



## HOLY FAMILY SECONDARY SCHOOL

Telephone: 045-431957

Email: [reception@holyfamily.ie](mailto:reception@holyfamily.ie)

NEWBRIDGE, CO. KILDARE, W12YD71

Website: [www.holyfamily.ie](http://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

19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

We hope that you this letter finds you all well as the summer break comes to an end.

Since March 2020, our team of school support staff, teachers and SNAs have used technology and their own creativity to stay connected with our students. They have worked tirelessly alongside parents and students to minimise the impact of school closures on our students. Throughout that time, our students were outstanding in their response and engagement during a very difficult time for all. We look forward with resolute optimism to getting back to school together for the new school year for 2021/2022.

### **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.

Our school app is our principle 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. We also have an official HFSS Facebook and HFSS Twitter, HFSS YouTube social media accounts that are linked to our school website. [www.holyfamily.ie](http://www.holyfamily.ie)

### **Back to school dates:**

Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> August	11am-1.00pm 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Students' Induction
Monday, 30 <sup>th</sup> August	11am-1.00pm 1 <sup>st</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Years
Tuesday, 31 <sup>st</sup> August	11am-1.00pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> and TY Years
Wed, 1 <sup>st</sup> September	8.45am-1.00pm. Normal school day for all years

**HFSS & Covid-19 updates:** A tab on our school website where we publish all Covid-19 updates as they relate to schools. <http://www.holyfamily.ie/covid-19-updates/>

**COVID 19 school operational logistics:** Please see the planning guide from the Department of Education received on 19<sup>th</sup> August. The school will implement Public Health instructions and directives from the Department of Education.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7acad-reopening-our-post-primary-schools/>

In summary:

- All classrooms will continue to operate with strict PPE controls.
- It will continue to be mandatory for our students to wear a mask, as per Government guidelines. We will have mask breaks in our school day.
- We will still be able to facilitate a canteen service and access to students' lockers. We will bring our students greater clarity on these and all other precautions as they return to school.

A key aspect of our planning is the safe circulation of students in and around the school. Students and staff will have to follow strict procedures in order to safeguard everyone's wellbeing. As part of this preparation, we are bringing back each year group in a slightly longer sequence.

**Year Heads for student year groups: Please contact [reception@hollyfamily.ie](mailto:reception@hollyfamily.ie) to communicate with Year Heads.**

<i>Ms A. Ní Fhatharta</i>	<i>First Years</i>
<i>Ms K. Kissane</i>	<i>Second Years</i>
<i>Ms C. Costello</i>	<i>Third Years</i>
<i>Ms D. Dowling</i>	<i>Transition Year &amp; LCVP Programmes Coordinator</i>
<i>Mr J. Cullen</i>	<i>Fifth Years</i>
<i>Ms A. Carey</i>	<i>Sixth Years</i>

**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 financial support.

The Pupil Service 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 and school events.

We ask you to make this contribution to support our on-going 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'.

You are requested to have completed the payment of school charges before the return to school dates.

As normal at this time of year, we want to bring several matters to your attention

#### **'OFF & AWAY' Mobile Phone Policy**

Reminder of our Mobile phone 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.

**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.

**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 student's name clearly labelled on them**. We have Lost Property with many misplaced items with no names on them.

### **Lunch Arrangements:**

The School Food Company provides a catering service during break/lunch times. ([www.schoolfoodcompany.ie](http://www.schoolfoodcompany.ie)).

**1<sup>st</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year students remain in school for lunchtime and are not permitted to leave the building.**

The school Finance office is open from 9.00 to 4pm Wed-Friday. Enquiries may be sent to the following email address [finance@holyfamily.ie](mailto:finance@holyfamily.ie)

**Getting ready for the new 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, sending all in our school community our kindest regards.

*Sarah Allen*  
*Principal*

*Katherine Kissane*  
*Deputy Principal*

*Eimear O'Brien*  
*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)