

**Holy Rosary Primary School**

**June 2018 Newsletter No. 10**

***Holy Rosary PS to benefit from £3 million worth of school enhancement.***

A couple of years ago the Board of Governors made the strategic decision to seek funding to enhance the school building rather than waiting for a new building. We were made aware at the time that it would take maybe 5 years to gain the finance to enhance the building whereas a new school building could take a couple of decades. The announcement from the Department of Education a month or so ago has put us well ahead of expected timescales.

We have been included in a list of schools to get their buildings enhanced and we have had an initial visit from the Department of Education. The modifications will improve the school building to the cost of around £3million. The work will be planned during the next school year with work possibly starting next summer. This is absolutely fantastic news. A number of schools have not been included and have been left very disappointed.

***Holy Rosary to escape the worst of the budget cuts for the time being and will have a low average class size for another year.***

I am sure that you are aware from the media that a large number of schools are in severe financial difficulty. Holy Rosary is planning to stay out of deficit for the next three years. Many local schools in the South Belfast Area are running average class sizes of 30-33. The present average class size in Holy Rosary is 24. In the coming year it will be 23! This will be very difficult to sustain in the longer term but in the meantime we should take full advantage of having 21 classes with an average class of 23. This means that we have to employ additional teachers for the unexpected number of classes that we now know that we can afford. This process will hopefully be completed in July.

We will have to make cuts over the coming years but we do not expect to experience the same difficulties over the next 3-year period that other schools are currently experiencing.

***Plans in place for next year.***

Over the past couple of months, we have been putting plans in place for the next school year. Teachers are largely in the same rooms with the same year groups. Resources have already been purchased and have been delivered. This current year we set aside 10 working days per teacher to develop the curriculum. In the coming year we are setting aside another 10 working days per teacher for Curriculum modifications. We will continue to develop a Shared Education Project with Botanic PS. Last year 2 classes were involved. This coming year 4 classes from each school will be involved.

***The cost of after schools to remain the same and after school Literacy and Numeracy Classes to continue.***

We have received funding for another year for our Extended Schools work. This means that we can continue to charge £2 per afternoon for after schools and no charge for using the breakfast room unless the children are buying a breakfast which is £1.

The other after school activities will continue. The most important activity to note is access to after school Literacy and Numeracy classes for all children from P4 to P7 on two afternoons per week from 3-4pm on a half termly cycle.

The Extended Schools money will also be able to help with our summer scheme and other activities.

***Finally, the staff of Holy Rosary PS would like to thank you for your support, your commitment to the school and your kind words during the course of this school year.***

***We wish you and your family a safe and relaxing Summer holiday.***

***![Sunshine-smile[1]]()***

  