



Holy Family JNS

River Valley Swords

River Valley, Swords, Co. Dublin, Charity Number 20119300



Principal's Message

March 2024

Welcome to our Term 2 Newsletter. We have had a busy term with Catholic Schools Week, Science Week, Wellness Week, Spring Day and all the activities that took place during Seachtain na Gaeilge.



Children from 2nd class have again been invited to contribute to the newsletter via our KidsView. These children have chosen a topic and have written their piece - this process allows children to purposefully engage with writing. Kidsview gives children a voice - fostering independence, resilience and self-esteem. These contributions are denoted with the binocular symbol. Well done to our budding journalists and special thanks to the teachers who facilitate this.



Thanks to Ms. Ginty for co-ordinating Kidsview and producing the Newsletter. I would like to wish you all a very Happy Easter – have a great break and enjoy the “choc fest”!

Mary Mc Nally



From the 29th January to 2nd February 2024, the school was buzzing with all things science. This nationwide event gives children an opportunity to appreciate and celebrate science in our everyday lives. Our Parent Talks were hugely engaging for the children and from a range of science, engineering and technology backgrounds. The children participated in a host of activities including exciting experiments, exploring interesting figures from the past and facts, and creative poster design and art competitions. We are very grateful to our STEM parents for their time and involvement and also to Mr. O'Donoghue for facilitating a great week in the school. Check out the [website](#) for photos and more!



Safer Internet Day took place in Holy Family on 8th February 2024. This full day of activities was intended to develop the children's awareness of the strategies they need to use to stay safe online.

The day kicked off with an assembly in the hall led by Ms. McCabe. The children took part in discussion, songs and stories throughout the day. We also sang a whole school rap called Stay Safe on the Internet! Classes paired up to create a PicCollage of the key messages from the day. Thank you to Ms. McCabe and the IT Committee for co-ordinating this. Any parent who wishes to learn more about online safety for their child, please visit [webwise.ie](#)



KidsView by Nathan

Science week is a fun week. In our class, we had two visitors. The first visitor worked with Iarnród Eireann and he fixes the railways. He had some funny stories. The second visitor worked with AI. He explained that AI doesn't understand words, they only understand numbers. He works in a lab that makes medicine for all over the world. In our class, we did an experiment where we tried to make rockets using cellotape, paper and straws.



KidsView by Jessica & Mia

In February, we had a week where we learned about how to stay safe on the Internet. We talked about what to do if a scary ad or video pops up. We sang a safety internet rap about staying safe. We went to a senior infant class to make a poster about how to be safe online when we use our tablets. We made these posters using an app on the ipads called PiCollage. Our teacher read us stories and we talked a lot about the internet that day.

#BeKindOnline

Buddy Reading



Our interschool reading initiative continued this term with Second and Fifth classes joining forces and enjoying books. More classes will come together to Buddy Read during the next term. Many thanks to the Junior and Senior school teachers involved.



KidsView by David & Ava

Our class took part in buddy reading over the past few weeks. Buddy reading is when you read with someone else in another class. We did our buddy reading with Mr. Gibbons' 5th class from the Senior School. We each had a partner from the 5th class to read with. Some books we read were The Gruffalo, Grandpa's Great Escape and The Highway Rat. While we were reading, we made connections and predictions. It was a lot of fun and it was really nice to meet new people.



Six Bricks

The school is delighted to announce that we were successful in a STEM Learning Grant. It was decided to invest in Six Bricks, a hands-on tool for learning. Through fun and short activities, the children practise memory, movement and use games designed to wake up the brain! Supporting the new maths curriculum, Six Bricks give children time to manipulate concrete tools (six colourful duplo bricks) which facilitate learning and development. Huge thanks to Ms. Corr, Ms. McCabe and Mr. O'Donoghue for their work on this process. The children are really enjoying the Six Bricks lessons!



Wellbeing & Mental Health at HFJNS

As part of our SPHE and Wellbeing programme, the Junior & Senior Infants took part in some live Wellbeing Workshops during October & November. They discovered some beneficial grounding and calming breathing exercises. The First Class children are engaging with the "A Lust for Life" Programme at the moment. This is a 10 week programme which aims to build resilience, increase wellbeing and enhance the emotional literacy in children.

