

In the Loop

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NOVEMBER 2025



Anti-Bullying Week: Power for Good



This year's Anti-Bullying Week theme is 'Power for Good', encouraging all pupils to speak up and take positive action against bullying in all its forms. Throughout the week, children will take part in a variety of activities and discussions designed to:

- Understand what bullying is and how it affects others.
- Learn and practice strategies for kindness, empathy, and inclusion.
- Explore safe ways to report concerns and support their friends.

These activities reflect our school's core values of kindness, respect, and belonging, and aim to empower every child to be a force for good in their community.

- **Monday 10th November – Odd Sock Day**

Pupils are invited to wear odd socks to celebrate individuality and uniqueness.

- **Wednesday 12th November: Building Bridges through Education**

Mrs Hamill's class will be visiting Barbour Nursery School, whilst Mrs Schmidt's class will be welcoming Barbour Nursery to our school, for a morning of fun and friendship.

- **Thursday 13th November – World Kindness Day**

Pupils from P3 to P7 will take part in a virtual assembly followed by classroom activities focused on kindness and compassion.

- **Friday 14th November – Crazy Hair Day**

To round off the week, pupils can come to school with a fun and creative hairstyle to celebrate self-expression and unity.

Our School Council will also be visiting their buddy classes to share key messages about anti-bullying, helping to reinforce the importance of standing together and supporting one another. We encourage all parents and carers to visit the Anti-Bullying Alliance website: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week-2025/parents-and-carers> where you can download the Parent Pack and find helpful resources to support conversations at home.



' MIGHTY OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW '



Nursery News

Building Bridges Through Education

We are delighted to share that St Anne's Nursery Unit has been successfully accepted into the PeacePlus Aspire Shared Education Partnership.

The Aspire programme (Advancing Shared Partnerships through Inclusive Relationships in Education) is led by the Education Authority, in collaboration with Léargas, Early Years Organisation, The National Childhood Network, and Fermanagh Trust. This exciting initiative supports one of our core school values—Connections.

The aim of the project is to foster meaningful and sustained partnerships between children, educators, and leaders from different backgrounds, helping to build a more peaceful, inclusive, and prosperous society.

Our partner school is Barbour Nursery School in Lisburn, and we are thrilled to begin this journey of friendship and collaboration. We look forward to getting to know the staff and pupils at Barbour, sharing experiences, and creating lasting connections.

ASPIRE Upcoming Activities Can you help?

There is a fun-filled programme of activities as part of our ASPIRE Shared Education Partnership with Barbour Nursery School. These experiences are designed to build friendships, promote inclusion, and strengthen connections between our schools.

Activities will include reciprocal visits to Barbour Nursery, as well as shared trips to W5 and Streamvale Farm.

To help make these events a success, we are seeking volunteers from our nursery parents to accompany us on trips and support activities.

The first event will take place on Wednesday 12th November 2025:

- Mrs Hamill's class will be visiting Barbour Nursery School for the day.
- Mrs Schmidt's class will be welcoming a class from Barbour Nursery to our school for shared activities.

If you are available to assist either class on this day, or if you would like to contribute to the project in any way, please contact the nursery and

speak to your child's teacher. Your support is greatly appreciated!

The Gathering Drums – Music, Rhythm & Fun!

We're thrilled to welcome Mr. Joe Loughlin to our nursery for a series of drum circle sessions as part of our music enrichment programme. The first three sessions will take place on Thursdays: 13th November, 20th November and 27th November 2025.

Drum circles are a fantastic way for young children to explore early music skills such as rhythm, beat, and tempo. They also support phonological awareness, helping children to hear and identify sound patterns—skills that are essential for early reading development, including segmenting and blending letter sounds. Beyond the educational benefits, these sessions help build confidence, encourage a strong sense of class spirit, and most importantly—they're great fun!

We look forward to the energy and excitement these musical experiences will bring to our nursery.



