



Holy Family Community
School



- ▶ First Year Information Meeting
- ▶ Thursday, September 3rd, 2026
- ▶ Welcome

Welcome

- If you have any questions regarding the presentation this evening, please put them in the chat box and we will endeavour to answer them at the end or you can email info@hfcs.ie
- If you have a specific question about your son/daughter please email info@hfcs.ie and direct it to the relevant person you wish to speak to.
- All School Policies may be found on the school website at www.hfcs.ie/our-policies-and-useful-information/
- Parents/guardians and students are expected to read these policies and students must abide by all school policies.

Welcome

During tonight's presentation I hope to highlight how all staff in Holy Family Community School will support the transition of our First Year students as they begin secondary school.

- First year is very much a time of transition and change
 - Changes in the school system
 - Social Change
 - Changes in schoolwork
 - Different procedures and Code of conduct

Communication between Parent/Guardian and school.

- ▶ The School Secretary, Ms. Lorraine O'Connell, is the main channel to contact Teachers, Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principals and Principal.
- ▶ Phone calls (01-4580766)
- ▶ Emails to info@hfcs.ie
- ▶ **Absence notes sent only via Vsware.**
 - ▶ **Must have exact times and dates – partial absence where relevant**
- ▶ Notes in dialann for individual subject teachers or contact made through email/phone call.
- ▶ All meetings between parents/guardians and staff members must be made by appointment.

Communication between school and Parents/Guardians.

- ▶ **VShare** is the management and communication system used by the school also acts to communicate messages to Parents/Guardians.
- ▶ Parents/Guardians can look at their child's timetable, attendance assessment results and **behaviour record** on VShare.
- ▶ In order to receive messages, please ensure that you download the VShare app on your mobile device and allow notifications.
- ▶ Instructions on how to download the VShare app can be found here: <https://support.vshare.ie/en/parent-app-overview>

CHECK
VSHARE
REGULARLY!

The image shows a login screen for the VShare system. It has a blue background with a large, faint 'VSHARE' logo. There are two white input fields: the top one is labeled 'Login' and the bottom one is labeled 'Password'. Below the password field is a 'Reset Password' link and a green circular icon with a white checkmark. At the bottom is a blue button labeled 'Sign In'.

Other forms of communication

- ▶ Website www.hfcs.ie
- ▶ School social media
- ▶ School reports
- ▶ Parent/Teacher meeting
- ▶ Meetings for specific issues
- ▶ Information Meetings
- ▶ Dialann





Leadership Team Holy Family Community School

- ▶ **Principal:** Ms. Ingrid Fallon
- ▶ **Deputy Principals:** Ms. Denise O'Keeffe,
Mr. Liam Ferguson & Mr. Derek Maher.

Student Support Team

Their core purpose is to coordinate the support available for all students in the school.

- ▶ Principal: Ms. Ingrid Fallon
- ▶ Deputy Principals: Ms. Denise O'Keeffe, Mr. Liam Ferguson, Mr. Derek Maher
- ▶ Year-head: Ms. Redmond
- ▶ Guidance Counsellors: Ms. Ursula McDonnell and Ms. Charlene Perris
- ▶ Chaplain: Mr. Noel McConnell
- ▶ Additional Needs Coordinator: Mr. Michael Savage
- ▶ Tutors and Subject Teachers
- ▶ Mentors



Year-Head - Ms. Redmond

- Has overall responsibility for:
 - Discipline
 - Monitoring Academic Progress
 - Coordinating Pastoral Care
 - Liaising with Parents
 - Liaising with tutors and subject teachers

Stages for Concerns

- ▶ Subject Teacher
- ▶ Tutor
- ▶ Year Head
- ▶ Principal
- ▶ Representatives of the Board of Management
- ▶ Full Board of Management
- ▶ Teaching Council
- ▶ Complaints' procedure is available on the school's website

Tutors of class groups

Bronze: Ms. Nikki Cowzer & Ms. Kayleigh Gifford

Diamond: Mr. Jonathon Darcy & Ms. Hannah Prendergast

Emerald: Ms. Sarah Doyle & Ms. Emma Byrne

Gold: Mr. Sean Murphy & Ms. Karen Gernon

Opal: Ms. Katie McGovern & Ms. Áine Murphy

Sapphire: Ms. Nonie McAndrew & Mr. O'Gallachóir

Silver: Ms. Claire Dollard & Mr. Brian Johnson

Uniform & Class Equipment

Wear

Students must wear full school uniform. Black shoes and ties.

Wear

Students must wear correct school P.E. uniform on P.E. day. Only the official school P.E. gear is allowed (no leggings).

Have

Students must have a note if not wearing the uniform (note only covers one day and this should rarely happen)

Make

Please make sure your son/daughter has all the books/ iPad etc. listed on their booklists

Ensure

Please ensure your child's name is on everything

Check

Check your son's/daughter's timetable (on VShare) at night to make sure he/she is properly prepared for the next day – some students will need help with this for a while.

