

Holy Child Primary School



End of Year Report to Stakeholders

2025–2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we reach the end of another school year, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been an incredibly busy, successful and rewarding year for our school community.

Since September, our pupils have embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm, positivity and resilience. From the earliest days in Nursery through to our Primary 7 classes preparing to leave us, it has been a year marked by excellent learning, strong community spirit and a wide range of achievements across all areas of school life.

A Year of High-Quality Learning

Throughout the year, our pupils have engaged in a wide range of high-quality learning experiences designed to develop skills, confidence and independence.

Across the school, children have:

- Developed strong literacy skills through creative writing, letter writing and topic-based work in class.
- Explored numeracy and problem-solving through practical and real-life learning contexts
- Taken part in engaging “World Around Us” topics, including work on history, science and geography
- Experienced outdoor learning, including visits to local parks and practical activities beyond the classroom.
- Pupils developed their oral language and communication skills through class discussions, presentations and structured opportunities to share their ideas with confidence
- A strong emphasis was placed on active learning approaches, where pupils worked collaboratively, problem-solved and engaged in hands-on activities across subjects
- Children made excellent use of digital technologies, participating in activities such as online drawing lessons and digital creativity tasks.
- Classes engaged in cross-curricular learning, making meaningful links between literacy, numeracy and World Around Us topics to deepen understanding
- Pupils developed critical thinking and decision-making skills, for example through practical activities involving budgeting, planning and evaluating choices in real-life scenarios.
- There was a continued focus on inclusive learning, ensuring that all pupils were supported and challenged appropriately within the classroom
- Pupils benefited from specialist programmes and workshops, including online safety sessions and visits from external partners to enhance their learning.
- Nursery and Foundation Stage children built strong foundations through play-based learning and exploration, developing early language, social and problem-solving skills.
- Opportunities for creative learning were embedded across the curriculum, including art, drama and music, allowing pupils to express themselves and develop their talents.
- Pupils were encouraged to take increasing ownership of their learning, reflecting on their progress and setting personal targets.
- School data, including standardised assessments, indicates that overall attainment in literacy and numeracy is broadly in line with Northern Ireland averages across year groups, with clear evidence of steady progress over time.”
- Strengths are particularly evident in reading comprehension and pupils’ engagement with number, with a consistent group of pupils achieving within and above the expected range.
- As in many schools, there remains a small group of pupils requiring additional targeted support, including some pupils with additional needs and those experiencing disadvantage, and this continues to be a key focus for development. Over 2025/26 identified pupils have been supported through our internal reading recovery provision

(33 pupils supported), the EA Lit team which supported P2, P4 and P5 pupils and St. Gerard's Literacy support which supported 8 pupils.

- Staff have engaged in a wide range of professional development throughout the year, reflecting a strong commitment to continuous improvement and high-quality teaching and learning.
- This has included training in areas such as literacy, numeracy, safeguarding, inclusion and wellbeing, supporting consistent and effective classroom practice.

Our aim continues to be to support every child to reach their full potential, while developing a love of learning that will stay with them for life.

Celebrating Success and Achievement

Celebrating the success of our pupils has been a central and valued part of school life at Holy Child this year. We are incredibly proud of the many achievements—both big and small—that our children have accomplished across all areas of the curriculum and wider school life.

Throughout the year, we have fostered a strong culture of recognition and encouragement. Regular **Trophy Friday presentations** have provided opportunities to celebrate pupils' effort, progress, behaviour and achievements both within and beyond the classroom. These occasions are always highlights of the week and play an important role in building confidence, pride and motivation among our pupils.

Reading continues to be a key strength within our school, and we are particularly proud of the high levels of engagement shown by our pupils. Many children have reached significant milestones within the **Accelerated Reader programme**, including pupils achieving the remarkable success of reading over a million words (with one pupil exceeding 6 million words in a year). These achievements reflect a genuine love of reading and a strong commitment to learning.

We have also taken great pride in celebrating pupils' individual talents and creativity. This year, for example, one of our Primary 7 pupils had their design selected for the school's new gaelic football kit, highlighting the creative abilities and confidence of our children. Across the school, pupils have showcased their talents through a range of performances, music events and class-based activities, demonstrating growing confidence and self-expression.

Our pupils have also represented Holy Child with great distinction in external events and competitions. We were delighted to see pupils selected to take part in the **Friendship Games**, competing in areas such as camogie and handball, and representing the school with pride and sportsmanship.

Alongside academic, sporting and creative success, we recognise the importance of celebrating personal milestones and the development of the whole child. Special moments such as **birthdays, achievements outside of school and Nursery Graduation** have been recognised and celebrated, reinforcing a strong sense of belonging within our school community.

