

TY Newsletter – December 2022



Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

Welcome to our second TY newsletter, highlighting the main events since returning from the mid-term break in November. In line with our HFSS TY programme, our TY students have experienced 4 academic weeks, punctuated with a variety of new learning experiences, workshops, external speakers, along with a Work Experience week, an Activity week and 6 academic exams. Here are some of the highlights of our busy term:

Junior Cycle Results

On November 23rd, our TY students finally received their long-awaited results. Heartiest congratulations to all on completing these exams, after 3 difficult and challenging years with Covid-19. In late January 2023, we will be preparing our TY students to make important subject choices for their Senior cycle programme, bearing in mind that they will complete Paper 1 in Gaeilge and English at the end of 5th year, according to the most recent notification from the Department of Education.

Attendance

In line with Department regulations and Tusla, our HFSS attendance strategy promotes high attendance correlating with high achievement. We encourage parents/guardians to inform us and explain any absences for students throughout the year. We would also respectfully request that parents/guardians monitor their daughter's number of absent half days, so that strong attendance becomes habitual and in line with good practice for their senior cycle years.

Tusla initiative

On November 24th, we welcomed members from Tusla to HFSS, as our TY students had been selected to from a focus group concerning their "Barnahus" concept, which will be a space for young people who have suffered from abuse. Volunteering students to this group were commended for their enthusiasm, active engagement and meticulous manners.

Think Languages

On November 17th, our TY students marked our national Think Languages event, which is a celebration of languages and cultures from all over the world. The day included a programme of enjoyable workshops including interpreting in EU languages, Russian ballet, Arabic & belly dancing, Chinese Art, Danish & design, Christmas in Spain etc. We value the skills involved in learning language and appreciate and encourage learning new languages in HFSS. Many thanks to all the teachers who facilitated the day and to the students for getting into the spirit of celebrating and valuing the diversity of languages and our many diverse cultures.

Festival of Flavours

Our TY students were involved in Holy Family's third bite at Festival of Flavours! The quality and diversity of food available was exquisite, as we have 18 different first-generation countries within the school, and in total we had 18 stands on display. Traditional foods from their home countries included Jollof Rice (spicy rice from Nigeria) Pierogi (Polish dumplings), Roccos (Spanish biscuits), Ube cake (purple yam cake from the Philippines), Tiramisu (Italy), Samosas (India) and of course Irish brown bread and the Tayto crisp sandwich! Well done to all involved as you raised over significant monies for Teach Tearmainn.

Rotary leaders

Newbridge Rotary club invited our TY students to participate in the Rotary Youth Leadership Club finals. Congratulations to Katelyn Dennehy, Caoimhe O'Connor and Cavina Whiteley who will receive certificates for their participation and to Katelyn who represented HFSS in the regional final against all other competing Kildare schools.

Rainbow day

As a school, we celebrated LGBTQI+, inclusion and awareness for a fortnight. All students participated in an LGBT+ awareness lesson and then our school community celebrated our support of inclusiveness and diversity by wearing all the distinct colours of the rainbow. Organised by our SRC, our TY students wore green. Many TY class tutors commented on how knowledgeable our students are on this issue. HFSS values the importance of ensuring that our school environment is a welcoming and safe place, where all our young people learn about equality, diversity and inclusion.

Congratulations

Heartiest congratulations to all our TY students involved in school GAA football, soccer, basketball and volleyball both in school and in their respective clubs, as the winter season now concludes.

