



# HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

## River Valley, Swords, Co Dublin.

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Deputy Principal: Ms M McNally  
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## School Introduction Statement

### 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This is a co-educational Junior Primary School with classes from Junior Infants to Second Standard. The school was established in September 1982 under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. This is a state-funded school i.e. it receives Grants from the Department of Education and Skills for Maintenance, Heat/Light, Secretary/Caretaker, etc. The Board of Management employs a Full-time Secretary. It also employs a Part-time Caretaker and 10 Special Needs Assistants (7 Full-time, 3 Part-time).

#### Teaching Staff

When established the school had a staff of a Principal and 7 Teachers. The current enrolment (30<sup>th</sup> September 2019) is **644** and the staff includes 1 Administrative Principal, 1 Administrative Deputy Principal, 24 Class Teachers, 11 Full-time Special Education Teachers, 2 English Language Teachers & 1 Support Teacher. We are a **Droichead** school and facilitate the induction of newly qualified teachers.

#### Board of Management

The school is governed by the Board of Management with eight members: Chairperson, Fathers' Nominee, Mothers' Nominee, Principal Teacher, Teachers' Nominee, Patron's Nominee, and two Members of the Community. The Board of Management is responsible for all aspects of the upkeep and maintenance of the school. It is also responsible for the employment of all staff. Strict accounting procedures are adhered to and all Board of Management accounts are audited annually and forwarded to the Finance Secretariat, Archbishop's House.

#### Parents Association

This school has an active Parents' Association which works closely with the Board of Management and they support the school in many areas, especially by fundraising. They meet once a month during the School Year to work on collaborative projects such as: Fund Raising, Spring Day, First Communion, Junior Infant Meetings, Sports Day/Sponsored Jog, Yard Painting, School Siopa, Book Fair, Do This in Memory, Reading Initiative/supporting children in class input into all school plans/policies and Safety Projects.

#### *The Association is/has been involved in:*

- ***Reading Initiative, Supporting children in class.***
- ***Implementation of one-way system outside school to try to ensure the safety of children coming to and leaving school.***
- ***Safety procedures in the school car park.***

## **School Books/School Services**

Each child is issued with a booklist. Parents are expected to purchase these books/workbooks in relevant bookshops. **This school does not operate a voluntary contribution fee system.**

**A fee for school services is charged.** This covers the provision of Art/Craft materials and all class resources i.e. photocopying, printing, I.C.T., Mata sa Rang materials, school produced books, class diaries (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> classes) 24 hour pupil personal accident insurance.

Included in this is a nominal fee towards the Book Rental Scheme, where each child receives a number of books. These books remain the property of this school and must be returned at the end of the year.

## **School Uniform**

**The School Uniform for Boys and Girls is compulsory and is as follows:**

Navy Blue Pants/Pinafore/Skirt, Grey Jumper/Cardigan, Grey Shirt/Blouse, and a navy blue School Tie with red stripes. A School Tracksuit (grey sweatshirt with school crest, red polo shirt and navy sweat pants) is available through Pat O'Farrell Schoolwear Ltd, Airside Swords. **Children wear their school uniform except on days when they are timetabled for P.E. or are instructed to wear tracksuits.**

**School Crests are available to purchase from school at a cost of €2.00.**

## **School Opening Times**

**School assembly is at 8.50 a.m. for all classes. Infant classes go home at 1.30 p.m. First and Second Standard at 2.30 p.m. The Board of Management, Principal, and Staff do not accept any responsibility for children before 8.50 am or after 2.30 pm unless they are attending an extra-curricular activity organised by authorised school staff.**

**Croke Park – Under recent Public Service Agreements (C.P. /H.R. & L.R.) all Staff Meetings and Parent/Teacher Meetings will be held outside school hours.**

## **Parent Teacher Meetings**

Formal Parent Teacher meetings are held annually,. This is where each parent/guardian is given an appointment time outside of school hours to meet with their child's teacher. The parent body are given notice as to the date of the parent /teacher meetings. Each teacher completes an appointment card for each parent. Further meetings throughout the year, may be arranged, if necessary.

## **School Reports**

It is school policy that parents receive two School Reports, one oral as above (Parent/Teacher meeting) and one written. A written school report is filled out for each child, and a copy of this report is sent to the parent/guardian in June. This allows sufficient time, before the closure of the school for summer vacation, for parents to seek meetings with the principal and/or teacher(s) to discuss the written report if necessary. This report was designed by the staff for this particular school with input from National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA) and School Development and Planning (SDP).

