**Welcome Back**

Everyone at Holy Family is delighted to welcome back all our pupils after the summer vacation and we would like to say a big welcome to all the new pupils who are starting in our nursery and primary one classes. We wish all our pupils a happy and successful year.

**New Year, New Arrangements**

In order to improve our health and safety arrangements new collection arrangements have been introduced for all P1-P3 pupils at 2.30pm. We would ask all parents/guardians to adhere to this system. The collection system is:

* P1 parents collect pupils from the P1 Shared Area and they access this area via the pedestrian gate that leads to the playgrounds.
* P2 parents collect pupils from the boxing club on playground A. They should access this area via the pedestrian gate.
* P3 parents collect pupils from the parking area adjacent to the school canteen.

There is no need for parents to enter the main school building at collection time. Thank you for your co-operation with this matter.

**Important Dates for your Diary**

Every year P4 and P7 parents are very keen to know the dates for the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. This year we have been informed that First Communion will take place on Saturday 18th May 2019 at 11am in Holy Family Chapel. Confirmation will take place on Saturday 23rd February 2019 at 11am in the same venue.

In addition, it has been confirmed that First Confessions for P4 pupils will take place at 6.15pm on Tuesday 4th December 2018.

**Parent Governor Election**

Thank you to all the parents who voted in the election for the parent governor. The initial election ended in a tie. Accordingly, in line with procedure a second election will be held and this will commence on Friday 5th October at 9am and conclude on Friday 12th October at 3pm. In the event of a tie, a lot will be drawn.

Voting papers are available from the school office.

**Good Communication**

Holy Family believes that good communication is vital in all matters and we try to ensure that we have a variety of methods to inform parents of all that is happening at the school. Currently, the main communication channels are:

- face to face - twitter: @principalhfps

- newsletter - website: [www.holyfamilyps.com](http://www.holyfamilyps.com)

- letters - text service

In order that all parents/guardians receive texts, can parents/guardians please ensure that the school has your current mobile number.

**Traffic Arrangements**

Traffic problems are a common feature at many schools and it is one of the greatest risks for pupils every day. In order to minimise these risks, a traffic control barrier has been installed at the entrance and exit to the staff car park. Accordingly, we would urge all parents to utilise the car park at the chapel when either dropping off or collecting pupils. Under no circumstances are vehicles allowed to park/wait in front of the barrier or at the corners of the entrance as access is required for staff, school deliveries and emergency services e.g. fire engine

The pedestrian entrance to the school is on the Aileach Road and we would ask all pupils/parents to use this when coming to the school. Thank you for your co-operation with this matter.

**Health and Fitness Audit**

Thank you to all parents/guardians who responded to our health and fitness audit. The outcomes of the audit can be seen below and are an overwhelming endorsement of our proposed plan to increase pupil health and fitness this year.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **YES** | **NO** |
| We intend to ensure each child receives an additional fifteen minutes’ exercise per day in school. Do you agree with this plan? | 99% | 1% |
| To promote independence, we intend to give pupils regular feedback on how their fitness level is progressing. Do you agree with this plan? | 97.5% | 2.5% |
| To raise awareness of appropriate diet we intend to provide information sessions for pupils. Do you agree with this plan? | 98% | 2% |
| To raise awareness of appropriate diet we intend to provide information sessions for parents/guardians. Do you agree with this plan? | 97% | 3% |
| To raise awareness of appropriate dental hygiene we intend to provide information session for pupils. Do you agree with this plan? | 99% | 1% |
| To promote good mental health and resilience, we intend to provide information sessions for pupils. Do you agree with this plan? | 98.5% | 1.5% |
| To promote good physical health, we intend to make Holy Family a healthy food school whereby crisps, sugary foods and chocolates would not be consumed. Do you agree with this plan? | 90% | 10% |
| To promote healthy lifestyles, we intend to sustain and expand our “Hope Healthy Lifestyles Programme” – this highlights the dangers and impact of addictions. Do you agree with this plan? | 98% | 2% |
| In order to balance the programme, we intend to retain one day (a Friday) as a treat day whereby the healthy school rule may be waived. Do you agree with this plan? | 94% | 6% |

As part of schools statutory duty to deliver the NI Curriculum inclusive of PE and Health Education, our pupils will participate in daily fitness activities that they will try to improve either in time or repetition throughout the year.

