



## **Holy Family NS, Newsletter December 2022**

### **A Message from Mrs Lewis:**

Dear Parents/Guardians & Children,

With our first term complete, I am particularly proud of all our pupils who show kindness and care to one another and who create an inclusive atmosphere for us all to enjoy. Our school is buzzing with fun, learning and entertainment, a truly warm and happy place to be.

It has been wonderful to be able to welcome parents and families back into our school building and for some of you this is the first time you have been able to walk through our halls to see all the wonderful work going on. It was particularly nice to have face to face parent-teacher meetings.

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 as usual has created an exciting atmosphere in the school. We have been proud to welcome you all to the amazing Christmas shows prepared by our teachers, SNAs and pupils. 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.

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.

My door is open. Please make an appointment through the office if you need to and I will set up a phone call/meeting with you, should you require it.

I'd like to wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas! I look forward to seeing you all again in 2023!!

Sarah-Jane.

## Santa's Visit



We were delighted to welcome Santa to the school and all the children really enjoyed their gift of a Christmas annual and pencil/pen. Thank you to his helpers Seamus and Pat. Santa also reassured us that he will be visiting all of the children in our school again on Christmas Eve.

## Ukulele Programme

We are thrilled our ukulele programme with Donegal Music Education, Partnership is up and running again. Tutor Brian O'Sullivan has returned and the new ukuleles have arrived. Our Board of management are funding the tuition. We hope all the children involved enjoy learning this fun instrument, we certainly love hearing the music throughout the corridors.

## Basketball Coaching

**We aim to have basketball coaching in the new year with coach Diego, more**



**details will follow in January.**

## 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 AGM took place in November and our new committee was elected. A big thank you to all the committee members who stayed on, a warm welcome to newly elected members and thank you to those who are willing to volunteer their time to help our school. The Christmas Card fundraiser was a great success, thank you to all families who supported it. The PA have funded the Christmas Annuals delivered to every child by Santa! [Please support our next Parents' Association Fundraiser on 20<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Theme Dress Up! €2 per child.](#)

Many thanks to our Parents' Association for their hard work and support!



**Cinema Trip:** All classes went on their annual Christmas cinema trip, 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. We would also like to thank Eclipse Cinema Bundoran for sponsoring a free cinema pass for each pupil, these are given out as pupil of the week prizes.

## Allingham Festival:

Congratulations to all of our Allingham shortlisters and winners. 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, James & Annie 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. We understand not everyone has access to Seesaw/Google Classroom directly after school every day but we would encourage all pupils to access their online accounts at least once a week so they are familiar with these online tools. If you are having any difficulties accessing the apps, please contact your child's teacher for support.



## Student Council

**Thank you to our Student Council who meet with Mrs Lewis at least once a term to discuss school policy/improvement and to inform their classmates about what is discussed. They represented us well giving visitors to our school a warm welcome during Christmas show week.**

## Acceptable Use Policy & Social Media Groups

We understand that social media groups such as Whats App and Messenger can be very handy for parents to use when organising playdates or activities outside school. However, in the interest of respect and fairness to everybody and as these groups are not moderated, we ask that school staff and policy is not discussed in these groups. Please use one of our other many methods of communication to discuss any

issue/question you may have directly with school staff. Our school Acceptable Use Policy has information on the use of social media in our school and is available on our website: <https://www.holyfamilyballyshannon.ie/policies.html>

## Active Flag

Well done to Maia O'Reilly and Bobby Ayres in second class for winning our Active School Slogan Competition with their very catchy phrase: **"Pick up the pace and you'll win the race!"**

Congratulations to Maebh McAfee (Junior Infants), Charlie Hickman (Senior Infants) and Amelia Newell (Senior Infants) for winning our Active School Colouring Competition!

We chose The Gingerbread Man to colour in as he reminded us that we have chosen walking and running this year as our two Fundamental Movement Skills.

**Fresh Today** will only deliver snacks on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December.

## Christmas Performances

Every class has performed wonderful Christmas shows, they have been filmed and will appear on the school Youtube channel for those who were unable to attend in



person to enjoy.

## School Assembly

We continue to have assembly in the school hall each week to celebrate our successes and share information together. We pray, learn a new lámh sign each week, celebrate birthdays and present our pupil's of the week with their certificates and prizes. Remember to let us know if there is anything that has occurred outside school that your child would like to share with the school community.



## **Enrolment, September 2023!**

Enrolment for September 2023 will take place starting the week of the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023, our school Admission notice will appear on our website one week in advance of enrolment.

