



HOLY FAMILY NATIONAL SCHOOL  
Carrickboy, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal

---

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Mark Sheerin	0719851689
<b>Principal:</b>	Pearse Mc Groary	0719851689

---

27/09/19

Dear parents,

Welcome back to all pupils and parents/guardians for the 2019/20 school year. A very special welcome to our new Junior Infants and newly enrolled children in other classes.

All children have settled very well into their new classes and routines. We have enjoyed a very positive start to the year with excellent discipline, punctuality, attendance and adherence to uniform policy.

### **Morning arrangements**

From next week, all children are asked to line up in their newly-designated area at the back of the school on arrival. Parents of infant children are welcome to escort their child to the line if they so wish. This system is being introduced as a safety measure as it is very difficult to adequately supervise all classes when they are in different locations.

Pupils should not congregate in the yard before 9.10. The Board of Management will not be responsible for children on the premises before this time.

On wet mornings the school will be open from 9.10 and the children will be supervised in the hall until 9.20. On such mornings when the front door of the school is open, all children should enter the school through the main front entrance and make their way to the hall.

### **Code of Behaviour**

Our revised Code of Behaviour is available to view on the school website at [www.holyfamilyballyshannon.ie](http://www.holyfamilyballyshannon.ie) and is also published in your child's homework journal. Parents and children should familiarise themselves with this policy. One important element of this policy is the emphasis on promoting positive behaviour. Systems have been established in all classes and at whole-school level to acknowledge and appropriately reward positive behaviour. One example of this is our weekly 'Pupil of the Week' award. Congratulations to all recent winners.

### **School initiatives**

In addition to regular curricular activities, a number of school-wide initiatives have been identified as a priority for the coming school year. Throughout the year, we will be working towards achieving recognition in the following areas:

- i. Active School Flag
- ii. Amber Flag (promoting positive mental health)
- iii. Primary Science and Maths (Plaque Award)

## **SPHE**

All schools are required to implement the Stay Safe and RSE (Relationship and Sexuality Education) programmes as part of the SPHE curriculum. It is important that parents are aware of the content of these programmes and are able to discuss the content of lessons with their children. Your child may bring home worksheets which will reinforce the topic being covered in class.

You can familiarise yourself with the content of the Stay Safe lessons at [www.staysafe.ie/teachers/resources.htm](http://www.staysafe.ie/teachers/resources.htm) and with the content of the RSE lessons at [www.ecdrumcondra.ie/programmes/rse](http://www.ecdrumcondra.ie/programmes/rse)

Additionally, third class will be participating in the 'Friends for Life' anxiety prevention and resilience building programme. Information on this programme can be accessed on [education.ie](http://education.ie).

## **School attendance**

Under the Education Welfare Act the school principal is obliged to notify TUSLA (the child and family agency) when a child has been absent for 20 days. Parents/guardians will be informed of any such notification. All absences from school should be notified to the class teacher in writing.

If parents are taking their child from school early or returning a child to school during the day, the child should be signed out or in at the secretary's office. Parents calling to the school should present at the secretary's office rather than making their way to the classrooms.

## **School closure**

The school will be closed on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December to facilitate a professional development day for teaching staff on the new Primary Language Curriculum.

## **Christmas outings**

It has been decided not to proceed with the trip to the pantomime in Derry this year. Concerns over dangerous driving conditions at this time of year, the uncertainty over Brexit and low uptake in some classes last year have influenced this decision. A visit to Bundoran cinema to view a Christmas movie will be organised for 2<sup>nd</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> classes as an alternative.

Ms Maguire's and Ms Mc Ginn's classes will visit the Abby Arts Centre on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December to view 'Santa's Fairy Tale Christmas'.

## **School lunches**

Our school snack club has resumed with a more extensive menu than previously was the case. Each child receives two small snacks (or a drink and a snack) each day. Over the past few weeks children have been sampling all available items on the menu. Next week classes will decide on their weekly order and this will remain unchanged until Christmas. We will then communicate to parents a list of the snacks provided on each day. Children are encouraged to eat these snacks in school as much as possible. If the food remains uneaten it should be brought home in the child's lunchbox and hopefully consumed by themselves or someone else at home. We are lucky to be involved in this scheme and wish to keep food waste to a minimum.

### **Recycling**

Green bins have been introduced in all classrooms to encourage children to dispose of their waste in a responsible manner. Education about recycling and waste reduction is on-going in all classrooms. Children are encouraged to bring any food packaging and waste home with them for disposal unless it can be recycled at school.

### **School uniform**

Please ensure your child wears the correct school uniform each day. Could all parents please mark all items of clothing (but particularly jumpers) with your child's name. There are regularly a number of jumpers discarded after PE and yard time and it is very difficult for children to distinguish between them when they go to retrieve them.

### **School website**

Please visit our school website at [holyfamilyballyshannon.ie](http://holyfamilyballyshannon.ie) for information and photos about school events. All class pages will be updated in the coming weeks with information about recent activities. Newsletters will be posted on the website throughout the year. A number of school policies are also available for viewing on the website.

### **Board of Management nominations**

The current Board of Management's four-year term will come to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> November. Nomination papers will issue shortly for parent representatives on the new Board.

### **Upcoming sports activities**

The school recently competed in a cross country athletics event hosted by Tír Conaill AC in Donegal Town. Participation was open to all children from fourth, fifth and sixth classes who felt they could comfortably complete the required distance. 24 children from the school competed admirably and were fantastic ambassadors for Holy Family NS.

Boys and girls teams have been entered in an upcoming FAI Primary Schools Futsal competition. In the interest of achieving maximum participation, all children from 4<sup>th</sup> class who express an interest will be selected on a team with any remaining places to be filled by children from 3<sup>rd</sup> class.

We have also entered the Cumann na mBunscol hurling competition, the first round of which will be played shortly.

### **Upcoming dates**

Hallowe'en holidays:	School will close Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> October at 3.00 and re-open on Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November at 9.20
Parent-teacher meetings:	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> November 3.00-5.30 Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November 3.00-5.30
School closure:	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> December (staff in-service training)
Christmas shows:	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December (times to be finalised closer to the date).
Christmas holidays:	School will close on Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December at 12.00 and re-open on Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January at 9.20