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Winter Wonderland

We're delighted to announce that on Monday 24th November, the nursery will be visited by Mr. Hullabaloo and his puppet friend Jester Jingles for a magical performance of their Winter Wonderland Show!

Children will meet the elves, enjoy the tale of The Gingerbread Man, and say hello to Frosty the Snowman. This enchanting experience is designed to support the development of attention and listening skills, while also nurturing a love of stories and storytelling. And of course, it's a wonderful way to bring a little festive cheer to the nursery!

Thank You!

A heartfelt thank-you to all families for your continued support of our Snack and Visitor Fund. These contributions make it possible for us to offer enriching experiences like the Winter Wonderland Show and other special events throughout the year.

Peace Proms

Our P5 pupils will proudly represent St. Anne's at the Peace Proms Concert in Belfast on Sunday 1st March 2026 at 7.00pm.

Peace Proms is a cross-community music initiative that brings together thousands of children from across the island of Ireland to perform in large-scale concerts. It promotes peace, unity, and cultural celebration through the joy of music, giving children the opportunity to sing alongside a live orchestra in a professional concert setting.

In preparation for this exciting event, our pupils will attend a number of practices and workshops. The first workshop will take place on Wednesday 12th November at the SSE Arena, from 9.30 -11.30am.

Ticketmaster have provided a dedicated link for parents/schools for Peace Proms 2026: <https://www.ticketmaster.ie/artist/1509563?venuelid=460013>

General tickets will go on sale on Friday 7th November at 10am.

We look forward to seeing and hearing our P5 pupils take part in this inspiring musical experience.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Please note the school will be closed to all pupils on Friday 28th November 2025.

To accommodate job share arrangements, parent teacher meetings may be scheduled for alternative dates. These will follow.

SEAG Transfer Test

As our P7 pupils prepare to sit the SEAG Transfer Test, we want to take a moment to acknowledge the dedication and effort they've shown throughout their preparation.

We know this can be a significant time for both children and families, and we want to assure you that your child is in our thoughts and prayers. We are proud of each pupil and grateful for the support and encouragement you continue to provide at home.

Wishing all our P7s calm minds, confidence, and the very best of luck as they take this next step.

Reminder of dates:

- Assessment Paper 1: 15th November
- Assessment Paper 2: 22nd November



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A Celebration of Community and Values

At St. Anne's, we are proud to be a school family where our values of faith, belonging, respect, kindness, growth, fun, and connection come to life in everything we do.

Over the past few weeks, our pupils have enjoyed a wide range of enriching experiences, including:

- A joyful Halloween Fancy Dress Day, filled with creativity and laughter.
- A warm and welcoming PTA Coffee Morning, bringing families together.
- Music Mornings celebrating rhythm and song.
- A spooky and exciting Nursery Bat Walk: a wonderful example of learning, play, and family connection in action.
- P5 pupils visiting Kilwee Nursing Home, sharing smiles and stories with residents and strengthening our sense of belonging in the wider community.
- P3 pupils planting daffodil bulbs with Father Martin, supported by our P6 Eco Agents: a small act rooted in faith, hope, and care for creation.
- Co-teaching lessons with Playful Science students from Stranmillis University, from Nursery through to P7: working together to spark curiosity and wonder.
- Our School Council, using apples from our own school grounds to create chocolate-covered apples, raising funds for school initiatives and showing the power of teamwork.

These moments reflect the heart of our school—where learning is joyful, relationships are nurtured, and every child is encouraged to grow and thrive.

'Together, we nurture a love of learning, a love for ourselves and each other, and a love for the world we all share.'

Certificates for the Month of November

To celebrate the children's great work and to encourage good behaviour this month's certificates will be awarded for:

- **Fabulous Friendship Award**
- **Showing Kindness and Respect to Others**
- **Looking After School Property**
- **Making a Fantastic Effort in Class**

Active Fun at the Dome!

Our P4 pupils will be heading to the Blacks Road Dome to take part in the SCBI Festival of Sport from 9:45am to 11:45am on Tuesday 18th November 2025.