## **Green Schools**

Our fantastic Green School Committee is up and running! We have children from all classes involved and they have given some great ideas and suggestions around our theme of Water.

We are in the process of completing our school audit for this year and we are happy to report our new school build has lots of water saving tricks already in place- our magic taps turn off even if we don't always remember!

The committee will run a competition in the New Year to select a Green School slogan. We will also organise some experiments to see how long it takes different materials to break down in water.

As a follow on from our theme of Litter and Waste we are recycling the Christmas cards and wrapping paper collected last year to make beautiful handmade cards and art projects.

Here are a few of our tips for a Green Christmas....

Make you own gift tags using cut out pictures from old cards.

Recycle wrapping paper. Remember to remove the adhesive tape.

Dispose of leftover food waste in your compost bin.

Switch off lights when you are not in the room.

Happy Christmas!



## **HSCL Home School Community Liaison**

**It has been a busy and really enjoyable term as HSCL.**

**The Christmas Shoe Box collection was a great success. The children were so proud to see the boxes stacked and displayed, ready for collection. Thank**



**you so much for your support with this project.**

**The parent/ teacher evening was a lovely chance to meet everyone and to introduce myself to some of our new parents. It was lovely to welcome you all back into the school and to chat face to face. I hope I got most of the tea and coffee orders correct. Apologies if you are still waiting for sugar in your**



**tea!**

**HSCL works best with as much parent/guardian involvement as possible, so I would like to thank all those involved in Ag Súgradh le Chéile. The morning was a great success and an enjoyable way for parents to connect with other parents.**

**I am always proud of our sixth class but I was especially proud on our trip to Coláiste Cholmcille. They were so well mannered and engaged in all the activities and classes offered. I know the transition to secondary can be daunting (for both parents and children). I am working with other local schools to set up some activities to bring the sixth class students in the locality together before they move to secondary.**

**Thank you also to the parents/guardians involved in our Bedtime Book Club.**



**It is fantastic to see so many children and parents collecting books.**

**The Halloween Costume exchange became a Christmas Jumper exchange! Once again thank you to everyone involved in donating or collecting a jumper.**

**I have booked some Yoga sessions for parents/guardians in the New Year to give us all a chance to relax after the busy festive season. I will send out**



**more information closer to the time.**

**I would like to especially thank the parents who invited me into their homes. You made me feel so welcome. My role is to listen to parents and help in any way can. I will only ever call to your home to chat or offer support.**

**If you would like to contact me please email [mrsmcginn@holyfamilyballyshannon.ie](mailto:mrsmcginn@holyfamilyballyshannon.ie) or by phone 083 0094276.**

**Have a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year!**

**Anita**

## News from the Classes!

*Ms Martin, Junior Infants*

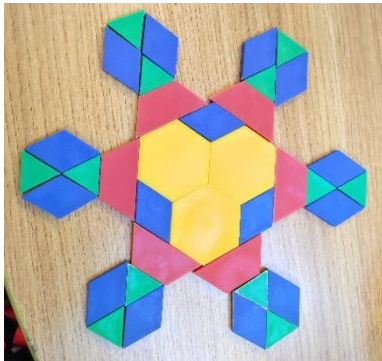
We have had such a busy few weeks in Junior Infants. We have been working so hard and learning all about our numbers 1 and 2. We have been making lots of sets using our concrete materials and working with our partners. We also had Ms O'Donnell teaching in our classroom and learned lots of lovely things with her from 2d shapes to science experiments. We have also been doing some yoga in our class during these frosty days.

We have started learning how to read! We have learned the sounds s, a, t, i, p and n, the tricky words I and the and have met some characters in our reading books just like us, Emma and Luke. We have used our playdoh to make the letters and we even put these letters together to make words! We are really enjoying using our whiteboards to practise writing our letters too.

This term in Aistear we enjoyed exploring all about the restaurant, pretending to be chefs, waitresses and customers. We also have been very busy little elves working hard for Santa designing and making toys in his workshop.



I hope the boys and girls have a safe and happy Christmas and that 'Daidí na Nollag' is good. See you all in the New Year.



*Ms Mullaney, Senior Infants*

Senior Infants have been busy playing the role of elves in 'Santa's Workshop'.

We have been helping Santa to carry out 'Quality Checks' before wrapping lots of presents.

We have also been making Snowmen, Christmas Trees and designing our own Christmas Jumpers! We all really enjoyed performing in our Christmas Play 'Born in a Barn' and we would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas!