These celebrations are a reflection of our school ethos, where every child is valued and encouraged to succeed. By recognising effort, perseverance and achievement in all its forms, we continue to build a positive and inclusive environment where all pupils feel proud of their accomplishments.

Sporting Success and Participation

Sport continues to play a vital role in school life at Holy Child, making a significant contribution to pupils' physical wellbeing, confidence and personal development. Throughout the year, our pupils have embraced a wide range of sporting opportunities, demonstrating teamwork, resilience and a strong sense of school pride.

This has been a particularly successful year for competitive sport. Our Boys' Hurling Team were crowned B League champions, an outstanding achievement reflecting the skill, determination and commitment of the team. In addition, both our Primary 6 boys' and girls' Gaelic teams reached the semi-final stages of the Annual Oliver Plunkett Tournament, competing at a very high level and representing the school with pride. The Girls' Camogie team reached the final of the A League championship.

Pupils have also had opportunities to represent the school beyond internal competitions. We were delighted to see children selected to take part in the Friendship Games, competing in disciplines such as camogie and handball—an excellent achievement which highlights the quality of sport within the school.

Participation in sport extends beyond competitive events. This year has seen:

- A full programme of Sports Days across all year groups, including Nursery and Key Stage 1, ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to take part, compete and enjoy physical activity.
- Opportunities for pupils to engage in tournaments, skills-based sessions and team activities, helping to build confidence and improve overall fitness.
- Investment in a new handball wall to develop outdoor sport opportunities.
- Outdoor experiences, such as visits to Musgrave Park, where pupils combined physical activity with play and learning in a fun and active environment.

A key strength of our sporting provision is its inclusive nature. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged and supported to participate, ensuring that every child can experience success, develop skills and enjoy being active as part of a team.

Overall, sport at Holy Child continues to play a central role in developing not only pupils' physical skills, but also their confidence, resilience and ability to work collaboratively. The enthusiasm and pride shown by our pupils in representing their school has been a real highlight of the year.

Wellbeing and Pastoral Care

Supporting the wellbeing of our pupils remains at the heart of everything we do in Holy Child. We are committed to ensuring that every child feels safe, valued and supported, enabling them to thrive both emotionally and academically.

Throughout the year, pupils have engaged in a wide range of structured wellbeing and mental health activities designed to promote confidence, resilience and positive relationships. During Mental Health and Wellbeing Week, children across the school explored key themes such as recognising and understanding emotions, developing coping strategies and building self-confidence. Pupils were encouraged to express themselves, reflect on positive thinking and learn practical ways to manage challenges.

These experiences were supported by a range of practical and enjoyable activities, including:

- Mindfulness and relaxation opportunities, helping pupils to develop strategies to calm their minds and regulate emotions
- Physical wellbeing activities, such as movement sessions, chair aerobics and outdoor play, reinforcing the importance of exercise for both mental and physical health.
- Opportunities to participate in creative and expressive activities, allowing pupils to explore and communicate their feelings in a safe and supportive environment

We also benefited from the support of external partners who enrich our pastoral provision. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 participated in HIP Psychology workshops, where they explored emotions, relationships and wellbeing in an engaging and age-appropriate way. These sessions helped children to better understand their feelings, develop social skills and build emotional resilience.

Our school employs a counsellor to provide targeted support for pupils and families, in 2025/26 16 pupils benefitted from this provision.

In addition, there has been a strong focus on preparing pupils to navigate the wider world safely and confidently. Through our Online Safety programme, children developed an understanding of digital wellbeing, responsible online behaviour and how to stay safe when using technology.

The school continues to prioritise inclusion, with a significant number of pupils supported through the SEN register and targeted interventions to meet individual needs.

This year has seen further development of specialist provision, including the establishment of a second SEN support classroom and continued collaboration with external agencies to support pupils effectively.

Staff have engaged in a wide range of professional learning to strengthen inclusive practice and ensure high-quality provision for all learners.

Our nurturing approach is further strengthened by the emphasis we place on inclusion and support for all learners. Across the school, pupils are encouraged to show kindness, respect and empathy towards one another, fostering a positive and caring school environment.

Overall, the wide range of wellbeing initiatives ensures that our pupils are equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to manage their emotions, build positive relationships and approach their learning with a strong sense of security and belonging.

Creative and Enrichment Activities

A particular strength of this year has been the wide range of creative and enrichment opportunities provided for our pupils, helping to develop confidence, curiosity and a love of learning beyond the classroom.

