



Hollybush Primary and Nursery School

January/February 2026 Newsletter



Dear Parent/Guardian

This newsletter is intended to give you an overview of things that are happening here at the school in January and February, and to highlight important events and activities that are planned for the near future. Please keep an eye on our app and Facebook page for other day-to-day events/information.

Catholic Schools' Week:



Catholic Schools' Week is happening this week. This year, the theme is 'Call to Holiness'. Classes will be engaged in various activities related to the theme during the week. Our primary 4 children will be inviting their grandparents to the school on the morning of Friday, January 30th to make St. Brigid's crosses – too early to do it this week.

Updating Office:

If you learn during the school year that your child has developed a medical condition or allergy, or there is any change to the status of an existing medical condition/allergy, please inform the school office. Please also inform the office if your contact details have changed.

Foyle Schools' Poetry Competition:



The deadline for submissions for this competition is February 6. We had huge success in this competition over the last three years, taking the top prize twice! This year's theme is 'Voices', and the children have produced some extraordinary pieces to date. A good number of pupils now have hard-backed notebooks, in which they keep poems, drawings and stories. This is an excellent way of preserving the creative journey of a pupil as he/she journeys through school life.

After-School Activities:

This term's activities are now up and running. A sincere thank you to the staff who take these clubs voluntarily, and to the grandparents/friends of the school volunteers who do likewise. Without this support, these clubs could not take place as Hollybush does not receive any Extended Schools Funding from the Department of Education. A timetable of activities is available on the website.

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Christmas Draw/Nursery work:

The Christmas Draw was a huge success, raising a whopping £3791.54. We are grateful for the incredible support our draws receive each year. As well as funding our scheduled projects, this income, which includes the parental contribution, helps cover the cost of programmes such as Mathletics, Accelerated Reading, IXL and Nessy.



Salmon Ambassadors:

Our Primary 7 pupils have been registered for the Loughs' Agency Salmon Ambassador Programme. We will have our very own salmon hatchery in the school again this year, and the pupils will be involved in every stage of the hatchery process.

Wellbeing Programme:

All our pupils will have access to a new and exciting wellbeing programme that has been devised by The Verbal Arts Centre. The programme has proved a very useful addition to our work on the curricular area, 'Personal Development and Mutual Understanding'. A huge thank you to Dean Harley, father of Evie in Mr Mc Nulty's class, who delivered a well-being workshop to the Primary 7 pupils. It was excellent, and very much appreciated.

Road Safety Quiz:



Best of luck to our Primary 7 Road Safety quiz team which competes in the local leg of the competition in the coming weeks.

Parent/Teacher Meetings:

This year's parent/teacher meetings will take place on Monday 2nd, Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th February. Appointments have been sent out. Please make every effort to come at the given time as facilitating meetings at other times can be very disruptive.

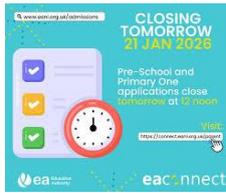
Special Intentions:



Our special intentions box is located on the coffee table at the entrance to the school. If you have an intention that you would like the children and staff to remember in our morning prayers, please place it in the box. These intentions are not read by anyone, and are burned at the end of each academic year. There are some remarkable success stories attached to this little box.

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Admissions:



The Admissions Portal for Nursery and Primary 1 applications closes tomorrow, Wednesday 21st January at 12 noon. Anyone who has any difficulty with the portal can contact the school office.

Safeguarding:

Just a couple of safeguarding housekeeping items; please remember that the school carpark is strictly for staff only. This rule helps ensure the safety of pupils entering and leaving the school grounds. All visitors to the school must report to the school office immediately upon arrival. Parents or adults who are not staff members should not enter shared areas etc without permission. The key members of the school's Safeguarding Team remain as were; Mr O'Connor (Designated Teacher), Mrs Mc Gurren (Deputy Designated Teacher), Mrs Angela Dobbins, Mr Paul Kirby and Mrs Rita Barrett (Designated Governors for safeguarding).

Clothing Items:

Thankfully, the vast majority of pupils' belongings are now clearly marked with their names, and we had only one small bag of lost property at the end of last term. Please continue to mark your child's name on his/her clothing and other items.

First Communion Preparation Masses:



The 'Do This in Memory' programme of preparation Masses for our Primary 4 pupils has been going really well, and the Masses have been very well attended. Thanks to the staff who prepare the children, and thanks to the parents who have assisted at the Masses. The next Mass takes place this Sunday, 25th January at 12.15 p.m. in Steelstown.

Drama Club:

This recommences on Wednesday, February 18th. Further details will be sent out on the school app.

School Photographs:



School photographs will be taken on February 24th and 25th. A message with further detail will be posted on the school app closer to the time.

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Sport:

- The final cross-country race takes place on Thursday, January 22nd at Oakgrove
- Boys' and girls' indoor Gaelic teams have qualified for the City Finals in February
- Indoor hurling championships take place on Friday, January 23rd
- Netball league begins next week



Keep an eye on our Facebook Page for sporting updates.

Kind regards

Mr Friel