Ms McNally, Rock Hub

## Happy Christmas and Happy New

**Year** from the Junior Rock Hub. We didn't get a chance to share our Halloween costumes with you, so here are some lads dressed up and relaxing. An important part of looking after your wellbeing is to take time after working hard to rest, reflect and rejuvenate.



We've been very lucky to have had great weather on our morning walks. Each morning we pop into the church to say our prayers and sing a hymn. We have been practising how to genuflect. Some of our class thoroughly enjoyed participating in Ag Sugradh Le Cheile on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. It was great fun.

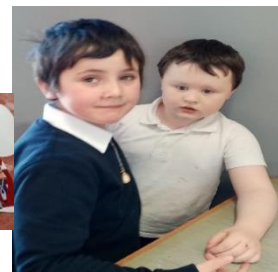


We've been enjoying classroom activities with numbers, letters and puzzles. We have also been working on cutting and pasting and made lovely angels and stars. We were very happy to tell Santa all about our hard work when he



came to visit.

We had a social trip to 5-Star fun and the children were very brave trying new slides and exploring the area. Charlie is our class representative on the school council this year. This week he is helping direct visitors to the hall for the Christmas performances. Also this week we have been playing every jingly Christmas song and carol. We use shakers, bells and triangles to brighten the music. We are having fun with our new friends in the Junior Rock Hub.



## Mr McGroary, 1<sup>st</sup> Class

We have had another busy half term in first class. Preparations for Christmas are well underway and the excitement continues to build. Our Christmas Nativity performance was great fun and we really enjoyed performing for different audiences over the last few weeks. We are looking forward to our trip to Bundoran cinema to see 'Lyle Lyle Crocodile'. In art we designed Christmas stockings and drew an Elf on the Shelf. Santa's visit was also a big highlight of recent weeks.

In SPHE 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. We also learned about different types of bullying and the negative effects bullying can have on people.

Recently in History we studied what homes were like long ago. As part of this study, we interviewed our grandparents about their childhood homes and shared our findings with the class. We brought in artefacts from homes in the past and created a class museum. We also learned about popular toys and games from long ago.

In Art we have been creating pictures using chalk pastels and oil pastels while in Science we learned about static electricity and friction.

We have been enjoying using our new playground equipment at break-times and have had great fun using the Khan Kids, Chatterpix and Teach Monster apps on the iPads.





### Mr Foley's 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Class

Second and third class have had a very busy couple of weeks in the lead up to Christmas! We have been creating lovely winter / Christmas themed-art and preparing for our Christmas play. Everyone has worked so hard on learning their lines and improving their voice projection. We have used the iPads to create projects on our favourite animals and conducted Science experiments such as investigating the density of different objects. Our class also really enjoyed the visit from Santa and were overjoyed the annuals he gave out as presents.

We wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year!





### Mr Sweeney's 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Class

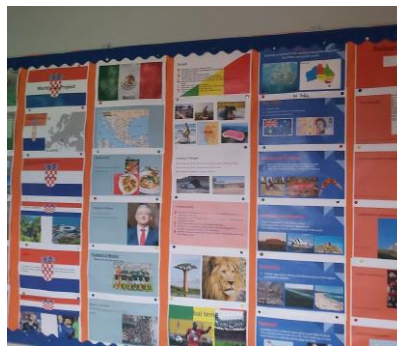
#### 3rd and 4th Class News

Our class are all looking forward to Christmas after all our hard work in the first term. Since Halloween we have done a lot of work in maths on fractions, decimals and money. We enjoyed learning about Ancient Rome in History and doing some very interesting Science experiments. We learned about anti-bullying and the importance of friendship in SPHE.

We developed out ICT skills using Google Slides and all pupils completed a digital project about a country participating in the World Cup. Each pupil then presented their project to the class.

It has been a busy time for the arts with super work gone into our Christmas Play, Peddler Polly and the Story Stealer. We have continued to develop our musicianship and really enjoyed singing at Assembly for the rest of the school and doing our Christmas Songs for parents and families after our Drama.

You can view some of our learning activities by scanning the QR Code here.



### Ms Brennan, Rock Hub

The students in the Senior Rock Hub have been working hard. For Science week they created using spaghetti and marshmallows. During circle time we have been playing cooperative games and doing SPHE lessons on emotions. We learnt about what happens when we feel a certain way and ways to help manage our emotions. We have been doing lots of work on sounds, reading and math activities. The students worked well on procedural writing and also used it in their baking activities. We practised our group work skills and followed instructions to construct Lego structures. Each person on the team had a different role-the builder, the supplier and the engineer. We learn about winter and nature in Ireland and also had a hot chocolate party.







