# Young Livingston joker brightens Scottish Parliament with smile and speech skills



A young joker from Livingston has brought smiles and laughter to the Scottish Parliament, highlighting the talents of schoolchildren across Scotland. John McGlynn, a Primary 3 pupil from St John Ogilvie RC Primary School, was one of 32 finalists in the VoiceBox grand final, a national joke-telling competition created by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT). His performance not only entertained the audience but also showcased the joys of communication, a theme central to the competition's mission.

Hosted by the Presiding Officer, Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP, and compered by BBC journalist and comedian Zara Janjua, the event saw participants from various local authorities delivering their best jokes before MSPs, families, and supporters. Each child’s performance was the culmination of a nationwide call for entries that attracted thousands of submissions from primary schools. John, representing West Lothian, elicited genuine laughter from the audience, showcasing the profound impact of community engagement and the arts in education.

Ezra Pasifull, another finalist from Oakbank Primary School in Perth, ultimately won the title of Scotland's funniest young comedian with his clever punchline: “I bought 10 bees but the beekeeper gave me 11 bees. I asked him why there is an extra bee and he said, because that one’s a ‘Free Bee!’” This delightful moment of humour underscored the competition's goal of fostering confidence and communication skills in children.

VoiceBox not only serves as a platform for laughter but also shines a light on the importance of speech and language development. Glenn Carter, Head of RCSLT Scotland, emphasised the gravity of this initiative in a statement, explaining that effective communication is foundational to a child’s learning, relationships, and future opportunities. “While the event is full of joy and laughter, its purpose is serious,” he stated, reinforcing how critical these skills are for long-term success.

This year's competition marks the continuation of VoiceBox’s mission to promote communication among young learners. The event's significance is further highlighted by the range of prizes—every finalist received £100 worth of books for their school, supporting literacy as part of the educational journey. Furthermore, winners received additional resources for their institutions, reflecting a commitment to enhancing the learning environment beyond just the performance stage.

The next iteration of the VoiceBox competition is already in the works, with plans for the 2025 grand final set for June 5 at the Scottish Parliament. Schools across Scotland have been encouraged to participate, with entries open until April 1, 2025. This initiative not only provides a platform for children to express themselves but also underscores the relevance of nurturing creativity and communication skills in the developmental framework of education.

Through laughter and light-heartedness, the VoiceBox competition illustrates the unique ways in which young voices can resonate within the halls of power, reminding all of the importance of encouraging children to communicate, connect, and thrive.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/west-lothian-schoolboy-joins-big-35365940), [[4]](https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2024/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/west-lothian-schoolboy-joins-big-35365940), [[2]](https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2025/), [[5]](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/voicebox-2025-national-joke-telling-competition-closes-on-april-fools-day/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.rcslt.org/news/east-lothian-schoolboy-wins-scotlands-first-voicebox-competition/), [[6]](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/primary-pupils-encouraged-to-submit-jokes-for-the-2025-voicebox-competition/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/west-lothian-schoolboy-joins-big-35365940), [[2]](https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2025/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[5]](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/voicebox-2025-national-joke-telling-competition-closes-on-april-fools-day/), [[6]](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/primary-pupils-encouraged-to-submit-jokes-for-the-2025-voicebox-competition/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/west-lothian-schoolboy-joins-big-35365940> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2025/> - The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) has launched VoiceBox 2025, a national joke-telling competition for primary school children in Scotland. The competition aims to highlight the importance of communication skills in children's development. Finalists will be invited to the National Final at the Scottish Parliament on 5 June 2025, where they will perform their jokes before MSPs, families, and supporters. Prizes include £100 worth of books for all finalists and additional rewards for the top three winners. The competition is open to children enrolled in P1-P7 during the 2024/25 school year, with entries accepted until 1 April 2025. ([rcslt.org](https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.rcslt.org/news/east-lothian-schoolboy-wins-scotlands-first-voicebox-competition/> - Gordon Moodie, a 9-year-old from Cockenzie Primary School in East Lothian, won the inaugural VoiceBox competition held at the Scottish Parliament on 6 June 2024. The competition featured 28 primary schoolchildren from across Scotland, each performing their jokes before MSPs and an audience. The event was hosted by the Presiding Officer, Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP, and compered by BBC journalist and comedian Zara Janjua. The winning joke was: 'Why did the donkey go to the shops? 'Cause he had Hee Haw in the hoose!' ([rcslt.org](https://www.rcslt.org/news/east-lothian-schoolboy-wins-scotlands-first-voicebox-competition/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2024/> - VoiceBox 2024 is a national joke-telling competition for primary school children in Scotland, organised by the RCSLT. The competition aims to raise awareness of the importance of communication skills in children's development. Finalists will be invited to the National Final at the Scottish Parliament on 6 June 2024, where they will perform their jokes before MSPs, families, and supporters. Prizes include £100 worth of books for all finalists and additional rewards for the top three winners. The competition is open to children enrolled in P1-P7 during the 2023/24 school year, with entries accepted until 1 April 2024. ([rcslt.org](https://www.rcslt.org/scotland/voicebox-2024/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/voicebox-2025-national-joke-telling-competition-closes-on-april-fools-day/> - Children in Scotland is encouraging primary schools across Scotland to submit entries for VoiceBox 2025, a nationwide joke-telling competition for primary school pupils. The competition aims to highlight the vital role communication plays in children's development. The final will take place on 5 June 2025 at the Scottish Parliament, where finalists will perform their jokes before MSPs, families, and supporters. Prizes include £100 worth of books for all finalists and additional rewards for the top three winners. Schools have until 1 April 2025 to submit their entries. ([childreninscotland.org.uk](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/voicebox-2025-national-joke-telling-competition-closes-on-april-fools-day/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/primary-pupils-encouraged-to-submit-jokes-for-the-2025-voicebox-competition/> - Primary pupils across Scotland are encouraged to submit their jokes for the 2025 VoiceBox Competition, a national joke-telling competition for primary-aged children. Organised by the RCSLT, the competition aims to raise awareness of the importance of communication skills in children's development. Finalists will be invited to the National Final at the Scottish Parliament on 5 June 2025, where they will perform their jokes before MSPs, families, and supporters. Prizes include £100 worth of books for all finalists and additional rewards for the top three winners. Schools have until 1 April 2025 to submit their entries. ([childreninscotland.org.uk](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/primary-pupils-encouraged-to-submit-jokes-for-the-2025-voicebox-competition/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.rcslt.org/news/voicebox-competition-launched-across-scotland/> - The RCSLT has launched the VoiceBox 2024 competition, a national joke-telling competition for primary school children in Scotland. The competition aims to raise awareness of the fun and importance of communication. Finalists will be invited to the National Final at the Scottish Parliament on 6 June 2024, where they will perform their jokes before MSPs, families, and supporters. Prizes include £100 worth of books for all finalists and additional rewards for the top three winners. The competition is open to children enrolled in P1-P7 during the 2023/24 school year, with entries accepted until 1 April 2024. ([rcslt.org](https://www.rcslt.org/news/voicebox-competition-launched-across-scotland/?utm_source=openai))