



Holy Family JNS

River Valley Swords

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



December 2025



Principal's Message

Welcome to our Term 1 newsletter. I would like to thank Ms Ginty for coordinating and producing this edition. We have had a great start to the school year and I would like to extend a special welcome to our Junior Infants, who have settled in very well. It has been a very busy first term with many activities and events, including STEM Week, Trick or Treat, the Annual Book Fair, Parent-Teacher Meetings and the Shoe Box Appeal.

Each term, Second Class pupils are invited to contribute to the newsletter through an initiative called KidsView. The children choose a topic and write their own piece, allowing them to purposefully engage with writing. These contributions are denoted by a binocular symbol. Well done to all the children who contributed this term, and special thanks to their teachers who facilitate this initiative.

We would also like to wish Ms Donna Barry very best wishes on her retirement. After over 35 years in our school, Ms Barry has been a class teacher, a special educational teacher and Reading Recovery teacher. She was also responsible for the lovely history displays and collections in the school.

We would like to sincerely thank her for her commitment, dedication and excellent service to the school.

We have enjoyed a wonderful build-up to Christmas. Celebrations began with a visit from the DAA Roadshow, who entertained us in the yard and presented the school with a gift. The children thoroughly enjoyed performing in their Christmas shows and a huge thank you goes to them and their teachers for entertaining us all. We were delighted to welcome Santa to the school and enjoyed a trip to the cinema. We also visited Anova Residential Home to sing carols. I would like to acknowledge the contributions and ongoing support of the staff, parents, and children of HFJNS throughout the year. Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and best wishes for 2026.

Mary Mc Nally



GAA Skills Sessions

The children have again been enjoying GAA sessions again this term. Our thanks and best Christmas wishes to Sean Motherway from St Finians for making the sessions fun for all!



KidsView by Luke & Zach

Sean comes to our school every Tuesday and Friday to do GAA with us. He is the football coach for Finians. He taught us lots of skills like solos, the 4 step rule and the hand pass. We also learned how to hold a hurl and solo. At the end, we did a skills test. It was so fun. We really enjoyed GAA with Sean.

Digital Learning

We marked Safety Internet Day as part of Stem and Maths week this year. The children engaged in an assembly, read stories about internet awareness and teamed up to work with other classes in creating a safety message on the ipads.



KidsView by Ciarán, Éilish, Jamie & Teagan

We learned about staying safe on the internet. We know that we shouldn't add people if we don't know them and we shouldn't talk to strangers online. If someone tries to talk to us online, we should talk to an adult we trust first. We learned an internet safety rap which we all sang together in the hall.



Maths & STEM Week

October brought a real buzz of STEM learning to HFJNS! Pupils enjoyed a fun and meaningful week discovering how maths and science connect with the world around them. A number of guest speakers with expertise in science, engineering and technology kindly visited the school to share their experiences and insights during our Parent Talks. The week was filled with hands-on learning, as children carried out experiments, explored inspiring figures and facts, and took part in interactive maths games with pupils from other classes. These activities encouraged curiosity, teamwork and problem-solving throughout the school. A sincere thank you to Mr O'Donoghue and Ms Corr for coordinating such an enjoyable and educational week, and to our STEM parents for their valuable support and participation. Be sure to check out the website for photos and highlights from the week!



KidsView by Cillian & Lila

STEM/MATHS Week was a great week full of excitement. First class visited Senior Infants and second class visited Junior Infants to play lots of fun and challenging games. We had lots of special visits from parents who came in to talk to children about engineering and the science of fitness. We learned about jobs that we didn't even know existed! Our favourite part of this week was the board games. Learning maths through games is the best way to learn - It is so much fun!. We played many maths games on the interactive whiteboard, took part in random daily maths quizzes and learned lots of catchy maths songs to help us understand concepts in maths better. Overall it was a superb week and we are already excited to participate in Maths week next year!



