



Holy Family NS, Newsletter December 2021

A Message from Mrs Lewis:

Dear Parents/Guardians & Children,

Once again, the term has flown past us! Despite all the challenges in the world around us, the Holy Family school community has been a vibrant and fun place to be. The children returned from their mid-term break with such enthusiasm it encouraged us all to enjoy every day at school together.

Our Board of Management have continued to support our ongoing projects and vision for Holy Family NS and I wish to thank them for their faith and counsel during both challenging and exciting times.

Despite restrictions, once again this year we have had a fantastically festive count-down to Christmas. The staff have worked so hard to ensure the children enjoy special activities and it's been lovely to celebrate together and as usual has created a fantastic atmosphere in the school. I wish to thank all our staff who continue to go above and beyond for the children in the school.

I'd also like to thank all parents, guardians and families for being so supportive and contributing to the wonderful sense of community in our school, this collaborative approach is so positive for your children to see and models great practice for them in their future.

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 wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas! I look forward to seeing you all again in 2022!!

Sarah-Jane.

Our Response to Covid-19

We are continuing to adopt and adapt guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills. Our Covid Response Plans 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.

Well done to all our pupils who have adapted so well to wearing face coverings, we have

continued to give the children lots of 'breather breaks'. If you have any concerns at all, please contact the office, we are happy to work with you in the best interests of all our pupils.

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 inside the parameters of the latest government guidelines.

Thank you for your continued patience & support. STAY SAFE EVERYONE



GAA Coaching

We are delighted to welcome Brian Roper, Donegal GAA and Declan Sherlock, Ulster GAA back to the school for coaching in football, hurling and dance in the new year!

Parents Association News

Our Parents Association have continued to be very busy and we are so lucky to have such an active Parents' Association. The Halloween 5K fundraiser was a great success, thank you to all families who supported it. The PA have funded our Christmas Annuals and every child received one as their first Christmas present! 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!



Thank you for your sponsorship

We would like to extend our gratitude to Martin K Ryan and SMD Mulligan Ltd. For their kind sponsorship this Christmas. The children received treats & selection boxes when Santa came to visit thanks to these generous contributions. Go raibh mile maith agaibh!!

Cinema Trip: All classes visited the cinema as a special treat for Christmas treat, as usual we were exceptionally proud of their behaviour. Everyone had a great time and there

was lots of fun on the bus too!



Thank you to Margaret & Paul in the office for making all the arrangements.

Allingham Festival: Congratulations to all of our Allingham shortlisters: Catherine Garvey, Pdraig Matthews Peters Silva, Sadhb McGinn, Nicole Garvey and Ethan Davis. 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 again this year and can be seen right across the town of Ballyshannon.



Online Applications

We will continue to use our Apps as homework tools, please check in and see what activities your children have been completing. If you are having any difficulties accessing the apps, please contact your child's teacher for support.

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.

Green School:

We are so proud of our Committee and the 'Green Team' for all their fantastic work. The school community made a huge effort to recycle as much as possible, to reuse when they can and to reduce the amount of waste we create.

The children had the most amazing ideas, including, reusing plastic bottle tops as counters for games and sorting objects for maths. The older children used aerial maps to show litter hot spots and completed a litter awareness questionnaire.

We had lots of fun experimenting with paper free art. The junior yard became a winter wonderland with chalk drawings covering most of the space. Rudolph and Santa's sleigh had lots of trees to navigate before landing safely on the roof!

Our Green School action plan for January is to ask each family to send in the front part of some of this year's Christmas cards. The card fronts will be stored in the

school and reused next December to make new cards. Five fronts from each child would mean a fantastic supply for next year.

The Committee will continue to update the notice board and check the suggestion box for any new ideas.

Some ideas for a 'green' Christmas can be found using the links below!

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/plastics/christmas-plastic-free>
<https://www.mywaste.ie/my-christmas-waste/>

Our Green Team Notice Board:



Active Flag:

It's official, we are an Active School! We can proudly report we have received our Active Flag. Many thanks to everyone who helped us get there including pupils, parents, coaches and to Ms Maguire for coordinating it all!