In addition, pupils will receive specific presentation/lessons related to healthy living and sporting achievements during the year. Throughout the year, pupils will be encouraged to only consume healthy snacks and Fridays will be retained as a ‘treat’ day. Thank you to all parents for your support with this initiative.

**Penalty Kick Competition**

Friday 5th October has been established as penalty kick day when the pupils from P3 – P7 will be involved in a sponsored year group penalty kick competition. The funds raised will be used by the school to support educational provision. Thank you to Mr Doherty for organising this event.

**Education Budget**

During the past number of years, the education budgets provided to schools have been declining significantly in real terms. This has resulted in virtually all schools having to reduce their provision. The extent of these cuts across the system is best appreciated by the fact that in the 2017-18 academic year, 444 schools were in deficit budget out of approximately 1100.

Accordingly, we would urge you to raise the matter with your local political representatives and support any actions taken by schools to secure realistic educational funding for pupils.

**PATHS Model School**

September is another month of celebration for Holy Family with the announcement that the school has been awarded the ‘Model School’ Status for Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies to help pupils with their social, emotional and regulation skills.

The school will receive the award at a special ceremony in the Everglades Hotel, Derry on Tuesday 9th October. Congratulations to Miss McCarron who has led our PATHS programme within school.

**Holy Family – a Nurturing School**

As parents are aware, Holy Family has been at the forefront of nurture education within Northern Ireland for many years. In addition to having a nurture unit within the school, the school has a nurturing approach and ethos in every class. Our aspiration is to have every member of staff, nurture accredited. To date, we have 50% of our teaching staff and 27% of our classroom assistant staff accredited.

Our most recent staff to receive accreditation are Mrs McCrory and Mr Gill who both passed with distinctions. Well done to all staff on this excellent achievement.

**Accelerated Reading**

Accelerated Reading is a great initiative to promote independent reading and comprehension. The Accelerated Reading Club runs every morning in the computer suite from 8.30am until 8.55am and pupils are also able to complete AR quizzes in class during the school day when they have free time. We would encourage all P3-P7 parents to regularly check with their children, how frequently they are completing AR quizzes.

In September;

P4 pupils have completed 121 quizzes

P5 pupils have completed 28 quizzes

P6 pupils have completed 52 quizzes

P7 pupils have completed 57 quizzes

**Holy Family House System**

In order to secure additional points for your house team please answer the following questions and forward the answers to the school office.

1. What percentage of classroom assistants still need to secure nurture accreditation for Holy Family to achieve its target?
2. What award will Holy Family receive in October?
3. What Holy Family past pupil read the prayers at St. Mary’s College beginning of the year Mass in St Eugene’s Cathedral?

**School Holidays**

The provisional school holidays for this academic year are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Staff Development Days (Pupils off)** | **Holidays (inclusive)** |
| 28th September 2018 | 31st October – 2nd November 2018 |
| 21st December 2018 | 24th December 2018 – 4th January 2019 |
| 19th March 2019 | 18th – 19th February 2019 |
| 28th May 2019 | 18th March 2019 |
| 14th June 2019 | 18th – 26th April 2019  6th May 2019  27th May 2019 |
|  |  |

**HOLY FAMILY**

**PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**

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**NEWSLETTER**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

Holy Family Primary & Nursery School

Aileach Road Derry

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Twitter: @principalhfps

**Congratulations**

Well done to our school choir and Mrs Doherty on their excellent performances at the Derry International Choral Festival during October. The quality of singing by the pupils was excellent and secured them first place in the Unison Choir competition.