The school has resumed its involvement with Junior Achievement Ireland. Ms. Kealey's First Class are currently participating in the programmes called "Our Families" with a business volunteer from Hertz Europe. Ms. Darby's Senior Infants and Ms. Hough's Second Class have also been chosen to partake in the project. Business volunteers from the DAA will visit the school in due course to deliver the programmes titled Ourselves & Our Community respectively.

Children's Mental Health Week & Palentine's Day



We celebrated Children's Mental Health Week during the week of 5th February. The theme this year was "My Voice Matters". The children participated in various activities in school to create awareness of positive mental health. The main focus is to empower young people to use their voices, share what matters to them, and encourage those around them to hear their voices. To coincide with Friendship February, the children teamed up with their pals in other classes for a Palentine's Activity. The children made Friendship wristbands.

KidsView by Ludvik

On the 13th of February we went visiting Senior Infants. My partner's name was Ava. We spoke about what colours we liked and then we made bracelets. We put a lot of work into it. I helped my partner to customise our bracelets. I had a great experience. It was really enjoyable.

KidsView by Matilda

On Palentine's Day, my class went to Senior Infants. My partner's name was Ruby. I made a Palentine's Day bracelet for Ruby and she made one for me. She coloured my bracelet green and purple. She was very kind.

Ms. Carty, SPHE Co-Ordinator, and the Wellbeing Committee are leading and facilitating these wonderful initiatives for the children – we are very thankful for all their efforts.



Catholic Schools Week

CSW was celebrated from 21st to 27th January with the theme of Catholic Schools as Communities of Service. Second Class children helped to mark this again with prayers and reflections read daily to all children over the school intercom. Our thanks to Ms. Hayes for facilitating this.

Spring Day 2024



The weather did not dampen any spirits on Spring Day this year. The fundraiser was bigger than ever thanks to the Holy Family Parents Association. Parents of children in both the Junior and Senior school brought a smile to every face with tasty treats, flowers and gifts. The Bumper Raffle was huge this year and the winners were delighted with their prizes. Ms. Darby's class sold the most raffle tickets to win an Easter Egg each. Spring Day proceeds go towards educational resources across both schools and this year, we raised a record breaking €12,570. Enormous thanks to all who gave their support – parents on the day, those who gave donations and bought tickets, our generous sponsors and the SNS children who manned the tables superbly. It was a wonderful day for all. To get involved, please email holyfamilyparentsassociation@gmail.com



KidsView by Chloe

On Friday the 1st March, there was a bake sale in the hall. There were lots of baked goods. There was a raffle and a Guess the Teddy and Doll's name. There were cakes, buns, cookies and brownies. There were Mother's Days gifts too. It was very cheap! Lots of parents helped out. It was crowded but it was fantastic. I loved Spring Day!



Green Schools 2024

This year, Holy Family JNS is working toward our fifth green flag. Over the years we have earned the flags for Litter & Waste, Energy, Water and Travel. The fifth flag focuses on Biodiversity. This theme looks at the steps which can be taken in primary schools to increase the children's awareness of the importance of native plants, animals and habitats and the necessity of increasing species-richness in a locality.

There are two children from each class appointed to the school's Green Team Committee. They monitor use of Handtowels (Litter & Waste) and use of lights, boards etc (Energy). On the 21st February, as part of the application, the Second Class children on the Green Team met with a member from An Taisce, Clare Patten. They updated her on the schools progress and shared all of their knowledge on Biodiversity. Go Green Team! A special well done to Ethan from Room 12 for his wonderful slogan. Thank you to

Ms. Power and Ms. Linnane who are leading this initiative and we are grateful to all the children and parents for their ongoing support with our theme. Fingers crossed we will be successful with our application!





