



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher Mr P.O'Kane

Newsletter 364 & 365 Friday 24th November & Friday 1st December 2017

The past few weeks have been extremely busy with lots going on in class and within our wider school community.

The PGSA held a very successful quiz night on Saturday 18th November—thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event—congratulations to the winning team, Phil's Fuzz. Special thanks must go to Mr Campbell who was an excellent quizmaster and host for the evening.

Our Year 3 children reminded us of the importance of preparing for Christmas throughout the Advent season during their class assembly on Wednesday 22nd November. Mrs Herridge, our Chair of Governors (and Parish Secretary) has created a beautiful Advent wreath for the school that we can light during assemblies and liturgies. Please help your children to prepare for the birth of Jesus throughout Advent.



Year 1 presented their class assembly on Friday 24th November. Their theme was Families & Belonging. Unfortunately, I was unable to be present as I had to accompany Mrs Lewins and the choir to the Southend Music Festival. As always, our choir performed to an exceptionally high standard and were awarded the silver medal for their class. Thank you to all the parents who helped with transport and supported the choir. Special thanks must go to Mrs Lewins for leading the choir and to Mrs Clark and Mrs Childs for teaching the signing members of the choir.

The netball girls were in action on Friday evening in a home match against Hadleigh. Sadly, our girls suffered a 10:3 defeat. However, the girls (and the boys) bounced back on Monday

afternoon when our mixed netball team hosted Kents Hill Junior's mixed netball team. Holy Family chalked up a resounding victory against our neighbours, winning 15:0. Well done!

Our choir performed at the Salvation Army citadel in Hadleigh on Sunday evening. It has become a tradition for our school choir to participate in this annual event organised by the Salvation Army. I am grateful to the parents and staff who gave up their time to ensure that the choir members were present.

Reading Miss Furby would like to thank the parents and grandparents who came to her recent reading training session. She would also like to thank all those parents and grandparents that give up their precious time to help hear readers every week.



Our Year 1 children went up to Deanes School on Thursday 30th November to take part in a **Winter Mini-Games** event. The children were given the opportunity to participate in a number of sports inside one of the sports halls located at Deanes. I'm grateful to Mr Lawrence, Miss Tranah and Miss Furby for arranging our children's participation.



Christmas Fayre Thank you so much to everyone who came along and supported the Christmas Fayre on Friday afternoon, especially all those who helped set up prior to the event and cleared up afterwards. Mrs Sopp, the PGSA treasurer will let us know how much money was raised. The children thoroughly enjoyed the cake sale and raffle on Friday morning—thank you all for your kind donations of cakes, pastries and other items.

Dinner money arrears and Christmas Dinner

I am afraid that too much time is spent by the ladies in the office on chasing unpaid dinner money. Dinner money should be paid for in advance or on the day the meal is to be taken.

Children should come to school with either a lunchbox or their dinner money.

Due to banking arrangements, all dinner money for the last three days of term 18th/19th/20th December must be paid in advance by **Friday 14th December.**

Christmas Dinner day will be the last day of term Wednesday 20th December and will cost £2.50 for KS2 children only; this includes a special dessert and a cracker!

Drum lessons There will be one space for a pupil to start drum lessons with Mr Stevenson at the beginning of the Spring term. The cost is £75.00 for 10 lessons of 15 minutes each term. If your child is interested in learning to play the drums, please contact Mrs Duxbury in the school office. The place will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Thank you.

Saint of the Week Yesterday (Sunday) was the Feast Day of St Francis Xavier, one of the founders of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and a great Catholic missionary. He was a pioneer in spreading the faith throughout India, Borneo, Japan and other parts of Asia. His ambition was to teach the gospel in China, but he died within sight of the Chinese mainland before he ever set foot on Chinese soil.



Saint Francis Xavier



The Holy Family

Prayer to the Holy Family Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendour of true love; to you we turn with trust. Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic churches. Holy Family of Nazareth, may families never again experience violence, rejection and division; may all who have been hurt or scandalized find ready comfort and healing. Holy Family of Nazareth, make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family and its beauty in God's plan. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, graciously hear our prayer. Amen.

Attendance Sadly, pupil attendance at Holy Family School is not what it used to be—quite simply, too many children are having too many days off. The negative impact of absence on children’s learning and attainment has been well-documented in recent years. In addition to the personal impact on individual pupils, the absence rates at Holy Family will be viewed as an issue at our next Ofsted inspection.

The table below puts absence into context:

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent days missed	Equivalent sessions	Equivalent weeks
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	2 Weeks
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	4 Weeks
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	6 Weeks
80%	38 Days	72 Sessions	8 Weeks
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	10 Weeks
70%	57 Days	114 Sessions	11.5 Weeks
65%	67 Days	134 Sessions	13.5 Weeks

The school will be rolling out a number of measures designed to address attendance issues in a number of ways. We will start holding a half-termly raffle for all children with 100% attendance each week with a £5.00 book token as the prize. There will be a special draw at the end of the year for all children with 100% attendance across the year.

We will also have to schedule attendance meetings for parents and carers whose children have high absence rates and we may be compelled to refer some families to Essex LA who will seek to issue fines and perhaps initiate court action. I really hope that attendance will improve and that families and the school can work together for the good of the children.

Library Books Please could children return all library books which they have borrowed from the school library. Thank you.

School Health Drop-in service If you have concerns about your child’s health then you can use the Drop-in service where no appointments are necessary. The limit is 15 minutes per child but for more in-depth problems please contact the clinic directly to speak to a member of the school nurse team on 01268 686041. The locations are: Little Lions Children’s Centre Northwick Park Academy, Third Avenue, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU. Phone 01268 686041 3-4pm 7th December and Oak Tree Children’s Centre, Grovewood Primary School, Grove Road, Rayleigh SS6 8UA. Phone 01268 775910 2-4pm 12th December.

Parish Contact Details

Holy Family Catholic Church, 661 High Road, Benfleet, SS7 6SF

Parish Priest: Fr Eduard Fartan,

eduard.fartan@yahoo.com
priest@holyfamily-church.org

Parish Secretary: Mrs Julie Herridge,
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Nursery class 86.1% RF93.9% 1F 79.3% 2T 90.7% 3W 95.7% 4HW 89.4% 5LB 92.9% 6F 95.2% Well done to Year 6 for best attendance last week.

Mr P. O'Kane

Headteacher

Diary Dates

Thursday 7 th December	Christmas productions dress rehearsals
Friday 8 th December	Feast of the Immaculate Conception—KS2 classes will walk to Mass in Holy Family Church
Monday 11 th December	Christmas productions, 1.30pm—grandparents and parishioners
Tuesday 12 th December	Christmas productions, 1.30pm—parents
Wednesday 13 th December	Christmas productions, 1.30pm—parents
Thursday 14 th December	KS2 walk to Holy Family Church to attend Mass and set up altar for evening production
Thursday 14 th December	KS2 Christmas production, 7.00pm Holy Family Church
Wednesday 13 th December	Year 6 Singing in nursing home
Tuesday 19 th December	Christingle service, 2.30pm
Wednesday 20 th December	Advent reconciliation service
Wednesday 20 th December	Christmas dinner
Wednesday 20 th December	Last day in school 2017
Thursday 21 st December—Monday 1 st January 2018	Christmas Holidays
Tuesday 2 nd January 2018	Non-pupil day
Wednesday 3 rd January 2018	First day of Spring Term 2018
Friday 12 th January 2018	Whole School Pantomime Trip
Monday 29 th January 2018	Young Voices concert o2 Arena Y5 & Y6
Monday 5 th February—Friday 9 th February 2018	Year 6 Danbury Residential