



Hollybush Primary and Nursery School

January/February 2025 Newsletter



Dear Parent/Guardian

This newsletter is intended to give you an overview of things that are happening here at the school in January and February, and to highlight important events and activities that are planned for the near future. Please keep an eye on our app and Facebook page for other day-to-day events/information.

Catholic Schools' Week:



Catholic Schools' Week begins on Sunday, January 19. At the 12.15 p.m. Mass at Steelstown, a pupil will present a school jumper in the offertory procession to mark the beginning of our journey through the week. This year, the theme is 'Alive in Christ'. Classes will be engaged in various activities related to the theme during the week.

Spanish Classes:



Mrs Orla Hasson begins Spanish classes on Friday, January 17 with our two Primary 7 classes. A huge thank you to Orla for giving our P7 pupils this opportunity.

Friends of Hollybush:

Our newly formed Friends of Hollybush had their first meeting in December. At that meeting, the new constitution was agreed, and office holders were elected: Chairperson, Mrs Orla O'Driscoll, Secretary, Mrs Carron Heffernan, Treasurer, Mrs Aine Condon. The committee will be working on fundraising initiatives in the coming months. A huge thank you to those parents who have volunteered.

Updating Office:

If you learn during the school year that your child has developed a medical condition or allergy, or there is any change to the status of an existing medical condition/allergy, please inform the school office. Please also inform the office if your contact details have changed.

Foyle Schools' Poetry Competition:

The deadline for submissions for this competition is January 16. We had huge success in this competition over the last two years, winning the overall competition in 2023 and winning the Key Stage One category last year. This year's theme is 'Positive People', and the children have produced some remarkable pieces!

Sustrans/Active Travel:

We are now working in partnership with the active travel organisation, Sustrans, to promote active travel to and from school. Mrs Donna Mc Feeley from Sustrans has done a baseline survey with the P5-7 pupils, and a number of walking/cycling events have been planned, details in the near future.

Healthy Eating Policy:



Please remember, we are a nut free school. This includes chocolate type spreads which contain nuts.

After-School Activities:

This term's activities are now up and running. A sincere thank you to the staff who take these clubs voluntarily, and to the grandparents/friends of the school volunteers who do likewise. Without this support, these clubs could not take place as Hollybush does not receive any Extended Schools Funding from the Department of Education. A timetable of activities is available on the website.

Christmas Draw/Nursery Work:



The Christmas Draw was a huge success, raising a whopping £4380. We have ordered our outdoor play kit and staff will receive training later in the month. We are grateful for the incredible support our draws receive each year. As well as funding our scheduled projects, this income,

which including the parental contribution, helps cover the cost of programmes such as Athletics, Accelerated Reading, IXL and Nessy.

Salmon Ambassadors:

Our Primary 7 pupils have been registered for the Loughs' Agency Salmon Ambassador Programme. We will have our very own salmon hatchery in the school, and the pupils will be involved in every stage of the hatchery process.

Wellbeing Programme:

All our pupils will have access to a new and exciting wellbeing programme that has been devised by The Verbal Arts Centre. The programme has been piloted with one class, and it has proved a very useful addition to our work on the curricular area, 'Personal Development and Mutual Understanding'.

Road Safety Quiz:

Best of luck to our Primary 7 Road Safety quiz team which competes in the local leg of the competition next Tuesday in the Guildhall.

Confirmation:



The Primary 7 pupils will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Wednesday, February 26 at 4.00 p.m. in Our Lady of Lourdes, Steelstown. Prior to receiving the Sacrament, the boys and girls will have a retreat organised by the parish. More details later.

Parent/Teacher Meetings:

This year's parent/teacher meetings will take place on Monday 27, Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 January. Appointments have been sent out. Please make every effort to come at the given time as facilitating meetings at other times can be very disruptive.

Special Intentions:



Our special intentions box is located on the coffee table at the entrance to the school. If you have an intention that you would like the children and staff to remember in our morning prayers, please place it in the box. These intentions are not read by anyone, and are burned at the end of each academic year. There are some remarkable success stories attached to this little box!

Admissions:

The Admissions Portal is now open for Nursery and Primary 1 applications. Anyone who has any difficulty with the portal can contact the school office.



Safeguarding:

Just a couple of safeguarding housekeeping items; please remember that the school carpark is strictly for staff only. This rule helps ensure the safety of pupils entering and leaving the school grounds. All visitors to the school must report to the school office immediately upon arrival. The key members of the school's Safeguarding Team remain as were; Mr O'Connor (Designated Teacher), Mrs Mc Gurren and Mrs Grace (Deputy Designated Teachers), Mrs Angela Dobbins, Mr Paul Kirby and Mrs Rita Barrett (Designated Governors for safeguarding).

Clothing Items:

Thankfully, the vast majority of pupils' belongings are now clearly marked with their names, and we had only one small bag of lost property at the end of last term. Please continue to mark your child's name on his/her clothing and other items.

Service of Light:



The Primary 7 pupils will have the **Service of Light** in Steelstown chapel on Wednesday, January 29 at 6.00 p.m. This is an important step in preparation for Confirmation. More details to follow.

Sport:

Gaelic and Hurling Fixtures

Girls' Indoor Gaelic qualifying groups, Jan 17

Hurling Indoor Championship, Jan 24

Boys' Indoor Gaelic finals, Feb 7th

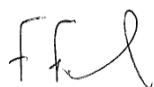
Girls' Indoor Finals, Feb 28th

NI NW Cross Country League Round 3, Jan 27

NI Cross Country Finals, date TBC



Kind regards



Mr Friel