SCBI stands for the 'Stadium Community Benefits Initiative' — a programme designed to promote wellbeing, inclusion, and community engagement through sport. Events like the Festival of Sport give children the chance to try out a variety of physical activities, build teamwork skills, and enjoy being active in a fun and supportive environment.

We're looking forward to a fantastic morning of movement, energy, and smiles!



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School Teams Update

Girls Gaelic

We are incredibly proud of our girls' Gaelic football team, who have secured a place in the final of the Cumann na mBunscol Football League after a fantastic performance against a strong St Joseph's Carryduff side in the semi-finals.

The team will now face St. Michael's in the Division 1 Final on Friday 7th November at Woodlands, on the 4G pitch. Throw-in is scheduled for 12.00pm.

We wish the team the very best of luck as they prepare for the final.

Boys Gaelic

We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to our boys' Gaelic football team, who reached the semi-finals of the Cumann na mBunscol Football League. In a thrilling match against St. Michael's, the team showed incredible grit and determination, coming back from a nine-point deficit to lose by just one point.

Although the result was disappointing, we are immensely proud of their performance, resilience, and teamwork. Valuable lessons have been learned that will help the team grow and develop in future competitions.

Athletics

We are thrilled to share the outstanding achievements of our pupils in recent cross-country running events, competing against eight other schools:

- P7 Boys – 1st place
- P7 Girls – 2nd place
- P6 Boys – 1st place
- P6 Girls – 3rd place

These fantastic results are a testament to the children's hard work, determination, and team spirit. We are incredibly proud of their efforts and the way they represented our school with pride and enthusiasm.

School Development Girls' Soccer – Next Steps

Following recent trials for our School Development Girls' Soccer Team, we are pleased to announce that those selected will now begin their training sessions.

We would like to extend a huge thank-you to all the girls who put themselves forward. We truly admire their enthusiasm and courage in taking part. For those who were not selected this time, we understand that this may be disappointing, but we encourage them to keep

practising, stay passionate, and consider joining a local club outside of school to continue developing their skills. Every experience is a step forward, and we are proud of all who participated.

Indoor Hurling

We're proud to share that members of our school hurling team will be representing us in an indoor competition at the Colin Glen Dome during the week beginning 24th November. It is a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to showcase their skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship. We wish them the very best as they take part!

Partners in Discovery

We continue to host 'playful' science students into school through our partnership with Stranmillis University. Their energy and curiosity help us nurture a spirit of inquiry-based learning—something we're focusing on to build upon and strengthen our current practice across staff and pupils.

This collaboration is mutually enriching: pupils benefit from fresh ideas and engaging activities, while the students gain valuable hands-on





Digital Learning

Following on from last month's engaging workshop on computational thinking, our P6 and P7 Dream Space Ambassadors will take part in their next exciting digital learning session on Tuesday 4th November.

This workshop, titled Micro:bit 101, will introduce pupils to the pocket-sized programmable device designed to make coding fun and accessible. Building on their previous learning, pupils will now get hands-on experience writing simple code and creating an interactive digital project.

Eco Update

P5CE enjoyed the first of their biodiversity workshops with Emily, the Biodiversity Officer from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. Pupils explored the school grounds to find the perfect spot for our new hedge—soon to be planted around the school pond.

Click the link below to watch and listen to P5CE's winning rap entry for the Hedgerow for Heroes competition—full of energy, creativity, and biodiversity brilliance!

[Make some Noise for the Hedgerows Rap](#)

A Team Effort in Full Bloom

Work on our wildflower meadow continues, led by Sean McCourt and supported by some enthusiastic small helping hands.

While the original plan was to cut the area, a delightful surprise—frogs hiding in the long grass—meant a gentler approach was needed. The team are now carefully raking the meadow to protect our pond's tiny residents. It's been a lot of work, but a wonderful example of care, teamwork, and respect for nature.