Book Fair HFJNS

From the 10th to 14th November, the HFJNS boys and girls were very excited to visit our Book Fair in the hall. Our annual book fair is intended to encourage the children to engage with books while also fundraising for school resources! The Parents Association are instrumental in this event with running of the book stalls each day. These volunteers helped children by day and the adults on at Parents Night. Many thanks to Ms. Fadden, Literacy Coordinator, who organised the Golden Tickets for each class. The Book Fair raised sales of €10,276 – of this we earned 60% of commission which goes to fund literacy resources.



KidsView by Milo

We had our book fair in November. It was in the hall and there was lots of books. There was the new Dogman book "Big Jim Believes". The book fair had a junior and senior sections. You could also buy pencils, rulers and erasers at the till.



Parents Association

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to everyone involved in the Parents Association for their continued efforts, time and support throughout Term 1. A special thank you to those who attended the AGM on 21st October 2025 and contributed to its success. Your involvement and commitment play a vital role in supporting the children and the wider school community. If you would like to get involved or offer your support, please contact the Parents Association by email at holyfamilyparentsassociation@gmail.com

Green Schools



As part of our Green School work, we are learning how to care for our planet by reducing waste and recycling as much as possible. One simple but effective way we can help is by bringing our own hand towels to school instead of using paper towels, which greatly reduces waste. This small change helps to keep our school cleaner, greener, and more environmentally friendly. By making thoughtful choices like this, we are raising awareness about protecting the environment and learning how our everyday actions can make a big difference for the future. Many thanks to the children's committee, Ms. Linnane and Mr Murphy for all their efforts in keeping our school clean and green!



KidsView by Callum & Jamie

We are the green schools volunteers. This is what we do. I empty the paper bins at the end of the day. I pick people to help me out each day. We empty our bins into the green recycling bag. It is hard work but we can handle it. We put blue tissue paper in separate bins. If we bring hand towels, we can protect the environment better.

Trick or Treat for Temple Street

Trick or Treat celebrated a monstrous 25 years in 2025, and we at Holy Family were delighted to take part once again. Children and teachers embraced the occasion by dressing up in fantastic costumes, creating a fun and festive atmosphere throughout the school and raising €854. Everyone enjoyed a truly spooktacular day filled with laughter, creativity and Halloween spirit.



KidsView by Jennifer & Millie

On the 20th of October, we had a Halloween disco. We made a lot of money for Temple Street. All the kids in Holy Family dressed up and danced in the hall. The teachers played music from K Pop Demon hunter. We had a fashion show before it, and we could show off our costumes. We were so happy we could give money to charity. We also got to play in the yard in our costumes. It was a fun day.



Season of Giving

The school and Team Hope would like to express their sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in this year's Christmas Shoebox Appeal, both online and offline. The amazing total of 204 gift boxes was very much appreciated and will help to make a direct and meaningful difference in the life of a child affected by poverty. This generosity truly reflects the caring spirit of our school community. A special word of thanks to Mr. Murphy for coordinating this wonderful initiative and ensuring its success.



KidsView by Ella, Halle, Liam, Paige and Sadie

We collected a total of 204 shoeboxes in Holy Family JNS this year. The shoeboxes were sent to children in Africa and Eastern Europe and we are glad they will be going to those who need nice things the most at Christmas time. We put dry food, good quality toys and warm clothes like hats and gloves inside them. We wish them all a very merry Christmas!

Christmas Carols



Some children from Second class were invited back into a local residential home and asked to spread the Christmas spirit by way of a Carol Service.



KidsView by Alia, Ciarán, James, Luke and Noah.

On Monday 15th December, Ms. English and Mr. Sullivan's classes were delighted to visit Anova Nursing Home to sing Christmas songs to everyone there. Ms. English played the piano, Mr. Sullivan played the guitar and Ms. Linnane played the tin whistle. We gave the residents cards that were made by the rest of Second Class, and they gave us cards too! We were glad to spread some Christmas cheer and we had lots of fun.

