and/or QR code provided. We warmly invite all members of our school community to join us in daily prayer and to take moments to come together in faith throughout this holy season.



<https://www.thinglink.com/scene/2047090022053577381>

## **Rite of Presentation**

The Rite of Presentation will take place over the weekend of the 24th and 25th of January 2026 during all Masses. This is for any children who have previously received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Any Primary 4 and above children who want to be Confirmed in 2026 but who are not baptised **MUST** be baptised before this date so that they can make their Reconciliation during these Masses. Please contact Father David Borland directly if you need to make arrangements for your child to be baptised.



## **Day of Dance Festival**

Our Primary 5 pupils put on a fantastic performance at Ayr Town Hall for our Day of the Dance! They showed off all the traditional dances they have been learning with our volunteers. They moved with confidence, energy, and great smiles. Everyone enjoyed seeing the hard work the pupils put in. Well done to all our dancers and volunteers for making the day so special!





## Book Week Scotland

Last week, the whole school celebrated Book Week Scotland. P1 – 4 classes were all paired with a P5-7 class, and we enjoyed some shared reading which links well to all our work on South Ayrshire Reads and developing our reading fluency. Some of our Library Pupil Voice Group presented at assembly and read a 'Mystery Book' to all our pupils. At the end of the week, P1-3 were gifted with their Read, Write, Count Bookbags to take home and enjoy!



## Learner Agency

### Primary 1-4

Follow Your Own Friday gives our Primary 1-4 learners the chance to take the lead in their own learning. Each week, pupils share their ideas and interests, and on Fridays, they choose from a range of activities that inspire them. These have ranged from coding to cooking, gymnastics, dance, ball sports, art, countries, animals, and outdoor learning! Our younger learners in P2-P4 are encouraged to explore, create, and collaborate with other children across the department while P1 have been exploring this in their own learning environment. Each learner agency activity has children developing important meta-skills with their friends from Meta-Land. This has the children growing in confidence and independence and allowing all children to have their voice heard, as every child accesses their chosen activity. This special time each week nurtures curiosity, creativity, and responsibility, while helping pupils see themselves as capable, active members of our school community—just like the MetaLand characters who inspire them!



Meta-skills land character icons		
Self-management	Social intelligence	Innovation
Focusing	Communicating	Curiosity
Integrity	Feeling	Sense-making
Adapting	Collaborating	Creativity
Initiative	Leading	Critical thinking

### **Primary 5-7**

Over the course of the first two terms, the children have been continuing to develop their meta- skills throughout our Follow Your Own Friday projects. We have enjoyed lots of learner-led projects including Hair Braiding, Outdoor Learning, Polish Lessons, Fashion Design, Football greats and we have been very lucky to have had sessions from Pro2 Wrestling!

We have also been preparing for the festive season this term and have been busy creating beautiful Christmas Crafts. These items will be on sale at our upcoming Christmas Fayre on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December. We're incredibly proud of the creativity and effort our pupils have shown, and we can't wait to share their wonderful work with the school community.



### **Attendance!**

This month, our children have been striving for 95%! The attendance shop opened its doors again this year to offer children vouchers of their choice with small rewards! Some children chose to be a teacher for a lesson, some children chose early lunch and others used their vouchers to attend our new special Masterclasses. Well done Attendance Pupil Voice Group! Please see the video link below.

Next month (starting 1st December) we will be launching our Faithful Advent Attenders Initiative. Each child will get an advent calendar that they will colour in each day they are in school- when they fill their advent calendar, they will be given a fun reward at the Christmas Karaoke.

<https://youtu.be/KpiBzCSwxJQ>

### **Rights Respecting Schools Accreditation**

We are delighted to announce that St John's has officially been re-accredited as a Gold Rights Respecting School for the third time! This prestigious award recognises our school's outstanding commitment to putting children's rights at the heart of everything we do. Achieving Gold reflects the dedication of our pupils, staff, families, and wider community in creating a welcoming, respectful, and empowering environment for every child. A huge congratulations and thank you to everyone who helped make this possible. Together, we've built a school culture we can all be proud of! 🏆💙🌟



## Christmas Lunches

Save the date! Our whole school Christmas Lunches will be served on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> December, a lovely opportunity for the whole school to gather and enjoy a festive meal together. As in previous years, Christmas lunches will be **free for all pupils**, making sure everyone can join in the celebration. To make the day feel extra special, children are invited to wear something festive—such as a Christmas jumper, Santa hat, or any seasonal accessory—if they'd like.