## **Child Safeguarding**

Child welfare and the protection of young people are the concern of all adults at all times, irrespective of their role within this school. In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the Preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Holy Family JNS has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

**The Designated Liaison Person (D.L.P.) is Mr D Power**

**The Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (D.D.L.P.) is Ms M McNally**

It is school policy to report alleged child neglect/abuse to TUSLA Child & Family Agency. Parents will generally be informed if such a report is being made. It is not within our remit to investigate such allegations. Our intention is to provide a safe, happy, secure environment for all the children attending this school.

A copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed in our foyer and on our website.

### **School Environment**

Studies suggest that a well planned and pleasant school environment can have a beneficial effect in the area of academic attainment, in addition to the obvious one of promoting in the child a respect for the environment in general. Through collaboration of the whole school community, such an environment has been created and continues to be developed at our school. The external landscaping has been carried out with direct involvement of the children, parents and teachers in planting of the shrubs, development of the sports grounds etc. The designs and drawings in both Junior & Senior Infant yards has been a joint successful project involving teachers, parents and pupils.

Every effort is made to create a pleasant and welcoming internal atmosphere. Display and storage facilities have been designed by the school so as to be child orientated, stimulating and encouraging of enquiry. The atmosphere is also designed to develop a sense of security, confidence and independence on the part of the child.

### **Subjects Taught**

**Our curriculum is comprised of the following subjects:**

Gaeilge, English, Maths, S.E.S.E. (Social, Environmental & Scientific Education), Religion, S.P.H.E (Social, Personal & Health Education), Visual Arts, Music, Drama, Physical Education and I.C.T., (Information, Communication Technology).

***Time allotted to each subject is as per Department of Education & Skills guideline.***

All classrooms are adequately equipped with relevant resources, and the following is a list of teachers who hold Posts of Responsibility for the areas of the Curriculum:

Mary McNally	Deputy Principal	Safety Officer. Geography & Environment/Religion/Droichead Attendance Education Welfare Board, School Reports, Assessment Folders. Allocation of Classes in event of teacher absences.
Paula Fitzsimons	Assistant Principal I	Literacy, Library, Aistear, Drama, Mentoring
Miriam Coughlin	Assistant Principal II	Physical Education/Mentoring
Catherine McGrath	Assistant Principal II	Gaeilge, 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Equipment
Angela Galvin	Assistant Principal II	Visual Arts, Displays, Staff Room Sundries
Joanne Corr	Assistant Principal II	Science, First Aid
Caroline Fadden	Assistant Principal II	Maths Resources & Equipment
Máire Clerkin	Assistant Principal II	SPHE, Filing Cabinet Keys/Computer Memory keys

(Extra Curricular Activities may include: Art & Craft, Chess, Gaeilge, Sports/GAA Skills, Speech and Drama, Irish Dancing, Modern Dance, Guitar, Tin Whistle, Homework Club, Keyboard, Science, Maths, Lego, Ballet, Scouts and Guides).

### **In School Management**

The Principal and the Deputy Principal are in regular professional contact with all postholders. Formal meetings are held at least once every term.

## 2. MISSION STATEMENT

Holy Family Junior National School is a co-educational Junior Primary School for the education of children in the parish of St Finian, River Valley.

The school has a Catholic ethos. Religious education is provided for pupils in accordance with the doctrines and traditions of the Catholic Church. In line with the Catholic ethos, the school observes Catholic holidays and festivals. The children are prepared for the reception of the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion in accordance with arrangements with the archdiocese of Dublin. The children are given opportunity to participate in liturgical celebrations arranged by the school. The ethos recognises the uniqueness value and dignity of each pupil and aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person including his/her relationship with God, family, teacher, special needs assistants, secretary, caretakers, friends, community, others and the environment.

The school is committed to the aims and principles of the (revised 1999) primary school curriculum. The curriculum aims to enable each child to:

- Live a full life as a child and realise his/her full potential as a unique individual.
- Equip the child to avail of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.
- Develop socially, through living with and co-operating with others for the good of society.

This school celebrates the uniqueness of each individual and seeks to nurture the child in all dimensions of his/her life; spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, asthetic, social and physical.

The school sees itself as an integral part of the Parish of St. Finian, in partnership with the parent body. Close contact is maintained between school and home. Parents and teachers support each other in supporting the pupils to realise the fullness of their potential. We value greatly our relationship with parents and the local community.