**Education Funding**

As parents are very aware, the education budget available has declined by almost 10% over the past 5 years. This reduction is having significant impacts on the vast majority of schools and the level of funding is inadequate to deliver the range and depth of services pupils need.

Accordingly, all parents are invited to attend a public meeting in the Assembly Hall of Holy Family PS on Wednesday 7th November at 4pm organised by the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) related to this funding issue.

**Families Connect**

Congratulations to all the parents and pupils taking part in our Families Connect programme. This programme runs for two hours each week for eight weeks and aims to help parents support their child(ren) with social and emotional literacy and numeracy.

Many thanks to Mr Lagan and Mrs Gallagher for facilitating the programme and Miss Pat Carlin for supporting the delivery of the course.

**Nativity Invitation**

No sooner is Hallowe’en over than the preparations for Christmas commence. Accordingly, to aid parents preparations for school based Christmas activities we would like to invite all parents to our Christmas nativities, these will take place as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Location** | **Date** | **Time** |
| Nursery | Assembly Hall | Tuesday 11th December | 10am |
| P1 | Assembly Hall | Wednesday 12th December | 10am |
| P2 | Assembly Hall | Thursday 13th December | 10am |
| P3 | Assembly Hall | Friday 14th December | 10am |
| P4 – P7 | Holy Family Church | Thursday 13th December | 8pm |

**How Can I Help My Child Learn?**

This question is one that virtually every parent has asked themselves at some point and the answer does not need to be complicated. At Holy Family we would recommend a few basic activities:

1. Show your child that you are interested in their school work by asking regularly what they are learning at school and how they are progressing with their learning?
2. Sign your child’s nightly homework and check that they know their learning homework e.g. their spellings, their tables or their maths facts.
3. Listen to your child read or ask him/her questions about their reading each night.
4. Praise your child – encourage them to improve by setting very small targets for improvement e.g. recite your tables faster next week than you did this week.
5. Make sure your child attends school on time each day so that they get the most out of school.

Thank you for your support because a little input from parents can make a big difference to children.

**Practical Science Magic**

Over the past number of years Mr Doherty (WAU Co-ordinator) has been making a huge effort to develop our practical science provision further. As part of that work quite a number of year groups have introduced practical science construction competitions and the response from pupils and parents has been fantastic.

This year to date there have been super:

* Viking Ship Constructions
* Musical Instrument Constructions

Thank you to all parents and grandparents for the super support they give the children with this work.

**Sacramental Preparations**

Our P4 and P7 year groups have already commenced their preparation for the respective sacraments they will receive this year. In order to support our pupils in their preparation there will be a number of parents’ evenings coming up in the near future including:

P4: First Communion Meeting on Tuesday 20th November at 7.30pm

P7: Confirmation Meeting on Tuesday 27th November at 7.30pm

P4: First Confession on Tuesday 4th December at 6.15pm

We look forward to seeing you at these.

**Rickety Wheel**

Our annual Rickety Wheel event is upon us again thanks to our hardworking PTA. Given the financial pressures facing schools presently, the work of PTAs has never been more important.

Accordingly, although this event always proves to be a hit with parents and children alike, we would encourage all parents to bring along relatives or family friends to the event also. This year there are more stunning prizes on offer and the event will take place at 7pm on Wednesday 5th December in the Assembly Hall. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Success, Success, Success**

Each month our pupils secure a wide range of success in a variety of sporting, musical, academic and dramatic competitions. This month it is important to recognise the excellent achievements of P6 pupil, Eve Mallett who secured a first place and a second place in the Swim Ulster Schools Competition on 20th October.

It is also important to recognise the fantastic achievement of:

Dearbhla Coyle and Rory O’Connor on becoming accelerated reading millionaires within a month and a half of the new school term.

**Thank You**

Many thanks to all pupils and parents for their great support of our sponsored penalty kick competition. This event raised a super £1,904.71 which will be used to support educational provision at the school.

