

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

**Telephone: 051-878388  
E-mail: office @ballygunner.ie  
[www.ballygunner.ie](http://www.ballygunner.ie)**



**Newsletter  
Issue 40 –Easter 2015.**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It has been an extremely busy Spring term here at St. Mary's N.S. and I wish to thank you all for your continuing support as we approach the Easter holidays.

What a proud week it has been for our whole school community as we enjoy the success of our school show 'Once upon an Ogre'. I wish to extend sincere thanks to everyone who was part of, or assisted in any way with this 'critically acclaimed' production. They are all truly outstanding!

I continue to fully support the ongoing work in the areas of literacy and numeracy as part of our School Improvement Plan. The introduction of 'Mata sa Rang' approach in our junior classes has been very well received by both pupils and staff, along with a renewed approach to problem solving in our senior classes. Also, this is year two of our writing project in literacy.

I wish to acknowledge the ongoing work on the following: School History Project, Active School Flag and Green Flag. There has been wonderful collaboration between pupils, parents and staff. I encourage you to visit our school website

[www.ballygunner.ie](http://www.ballygunner.ie) to view our Active School Flag news and please follow us on twitter @BallygunnerNS to keep up with school news  
Sincere thanks to our Parents Association who continue to work tirelessly in support of our school. We are now in year three of our School/Parents Association Library Plan and we will be circulating further information to all families after Easter. We look forward to the fundraising quiz night in April.

I wish to compliment our pupils on all their hard work and achievements this term. There were many notable successes. Special mention goes to the cast of 'Once Upon an Ogre', our school credit union team, our Green School Committee and our mini-sevens camogie team.

On behalf of the Board of Management I wish to thank you all for your cooperation with the recently circulated Department of Education and Skills Primary Schools Online Database questionnaire and continuing to observe our school car-park arrangements for the safety of all. The Board looks forward to finalising a design for a new school sign in term three.

I wish to remind you all that Confirmation Day is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May and First Holy Communion Day Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May. Both ceremonies will be in St. Mary's Church. Finally, on behalf of the Board of Management and Staff I wish you all a very Happy Easter.

Killian O'Reilly  
Principal Teacher

### **Ballygunner Parents Association:**

**We need some new members for our Parents Association. We meet once a month for a meeting. It is important to have support from the parents for this as we fund raise to help the school which benefits all our children. If numbers on committee are low then it may impact on the activities and some events may not be able to take place in the future as we don't have the help. Please give your details to Anne in the office if you are interested or one of the committee members. It would be greatly appreciated.**

### **Table Quiz**

Our annual fund raising quiz will take place in Oskars bar on the 24<sup>th</sup> April. This is a great night out so please come and support!!! If you cannot attend there will be one ticket per family sent home and we would appreciate if you could purchase a ticket instead to support.

### **School Musical**

Here at St. Mary's National School, we have a rich tradition of school musicals. Our productions to date include:

- The Wizard of Oz (2005)
- The Sound of Music (2007)
- Annie (2009)
- Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs (2013)

This year's musical, 'Once Upon An Ogre', tells the story of an ugly, but lonely, ogre, whose home is invaded by a flock of fairytale creatures. He vows to regain his swamp, and sets off to see Lord Farquaad, in the land of Duloc. Along the way, Shrek meets a friendly, yet irritating donkey; a singing, fire-breathing dragon; a witty, streetwise princess; and some famous bands, along with their fans!

The cast of 'Once Upon An Ogre' consists of a record-breaking 106 children! Auditions took place in November, after which rehearsals began immediately. Working with a cast of this size was no mean feat, but the children's dedication, excellent behaviour and tremendous talent has made this production a great success! The amount

of support offered by staff members and parents this year was also remarkable. It helped move our show's standards to a whole new level, with the addition of impressive sets and striking costumes. The installation of our red curtain was the crowning glory on this year's production. Well done to all the children, staff members and parents involved in the musical. Break a leg this week everyone!!

### **Seachtain na Gaeilge**

Bhí "Seachtain na Gaeilge" ar siúl sa scoil seo againne ón 10ú lá-17ú lá de Mhí Márta. Bhí comórtais, tráth na gceist, am scéalaíochta, céilí agus ceolchoirm ar siúl i rith na seachtaine. Tá súil agam gur bhain na páistí go léir sár thaitheamh as na h-imeachtaí go léir!