The Principal and staff aim to make the school a centre of excellence in which high professional standards are maintained and where pupils learn in a safe and happy environment.

As a learning community, the school promotes and values the notion of life-long learning for all. Teachers and all staff are encouraged and supported to develop personally and professionally. Ancillary staff are respected and highly valued for the contribution they make to the school.

We strive to respond to the needs of all including travellers, refugees, international students and children with special needs. The school promotes equality of opportunity and it respects the cultural and religious values of all. Extra support is provided for children with learning difficulties, special educational needs and where English is a second language.

This school seeks to promote a warm welcoming, safe, happy, supportive, nurturing, inclusive, respectful environment for the whole school community. We aim to provide a safe, physical and emotional environment that fosters tolerance and inclusivity.

## **Cultural Diversity**

Holy Family J.N.S. recognises that all children have a culture and ethnicity. Learning to value their own culture and ethnicity is central to their self-esteem and sense of identity. Intercultural education facilitates all children in coming to value their own heritage and the heritage of others.

The school community develops an experience of, and positive engagement with, cultural diversity through the practices that shape and make up the child's total experience of school life. As such, Holy Family J.N.S. recognises that intercultural education extends beyond a narrow focus on the content of classroom teaching, and is central to the effective development of an inclusive, intercultural school. In the school plan we explore opportunities for intercultural education in the curriculum areas for each class group, selecting appropriate resources, approaching assessment with an intercultural awareness and creating supportive environments for second language learning.

## **3. CURRICULUM PLANS AND PROGRAMMES**

This school has a comprehensive School Plan in each curricular area. Each subject area was co-ordinated by the relevant Postholder with input from Curriculum Planning Seminars/In-Service, Personnel from School Development and Planning, revised Curricula, Principal and all the teaching Staff in the school. These plans are revisited under the "*School Self-Evaluation*" process to reflect current best practice.

### **Teachers/Staff**

The school vision recognises that a claim to true professionalism must be based on the delivery of a standard of knowledge, expertise and level of service warranting such. Towards this end, ongoing professional development is encouraged through activities such as; the provision of a comprehensive Professional Reading Library, the sharing of expertise through the Curriculum Planning sessions and attendance at In-Service Courses. All aspects of school organisation have been carefully planned, with regular updating and revision of the 'Plean Scoile'.

Holy Family J. N.S. is a "Droichead" school providing formal induction for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). This programme is in conjunction with PDST and completion is a requirement for full Teaching Council recognition. A professional support team comprised of experienced staff works with NQTs over the period allocated for the process.

Further, the school has staff who are trained as mentors. These staff are there to support both NQTs and new staff throughout their first years of teaching in our school.

### **Management**

A comprehensive management document has been produced outlining, according to guidelines issued by D.E.S., the management structure of this school.

- (a) Principal Teacher
- (b) 1 Deputy Principal
- (c) 2 Assistant Principals I
- (d) 6 Assistant Principal II (see Management Document)

### **Equality**

The school complies with the Equal Status Act 2000-2004, The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004, The Education Welfare Act 2000, The Education Act 1998 and The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (E.P.S.E.N.) 2004.

## Special Needs

In the school's Admission's Policy specific reference is made to the enrolment of children with Special Needs. This is an inclusive school where all children are welcome, and given the opportunity to achieve to their full potential. It is the policy of this school to integrate, where possible/suitable, all children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream.

Prior to enrolment the B.O.M. requests from parents copies of all relevant medical and/or psychological reports where available. Where they are not available a request will be made that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of these reports is (a) to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child and (b) to apply to The National Council for Special Education for the necessary resources to ensure that the child's educational needs can be met in the school.

These Resources may take the form of:

1. Access to the support of Special Needs Assistants
2. Accessing Additional Teaching Inputs under Department of Education & Skills (D.E.S.)
3. Avail of services of Visiting Teachers – e.g. Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired.

With proper documentation and the approval of Special Educational Needs Organiser (S.E.N.O.) these services should be in place from the first day of enrolment. Where a child is enrolled in this school and there are concerns re their educational needs based on School Screening and Teacher observation, assessments may be sought from the most relevant professionals, with parental consent. Early intervention is recognised as being of huge importance in addressing these concerns/needs

A review of resources by National Council for Special Education/Special Educational Needs Organiser takes place regularly and, where necessary, applications for additional resources will be made. In other cases, resources may be withdrawn.