Pupils across the school have benefited from a rich and varied programme of experiences. In music and performance, children demonstrated excellent confidence and teamwork through events such as the iRock summer concert, where pupils showcased their musical talents to a high standard. These opportunities, alongside class performances and end-of-year productions, have helped pupils to develop their creativity, stage presence and self-belief.

Creative learning has also been embedded across the curriculum. Pupils explored a range of engaging topics, including Greek mythology, bringing stories to life through art, discussion and imaginative work. In other year groups, pupils engaged in digital creativity and online art lessons, developing both artistic and ICT skills in a modern learning context.

The school continues to place a strong emphasis on cultural awareness and global learning. This was reflected in activities such as Mandarin lessons in Primary 1, where pupils developed early language skills while learning about another culture.

A wide range of visitors and workshops further enriched pupils' experiences. Highlights included engaging, hands-on sessions such as interactive science workshops and performances, which

sparked curiosity and excitement for learning. These experiences help bring the curriculum to life and deepen pupils' understanding through practical involvement.

Outdoor and experiential learning has also played an important role. Pupils enjoyed opportunities such as:

- Visits to Musgrave Park, where they took part in activities combining play, exploration and learning in a natural environment
- Participation in Outdoor Classroom Day and outdoor learning activities, encouraging creativity and curiosity through real-life experiences
- Early years and nursery pupils engaging in exploration-based activities, such as nature hunts and creative outdoor tasks, supporting learning through play and discovery.

In addition, pupils have benefited from wider enrichment opportunities including:

- Intergenerational and community-linked experiences, helping to build confidence and communication skills
- Themed learning events and special activity days that bring fun and variety to school life
- Opportunities to explore creativity through arts, crafts and performance within both class and extended school provision

Extended Schools provision has expanded significantly this year, with a wide range of after-school activities delivered through staff, external providers and community partners.

This development has been strongly influenced by parent feedback, with increased demand for wrap-around care leading to extended provision for pupils and families.

Overall, these enrichment experiences play a vital role in developing well-rounded learners. They allow our pupils to discover their talents, build confidence and develop essential life skills, ensuring that learning at Holy Child is both meaningful and enjoyable.

Community, Faith and Partnerships

Our strong sense of community and Catholic ethos continue to underpin all aspects of life at Holy Child. We are proud of the warm, inclusive and respectful environment we have built, where relationships between pupils, staff and families are central to the success of our school.

Throughout the year, pupils have had many opportunities to live out the values of "Caring, Sharing and Learning", both within school and in the wider community. Our Catholic faith

remains at the heart of school life, with pupils participating in school Masses, sacramental preparation and class assemblies, helping them to deepen their understanding of faith, values and respect for others.

Our school chaplain, Father Raymond McCullough, works closely with the school in both sacramental preparation and in the development of our religious programme. The school and pupils are indebted to Father McCullough for the selfless dedication he shows in supporting the school throughout the year.

We have continued to strengthen our links with parents and families, recognising the vital role they play in supporting children's learning and development. Parents have been actively involved in school life through:

- Attendance at key events such as Nursery Graduation and school celebrations, sharing important milestones with their children.
- Engagement with school initiatives, performances and wider activities across the year
- Ongoing communication and partnership with staff to support pupils' progress and wellbeing

Our partnerships extend beyond the school community. This year, we have worked closely with a range of external organisations and agencies to enrich pupils' experiences and provide additional support, including:

- Belfast City Council Parks Team, who facilitated outdoor learning experiences during visits such as those to Musgrave Park.
- HIP Psychology, who delivered workshops supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing and development.
- Community partners who contributed to health, wellbeing and enrichment programmes throughout the year.
- Our school and nursery unit also works closely with the Holy Child Nursery School (Holy Child On The Hill) to ensure transition into primary school is effectively managed.

Feedback from parents and families continues to be extremely positive, with very high levels of satisfaction reported across all aspects of school life in our recent questionnaire.

Parents particularly highlight the welcoming and caring ethos of the school, strong leadership, improved communication and the positive impact of developments such as after-school provision, digital systems and the school website.

We have also continued to foster meaningful connections within the local community. Pupils participated in intergenerational activities and community-based events, helping them to develop empathy, respect and a sense of belonging.

Our PTA and wider school community have played an important role in supporting school initiatives and fundraising activities, helping to enhance resources and opportunities for our pupils. Events organised throughout the year have further strengthened the strong sense of community that exists within Holy Child.

Overall, our commitment to strong partnerships ensures that our pupils benefit from a supportive and connected school community. By working together with families, parish and external partners, we continue to provide a nurturing environment where every child feels valued and supported to achieve their full potential.