## Christmas Parties

As we enter Advent and the Christmas season, our pupils are getting excited for their upcoming Christmas parties! On their party day, children will enjoy a full day of Festive Fun. Activities will include a range of Christmas crafts and art projects, a cosy festive film, and of course, the party itself! During the celebration, pupils will join in traditional Ceilidh dances, take part in fun party games with prizes, and enjoy some party snacks to spread the festive cheer. Please check the dates in this newsletter to see when your child's class party is scheduled. We're looking forward to magical and memorable celebrations! Children are welcome to wear their party clothes for the entire day. If anyone requires additional support during the Christmas season, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

## Christmas Jumper Day

We will be holding our annual Christmas Jumper Day on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> December. Children are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper or any festive accessory—such as a t-shirt, tie, hairband, bobble, or even a bit of tinsel—so there's no need for families to buy anything new. Festive jumpers and accessories may also be worn on Panto Day and for Christmas Lunch.

On all other days throughout December, we kindly ask that children attend in their full school uniform.

## P7 Transition

This month, our Primary 7 pupils enjoyed a fantastic curricular visit to QMA. The trip offered a great opportunity for our senior pupils to experience the secondary school setting and begin forming relationships with some of the staff who will support them in S1. The staff at QMA were full of praise for our pupils, commenting on their excellent engagement and behaviour. They are excited to welcome our P7s back later this term for a special Christmas Party and Ceilidh on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. These visits play an important role in helping our children transition confidently to secondary school, and we are thrilled with how positively they have embraced the experience so far.




### Advance notice of Diary Dates

December		
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December	P7 Christmas Ceilidh	12-2pm at QMA
Wednesday 3rd December	P6/7 Assembly	9.10am In School
Thursday 4th December	P4/5 Assembly	9.10am In School
Friday 5th December	P2/3 Assembly	9.10am In School
Friday 5th December	Christmas Fayre	3-5.30pm
Monday 8th December	P7 Christmas Party	In School
Tuesday 9th December	P6 Christmas Party	In School
Tuesday 9th December	QMA Cluster Carol Service	6.30pm in St Margaret's
Wednesday 10th December	P1 Nativity	10am in St Margaret's
Wednesday 10th December	P5 Christmas Party	In School
Thursday 11th December	Christmas Lunches	In School
Friday 12th December	Christmas Jumper Day	Whole School
Friday 12th December	Christmas Panto "Aladdie"	The Gaiety Theatre
Monday 15th December	P4 & P3 Christmas Parties	In School
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	Santa Visit (Den & Infants)	In School
Monday 15th December	Advent Penitential Service	7pm in St Margaret's
Tuesday 16th December	End of Term Mass (Whole School)	10am in St Margaret's
Wednesday 17th December	P2 Christmas Party	In School

Wednesday 17th December	Choir's Festive Carol Singing (for SPRED)	11am at Ayr Central
Thursday 18th December	P1 Christmas Party	In School
Thursday 18th December	Choir's Festive Carol Singing (for Hansel)	10.40am at Ayr Central
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Tesco Carol Singing (Choir)	12pm at Ayr Tesco
Friday 19th December	School closes for Christmas Holidays at 2.30pm	
<b>January 2025</b>		
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	PUPILS RETURN	School Open
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	Ayr United Afterschool Club Restarts	3-5.30pm
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> January	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> January	P1-4 Fluoride Varnishing	In School
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> & Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> January	Rite of Presentation for Confirmation & First Communion 2026	All Masses
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> January	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
<b>February 2025</b>		
W/c Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Reading Schools Week	In School
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> February	SCHOOL CLOSED	LOCAL HOLIDAY
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> February	SCHOOL CLOSED	LOCAL HOLIDAY
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	SCHOOL CLOSED	IN-SERVICE DAY
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February	PUPILS RETURN	School Open
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Ash Wednesday Service	In School



Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> & Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> January	Rite of Enrolment (First Sunday of Lent)	All Masses
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
<b>March 2025</b>		
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Stations of the Cross	In School
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	P5 Swimming	The Citadel
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	P5 Swimming (Last session)	The Citadel
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Lenten Penitential Service P3 Reconciliation	7pm in St Margaret's
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Euro Quiz	TBC
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	School Show	6.30pm in St Margaret's
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March	School Show	10.30am & 6.30pm in St Margaret's
<b>April 2025</b>		
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	School closes for Easter Holidays	
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	PUPILS RETURN	School Open