MORNING CHECKLIST

				
Do I have my full uniform on? • Shoes • Jacket	Is my schoolbag packed and ready for school? • Lunch • Water • Ipad • Stylus • Copies	Have I packed? • Sports Gear • Art or Tech supplies • Ingredients	Do I have my Dialann? • all copies • books • novels • workbooks	Is my Ipad in my bag? Is my stylus in my bag?

EVENING CHECKLIST

				
Do I have my uniform laid out?	Is my schoolbag packed and ready for school? • pencilcase • workbooks • correct copies for tomorrow's classes	Do I need? • P.E. Gear • Art or Tech supplies • Ingredients	Dialann Check: Did I do all my written AND learning homework for tomorrow's classes?	Is my Ipad charging? Is my stylus charging?

Accommodations

- ▶ Additional Needs Co-Ordinator: Mr. Michael Savage.
- ▶ It is recommended that any relevant information, reports, or documentation, medical issues/allergies which parents/guardians may have are shared with Mr. Savage.

SCHOOL POLICIES



All HFCS policies and useful information are available on the school website



<https://www.hfcs.ie/our-policies-and-useful-information/>



The Code of Behaviour and Discipline should be read by students and parents and is available in the students' journals and on the website. It must be signed in the dialann.

Please note



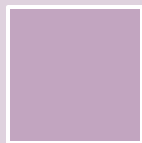
Holy Family Community School is a phone free zone.



All students' phones must be switched off and out of sight for the full school day.



Please do not contact your son/daughter via mobile phone during the day – contact the school office.



Misuse of ipads – students are not to photograph, video or audio record any member of the school community.

Health and Safety

18

01

Always have an appointment

02

Do not enter school grounds except by prior arrangement

03

Drop off and pick up students at the front of the school

04

Do not stop on the roundabout or in the school gateway or across the driveways of houses

Health and Safety: New Building

19

01

Accessing or attempting to access the construction site for the new school building is forbidden.

02

Parents/guardians must not drop off or collect at either roundabout outside school. Top roundabout is now an access point for construction machinery.

03

Drop off and pick up students at the front of the school. No parking at St. Anne's Terrace.

04

Students must be aware of new fire evacuation route/procedures. Fire drills will take place.

Settling in to Secondary School

- Students have all been given stationery, equipment and stylus pens for ipads.
- Each class group has 4 sixth year students assigned to it to help students settle in. They meet the class each Wednesday during Well-being period.
- First year students are advised to write their subjects for the full week into their Dialann (journal)
- They write the topic studied or the homework they are given.
- Students may be given homework to complete over the weekend.
- It is recommended that students spend about an hour doing homework/revision. Extra time may be needed coming up to exam time for revision.
- AI Technology must not be used in place of a student's own work.
- Essential that balance is maintained during students' first year of school.

School Procedures

Classes begin at 8.45am and finish at 3.40pm (1pm on Wed) Students must be in school 5 minutes before first class in the morning and first class in the afternoon

Morning break is from 10.45am - 11.00am Lunch break 1.00pm – 1.40pm

Wednesdays: morning break is from 10.55 to 11.10am.

1st Year students issued with a home pass are allowed to go home during lunch period. They must live in Rathcoole village. Students must return to the school in plenty of time to be in their first class after lunch.

A seating plan and cleaning roster is posted on each base room wall which students must adhere to.

Personal Electronic Devices

PLEASE READ
AUP POLICY
ON SCHOOL
WEBSITE

Must be off and out of sight at all times during school day

Students must not take photographs or recordings of any member of the school community.

Students must not use their personal electronic devices to abuse, threaten, harass or bully other students or staff or use these devices to invade the privacy of any member of the school community. Infringement of these rules is taken very seriously by the school.

Parents must not phone students during the school day

Please read www.cybersafeireland.org and www.webwise.ie

Attendance & Punctuality – Ms. Siobhán Connaughten – Attendance Co-ordinator

- ▶ Regular attendance and punctuality is extremely important.
- ▶ Please avoid family holidays during term time.
- ▶ Students late three times in a two week period will be sanctioned on their fourth breach.
- ▶ Students who are absent for 20 days will be reported to TUSLA.



General Sickness Procedures and leaving school early

- ▶ Please do not send a sick child to school,
- ▶ Student must not use their mobile phone to contact a Parent/Guardian if they feel ill in school.
- ▶ The student must get the teacher's permission to go to reception.
- ▶ The school secretary then contacts the Parent/ Guardian.
- ▶ Please ensure that a correct phone number is on VSware to contact you.
- ▶ Student must be collected by Parent/Guardian and sign out at reception when collected.
- ▶ Any student being collected by a parent during the school day must present a note to the Year Head or send a note via VSware.

Detention

- ▶ Wednesdays from 1.15 p.m. to 2.15 p.m.
- ▶ Parents/ Guardians will be informed by the school when detention is given.
- ▶ Parents can check Vsware for the reason for detention.
- ▶ Parents must organise transport home for their son/daughter.
- ▶ Failure to attend detention may result in suspension.
- ▶ If a student is unable to attend detention, a note must be presented in advance to the Behaviour Management Co-ordinator, Mr. Brendan Weldon.