Amber Flag/Anti-Bullying Week:

Our school was awarded the Amber Flag in 2020 in recognition of our efforts to promote positive mental health. Since then, there are ongoing activities in the school which contribute to maintaining our Flag status.

Anti-Bullying Week took place in November. Current research shows that bullying behaviour often arises out of a lack of respect for differences. All classes were invited to take part in an Art and Poetry Competition entitled, 'All Different, All Equal'. This competition highlighted the fact that we are all different and that we are learning to respect and celebrate diversity.

We also held a 'One Kind Word Campaign' where children were encouraged to use 'One Kind Word' in the yard at breaktimes and some of the children designed wristbands to highlight their strengths and friendship qualities. Our competition winners are pictured below:



Carambola Snacks won't be delivered on Tuesday 22nd December.

Christmas Performances

Every class has been busy channeling their inner Spielberg creating wonderful Christmas performances for you all to enjoy. Check out our Youtube Channel to view



them.

School Assembly

Every week Assembly takes place in a different class. Mrs Lewis visit's the class and they host her for assembly. This is filmed and then sent to the other classes to view on Friday. Each assembly celebrates birthdays, facilitates announcements from all classes and Pupil's of the Week are announced. The class who hosts assembly always share something they have been working on with the rest of the school too. Even though we can't be together in person, we still get to celebrate one another's achievements and see what's happening around the school in a virtual way.



Enrolment, September 2022!

Enrolment for September 2022 will take place starting the week of the 7th February 2022, our school Admission notice will appear on our website one week in advance of enrolment.



Sensory Room

We really looking forward to the installation of our new Sensory Room, mainly funded by the Department of Education, this room will provide a safe space for activities to reduce stress, increase emotional regulation and promote sensory awareness. We hope all classes will avail of this wonderful new resource in our school.

Bosca Leabharlainne

We are delighted to have been selected for to receive An Bosca Leabharlainne - a box of 25 original Irish language books handpicked by Laureate na nÓg Áine Ní Ghlinn. An Bosca Leabharlainne will arrive in our school in Spring 2022. Thank you to Ms Curran for organising this for us.



News from the Classes!

Mrs McGinn, Junior Infants

Junior Infants deserve the very happiest Christmas! They have worked just as hard as any of Santa's elves.

The children have continued to work on their fine motor skills and have mastered the more difficult activities. We are working through the letter sounds and formation and I am so proud when I hear them sound out their words and begin to read. It is such a huge achievement!

The children have counted, sorted, classified, constructed and grouped their way through our maths activities and have had lots of fun working on the Irish Bua na Cainte lessons. I think it is safe to say 'An Nollaig' is the favourite from this term!

The children have focused on the theme of Christmas for Aistéar and have made fabulous play dough candy canes, wreaths and snowmen. They have tried Christmas stencils, small world fun with the puppets and made some festive stick characters.

The singing and poetry this term has earned many compliments from passing staff and children and the girls and boys are excited for you all to watch their performance. They are also looking forward to bringing home their Christmas arts and crafts at the end of term.

I hope all my 'sugar plum fairies' and 'Santa's robins' have a magical Christmas.



Ms Mullaney, Senior Infants

Senior Infants have enjoyed making Friendship Wristbands and taking part in the 'One Kind Word' Campaign during Anti Bullying Week in November. We have been learning all about 'Winter' this month and we have made some snowmen with scarves and waistcoats to protect them from the stormy weather!

We are also making Christmas decorations and practising our songs for our Christmas Performance which is a short extract from the play 'Born in a Barn'. We wish everyone a very Happy Christmas!



Ms McNally, Rock Hub

We have been very busy for the past few weeks in the Hub. We were marching to music and trying some dancing to Irish music too! Dressing up and talking about the story of Christmas has been exciting and we hope you will enjoy our Christmas piece soon!





We were practising fine motor skills buttering toast and matching and folding socks. They can be tricky jobs for little hands. We did a great job!



Here we are relaxing reading,

at tummy time

and catching bubbles!



And finally, we went to the cinema on Tuesday. It was amazing!



