



HOLY FAMILY SECONDARY SCHOOL

Telephone: 045-431957

Email: reception@holyfamily.ie

NEWBRIDGE, CO. KILDARE, W12YD71

Website: www.holyfamily.ie

Under the patronage of the Catholic Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin
Principal: Ms. S. Allen Deputy Principals: K. Kissane, E. O'Brien

14th August 2023

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

We hope that this letter finds you all well as the summer break comes to an end. Further to our information update in May, we would like to bring the following to your attention.

URGENT REMINDER: If your daughter is not returning to HFSS this year, please contact the school to notify us if you have not already done so.

Return to School Dates

Year Group	Welcome back meeting online on school via student TEAMS	Return to School
First Years	Thursday, 24 th August at 6.30 pm The link for this meeting will be sent via the app nearer the date.	Friday, 25 th August, Induction day #1 11.00-1 pm. In PE uniform Mon, 28 th August Induction day #2 11.00-1 pm. In PE uniform Wed, 30 th August 8.45am-1 pm. In regular uniform
Second Years	Monday, 28 th August at 5.30 pm	Tuesday, 29 th August 11.00-1 pm
Third Years	Monday, 28 th August at 6.30 pm	Tuesday, 29 th August 11.00-1 pm
Transition Years (4th)	Thursday, 24 th August at 5.30 pm	Friday, 25 th August 9.30-10.30 am Colaiste Acla: 28 th -30 th August Thursday, 31 st August – full day
Fifth Years	Monday, 28 th August at 7.30 pm	Tuesday, 29 th 11.00- 1pm
Sixth Years	Thursday, 24 th August at 7.30 pm	Monday, 28 th August 11.00-1 pm
ALL YEARS	FULL NORMAL SCHOOL DAY	Wednesday, 30th August 8.45am- 1.00pm

Summer Works: We upgrade our school facilities during the summer break. Our Science labs refurbishment project is completed.

Staying Connected: Do we have your correct and up-to-date contact details?

Please keep in contact with the school to update your contact information.

REMINDER: Our school app is our main method of communication. Please ensure that notifications are turned on. Our school website, which can also be accessed via the school app, has many of our school policies, recent news, and events. www.holyfamily.ie.

We work in partnership for our students so please keep yourself informed of school updates and communications throughout the school year.

HFSS & Covid-19 updates: We will continue to be advised by the Department of Education and we will keep you informed as we receive information.

Year Heads for student year groups: Please contact reception@holyfamily.ie to communicate with Year Heads.

<i>Mr S. Stapleton</i>	<i>First Years</i>
<i>Ms C. Costello</i>	<i>Second Years</i>
<i>Ms A. Ní Fhatharta</i>	<i>Third Years</i>
<i>Ms D. Dowling</i>	<i>Transition Year & LCVP Programmes Coordinator</i>
<i>Mr J. Cullen</i>	<i>Fifth Years</i>
<i>Mr P. Bergin</i>	<i>Sixth Years</i>

ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES, POLICIES, and INTERVENTIONS

Ms Carey is Acting Up Deputy Principal this year. She is also our Leader of Anti-Bullying Programmes. In that role, she works with all school partners (staff, students, and parents) to lead and action whole school anti-bullying awareness and intervention programmes. Ms Carey can be contacted via reception@holyfamily.ie

Pupil Services Charge: Voluntary secondary schools, such as HFSS, are not fully funded by the Department of Education and Skills and the pupil services charge is very necessary to make up the shortfall in funding from the government. **We could not run the school without your support.**

The Pupil Services Charge you contribute every year is needed to provide for important supports for your child in the school such as; personal insurance (paid by the school for each student), faith formation activities, lockers, journals, IT facilities, IT licenses (e.g. Microsoft 365/TEAMS), aptitude testing, stationery, house and mock examinations, photocopying, the school app services, subsidised uses for school events and school sporting association fees. We ask you to make this contribution to support our ongoing commitment to providing a holistic education. For further information, we refer you to the DES Circular 0065/2010 regarding 'certain charges that may be legitimately requested from pupils'.

'OFF & AWAY' Mobile Phone Policy

This a reminder of our Mobile phone and digital device policy. Mobiles should be '**Off and Away**'; phones seen or heard will be confiscated. Phones that are confiscated will be returned to students at the end of the day in the first instance, although should there be a second occurrence, a call will be made home with the requirement for a parent/guardian to collect the phone after 5 school days.

Please do not message/call your child via mobile phone during the school day as the phone will be confiscated. Should you need to contact your child, please contact school reception.