Activity week

The Activity Week aims to cater for all subjects and provide a varied programme of experiences including:

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| - Forensics module (Preparation) | - Teach Tearmainn Talk and Star activity |
| - Geography Country workshop | - Cinema (Matilda: The Musical) |
| - Christmas crafts (Art) | - DNA keychains |
| - TY Olympics (PE) | - Oreo truffles, Yule logs and Gingerbread men (Home Ec.) |
| - Talk by Author Amy Gaffney | - Taekwon-Do workshop (NIO Fitness) |
| - Murder Mystery investigation | - Ice-skating |

Taekwon-Do

In continuing to enhance our TY programme, we were delighted to introduce for the first time a Taekwon-Do workshop under the expert guidance of European and World champion Mr. Hong Looi (VI Degree Black Belt). Our TY students and supervising teachers were extremely impressed with all they accomplished with Hong, and we hope this is the start of many enjoyable years ahead working with Hong and his team.

TY Christmas Market

On November 30th, our TY Mini-companies hosted their TY Christmas market. With serious logistical planning from our facilitating teachers, our TY students got to present, advertise, promote and sell, sell sell (!) their goods and services. It was a delight for the whole school community to visit the stalls and buy some amazing products and bargains for Christmas. Well done to all involved - we certainly have some serious entrepreneurs in our midst, as orders were coming in from abroad for certain goods!

Ice-Skating

On December 2nd, the final day of Activity week, our TY students headed to Blanchardstown to go ice-skating. What a sight to behold and what shrieking of delight was to be heard as they took to the ice! I was in awe of their prowess on the ice and more-so the kindness they showed to one another, as hands were held, and all were encouraged to take baby penguin steps and pull away from the barrier. After 20 minutes, it was amazing to see how many had become avid skaters. Thank you so much to all who supported and cared for all who were anxious – it was heartfelt and a testament to your beautiful characters.

Forensics

On December 5th, our TY students participated in a 2-hour Forensics workshop pertaining to the JFK case. This session included fingerprinting, ballistics & gunshot residue GSR, photographic analysis, autopsy reports, links with history etc. Students gained knowledge of this historical case, assessed entry /exit wounds and trajectory of bullets, critically analysed part of the official autopsy report, questioned parts of the Warren Commission Report and applied forensic science techniques that challenged their analytical and scientific skills – always a captivating and simultaneously fun workshop. Any students interested in Forensics should contact Ms. Dowling via Teams for further information on courses.

Work Experience

TY students will commence their second opportunity of work experience from **Wednesday 14th December – Wednesday 21st December 2022**. Students should upload their Employer Details form to their Business Team. There was an array of careers sampled over these weeks including acting, hospitality, teaching, RTE, veterinary, equestrian work, retail, health services, pharmacy, photography, childcare, politics, work shadowing and volunteering. The next work experience will run from **February 20th – 24th, 2022**. Students are encouraged to try a range of career types to assist them in effectively selecting their Leaving Certificate subject choices. A gentle reminder that all required documents for work experience are on our school website under the TY tab – documents include our school insurance letter and reports. We extend our best wishes to our students returning from abroad after enhancing their modern foreign language, and wish those travelling to Ghana and Kenya over the coming months every blessing and safe travels.

Parent / Guardian Involvement

Any parent/guardian who would like to promote their talents or skills or work area with our students, we would love to hear from you, so that our TY programme is rich in diversity and enhanced with your vital input. Please contact our school reception on reception@hollyfamily.ie or 045-431957 or ddowling@hollyfamily.ie with your details – many thanks to those who have offered to date – Our TY students will reap what you sow.

Willowbrook, Holy Family Convent and Curragh Lawns Nursing Homes

In true Holy Family spirit and in the spirit of Christmas, our TY students truly showed their innate kindness, generosity and thoughtfulness as they inundated the Chaplaincy office with gifts for our friends in our local nursing homes, Willowbrook, Curragh Lawns and our dear Sisters next door in the Holy Family convent. Photos of all these gifts don't do our students justice, it was their positive reception of this initiative that was incredulous – their delight in being assigned a specific and unique first name of their recipient, and the effort and thought that went into their Christmas messages was simply magical.

May I take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our TY families for all their support over the last few months, and wish you and yours a safe and peaceful Christmas.

Dearbháil Dowling

TY Co-ordinator & Year Head 2022/23