Acknowledgement of Positive Behaviour

- Teachers award positive comments on VSware to acknowledge students going above and beyond during the school day.
- They are not given for academic achievement
- They reward consistent good effort; sustained improvement and positive contributions to the school
- It is an honour to be awarded a merit
- Merit comments are awarded by staff and recorded on VSware. It is important to praise your son/daughter if he/she receives a merit .

Extra-curricular activities

Athletics

Basketball

School Musical

Debating

Gaelic
Football

Gymnastics

Hurling /
Camogie

Public
Speaking

Soccer

Lunch Clubs

Extra-curricular activities

- ▶ Good to encourage your son/daughter to get involved in activities.
- ▶ There is something for everyone!
- ▶ Students must remember that good behaviour will be expected during extra-curricular activities and when representing the school.
- ▶ Students are expected to do assigned homework if they miss class due to participation in an extra-curricular activity.
- ▶ Voluntary Contributions fund extra-curricular activities.
- ▶ Personal Accident Insurance Scheme - €10 per student. This gives 24/7 cover

New Junior Cycle Framework

- ▶ This Framework is available to view at:
<https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/framework-for-junior-cycle>

The main points of the Framework are:

- 8 Principles
- 24 Statements of Learning describe what students should know, understand, value and be able to do at the end of junior cycle
- 8 Key skills include Literacy, Numeracy and 6 other skills
- ▶ Maths, English and Gaeilge are 240 hour courses
- ▶ Other subjects are 200 hour courses
- ▶ Short courses are 100 hours
- ▶ Priority Learning Units (PLUs) are for students with moderate general learning difficulties (GLD)



New Junior Cycle Framework

Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) Certificate will include a report on Wellbeing and other areas of learning from First to Third year

Assessment of schoolwork - 2nd Year Classroom Based Assessment (CBA 1) 3rd Year (CBA 2 & Assessment Task (AT))

Descriptors are used instead of grades.

Descriptors are awarded instead of marks. They are

- **Yet to meet expectations**
- **In line with expectations**
- **Above expectations**
- **Exceptional**

Terminal examination (June, 2026)

Grade Descriptors for the terminal exams are awarded by the State Exams Commission (SEC)

They are

- **Partially achieved (20 to 39%)**
- **Achieved (40 to 54 %)**
- **Merit (55 to 74 %)**
- **Higher Merit (75 to 89%)**
- **Distinction (90 to 100%)**

Further information :
www.ncca.ie or
www.juniorcycle.ie

CONNECTED



RESPECTED

Wellbeing at HFCS

**INDICATORS
OF WELLBEING**



ACTIVE



RESPONSIBLE



RESILIENT



AWARE

What does wellbeing look like at our school?

- ▶ **Indicators of Wellbeing:** Wellbeing is identified using indicators designed by the NCCA in their Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines in 2017.
- ▶ Students learn about wellbeing using these indicators. Our goal is to provide students with the resources, knowledge, skills and tools of well-being, so that as they journey through their lives, they have the strategies to cope with the struggles and daily stresses of life.
- ▶ Wellbeing is a programme at Junior Cycle. It accounts for 400 hours of learning over a range of subjects and learning experiences.
- ▶ SPHE, CSPE, PE, Digital Media Literacy, Wellbeing Tutor Time & Extra-Curricular
- ▶ Other learning experiences include themed weeks and events throughout the year such as our Positive Mental Health weeks organized by the Amber Flag Committee, our First Year Wellbeing Retreat day, subject themed weeks, and a range of guest speakers from organisations such as the charity Aware.

Student Life

We want our students to be happy in HFCS

Bullying will not be tolerated and should be reported to the school

Students are expected to display good manners and courtesy to all members of the school community.

Students are expected to show respect for each other and to watch out for one another

Students are expected to be kind and tolerant, to treat others as they expect to be treated.

Lunchtime Arrangements

- ▶ 1st Year students eat lunch with all Junior Students in the GPA (General Purpose Area) Students may also go outside during lunch time to the designated social area.
- ▶ Students are expected to keep the GPA clean and put rubbish in the bins once lunch is finished.
- ▶ Students who meet the criteria for a home pass may go home during lunch break ensuring they are back in plenty of time for class.
- ▶ No student is allowed down to the village during lunch time.
- ▶ No student has permission to leave school during 11:00 break time.

Get involved in the HFCS Parents Council

**Follow us
on
Facebook**



HFCS Parents Council Group

**Follow us
on
Instagram**



@hfcs_parents council

**To join the
Parents Council
email**



parentscouncil@hfcs.ie

Dates for your Diary

September: Cardiac Screening register by Sept 7th – screening towards end of Sept

17th September – Opening Evening 4.30 to 6.30 p.m.

October: 12th – 16th October Numeracy Week

December: House Exams 14th – 18th December Age and stage appropriate

January: 26th First Year Parent Teacher meeting 4.15 to 6.45 p.m.

Please keep an eye on the school website www.hfcs.ie for other important school dates.

Thank you for your attention and support



PARENT
SUPPORT

