



HOLY FAMILY SECONDARY SCHOOL

NEWBRIDGE, CO. KILDARE, W12YD71

Telephone: 045431957 Fax: 045 435213 Email: reception@holyfamily.ie Website: www.holyfamily.ie

Under the patronage of the Catholic Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin

Principal: Ms. S. Allen Deputy Principals: Ms. K. Aherne Ms K. Kissane

9th January 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students

On behalf of the entire community at Holy Family Secondary School, we want to extend every good wish to you and your family for 2021.

The rate of community transmission of the COVID virus in recent weeks has resulted in the government taking the difficult decision to request schools to deliver teaching through on-line platforms for the month of January 2021. It is envisaged that schools will reopen for 'in person' classes on February 1st 2021. As a school community, we have prepared for this event with contingency planning in place.

Every student has a school email account and our students will access their lessons through TEAMS. On Monday, 11th January, subject department teachers will plan for the next three weeks of online school. There will be no classes on Monday. Students should take this day to prepare for a routine for the next three weeks. From 8.45am on Tuesday January 12th 2021, classes will be delivered through our Microsoft Office 365 platform. Students will follow their daily timetable, as far as possible, for the next three weeks. Records of attendance and engagement will be taken.

However, we all recognise and acknowledge that there will be many competing demands on families as we all do our best to 'stay at home'. Many parents are working at home, brothers and sisters may also be expected to be online for school/college/work and there are many other factors that affect the reality of our lives at this difficult time. Our teachers will also be doing their very best to juggle COVID realities with their teaching commitments. We thank you for your support and understanding in this. We will work together and be respectful of all in these circumstances.

What will the remote school day be like?

The on-line engagement will vary during the week according what works best for individual subjects. Students can expect a mixture of live on-screen lessons by teachers, recorded video lessons and lessons based on materials and assignments forwarded to students. In every case the platform to be used is TEAMS. All students should be familiar with this. We used it extensively in the previous remote learning period and used it regularly during the first term of this school year. There is no one-size fits all approach expectation for the next three weeks of remote school. Work that is not completed during the lesson is expected to be done later in the day as 'homework' in the usual way. Teachers will guide their students in this. In addition, 3rd, 5th and 6th year students should set aside time for 'study' in the evening.

Please note that our wellbeing programmes will continue to be delivered to our students and that our guidance counsellors remain available. Please also note that this service will be prioritising our Leaving Cert students during January as the CAO deadline approaches.

Should you have any difficulties or queries please contact the relevant year head. The Year Heads will be arranging assemblies for Monday, 11th January.

1st Year: Ms H. O'Callaghan

2nd Year: Ms D. Dowling

3rd Year: Mr J. Cullen

4th Year: Ms E. O'Brien

5th Year: Ms A. Carey

6th Year: Ms A. Ní Fhatharta

The Government guidance released on 8th January 2021 provided us with updated guidance for schools to adhere to and manage schools. Full details are available on the link;

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a0bff-reopening-our-primary-and-special-schools/#additional-guidelines-and-procedures>

School office: School offices will remain closed to personal visitors.

Communication with parents is important to us. Please do this by email reception@holyfamily.ie or **045-431957**.

Student Wellbeing, Tutor time etc. Staff at HFSS continue to work to a collective positive mind-set. Part of that means contextualising this new lockdown. During the last remote school, many of our students worked hard, produced good work, and have benefited from time spent with their families, exploring and experiencing different opportunities to grow, learn and achieve in different contexts. We know that whatever the situation, we have the staff with the best knowledge and experience of how to teach, support and help our students in 'closing the gap' where required.. These are not ideal circumstances for anyone and staff at HFSS are doing their utmost to maintain a positive, affirming school.

E-books for home learning: Advice and information on how to download the free school textbooks online;

http://www.holyfamily.ie/wp-assets-holyfamily/uploads/2020/09/Holy-Family-Secondary-School_EBOOK-support-parents-students.pdf

TEAMS: Please see our school website for support documents.

<http://www.holyfamily.ie/hfss-parents/>

Most importantly, stay safe and stay well.

With our sincere regards

Sarah Allen
Principal

Katherine Aherne
Deputy Principal

Katherine Kissane
Deputy Principal