



## Holy Family NS, Newsletter December 2020

### A Message from Mrs Lewis:

Dear Parents & Children,

It is hard to believe Term One is now drawing to a close. It has been a very busy first term in the school and the staff and children have been working very hard and are looking forward to a well-deserved break. I have thoroughly enjoyed settling in and getting to know the children and school community and I feel very lucky to be working in such a wonderful, vibrant school.

Despite restrictions, we have had a fantastically festive run up to Christmas as you will see with all our news, it's been great fun and has created a lovely atmosphere in the school.

My door is still 'virtually' open. Please make an appointment through the office if you need to and I will set up a phone call/meeting depending on restrictions.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and to wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas!

Sarah-Jane.

### Our Response to Covid-19

We are continuing to adopt and adapt guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills. They were sent to the school community in August and are still available on the school website.

We will continue to deliver government advice and follow procedure and restrictions accordingly. We ask that you reinforce these messages at home and continue to encourage the children to social distance, wash hands and sanitise. There are updates available to parents on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

Communication with the school is extremely important, thank you to those of you who have kept us informed, this is so important and gives us the opportunity to seek advice in a timely manner. All information is treated with confidentiality, Due to Data Protection, the school staff cannot identify any case or suspected case of Covid-19. If it is decided that close contacts need to be informed, this will be done by the HSE.

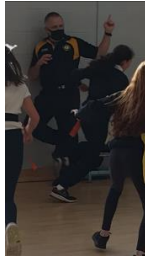
Thank you for you continued patience & support.

STAY SAFE EVERYONE



## GAA Coaching

We were delighted to welcome Brian Roper, Donegal GAA and Declan Sherlock, Ulster GAA back to the school for coaching in football, hurling and dance. The children have thoroughly enjoyed these lessons.



Dance



Football

## Parents Association News

Our Parents Association have continued to be very busy and we are so lucky to have such an active Parents' Association. They have funded our wonderful Christmas lights, yard equipment for the children to play with and testing materials that have contributed hugely to our Special Education Needs Department. [Please support our next Parents' Association Fundraiser on the last day of term: Christmas Theme Dress](#)

Up! €2 per child. Many thanks to our Parents' Association for their hard work and support!



**Pantomime Fun:** We had a wonderful morning watching the Ulster Theatre Company perform Jack and the Beanstalk. It started off our Christmas celebrations and the Parents' Association sent in treats for all the children.



**Allingham Festival:** Congratulations to Daíthí Sheerin for placing third in the short story category of the Allingham Festival and to Catherine Garvey for being shortlisted in the art category. Well done to all the children who participated in the festival and put such a tremendous effort into their entries. We are very proud of you all.

**Christmas Lights:** Thank you to Niall, Darragh and James McCready who worked very hard and volunteered their time to light up our school. The lights look amazing and can be seen right across the town of Ballyshannon.





## Online Applications

I am delighted that our Seesaw and Google Classroom apps are successfully established. When work is assigned via the apps as homework, it is expected that the children would complete the activities as they would any other assignment, they are not optional activities. Please inform class teachers if you are having any type of access difficulties and we will support you with this.

### Boxes

All children are asked to bring home their classroom book boxes on either Monday or Tuesday to have a good clear out, clean and replenish any items that have been used up for example white board markers/glue/missing colours etc.

## Primary Debate

Our fantastic 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils Katie McGowan, Daithí Sheerin and Muna Nwanko used their persuasive skills in the art of debating. Their competition took place this week against Drumman NS, They won their debate and we are so proud of them. What will they persuade us to do next?!

**Carambola Snacks** won't be delivered on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

## Christmas Cards for the Elderly in our Community

All classes have made beautiful Christmas cards that have been distributed to elderly members of the community. The local Gardaí are delivering some of them. Regina Gibbions has collected some for local groups who used to be able to meet and we posted some to Finn View ward at St Joseph's, Stranorlar and Shiel Hospital.



## Enrolment

Enrolment for September 2021 will take place starting the week of the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021, our school Admission notice will appear on our website one week in advance of enrolment.

## ASD Unit

Plans to establish a unit for children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnosis are progressing. We are delighted with this development at our school and are currently accepting expressions of interest.

## News from the Classes!

### *Mrs Lewis, Junior Infants*

We have had a great term in Junior Infants, in Aistear we have explored the themes of the Restaurant and Santa's workshop! We have continued with our mindfulness and yoga to help us relax and stay healthy in both mind and body.

We have also been learning about Winter, hibernation, animals in winter, toys from the past and journeys.

We have made great progress in literacy, progressing from pre-reading to reading and blending words.