Mr McGroary, 1st & 2nd Class

We have had another busy half term in first and second class. Preparations for Christmas are well underway and the excitement continues to build. We really enjoyed our trip to Bundoran cinema to see 'Clifford the Big Red Dog'. In art we have worked together to create a Christmas tree collage as well as designing Christmas jumpers and stockings. Our Christmas performance was great fun and we look

forward to sharing it with everyone in the coming days. Santa's visit was also a big highlight of recent weeks.

In science we carried out experiments to test the absorbency of different materials. In another lesson we learned about how snowflakes are created from ice crystals and we then used salt water to create our own crystals. In History we learned about Christmas celebrations from years ago while in Geography we learned about how Christmas is celebrated in different parts of the world and about the people of Lapland. In PE we have been working on our ball handling and movement skills.



Ms Maguire's 2nd & 3rd Class

Second and third class have certainly been getting into the Christmas spirit this term!

They painted some lovely winter silhouettes and they are very busy preparing for their Christmas show, which we hope you will all enjoy.

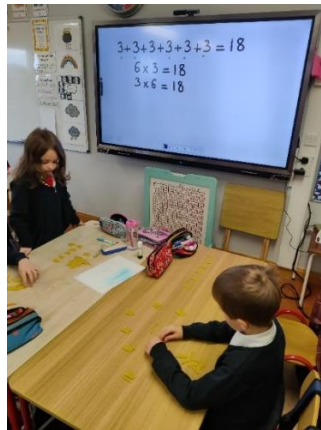
They have worked hard on learning their lines, voice projection and following stage directions.

We might have a few budding actors in our midst!

All the children have also been working hard on their S.W.S.T words this term and on the themes of The Weather and Christmas across all subject areas.

They have demonstrated such kindness and inclusivity towards one another and they have really matured since September.

I look forward to welcoming them back in January 2022.



Mr Sweeny's 4th Class

4th class have had an excellent time in the run up to Christmas. We have worked hard in all subjects and have really enjoyed some success in Music, Drama and Art. We have enjoyed learning the Ukulele and Tin Whistle and have more than a few budding actors in our Christmas Play, Bah Humbug. We will have videos for families to enjoy over Christmas of both our Drama and Musical Talent and pupils will take home some lovely Christmas artwork and decorations made from clay. We wish all of our families a Merry Christmas and very Happy 2022.



Ms Brennan, Rock Hub

The Senior Hub have had a great term. We have enjoyed reading our novels and demonstrating experiments for science week. We have been doing lots of work on spelling and money maths. We loved our trip to the cinema. As usual we have been busy baking and have made lots of tasty foods like soda bread, pizza and French toast!



Ms Curran's 5th & 6th Class

5th and 6th class have had an exciting term filled with lots of activities and festivities. At the beginning of November, we celebrated 'Science week' where both classes enjoyed seeing the effects of water on skittles and how the colours change. We also had some children in the class bringing in their own materials for a science experiment and they presented these to the class.

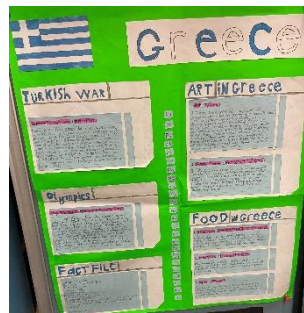
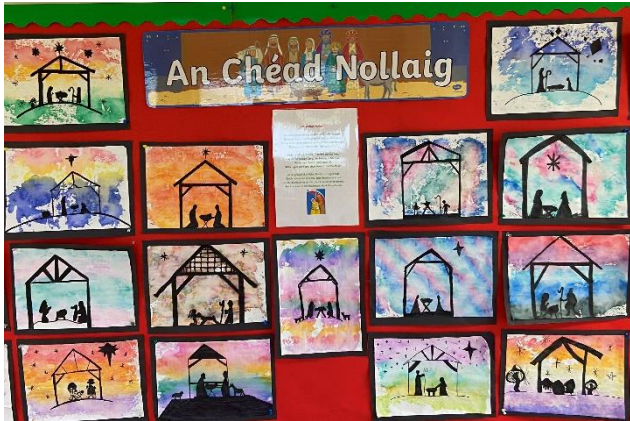
I mí na Samhna, ghlac muid páirt i 'Gaeilge 24' agus chaith muid an lá ar fad ag labhairt i nGaeilge. Bhain na páistí súp agus sult as agus bhí go leor duaiseanna tugtha amach ar an lá. In early November, both 5th and 6th class took part in *Gaeilge 24*, an initiative organised by Conradh na Gaeilge to promote the Irish Language in schools. 5th and 6th class made a tremendous effort on the day to speak as much Irish as they could in school. Maith sibh a pháistí!

