

**Parents Association
St. Mary's National School,
Ballygunner.**

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Newsletter

Issue 39 – Christmas 2014.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

With Christmas holidays fast approaching on Friday 19th I wish to thank you all for your continuing support. It has been a busy first term here at St. Mary's National School. Both pupils and staff are looking forward to a well-earned rest.

A close link between home and school is important for the academic progress of your children. Thank you for attending your child's parent/teacher meeting in November. I encourage you to keep up to date on school news via Twitter @BallygunnerNS. Also, our school website is an excellent reference on general school policies, procedures and school improvement planning. Please remember teaching staff are available by appointment. Arrangements can be made through Anne Quealy our school secretary on 878388 between 8.45am and 3pm daily.

I wish to acknowledge the work of all school staff involved in extra-curricular activities outside of school hours. The Active School Flag

programme is gaining momentum, indeed Monday's soccer match between pupils and staff was entertaining! Fulltime score: Staff 4 Pupils 2. I'm looking forward to the staging of 'Shrek' by 5th and 6th class pupils before Easter 2015.

Sincere thanks to our hard working Parents Association. I wish to extend a special word of thanks to parents who worked tirelessly to revamp and enhance our junior library in recent weeks. Our pupils will benefit hugely from their work.

Our Christmas raffle 2014 was very well supported. A huge thank you to all who sold tickets and sponsored prizes. The funds collected will be used to replace flooring in our senior infant classrooms in Summer 2015.

There has been great excitement in so many classrooms and our school hall this week with Christmas plays and concerts in full swing. It was wonderful to see so many parents, grandparents, families and friends arriving to see the various performances. It gives us all a great lift at this time of year. A special note of thanks to one of our parents Anna Pageot who decorated the hall so beautifully for Christmas

Huge congratulations to our pupils on all their achievements this term. One special mention goes to the teams who won prizes at recent Tráth na gCeist i gGaelcholáiste Phort Láirge. It is important to link up with our neighbouring schools.

Our pupils' attendance levels continue to be excellent here at St. Mary's National School. However please do **not** send you child to school if they are sick, it is unfair to them, their classmates and teachers.

Finally, just to confirm we return to school on Monday 5th January 2015

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir!

Killian O'Reilly

Principal Teacher



Christmas Charity Collection

Many thanks to all of you for your generosity towards the St Vincent de Paul non perishable collection in lieu of Christmas presents for teacher! A special thanks also to our teachers for foregoing presents again this year.

Unused Musical Instruments

The school music committee are seeking any unwanted musical instruments to be used for various music activities within the school. The contact person for this is Donna Moore.

Local History Project

We hope to enter a project into the Schools Excellence Awards for Local History. We are looking at the period of 1900-1925. If anybody has any connections with or has any medals/artefacts associated with this era and in particular World War One and the War of Independence, we would encourage them to contact Mr. O'Neill directly or via your child's class teacher.

School Musical

Preparations for our school musical are well underway! Auditions for acting, singing and dancing, which were held at the end of November, were a great success. Well done to the many 5th and 6th class pupils who put so much time and effort into preparing for these. Their diligence and enthusiasm coupled with an abundance of talent is

greatly acknowledged by the Drama committee! Well done to all!

Rehearsals for all children involved will begin immediately after the Christmas holidays on Monday 5th January until 4pm. Rehearsals will continue every Monday and Thursday until Showtime. It is so important that children attend all rehearsals.

Performance dates are scheduled for the evenings of the 23rd, 24th and 25th March 2015.

Christmas Concerts

It's that time of year again when the corridors of our school are filled with the sounds of well-loved Christmas tunes! Well done to the Junior and Senior Infants and the First and Fourth Classes who took to the stage to perform some enchanting Christmas stories. Well done to the pupils in Second and Third Class who performed Christmas Carols.

Sincere thanks to Pepe Pageot who transformed our school hall into a magical Christmas Wonderland for the children. We are most fortunate to have her talent and dedication in our school community.

Faithlegg Santa Visit

A great day was had by some of our pupils who attended a Christmas Party in Faithlegg House Hotel. Thank you to the helpers, volunteers and staff at Faithlegg House Hotel & Golf Club for providing such a wonderful experience.

Active Flag

An indoor football tournament which was run at lunchtimes for 5th and 6th class pupils was a great success and good fun. The final round culminated in an exciting match between the winning 6th Class team and a team of teachers!

Tráth na gCeist

Comhghairdeas do Bob Landers, Sean Upton, Ryan Tubbritt agus Julianna Frost ó Rang a Sé a bhí ar an bhfoireann a bhuaigh Comórtas Tráth na gCeist sa Ghaelcholáiste ar an Aoine seo chaite.

Date for your diary

Service of Commitment for Confirmation classes is on Thursday 5th March 2015 during school hours.

Sixth Class will be organising a cake sale in the New Year to raise money for local charities.