In gaeilge we have covered the topics Bia, Caitheamh Aimsire agus An Nollaig.

We made Nativity scenes and learned about the first Christmas and how Jesus was born.

Santa sent a video message to us from the North Pole and he told us we are all on the nice list!!! Happily exhausted and ready for a break, Junior Infants wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year!



**Aistear**



**Yoga**

### *Ms McGinn, Senior Infants*

Team Senior Infants have done so much in the lead up to Christmas. All the girls and boys have worked on their letters and reading, maths and writing. Of course, they have also managed to have lots of fun and have made some lovely Christmas decorations and art work.

The children are looking forward to performing their Christmas songs and can't wait for you to watch their show.

I am absolutely sure that all the children's names are at the very top of Santa's nice list!

Senior Infants wish you all a very happy Christmas and a happy and healthy 2021.



### *Mrs Coltery, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Class*

This term pupils' have been learning all about winter and Christmas. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed completing art activities linking to these. All pupils participated very well in the Christmas concert and we made Christmas cards for the elderly in the local community.

Pupils wrote excellent narrative stories and they showed great support and encouragement towards one another when writing these. They read their stories to the class and showed great presentation skills.

Well done to all pupils for an excellent first full term. Every child had a great attitude and demonstrated hard work throughout.





### Ms Maguire's 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Class

Second and third class visited the chapel this term to say some prayers. They are all working hard on the theme of Christmas across the curriculum, 2D Shapes and preparing for our Christmas Show which we hope you enjoy. Wishing you all a peaceful and safe Christmas from our classroom to your home.



### Mr McGroary's 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Class

In SPHE recently we have been learning all about feelings and how 'not-so-good' feelings can impact our relationships with others. We have identified several strategies for dealing with these feelings. Some strategies we have been practising in class regularly over the last few weeks are meditation and breathing exercises.

In English we have been learning all about narrative writing. We have written a number of different stories over the last few weeks. We are now in the process of typing, proof-reading and editing what we consider our best efforts.

In art we have been developing our painting skills. We have painted landscapes, impressionist paintings and 'Winter Wonderland' scenes which are all proudly displayed in our classroom.



We have been enjoying using our new playground equipment at break-times. GAA coaching continues each Thursday with Brian Roper while we have been doing dance and games with Declan Sherlock on a Wednesday.

Recently in SESE we studied what school was like long ago. As part of this study, we interviewed our grandparents about their memories of school and shared our findings with the class. Other recent SESE work includes projects on 'The Romans' and 'The Netherlands' as well as range of science demonstrations and experiments for Science Week.

Preparations are continuing for our Christmas variety performance which will be a mixture of singing, dancing and poetry recitals. Watch this space!

### Mr Sweeney's 6<sup>th</sup> Class

6th Class are looking forward to the Christmas holidays after working hard for the past few months. Our Christmas Drama, *The Late Late Show*, was written by the pupils themselves and showcases some of the artistic talents they have. We have embraced some new ways of communication and learning, having enjoyed a virtual Open Day of Coláiste Cholmcille and a Zoom meeting with the Vice Principal Mr Mc Guinness.

We also competed in The Concern School Debates for the first time. The debate was held using Zoom and we competed against Drumman NS, winning narrowly. In the next round, in January 2021, we will propose the motion *Children can make a big difference to the Environment*; competing against Kilmacrennan NS.

As part of our Science Week activities we took a shore walk to Creevy Pier. We collected rubbish and observed interesting aspects of our local environment along the way. Thanks to parents and school staff who joined us in a great fun day. Wishing all 6th Class Parents and families a happy and safe Christmas.  
Alan Sweeney

### Ms Timoney

#### Lexia Literacy Programme

Congratulations to the boys and girls who have been working on this programme and have received certificates for all their effort and hard work.

#### Friends for Life

The children in 6<sup>th</sup> class have been really busy participating in The Friends for Life Programme which will be continued in January.

Remember "Be kind to yourself. You are doing the best you can"



Ms McNally

Part of the Fun Friends Programme focuses on dealing with feelings which may cause worry or a bad mood. One way to relax when not feeling calm is “Milkshake Breathing”... Blowing gently into a small cup of water through a straw.



Milshake Breathing



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**Dates for next term:**

School reopens Wednesday 6th January 2021

February Mid-Term Break 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> February 2021. (inclusive)

St Patrick's Day School closed Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Easter Holidays: School closes Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 12:30

**Remember to check out our website:**

[www.HolyFamilyBallyshannon.ie](http://www.HolyFamilyBallyshannon.ie)

**and to like us on Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Elementary-School/Holy-Family-National-School-443493775761145/>

Have a lovely Christmas and stay safe  
everyone!