The penalty Kings and Queens in each year group with the top fundraisers respectively were:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| P3 | Fionn Meehan  Aoibheann Thompson  Lauren McConnell | P6 | Shay McCauley  Caoimhe Coyle  Neil Coyle & Eve Mallett |
| P4 | Ethan O’Hagan  Sophia O’Donnell  Cian Griffin | P7 | Darragh McCaul  Anya Doherty  Kelsey Hargan |
| P5 | Jack Beasley  Rhia Meehan  Jessica Hilley |  |  |

Thanks once again to everyone who supported the event and to Mr Doherty for organising the event.

**Reconstitution of the Board of Governors**

Every four years the Board of Governors of all schools are reconstituted. The Board of Governors for Holy Family Primary and Nursery School for the next four years (2018-2022) will be:

Mrs Carmel Doherty : Trustee Representative

Mrs Roisin O’Hagan : Trustee Representative

Mr Gregory Parke : Trustee Representative

Mr Jim McColgan : Trustee Representative

Mrs Frances McKinney : EA Representative

Mr Kevin Wilson : EA Representative

Mrs Catriona O’Donnell : DE Representative

Mrs Amie McCrystal : Parent Representative

Mr Patrick Gill : Teacher Representative

Mr Matthewson : Principal

The Board of Governors are responsible for upholding the essential ethos and character of the school as well as overseeing the management and leadership of the school. Thank you to all governors for taking on this very important role.

In addition to the overall role of governors, specific governors have acquired particular responsibilities and these are:

Mrs O’Hagan Safeguarding Governor

Mrs O’Donnell Pastoral Care Governor

Mrs Doherty Nurture Governor

Mrs McKinney Standards Governor

Mr McColgan SEN Governor

Mr Wilson Staff Development Governor

Mr Parke Community Links Governor

**House Teams**

Congratulations to the following pupils who gained extra points for their house team by getting all answers to last month’s questions correct.

Seán Scott P5 Rm 23 Rhys Bonner P2 Rm 4

The correct answers were:

1. 73% 2. PATHS Model School 3. Megan Scott

In order to secure extra points this month please answer the following questions and return them to the office:

1. How long does a Board of Governors remain in office?
2. What is happening at 4pm on Wednesday 7th November?
3. What have Ben Wilson, Ronan Curtis and Darren Gibson got in common?

**Good Luck**

We wish all P7 pupils who are sitting the entrance assessment on Saturday 17th November every success in their endeavours. Good luck.

**HOLY FAMILY**

**PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**



**NEWSLETTER**

**OCTOBER 2018**

Holy Family Primary & Nursery School

Aileach Road Derry

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**Red Wednesday**

The school participated in Red Wednesday events during November to acknowledge and pray for Persecuted Christians and Faith Minorities throughout the world. As part of the activities all our P4-P7 pupils engaged in a special assembly while all our P1-P7 pupils painted red rectangles to take home and discuss the issue with parents and family members.

**Student Council Action**

Our student council have been discussing action that pupils and the school could take to improve the safety of the Aileach Road. As you know the Aileach Road becomes particularly congested between 8.40am - 9.10am and between 2.30pm – 3.15pm because drivers do not use the abundant car park spaces in the chapel grounds and Dunnes car park.

As a very first step we would ask parents to utilise these car parks to lessen the congestion on the Aileach Road. This will also improve the safety for our pupils and your children.

The student council will soon be launching a vigorous campaign to ensure their travel to/from school is safe. Thank you for your support.

**Faith Development**

During November, two important faith development events took place with the P4 parents attending a First Communion information evening and the parents of P7 pupils participating in a Confirmation preparation meeting. Thank you to all the parents who attended these events.

The participation of parents in the preparation of children for the sacraments is vitally important and this participation is a great way of ensuring your child actively engages in his/her faith journey.