Green Schools Initiative



Green Schools – Biodiversity

Biodiversity is all about plants, animals, habitats and ecosystems all around us. Well done and thank you to our hardworking, enthusiastic Green Schools committee members and to the classes throughout the school who are doing great work in developing biodiversity in our school grounds. We are working hard on the theme of “Biodiversity” this year and hope to

win our fifth Green Flag before Summer 2015!

Bird Feeders

We have filled our bird feeders with nuts and already have increased the numbers of garden birds visiting our school grounds. Look out for sparrows, chaffinches, gold finches, wagtails, blue tits and great tits who are delighted to be fed during the cold months of winter.

Window Boxes

Our lovely window boxes at the front of the school were put together by our enthusiastic green-fingered pupils on the Green Schools committee. Well done everyone – they look beautiful and brighten up the entrance to the school.

Volunteers Needed Please!

After Christmas we will be planting native shrubs and trees along the periphery of the playground to replace the trees which were damaged in the storms earlier this year. **If anyone is interested in helping** to dig holes and plant, we would really appreciate it. Please leave your contact details in the office and a Green Schools committee member will be in touch with you after Christmas to make arrangements.

Keep Up the Great Work!

Well done and thank you to all the pupils, parents and staff who continuously promote the Green Schools themes of litter and waste management, water and energy conservation and sustainable travel. Don't forget to carpool, walk, take the bus or park 'n' stride to and from school to lower your carbon footprint. Remember to recycle your used batteries, stamps and ink cartridges in the collection boxes in the main entrance hall. Happy Christmas everyone! Fionn Smith

Christmas Raffle Winners

Many thanks to all our sponsors for donating such great prizes for our Christmas Raffle. This year the proceeds from the Christmas raffle will be used to replace flooring in the Senior Infants classrooms in 2015.

The Christmas Raffle winners are:

1st prize – 2 nights B&B Castleknock Hotel & Country Club (FBD Hotels & Resorts) – Winner- Walsh Family

Seller – Joseph Walsh

2nd prize – Ardkeen Stores Food Hamper – Winner Suzanne Parker

Seller- Emma Rogers Mulhall

3rd prize – 100Euro One for All Voucher Waterford Garda

Winner – Jennifer Dwyer

Seller – Killian Dwyer

4th prize – 100Euro Loko Voucher

Winner – Yvonne Devereux

Seller – Derek Devereux

5th prize – 1 week De La Salle College Summer Sports Camp

Winner – Deirdre Sheehan

Seller – Diarmuid Sheehan

6th prize – “The Curragh” Hamper from Kiely’s Daybreak

Winner – Bina Glynn

Seller – Moya Glynn

7th prize – 1 free sitting – Leo Murphy

Winner – Edward Kissane

Seller – Conor Kissane

8th prize – 1 free sitting – Leo Murphy

Winner – Chris Glynn

Seller – Moya Glynn

9th prize – Chocolate Hamper – World Wine Wines

Winner – Sean Upton

Seller – Sean Upton

10th prize – Kids Party 70Euro Ballygunner GAA

Winner – Teresa Jacques

Seller – Ruby Jacques

11th prize – Craft Beer Hamper – Phil Grimes Pub

Winner - Sarah Nolan

Seller – Alex Stotsky

12th prize – Waterford Crystal Vase – Michael Kenny Photographer

Winner – Gary Jacques

Seller – Ruby Jacques

13th prize – 50Euro Maxol Voucher

Winner – Chloe Buggy

Seller – Chloe Buggy

14th prize – 50Euro Premier Butchers – Dawn Meats

Winner – Caitlin Cummins

Seller – Sean Cummins

15th prize – 40Euro Muse Voucher

Winner – Anne Kavanagh

Seller – Dara Kavanagh

16th prize – 3 Art Classes – Chowder Arts

Winner – Michael Forest

Seller – Robert Forest

17th prize – 25Euro Voucher for Island Lane

Winner – Ray Regan

Seller – Ursula Regan

18th prize – 20Euro Topaz Voucher

Winner – Aisling Hayes

Seller – Emily Hayes

19th prize – Child’s White/Blackboard – Fieldmaster

Winner – Michael Farrell

Seller – Eoin Farrell

20th prize – Santa Visit – Kickadoo

Winner – Emily Kelly

Seller – Conor Kelly

Parents Association

If anybody would like to join the Parents Association there are still positions available on the committee or if you could give an hour or two of your time we could always do with help in the library or other events during the year. If interested please contact Anne in the office with details.

Lost and Found

Please **label** everything in School (except your children!!). Labelled items can be returned to their owners or retrieved from lost and found bin. Unretrieved items will be donated to various charities at the end of term.

Kids Corner

Q. What goes “oh, oh, oh”?

A. Santa walking backwards!!!

Q. What do you get if you cross Santa and a dog?

A. Santa Paws!!!

Happy Christmas Everyone!