No-Digging

Pupils are taking part in the 'No Dig' gardening method, supported by Sharon from New Leaf Compost. This sustainable approach helps protect soil health while making planting easier and more eco-friendly. Pupils will then plant onions, garlic, and other vegetables—an exciting hands-on experience that connects learning with care for the environment.

Christmas Jumper Swap

We will be running a Christmas Jumper Swap Shop over the coming weeks. It is a great way to share seasonal cheer sustainably—families can donate pre-loved jumpers and pick up a festive favourite for their child. More details to follow!

PTA Halloween Coffee Morning

A grand total of £836.50 was raised at the PTA coffee morning. A huge thank you to all who supported this fundraising event.

Next PTA meeting will take place on Tuesday 4th November @ 6.30pm in the Birch Building. Everyone welcome.

Save the Date!

Christmas Fair – Sunday 30th November from 12.00-3.00pm.

Getting Creative with AI

P3 pupils have been busy combining creativity with technology as they enter the C2K NewsDesk Toy Design Competition! Using the AI feature of Adobe Express, pupils are designing a unique toy inspired by themselves. To support their ideas, pupils used a planning sheet to outline their toy's characteristics before bringing it to life with the AI tool. Once completed, their designs will be uploaded to the C2k NewsDesk for judging.

The competition closes on 24th November, and the winning class will receive a pizza party—a delicious reward for their imagination and effort!



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Titanic Tales come to Life

To complement the current World Around Us topic – Titanic, our P6 pupils will be visiting the very place where the Titanic was designed, built, and launched.

Visit 1: Wednesday 19th November – P6JP and P6DT

Visit 2: Thursday 20th November – P6AL and P6PG

During these visits, pupils will take part in tours and workshops held in the Education Suite at the Titanic Centre and aboard the SS Nomadic, Titanic's sister ship. Activities will include:

- A guided tour of the Titanic Experience
- Exploration of the SS Nomadic
- A walk through the Titanic Slipways, where the ship was launched

These hands-on experiences will bring history to life and deepen pupils' understanding of Belfast's maritime heritage and the story of the Titanic.

A Celebration of Culture

On Friday 21st November, Thai Arts NI will be visiting our P3 year group to deliver a vibrant cultural workshop.

This engaging experience ties in with the World Around Us topic 'Celebrations', giving pupils the chance to explore Thai traditions through music, dance, and storytelling.

It is a wonderful opportunity to broaden their understanding of global cultures while having fun and learning together.

Cross-Community Basketball Programme

As previously shared, our P6AL pupils are taking part in the PlusSport in-school cross-community basketball programme, delivered by PeacePlayers-Northern Ireland.

Throughout November, the programme will focus on a series of weekly themes that support pupils' personal development and wellbeing:

Theme 1: *Equality*
Theme 2: *Inclusion*
Theme 3: *Good Relations*
Theme 4: *Healthy and Wellbeing*

These sessions continue to offer a valuable blend of sport and life skills, helping our pupils grow in confidence and compassion both on and off the court.

Skills in Action!

Our P5 pupils have been enjoying weekly basketball coaching sessions, building their skills, teamwork, and confidence on the court.

These sessions will culminate in the NI Cleveland Project Basketball Blitz, taking place at the LRC on Thursday 20th November. Pupils will compete against other primary schools in a fun and energetic morning of sport.

We're looking forward to seeing their hard work and enthusiasm come to life in this exciting event!

Weekly Mass Rota

Building on our school values of 'connections' and 'faith', these classes will attend mass on the following dates:

Wed 5th Nov: P4OMG/P6DT
Wed 12th Nov: P4CG/P6JP
Wed 19th Nov: P4NF/P6AL
Wed 26th Nov: P4LB/P6PG

If you are free, we warmly welcome you to join us.

Gentle reminder of St. Anne's Parish Mass times:

- Saturday @ 5.00pm:
Sunday Vigil Mass
- Sunday @ 11.00am:
Children's Liturgy