Following a survey of the pupils, these are the ways that they would like parents to help with their preparation for the sacraments:

* Pray together as a family
* Buy a family bible to read
* Tell your child about your First Communion or Confirmation
* Attend mass together
* Visit the chapel together

**Viking Long Boats**

During the past few years, the volume and quality of practical science within the school has increased massively. The credit for this must go to Mr Doherty (WAU Co-ordinator), pupils, parents and teaching staff.

During November, we held our Viking Long Boat competition and the standard of entries was fantastic. After long deliberations, the following winners were declared as:

1st Ava Thomas

2nd Eve Mallett and Shea McCauley

3rd Ava Curran and Hannah Courtney

**Congratulations**

* Well done to all our nursery pupils who took part in World Nursery Rhyme Week between 19th – 23rd November. Each child received a participation certificate to celebrate their involvement.
* Well done to past pupil and current Portsmouth FC footballer, Ronan Curtis, who gained his first international cap for the Republic of Ireland during November.
* Our School football team who secured the blitz trophy after overcoming Ebrington P.S., Sacred Heart P.S. and Oakgrove P.S. in a highly competitive tournament.
* Well done to Abbie-Rose McGeady on her success in the Derry Road Safety Art competition during November.

**Many Thanks**

In order for Holy Family to provide a broad and rich educational experience for all our pupils, we must rely on the support of a range of external organisations. We would like to thank the following organisations who supported us during November:

* Joanne Sweeney from Sentinus for working with our P6 pupils on the theme of tasty science. Joanne delivered a really interesting workshop on this theme that really caught the interest of our pupils.
* The N.I. Water Team who provided a highly informative educational presentation to our pupils on the importance of water and also presented our pupils with reusable water bottles. This will help promote healthy drinking habits and also reduce the need for single use plastic bottles in school.
* Ronan McLaughlin from Sustrans who delivered a presentation to our P4-P7 pupils on the importance of active travel for both the individual person and the wider community and world. In addition, he conducted an assessment of our active travel engagement.
* The Legion of Mary who attend our school on a weekly basis to pray the rosary with our P4 and P7 classes as part of their sacramental preparation.
* Valerie Holmes (Slimming World) for presenting a very informative workshop to parents regarding healthy eating options for our pupils.
* The N.I. Ambulance Service for providing an excellent workshop for our P2 pupils. The workshop involved our young pupils accessing the ambulance, seeing how all the equipment worked, wearing the ambulance helmets and clothing as well as getting the opportunity to question the ambulance staff.

**Partner Schools**

In order to support our pupils transition to post primary school and to broaden their educational experiences, we have developed mutually supportive relationships with many post primary schools. This month we would like to thank:

* St Mary’s College for delivering a great coding session for our P7 girls. The girls had a great time.
* St Joseph’s Boys’ School for providing a very enjoyable and informative minecraft event for our P7 boys.

**YES Project**

Thank you to the organising committee and participants in the YES project for creating a very interesting and enjoyable day for our P6 pupils.

**House Teams**

Congratulations to the following pupils on getting the correct answers to last month’s quiz questions and securing extra points for their house team:

Sara Morrow P7 Rm 13 Michael Morrow P3 Rm 11

AJ Rooney P2 Rm 4 Corey Bradley P5 Rm 21

Rhys Bonner P2 Rm 4 Lainey Parkhouse P7 RM 13

Serenity McVeigh P5 Rm 21

The correct answers were:

1. 4 years
2. NAHT Education Funding Meeting
3. They have all signed for football teams in England and are past pupils of Holy Family

In order to secure more house points this month please answer the following questions and return them to the school office.

1. What notable space event took place on Monday 26th November 2018?
2. What is the connection between Holy Family P.S. and the new Republic of Ireland Manager in 2020?
3. What is the currency in Nepal?