DAA Christmas Roadshow

The DAA Christmas Roadshow is an annual community initiative that brings festive performances to primary schools in our area. The roadshow visited 19 schools including Holy Family JNS! All the children enjoyed songs, dances, interactive shows and festive characters such as Jack Frost, the elves & Santa!



KidsView by Emily

The show was in December out in the yard. There were elves and some of them were KPop demon hunters. They were singing Golden. It was very good. Santa was there and he did a backflip. At the end Santa gave out colouring books for everyone.



HFJNS @ Movies

The trip to the cinema to see Zootropolis 2 was a wonderful success! The children did a fantastic job walking all the way and were full of excitement. Our cheerful singing and Christmas spirit certainly brightened the day & brought smiles to many faces along the way. A big thank you to Ms. Darby for organising this much-loved and festive outing! 🎬



KidsView by

Ben, Brooke, Harry & Millie

We went to 'Zootropolis 2'. It was a very very long walk to get there. We walked down with our partners. The movie was very funny and very good. There were a few catchy songs in it. We had a really good time!



KidsView by Andrew & Penny

Junior Infants watched a movie in their classroom instead. They watched 'Chicken Run'. Conor & Dáire from Room 5 explained it was about a chicken in flight school. It was good. They also did jigsaw activities after.



Santa Visits HFJNS



KidsView by Emma

Santa came to school on the 17th of December. We heard bells jingling on the intercom. We were so excited to see him! Santa gave us jellies when he came to our classroom and told us we were all on the good list. He was so kind.

Dates for the Diary

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| School Reopens | 5 January 2026 |
| St. Brigid's BH | 2 February 2026 |
| Mid-Term | 19 & 20 February 2026 |
| St Patrick's BH | 16 & 17 March 2026 |
| School Closure | 18 March 2026 |
| Easter Break | 30 March - 10 April 26 |
| School Reopens on 13th April 2026 | |

Christmas Shows 2025



In recent weeks, the corridors of HFJNS have been alive with music and drama as classes prepared for their Christmas Shows. These performances brought great enjoyment to pupils, teachers and families alike and were the result of weeks of hard work and dedication from everyone involved. The children should be very proud of their performances. Special words of thanks go to Ms Hayes for coordinating the schedules for both the hall and the church in addition to accompanying classes on the keyboard and to Ms Roughneen who played the guitar.



Junior Infants Show

KidsView by Harry & Ines

The show was a huge success, earning a "big 10 with 10 big fingers!". They sang lots of songs with *Jingle Bells* and *Little Snowflake* being their favourites. Everyone wore cheerful Christmas jumpers. The children felt happy on stage, not nervous at all. They had practised five times a week. Eimear and Finley from Room 3 said they would love to do it all over again.



Senior Infants Show

KidsView by Caleb & Johan



Senior Infants had their Christmas show on Friday 12th December. Their Christmas concert was in the hall. Some of the songs they sang were 'Away in a manger' and 'Little Donkey'. The whole class said parts together. They all wore their Christmas jumpers. There were lots of Mammys, Daddys, Grannies and Grandads there. Seán and Bethany from Room 8a said everyone really enjoyed it.



First Class Show

KidsView by Amelia & Fionn

First Class performed their Christmas show in the hall to a huge audience of mams, dads, brothers and sisters! They worked very hard for it, practicing every day for two weeks before they put their show on. They even got the chance to play the bells and the triangle for some songs, and used inflatable saxophones too! This is the Moment was a clear favourite for everyone because of its lovely words and great actions. First Class had a great time doing their show this year.



Second Class Show

KidsView by Hannah & Harlow

The Second Class show was in the church on Tuesday the 9th of December. We sang lots of songs but Nobody wants to Know and You are my Brother were our favourites. Our favourite part of the show was seeing our families there. We felt nervous and excited on the stage but we were happy and relieved when the show ended. Our legs were so sore!