## Parents

The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators of their children and supports them in this role. Parental involvement is encouraged through **Junior Infant parent information talks**. These take place in September/October, where parents are invited as a group to a talk given by the Principal and their child's teacher. Many aspects of school life are discussed and parents are advised on how best they can support the work of the class teacher and the school. They are also informed of the existence of the Parents' Association and are invited to become active members.

School Policy on Homework and Information Sheet is distributed and discussed.

Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the development of their children and to meet with the class teacher both informally and formally to discuss any aspect of their child's progress (see school website [www.holyfamilyjns.ie](http://www.holyfamilyjns.ie) and Parent Information Booklet).

#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES

The following is a list of Policies which have been ratified by the Board of Management and are available from the school. Each teacher is provided with a folder containing school policies/procedures.

- Health & Safety Statement
- Admissions Policy (including Special Needs)
- Child Safeguarding
- Anti-Bullying
- Code of Behaviour & Discipline
- School Attendance
- School Introduction Statement
- Equality of Opportunity
- Sexual Harassment/Adult Bullying
- Critical Incidence
- Mobile Phone & Electronic Devices
- Data Protection
- Protected Disclosures
- Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Screening Policy for Identification of Learning Difficulties
- Special Needs Assistants
- Pupil Illness during School
- Administration of Medicines
- School Substance Use
- A.U.P. Acceptable Use Policy (Internet)
- Homework
- School Reports
- Education Welfare Board Notification of Absences
- Teacher Absences
- Job- Sharing
- Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT)
- Equality of Access and Participation
- Book Rental
- School Tour
- Extra Personal Vacation Days & Continual Professional Development
- Assessment & Reporting

## 5. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

- School Planning
- School History
- Home School Links
- Attendance
- Supervision
- Pupil Personal Accident
- Fire Drill & Evacuation Procedures
- First Aid
- Annual School Calendar
- School Tours
- Sports Day
- Pupil Promotion
- Transfer of Pupils from Holy Family J.N.S. to Holy Family S.N.S.
- Student Teacher Policy / Substitute Teacher Information
- E.P.V. Days (Extra Personal Vacation Days)
- Notification of Brief Teacher Absence
- Booklists
- School Reports
- Photocopying and Printing
- Self-Esteem



## 6. DEVELOPMENT

This school is committed to the concept of life-long learning and encourages professional development in all areas of the curriculum. Continuing professional development is encouraged at both whole school and individual staff member level. This allows us to ensure “best practice” in our delivery of the school curriculum.

### Gaeilge

Cloisfidh na páistí an múinteoir ag labhairt Gaeilge leo i rith an lae. Spreagfar iad an teanga atá foghlamtha acu a úsáid lasmuigh den cheacht Gaeilge. Iarracht a dhéanamh chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid níos mó timpeall na scoile. Bíonn “Seachtain na Gaeilge againn gach bhliain. Bíonn ceol, craic, céilí agus drámaíocht again i rith na seachtain.

### Elements of the School Plan include:

1. The creation of a pleasant external and internal environment (See School Environment)
2. Accessibility of information, with background reading materials, classroom organisation procedures and subject materials provided for each teacher.
  - **Plean Scoile** – All Curricular Areas. Shared Drive Under Plean Scoile
  - **Plean Scoile** - Vision, Aims, Organisational Policies, Procedure & Practices Developmental Section. Shared Drive under Plean Scoile
  - **Professional Reading Library** displaying D.E.S. publications and all other relevant publications of Educational interest.
  - **School Self-Evaluation (SSE)** – English, Maths & Science
3. A programme of familiarisation with curriculum content as at (2), including the provision of talks on the Junior Infant Curriculum by Principal and Junior Infant Class Teachers during each school year.
4. A sharing of professional expertise in preparation of the materials as at (2) and (3). Regular curriculum planning.
5. Provision of extensive Audio-Visual and I.T. resources, with accessibility designed to encourage use, e.g. Interactive Whiteboards, Overhead Projectors, Visualisers and Computers, I Pads etc
6. Complete stocking of each Infant classroom with a range of activity materials. The teacher is issued with checklists on which, at the end of each school year, a full check on materials is recorded before handing on same to the next class teacher.
7. A Teacher’s Kit, including all books in use for the particular school year together with the Parent Information Booklet, Policy documents and various programmes. A detailed outline on the procedure to be followed when preparing children for First Holy Communion is also included.
8. Planning: Staff has agreed that the school adopts school produced fortnightly templates. “Folens Primary Teacher’s Yearbook” is also provided to each staff member by the B.O.M. This book includes, ‘Teacher Planning, Templates & Forms, Diary Pages, References, Records and Results’. The Cuntas Míosúil is a tick box format available in fortnightly plans. This section, when complete, is photocopied and retained in the Principal’s office. At the end of the school year all completed Yearbooks are stored