**Reminder: Christmas Nativities**

We would like to invite all parents to our Christmas nativities, these will take place as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Location** | **Date** | **Time** |
| Nursery | Assembly Hall | Tuesday 11th December | 10am |
| P1 | Assembly Hall | Wednesday 12th December | 10am |
| P2 | Assembly Hall | Thursday 13th December | 10am |
| P3 | Assembly Hall | Friday 14th December | 10am |
| P4 – P7 | Holy Family Church | Thursday 13th December | 8pm |

Our annual Rickety Wheel event will take place at 7pm on Wednesday 5th December in the Assembly Hall. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Health & Fitness Update**

The school is placing a big emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles and the appropriateness of this decision is supported by the Chief Inspector of Education in N. Ireland, Noelle Buick when she raised concerns about the obesity levels and mental health issues occurring at primary school level. These comments were made in her biennial report covering the period 2016 – 2018.

As part of our PE action plan we have:

* Increased the amount of physical activity the pupils get each day
* Increased the amount of lunchtime play pupils receive
* Introduced a daily run for all pupils
* Audited all parents regarding our planned PE/Health activities
* Updated our Health Education policy and our Nutrition policy to prohibit chocolate, fizzy drinks and crisps on a Monday to Thursday and retained Friday as a treat day.
* Agreed with the canteen that they will not serve chocolate, fizzy drinks and crisps Monday to Thursday
* Decided to circulate a copy of our revised Nutrition and Health Education policy to each family

**Good Luck**

We wish every success to our pupils who are taking part in the P7 duathlon at St Mary’s College, Derry on Thursday 29th November.

We also wish good luck to all of our P3-P7 pupils who are taking part in our cycle, walk, scoot to Santa event. Please remember if you are travelling actively to school, wear something bright to be seen. Keep safe.

**HOLY FAMILY**

**PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**



**NEWSLETTER**

**NOVEMBER 2018**

Holy Family Primary & Nursery School

Aileach Road Derry

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Twitter: @principalhfps

**Nativity Success**

Congratulations to our nursery, P1, P2, P3 and P4-P7 pupils on the wonderful performances of their Christmas nativity shows. Every year we are amazed by the extensive talent on show. Thank you to all of our staff and to Mrs C Doherty for ensuring such a high standard of performance.

**Rickety Wheel**

Thank you to all members of our PTA for the very successful Rickety Wheel on Wednesday 5th December. Congratulations to all prize winners and thank you for your continued support. The amount raised will be announced later this week and these funds will be used to support educational provision at the school.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The service of commitment for all children making their confirmation will take place on Sunday 13th January 2019 at 11.00am Mass in Holy Family Church. We look forward to seeing all our P7 pupils and their families at this special Mass.

**Christmas Music**

Our P4-P7 children had a wonderful time at the pantomime performance of Peter Pan at the Millennium Forum on Monday 17th December, thank you to Mrs Claire Doherty for organising this event. Our school choir have also had a busy festive period with performance at BHCP Pensioners’ Dinner, Holy Family Parish Carol Service and at the Tree of Remembrance in Foyleside Shopping Centre.

**Nursery and P1 Applications**

Parents who are interested in a place for their child at our nursery unit or in P1 should know that the application process begins on 2nd January 2019 and closes on 31st January 2019.

Parents should also note that the Education Authority has decided that application should be made online via the EA website [www.eani.org.uk](http://www.eani.org.uk). If you have any difficulty accessing the application portal on the website, please contact the school office as soon as possible.

School prospectuses are available from the school office.

**Success and more Success**

Congratulations to our school football team who won the Derry Primary School league after coming top in the winner’s blitz at Bishop’s Field. The team overcame very tough competition in the form of St. Eithne’s P.S., St John’s P.S. and Nazareth House P.S. to secure the prestigious Kieran Coyle Cup.

The boys will now move forward in the New Year to the N. Ireland finals.

Many thanks to coaches Mr Doherty and Mrs N. Doherty.

The school was delighted to be awarded the prestigious Sustrans Silver Award for our efforts in promoting sustainable travel. Special thanks must go to our Co-ordinator Mr G. Doherty.

**Thank You**

In order to deliver the greatest breadth of experiences for our pupils as possible, it is essential that we receive support from a wide range of agencies and people.

