

HOLY FAMILY NATIONAL SCHOOL
Carrickboy, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal

Chairperson: Canon Ramon Munster	0719851689
Principal: Pearse Mc Groary	0719851689

End of year newsletter, June 2020

Dear parents,

I hope you and your families are all keeping well as we approach the end of a most unusual schoolyear.

Thank you for all your efforts throughout the last few months engaging in home-schooling with your children. I know it can't have been easy for many of you juggling home-schooling, childminding and work commitments.

Return to school

As I write this, there is still a lot of uncertainty around returning to school at the end of the summer and arrangements that will need to be put in place. Guidelines are expected to be issued by the Department of Education in the coming weeks with which the school will fully comply. More information will be communicated by newsletter and via the school website over the summer months when arrangements become clearer.

We provisionally intend to re-open on **Wednesday 26th August** but this will be subject to change depending on Department guidelines. Nationally standardised holidays for 2020/21 are as follows:

Hallowe'en:	Monday 26 th -Friday 30 th October inclusive
Christmas:	Weds 23 rd December – Tuesday 5 th January inclusive
Easter:	Monday 29 th March- Friday 10 th April inclusive

No further decisions on the 2020/21 school calendar have been made beyond this. A full school calendar will be decided at the beginning of the school year and communicated to all parents.

Teaching arrangements 2020/21

We will have an additional class teacher next year, bringing our total teaching staff numbers up to eight (six class teachers and two special education teachers). This is great news for the school as it means reduced class sizes in all rooms and less class splits throughout. Classroom and teaching arrangements for the new school year will be as follows:

Junior Infants:	New teacher to be appointed
Senior Infants:	Ms Mc Ginn
First/Second class:	Ms Mullaney
Second/Third class:	Ms Maguire
Fourth /Fifth class:	Mr Mc Groary
Sixth class:	Mr Sweeny
SET:	Ms Mc Nally
SET:	Ms Timoney (shared with Scoil Caitriona)

Parents of children in first class (moving to second) should find enclosed a letter outlining which classroom your child will be in.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Ms Mullaney well as she commences her maternity leave. We look forward to hearing her good news in the coming weeks. A substitute teacher will be appointed over the summer to teach Ms Mullaney's class for the first few months of the year. For the remaining two weeks of this year, Ms Mc Nally will provide support and address any queries in relation to this class.

Reports/Booklists

Please find enclosed your child's school report for 2019/20 and booklist for the coming year.

We have made every effort to keep the cost of booklists as low as possible. You will notice that a number of books for each class are available on the book rental scheme. We have invested a further €1500 this year in our stock of school rental books in order to reduce the cost of booklists as much as possible.

Going forward we plan to set up a '*Used Book Box*' to reduce the costs of school books further by coordinating the sale of used school books. Any textbooks purchased this year will remain on booklists for the next number of years. These can be sold back to the *Used Book Box* at the end of the year at approximately 50% of cost. Parents could also choose to donate these books to the *Used Book Box*. They will then be available to purchase second hand in future years. Any profits as a result of donations will be used to buy other school books.

Book rental returns/Work submission

The school will open on Wednesday 17th June from 5.00-7.00pm for the return of school rental books. Class teachers will post the names of books due to be returned on the class webpage. It is essential that all books are returned to the school to be recirculated next year.

Children are welcome to come to the school on this evening (with a parent), if they so wish, to return books and work and to say goodbye to their class teacher. A certificate will be presented to each child in recognition of their efforts to continue their learning over the last

few months. Similar to arrangements in place for the collection of books back in March, social- distancing guidelines should be adhered to with only one parent/child in each classroom at a time. The front door of the school will be locked and parents/children should proceed to the external classroom doors.

Sixth class goodbye

Sixth class children will be invited to visit the school on Tuesday 16th June to say goodbye to teachers and to receive a leaving gift and certificate to mark the end of their time in Holy Family NS. We also hope to produce an online photo-story to commemorate their time in the school. Regrettably, given social distancing guidelines and restrictions on access to the school building, we cannot organise a formal get-together at this stage. The presentation of the Shannon Gallagher memorial award will be postponed until September when it can hopefully be presented in front of an audience with the recipient receiving due recognition.

Announcement

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that I intend to step down from the role of principal with effect from 31st August. I will return to the position of classroom teacher and look forward to doing so. Over the past while, I have struggled with the dual demands of classroom teaching and principalship duties. I have made this decision in the best interests of myself and my family and also of the school. My successor will be appointed over the summer months and I look forward to working with him/her to serve the best interests of the school.

Wishing you all an enjoyable summer,

Kind regards,

Pearse Mc Groary