We would ask that you discuss this at home before the school year begins and we ask for your full support as we strive together to keep the focus in our school community on effective teaching, learning, and mental wellbeing and to avoid unnecessary social media and other distractions.

Please note that it is not permissible to access social media and other apps via smart watches. Please continue to support our teaching and learning focus whilst in school.

School Uniform: Learning to adhere to appropriate dress codes and wear smart attire are important life skills. Our uniform policy, which is available on our school's website and in the student journal, outlines our rules. We ask you to continue supporting our uniform policy. This gives great equity to all.

Only HFSS school uniform items may be worn to school. PE uniform may be worn for PE and specified school activities only. All details are in the uniform policy on the website. <http://www.holyfamily.ie/policy-2/>

Lockers & Property: We would like to remind you that students would need to have a very sturdy lock for the locker. Please keep a replica key for the locker in a safe place.

We remind you also that **books, jacket, P.E. gear, bags, etc. should have the student's name clearly labelled on them.** We have Lost Property with many misplaced items with no names on them.

Lunch Arrangements:

RAFTERS CAFÉ will be serving hot meals and a varied and healthy canteen service. <https://rafterscafe.ie/>

REMINDER: 1st /2nd/3rd year students remain in school for lunchtime and are not permitted to leave the building.

Sponsorship:

Holy Family Secondary School has a proud tradition of seeking to support our students beyond their academic curriculum, aiming to nurture and support the holistic development of the remarkable young people in our school. We centre many of the school's programmes on the principles of wellbeing. In addition to the many curricular and leadership programmes on offer at HFSS, the school currently has over 300 students actively participating in extra-curricular activities such as GAA, Basketball, Running, Volleyball, Football, Equestrian and many club activities, such as Book Club and Craft Club.

Realistically, such undertakings are very expensive and we ask for sponsorship to help subsidise the cost of new equipment, apparel and travel expenses. All sponsorship received goes directly towards upgrading kits and equipment for these activities. Sponsoring one of our school teams or clubs is not only a great way to get involved with the community; it's also an mutually beneficial form of marketing for your business. Please contact Mr Beggy, the school's extra-curricular coordinator, to discuss further.

The school community are extremely grateful to all who have provided sponsorship for our students and their activities last year.

We are also delighted to share with you that HFSS will once again be collaborating with the Patrician Secondary School for a school musical production this Autumn. The songs, laughs and antics of *Rydell High School* will soon fill the corridors as **Grease** is the word for 2023.

EVENING SUPERVISED STUDY

Study for 3rd, 5th and 6th years will begin on Monday 11th September 2023 and end on Friday 12th January 2024. The total cost for 15 weeks is €15 per week. Total cost €225

Full payment to be received before Wednesday 6th September for students to begin study on Monday 11th September.

An application form and shop item will be sent on the school app later this week. Priority for places is given to 6th-year students.

Study Times:

Monday: 16:30 – 18:30

Tuesday: 16:15 – 18:15

Wednesday: 13:30 – 15:30

Thursday: 16:15 – 18:15

Friday: 16:15 – 18:15

The school Finance office is open from 9.00 to 1.00 pm on Wednesdays and 9.00 to 4.00 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. Enquiries may be sent to the following email address finance@holyfamily.ie

Getting ready for the new HFSS school year together: Before the new school year commences, it is timely to discuss at home the importance of positive and effective student behaviours that will contribute hugely to more meaningful engagement with school.

- **Punctuality and Attendance:** *It has always been the policy of HFSS to encourage excellent attendance and punctuality.*
- **Good Study and Learning Habits:** *Knowing the timetable and being prepared for lessons adds hugely to developing good organisational school skills and better academic attainment.*
- **Complete all Homework and Coursework Assignments:** *On time and with sincere effort and commitment.*
- **Respect HFSS students and staff:** *Be positive and kind in all school and peer relationships.*
- **Respect the HFSS school policies and practices** *in our teaching and learning community. The aim of our collective protocols and policies is to give transparency, equity and respect to all. We strive at HFSS to grow in learning together in a respectful learning community.*

We eagerly look forward to starting the new school year together. In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the school holidays. Sending all in our school community our kindest regards,

Sarah Allen
Principal

Katherine Kissane
Deputy Principal

Aoife Carey
Acting Deputy Principal

Education Support links

<https://www.education.ie/covid19> Department of Education and Skills (DES) School operational policy and protocols for COVID 19

<https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle> National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/> Curriculum online- Junior Cycle subjects

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Junior-Cycle-/>

Department of Education and Skills (DES)

<https://www.examinations.ie/>

State Exams Commission (branch of the DES that runs all state examinations, such as the Junior Cycle) information website, also with examination archive material (past papers and marking schemes to download)