This month we would like to thank:

* Fr. Paddy for allowing us access to the Chapel to both prepare and present our P4-P7 Christmas Nativity.
* Santa for visiting our pupils and listening to their Christmas wishes
* To our PTA for their excellent work all year and especially on the organization and delivery of a highly successful Rickety Wheel
* To the Department of Infrastructure for upgrading the road markings at the exit point to our school which will increase the safety for all road users

**Open Day**

Thank you to all pupils, parents, staff and prospective parents for ensuring that we had a very successful and enjoyable Open Day on Friday 7th December.

Prospective parents who were unable to attend Open Day are reminded that they are very welcome to contact the school and arrange an alternative visit.

**House Team Performance**

The scores for the House Team competition are:

KS1

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Daphne – Gryffindor | Duke – Hufflepuff | Henrietta – Ravenclaw | Twiggle – Slytherin |
| 17 | 19.5 | 17 | 16.5 |
| KS2 |  |  |  |
| Gryffindor | Hufflepuff | Ravenclaw | Slytherin |
| 18.5 | 18 | 20 | 13.5 |

The correct answers to last month’s quiz questions were:

1. Spaceship landed on Mars
2. Stephen Kenny’s child Niamh, attended Holy Family P.S.
3. Nepalese Rupee

In order to gain extra points for your house team pupils with the correct answers should return them to the school office.

1. Who played the roles of the Three Wise Men in the P4-P7 Nativity Play this year?
2. What year did King Herod die?
3. When will our P7 pupils be confirmed?

**Holidays**

The school will close for the Christmas holidays on Thursday 20th December at 12.30pm and re-open for all pupils on Monday 7th January 2019 at 9am.

On behalf of the staff of the school we wish all our pupils and their families a happy and peaceful Christmas.

**School Choir**

Our school choir have been invited to perform with world famous Derry Soprano, Mary Keys in the Waterside Theatre on Friday 21st December 2018 at 7pm. We are sure the choir will represent the school wonderfully well at this prestigious event. Good luck to all involved.

**Upcoming Events**

Although we are about to commence the Christmas holidays, it is important that parents are aware of the following events that will take place soon:

Nursery Parky and Rusty the Bear will visit our Nursery on Wednesday 19th December to perform a magic puppet show for our pupils.

P7 Preparation for Confirmation retreat in January

P7 Commitment to Confirmation Service on Sunday 13th January at 11am

2nd January 2019 Opening of Nursery and P1 application procedure

31st January 2019 Closure of Nursery and P1 application

Mid-term 18th – 19th February 2019

P7 Confirmation on Saturday 23rd February 2019 at 11am

**Confirmation Retreat**

As part of the preparation programme for Confirmation, our P7 pupils will be taking part in a Confirmation retreat on Wednesday 9th January 2019 starting at 10am. This retreat will be held in the school and will be delivered by Diocesan staff.

As part of the retreat, parents of P7 pupils are invited to a homily service at 2pm that day. We look forward to welcoming all our P7 parents to this special event.

**Christmas Jumper Day**

A special Christmas Jumper Day will be held in the school on Wednesday 19th December 2018 when pupils will be encouraged to wear a Christmas Jumper to school. We would request all pupils donate £1 to the school that day and all monies received will go to one of our named charities: The Foyle Hospice

Thank you for your support in advance.

**Prayer and Living Our Faith**

As part of a number of new initiatives to highlight the importance of faith development within our school and parish, we shall be introducing a prayer box in the foyer area where parents can place anonymous prayer requests for special intentions. At our weekly assembly, these requests will be prayed for by all the pupils attending.

In addition, our P7 pupils will be paired up with a P4 pupil and each child will have an opportunity to pray for their faith partner as they progress in faith through the sacraments of reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation.

We will keep parents informed about the progress of our faith partners programme.

**HOLY FAMILY**

**PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**



**NEWSLETTER**

**DECEMBER 2018**

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