A Vibrant and Active School Community

From the very beginning of the school year through to the final weeks of June, Holy Child has continued to be a vibrant, welcoming and highly active school community. There is a strong sense of energy and engagement across all year groups, with pupils fully involved in a wide range of activities that enrich their overall school experience.

Pupil voice and leadership have been an important feature of school life. Through initiatives such as the School Council and pupil leadership groups, children have had opportunities to share their views, contribute to decision-making and take on roles of responsibility within the school. These experiences help to develop confidence, independence and a sense of ownership over school life.

The school calendar has been full of engaging events and themed weeks that promote wider personal development. These have included initiatives such as:

- Healthy Eating and Eco initiatives, supporting pupils in making positive lifestyle choices and developing an awareness of sustainability.
- A range of themed learning days and class-based activities that bring fun, variety and purpose to the curriculum

Pupils have also benefited from a wide programme of trips, visits and shared experiences throughout the year. These have included:

- Educational visits to local facilities and outdoor locations, supporting both learning and social development.
- Participation in intergenerational activities, allowing pupils to connect with the wider community and develop empathy and communication skills.

- A variety of whole-school and class events that have created memorable experiences for pupils at every stage

Our Extended Schools provision and extra-curricular opportunities have continued to play an important role in enriching school life. Pupils have had access to after-school clubs, creative activities and additional programmes, allowing them to explore interests, develop talents and build friendships beyond the classroom.

Across the year, special events such as performances, celebrations and end-of-year activities have contributed to a strong sense of togetherness and pride within our school community. These shared experiences help to create lasting memories for our pupils and reinforce the positive, inclusive ethos that defines Holy Child.

Overall, the wide range of opportunities available ensures that school life is engaging, enjoyable and meaningful for all. The enthusiasm, participation and positive attitude shown by our pupils are a real reflection of the strength of our school community.

Feedback from pupil questionnaires highlights that the vast majority of children feel safe, happy and well supported in school, with strong relationships between pupils and staff identified as a key strength.

Children report that their achievements are recognised and celebrated, and that they enjoy a wide range of engaging learning experiences.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, we remain committed to our school motto:
“Caring, Sharing and Learning.”

Next year, we will continue to:

- Build on high standards in teaching and learning
- Further develop pupil voice and leadership
- Strengthen our focus on wellbeing and inclusion
- Provide meaningful and engaging learning opportunities for all

Following evaluation of whole-school data, stakeholder feedback and ongoing school self-evaluation, key priorities for the coming years will include:

- Developing **oracy skills** to strengthen outcomes in writing across the curriculum.

- Further improving **problem-solving and reasoning in numeracy**
- Expanding **playful and creative approaches to learning**
- Continuing to strengthen **inclusive practice and support for all learners**
- Enhancing **leadership structures and staff collaboration**

A Final Word of Thanks

As we reflect on the many successes of this school year, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to making Holy Child such a vibrant, caring and successful school community.

Firstly, I would like to thank our dedicated and hardworking staff. Their commitment, professionalism and care for every child are evident each and every day. They go above and beyond to provide high-quality learning experiences, support pupils' wellbeing and create a positive and nurturing environment where all children can thrive.

I would also like to express my gratitude to our parents and families for your continued support, encouragement and partnership throughout the year. Whether supporting learning at home, attending school events or working closely with staff, your involvement plays a vital role in the success and development of our pupils. Strong home-school links remain at the heart of everything we do.

A special word of thanks must also go to our Board of Governors and PTA, whose ongoing support, guidance and commitment help to strengthen and enrich school life. Their contribution ensures that we are able to continue providing high-quality opportunities and experiences for all of our children.

The Board of Governors have continued to play a key role in supporting and challenging the school, carefully monitoring standards, overseeing school development priorities and ensuring the effective use of resources. Governors have supported key developments this year, including school improvement planning, safeguarding, SEN provision and extended schools provision.

Most importantly, I would like to recognise and congratulate our wonderful pupils. They are a credit to themselves, their families and our school. Throughout the year, they have demonstrated enthusiasm, kindness, resilience and a genuine love of learning. Their positive attitude and behaviour contribute greatly to the warm and welcoming atmosphere that exists within Holy Child.

To our Primary 7 pupils, thank you for the contribution you have made during your time with us. You have been excellent role models for younger pupils, and we are extremely proud of

everything you have achieved. As you move on to the next stage of your education, we wish you every success and happiness in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank all our wider school community and partners who have supported us throughout the year. Your involvement and encouragement help to make Holy Child the special place that it is.

I hope that all of our families enjoy a safe, happy and restful summer break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new school year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Conor Murphy

Principal