### *Ms Curran's 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Class*

What a busy term! 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class have been working very hard this term and they deserve high amounts of praise for their efforts and dedication shown in the past few months!

We had a number of children shortlisted for competitions in the Allingham Festival between art, poetry and creative writing. A big well done to Kate who was placed in the poetry competition and to Enas who was placed in the Art competition.

Our 6<sup>th</sup> class debating team had their 1<sup>st</sup> heat in the Concern Primary Debate competition. They carried out tremendous amounts of research on their motion that 'Uniforms should be a thing of the past' and although they were narrowly beaten by St. Blaithe's National School, they made us all so proud. We definitely have some future politicians and TV presenters in our midst.

We celebrated Science Week in class by showcasing our favourite science experiments in the classroom. We enjoyed watching elephant toothpaste being made, dissolving egg shells, xylophone food colouring and so much more!

We have also started back to our Ukulele lessons with Brian O' Sullivan and it is great to see how much we have all remembered from last year.

Our rehearsals are well underway for our Christmas show, 'Tinsel and Tea Towels.' 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class should all be very proud of themselves for what they have achieved and created. They have put so much time and effort into our play and all the hard work has paid off!

Maith sibh a pháistí agus Nollaig shona daoibh go léir!



## Ms Maguire SET

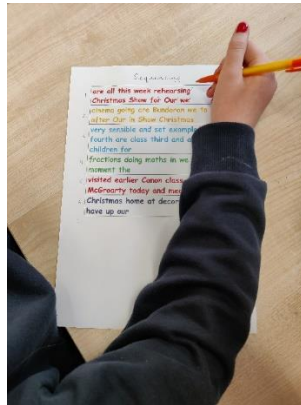
All the children have been working very hard this term on their reading, dictation, spellings and maths.

Some of the senior children have especially enjoyed using Dairy Milk chocolate to show  $\frac{1}{8}$ ,  $\frac{2}{8}$ ,  $\frac{3}{8}$ ,  $\frac{4}{8} = \frac{1}{2}$ , etc. (although they have enjoyed eating it more!).

The children have also used Starburst sweets in maths to find the whole number when given a fraction.

We have been busy sequencing sentences and stories and building up our vocabulary with cloze procedure and language games such as "What's Up?"

I am very proud of all the children on all their hard work this term and I wish them all a Happy Christmas!



## Ms Sweeney SET

It has been a very busy couple of months and even on the run up to the Christmas holidays, all of my groups have remained focused and continued to work hard on their mathematical and literacy skills.

In maths, the children have been working on forward and backward number sequences, addition strategies and counting screened collections of items. They have also enjoyed playing "Hit the Button" trying to better their score each time!

My literacy groups have been working on a range of skills from reading fluency and comprehension, to spelling, phonics and phonological awareness. My handwriting groups have been practising their letter formation using lots of different multisensory approaches such as chalkboards and window markers.

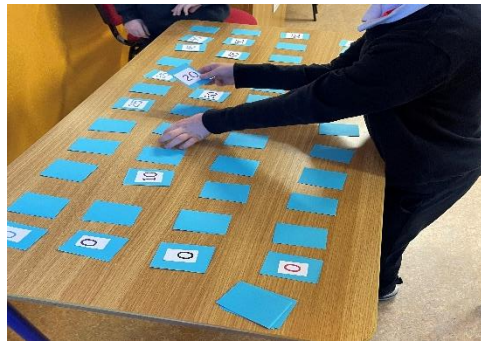


I hope everyone enjoys their well-deserved Christmas break!



### Ms Leonard SET

Ms Leonard's groups have been working very hard this term, particularly with Maths and Mata sa Rang activities. They have been doing lots of counting activities and games like this one called 4 Kings and everyone's favourite Count Around.



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### Contact Us:

Phone: Office on 071 9851689 or Mrs McGinn on 083 0094276

Email: Class teachers directly or the office on  
[holyfamily@holyfamilyballyshannon.ie](mailto:holyfamily@holyfamilyballyshannon.ie)

### Dates for next term:

School reopens Thursday 5th January 2023

St Brigid's Day: School closed 6th February 2023

February Mid-Term Break 24th & 25th February 2023.

St Patrick's Day School closed Thursday 16th & Friday 17th March 2023

Easter Holidays: School closes Friday 31st March 2023 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!