Seachtain na Gaeilge 2024

The fortnight long celebration of Irish language, heritage and culture began with Spring Day in Holy Family. From 1st to 17th March, the children embraced class and school-wide activities such as Wellness, art, songs and games through Irish. The whole-school ceolchoirm with the incredibly talented Teachers Band and the bi-lingual play, An Chailleach Santach (The Greedy Witch – a Gráinne Jordan Production), both captivated and engaged the children. Special message of thanks to Ms. Rattigan and Ms. Linnane who adapted a modern song with lyrics to suit our Seachtain Na Gaeilge celebrations. The children loved it! On the final day, the Parade and the Céilí Mór gave rise to a fantastic atmosphere in the school and in the community. Thank you to Ms. Ginty for organising the events and buíochas mór lena páistí agus na múinteoirí go léir. Visit our [website](#) for the song, photos and videos.



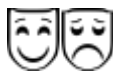
An Damhsa Mór KidsView by Oliver & Sophie



On Friday, the 15th March, we had a céilí and a parade for Seachtain na Gaeilge. We went to the hall to do the céilí – we were so excited! We danced to traditional Irish music and songs called Shoe the Donkey and Ballaí Luimní. We sang the song Ms. Rattigan and Ms. Linnane wrote and our teacher, Ms McManus taught us a line dance. We wore green, white and orange - It was great fun! One of our classmates wore a Welsh rugby kit because St. Patrick was originally from Wales. For our school parade, we had a walk around our local area – lots of cars beeped at us. When we got back, we were tired. It was a busy day but we enjoyed it!



An Chailleach Santach KidsView by Sophia



This year the play was called An Chaillach Santach, which means the Greedy Witch. I was excited for the play to start. I really liked it because the actors were really good. It was funny and it suited all ages. I liked how it had a happy ending. I loved all the songs in it, especially Shake it off because I love Taylor Swift and I'm a Swiftie.



Ag Caint le Chéile KidsView by Nicole



I was happy to be picked to speak over the intercom but I was a little bit nervous. We went to Ms. McNally's office. I spoke about the days of the week in Irish. I was really happy afterwards. I realised that it wasn't that scary. When we came back to class, everyone was clapping.



An Ceoilchoirm KidsView by Alex



The concert took place in the hall. There were lots of teachers playing instruments such as the piano, guitar, banjo, accordion, tin whistle, flute and uilleann pipes. We sang lots of songs like Trasna na dTonnta, Molly Malone, Rattlin' Bog and Beyoncé in Irish. There were children Irish dancing and playing the tin whistle. It was fun. It was amazing. The local police were even there and listened to one song! We all got to wear green on Thursday and Friday. I enjoyed it and so did everyone else. It was outstanding!



Tesco Community Fund

Many thanks to Nicola and Michael from Tesco who recently visited the school to present a cheque for €1187. Thanks to all who supported the school with their blue tokens in this Community Fundraiser in Tesco Holywell and Tesco Ridgewood.



Creative Schools 2024

Our school is celebrating something incredible! We've been chosen as one of 139 schools

for the Creative Schools initiative. This special program is all about making art and creativity a big part of our lives. It's like giving a huge hug to creativity! Creative Schools is part of the Creative Ireland Programme and it's led by awesome people from the Arts Council, the Education Department and the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht. Together, we are making our school even more creative and fun! We've got our very own Creative Schools Committee with children from Senior Infants to Second Class. Heather Gray, our Creative Associate, is going to help us decide on all the cool things we want to do together. Get ready for some super exciting times ahead!

Toraíochta na Cásca

Our traditional Easter themed Irish and Maths Hunt was held during the last week of term. The children had great fun agus bhí said ag úsáid an Gaeilge. Thanks to Ms. Corr and Ms. Ginty for organising this egg-citing event.

Beannachtaí na Cásca Oraibh!



KidsView by Annabelle, Caia & Lillie

On Thursday, the 21st March, all the boys and girls from HFJNS went on an Easter Scavenger Hunt. The hunt took place all around the school. It was so exciting and everyone had lots of fun!

Dates for the Diary

Term 3 Re-opening	8 th April
First Communion	4 th May
May BH Closure	6 th , 7 th & 8 th May
Maths Inservice Day	29 th May
June BH Closure	4 th , 5 th & 6 th June
Polling Closure	7 th June
Senior Infants Tour	10 th June
1 st Class Tour	10 th June
2 nd Class Tour	13 th June
Junior Infant Tour	14 th June
Summer Closure	28 th June