DISTRICT CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITION – Saturday 9th March 2013

ALICIA LEADS THE WAY WITH SPARKLING SILVER!

Under heavy lead-grey skies, 11 schools assembled on the field at Cardinal Newman School for the 2013 ERPSSA District Cross Country. With over 500 children taking part, this is a massive event and we knew the competition would be fierce. With excitement buzzing as the races approached, Holy Family were distinctly recognisable amongst the throng of people thanks to Mrs Rawlinson and Mrs Wright who had positioned 2 pop-up marquees close to the finish line –great preparation, clearly these 2 were girl guides at one time!

Walking the course it was clear that underfoot conditions were heavy – it was more steeplechaser ground rather than one for the thoroughbreds although on the positive side it was nowhere near as heavy as the Salesian treacle pot we ran in a couple of weeks ago. Races began at 10am with the Under 9 girls leading the way and our team performed superbly. Lead by Ella (who finished 8th overall) they ran very bravely and finished in 4th place. With 11 teams and around 70 children per race competing, this is a fantastic effort for a small school competing in this event for the first time. The Under 9 Boys were on the squelchy track next and again they ran very well. Lucas was the first Holy Family runner to finish and his team mates backed him up for an overall 6th place finish.

The Under 10 Girls race featured the highlight moment of the morning. After finishing in 4th place at the Salesian event (which featured 5 schools) we had targeted a top 10 finish this time for Alicia. The tactic was to try to run from the front and Alicia executed this plan to perfection. Tracking the leader all the way, Alicia powered on through the wet and mud to win a sensational silver medal. Cheered all the way by the enthusiastic Holy Family support, this was an amazing performance and one that should inspire everyone in our school. We had lost several of our runners from this team for various valid reasons in the build-up to Saturday however the 2 other girls (Alannah and Emily) also ran brilliantly, The Under 10 boys followed once the excitement had abated slightly and they also ran bravely with Jason (up out of his sick bed) leading the team home to an 8th place finish.

The morning races were completed by Year 6 and once again the girls ran brilliantly. Niamh and Lily worked together as a pair, pacing each other all the way around with Niamh finishing 11th and Lily 13th. Sophie and Zara also scored to earn the girls an overall 5th place finish. In the Under 11 boys’ race, Luke ran his heart out in a very fast-paced race to finish 14th and the boys earned an overall 8th place finish.

I was extremely proud of every member of our team on Saturday. Each one responded to our call of giving 100% from start to finish. Every one of our runners finished the course and this in itself should be viewed as a proud achievement. We had several top 20 finishers, 2 in the top 10 and of course one silver medal for the school. Significantly, our level of performance on Saturday was much higher than in our previous competition at Salesian. We are learning fast about how to race and how to be competitive. We are gaining confidence and beginning to believe that we can win. Holy Family are now on the ERPSSA sporting map!

As always, the children behaved beautifully and it was a joy to lead them on such a grisly grey Saturday morning. As always, our parents provided fantastic support and I am truly grateful for this. I hope everyone enjoyed the morning. We should now look forward with confidence to the summer term where we will compete in the District Sports (athletics) against all the other small schools in ERPSSA. With the right training and plenty of sel-belief, we can compete for more medals and trophies in June!

District Cross Country Team 2013:

Under 9 – Ella Stoner, Philippa Holt, Ellie Ford, Erika Mulligan, Joey Siow, Emily McElroy, Freya Standley, Inuki Wijesekera, Lucas Clark, Sam Deal, Amit Bose, Joe Wright, Akindu Wijesekera, Brendan Chillistone, Sam Clayton, Josh Rawlinson, Conor Reilly

Girls 4th, Boys 6th, Overall 6th

Under 10 – Alicia Beams, Emily Mendes De Freitas, Alannah Chillistone, Lucy Elliot (ran in Under 11 race), Jason De Freitas, Joshua Cuevas, Harley Robertson, Louis Horan, Joseph Lightfoot,

Girls 3rd , Boys 8th, Overall 3rd

Under 11 – Niamh Rogers, Lily McDaid, Sophie Rawlinson, Zara Pucci, Luke Fields, Artur Bose, Alex Beaumont, Oliver Drew, Dino Federico, Daniel Morse

Girls 5th, Boys 8th, Overall 7th

Well done everyone!