5th and 6th class worked hard throughout the month of November to complete projects on Greece. They created posters and PowerPoints on different aspects of the country and each child presented their project to the rest of the class.

We have also been very busy, particularly in the month of December completing different Christmas Art pieces. We created 'An Chéad Nollaig/The First Christmas' image with beautiful backgrounds. We also had some fun creating 'Midnight snowmen' up to no good!

It can't be December without mentioning our School Play! 5th and 6th class have worked so hard on their recreation of a very well-known Christmas film. This has been a month full of learning lines, singing songs, playing ukuleles and even being pied! We hope you all enjoy our production brought to your screens next week!

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir ó R5/6!



Ms Martin SET

Another busy term for all the boys and girls and what an exciting time of year. In 4th class we have worked very hard learning all about fractions and decimals. They're very tricky so using concrete materials and games like this really helps us to understand and explore equivalent fractions. It's nice to work together too to see all the different ways of making 1 whole. As a treat, after all the hard work was complete, 3rd class helped Ms Martin making decorations for her window to create 'Our Winter Scene'. These 3D models are very tricky to cut and stick together and the boys and girls have done a wonderful job.



Ms Sweeney SET

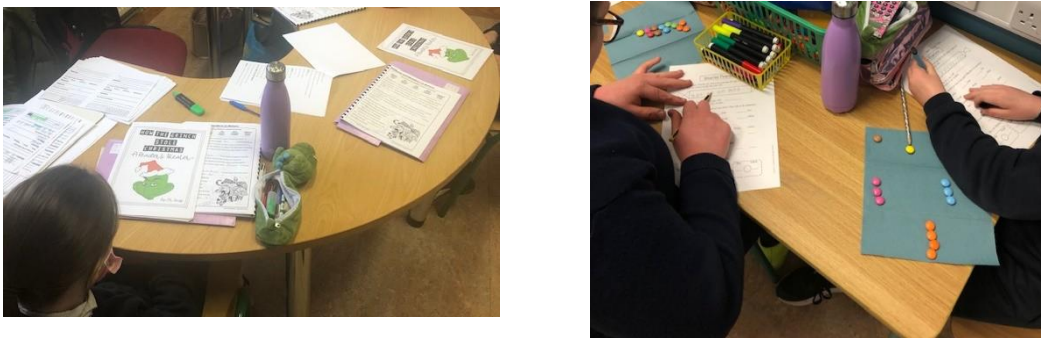
We have had a really busy end to the first term. We have all been working very hard while having lots of fun along the way.

1st and 2nd class have been working tirelessly on their reading and practising their Dolch words. As you can see from the photos we have found lots of fun ways to practise these words! They have also been doing lots of work practising their handwriting using a multisensory programme.



5th and 6th class literacy groups have had lots of fun practising their reading fluency and expression through Readers Theatre. 5th class have been engaging with "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and 6th class have been practising the script "Inclusive of Aliens".

5th and 6th class maths groups have shown great perseverance over the last number of weeks while we have been working on fractions! We enjoyed using smarties to work on simplifying fractions.



Dates for next term:

School reopens Thursday 6th January 2022

School closed Wednesday 23rd February 2022 for Staff Training

February Mid-Term Break 24th & 25th February 2022.

St Patrick's Day School closed Thursday 17th & Friday 18th March 2022

Easter Holidays: School closes Friday 8th April 2022 at 12:30

Remember to check out our website:

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!