in a central location. Newly qualified teachers who are in their probationary year are expected to prepare weekly notes of much greater detail (Templates available from Principal's office). Or N.I.P.T. Website

9. Parent Information Policy: In addition to the talks on the Infant Curriculum, an induction meeting is given for new Junior Infants. Clear statements of school policy are provided in the Parents Information Booklet which includes: Routines, Code of Behaviour and Discipline, Anti-Bullying Code and Support Programmes.
10. All parents/guardians receive a copy of their child's school report including standardised test results where appropriate. Standardised tests results are discussed with parents at Parent Teacher Meetings.
11. Class Record Sheets are provided and updated yearly. In addition, class lists, with all immediately relevant details, including medical information are provided.
12. A Special Information Sheet is provided to all staff giving details of medical conditions, medication needed, allergies etc that specific children may have. It is the policy of this school, with parents consent, to display photographs of these children in the staff room and class folder, with details as to how to proceed in the event of an emergency. This list is updated regularly.
13. The following Screening, Diagnostic and Standardised Tests may be used:-

• In-house Literacy Test	Junior Infants
• Bury Infant Check	Junior Infants
• Test 2R	Senior Infants
• Jackson Phonic Tests 3-6 (C.V.C.) etc	Senior Infants – 2 <sup>nd</sup>
• Schonell Spelling Test	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• Rain Sentence Reading Test	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• Murray McNally 100 words	Senior Infants – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• *Micra-T Literacy Test	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• *MIST (Middle Infant Screening Test)	Senior Infants
• *NNRIT ( New Non-Reading Intelligence Test)	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• *Sigma-T Numeracy Test	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• *Drumcondra Numeracy & Literacy	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes
• Drumcondra Spelling Test	2 <sup>nd</sup> Classes

\*Given routinely

Others are diagnostic and are used by SEN Teachers

A child is considered for repeat in consultation with the Principal and the child's parents, and in accordance with the guidelines set out in D.E.S. Circular 32/03.

According to Circular 0056/2011 the Minister for Education & Skills informed schools that all pupils should take standardised tests in English reading and Maths in 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Class. It is school policy to furnish parents with written results together with an explanation of interpretation of standardised scores.

As per Circular 0056/2011, the principal teacher reports annually to the Board of Management the *aggregated assessment data* from these tests. (usually at Board of Meeting held in June). This report comprises of the aggregated results of standardised tests administered in accordance with Circular 0056/2011. The principal will also report aggregated assessment results to the Department of Education & Skills once annually.

## 14. Information and Communication Technologies

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are continually evolving and becoming more and more integral to our way of life. School aims to prepare and equip children to live effective and fulfilling lives. ICTs offer teachers and children educational tools and resources which extend their learning environment. When used to support the aims, principles and objectives of the Primary School Curriculum, these technology tools have the potential to augment and transform classroom learning and teaching.

A continual programme of development and expansion of ICT resources is in place in the school. This is in line with ICT Policy and Initiatives from the Department of Education and Skills(DES) in recent years, along with the school's own vision of the role ICTs have to play. As recommended by DES guidelines, ICT use is approached in 3 ways:

- **Learning about ICT** where teachers and children develop skills and knowledge in the potential uses of ICT to support learning.
- **Learning with ICT** where teachers and children use ICT resources to support the classroom curriculum.
- **Learning through ICT** where teachers and children use ICT to transform the process of teaching and learning – learning in new ways.

All classrooms have been furnished with a laptop, Interactive Whiteboards, Digital Projector and Visualise. Each classroom is also linked to the school's Local Area Network (LAN) and has Broadband Internet access, subject to the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). A number of other technologies e.g. Digital Camera and small number of Tablets are available and can be used with the children. The school subscribes to various, age appropriate websites.

*This statement will be reviewed annually.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs Margaret O'Neill, (Chairperson)  
Board of Management, Holy Family J.N.S.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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