Maith Sibh

### **Paired Reading**

This term saw the beginning of Paired Reading in First Class. It was a most enjoyable activity for our emergent readers in enabling them to further develop their reading skills. They really liked the new books and the feedback from parents has been extremely positive. Thank you to all parents who were involved in supporting their child during this time. Thank you to the Parent's Association who donated funds for the purchase of these books. Well done to all pupils involved!

### **Pizza Party**

Well done to our 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils who had a pizza party to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day (21<sup>st</sup> March). Thank you to both Apache Pizza and the Upton Family for sponsoring this party.

### **Cake Sale**

The 6<sup>th</sup> class cake sale was a great success and over €2,800 was raised for local charities. This fund was split between the following charities; Sacred Heart School Lady Lane, Irish Red Cross and WASSA. The cheques were presented to the respective charities during the Service of Commitment. Thank you to all who supported this event. Well done to 6<sup>th</sup> Class and their teachers!

## Credit Union Quiz

Congratulations to Sam Walsh, Conor Walsh, Orna Fanning and Emmet Treacy who were successful in winning the local round of the Annual Credit Union Quiz which was attended by many local schools in the area. The team then went on to come 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Regional Stage.

## GAA NEWS

### Cumann na mBunscol Quiz

Well done to the two teams who represented our school of the Annual Cumann na mBunscol Quiz. It was a great chance for the pupils to put their GAA knowledge to the test! Conor Walsh, David Mahon, Clodagh Curham and Caoimhe Forrest were the members of one team and Rory Fives, Bill Murphy, Eli Cullen and Peter Rafter the other.



### Mini Seven's Camogie Final

A huge congratulations to the girls from 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes who won the Eastern Final Of the Mini Seven's Camogie Blitz. The girls had to play several mini games over two afternoons. This was a terrific win for our Camogie Team! The girls travelled to Fraher Field in Dungarvan last Wednesday to meet Lismore for the County Final and unfortunately were beaten by three points. This was a thrilling game which saw a goal from Laoise Forrest and a goal and two points from Alannah O' Sullivan. The team was co-captained by Sarah Maher and Sarah Kavanagh. Well done to all girls involved and to the teachers who were involved in training.

### Indoor Hurling Tournament

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Class indoor hurling tournament was a great success. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class tournament is ongoing.

## Garden News:

Spring is with us thankfully. The bulbs planted inside the school wall last Autumn are providing a wonderful display, "a host of golden daffodils".



The supplies of seeds, potatoes and onion sets arrived in school in early March and since then teachers have been making careful selections of what to grow with their classes.

The corridor inside is filled with seed trays and pots filled with flowers, peas and beans. The marigold and tagetes flowers will help to deter aphids from the vegetables as they grow. They should all be ready to plant out after the holidays. Potatoes are sprouting and will be planted this week in various places, raised beds, pots and even shopping bags. It is wonderful to see so many classes trying their hands at growing vegetables and flowers this year. The children really enjoy the experience and learn just how easy it is to produce food at home.

We are very lucky to have additional raised beds this year. We bought them with the grant received from the GIY fund. Mark McGuinness has kindly donated the top soil for this new Senior Garden area. He supplies top soil and bark mulch in anything from 2 tonne to 20 tonne loads. Mark can be contacted at 087 865 7105. We hope to have the beds ready for the children by the end of this week with the help from staff, children and parents. The new garden area is located at the rear of the school between the playground and the entrance to the GAA grounds.

If any parents have some time on their hands and an interest in helping out with the school garden, we would be delighted to hear from you. As our garden expands it would be great to get some extra help with planting and maintaining it. You can contact me through the school office or via your child.

Maura Upton

## Green Schools Initiative

### Our Biodiversity Green Flag



We have spent the past two years working on the theme of Biodiversity and hope to win our **fifth** Green Flag in the next few weeks. A Green Schools Assessor visited our school on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March and was very impressed. Well done and a huge thank you to all the committee members, especially the pupil reps, who are so enthusiastic and hardworking. Well done also to all the pupils, parents and staff who continue to support the Green Schools Project.

### What did we do?

Biodiversity is all about plants, animals, habitats and ecosystems. In our school we created log piles and bug hotels to provide homes for wildlife. We set up lots of nesting boxes and bird feeders to attract sparrows, chaffinches, gold finches, wagtails, blue tits and great tits who are delighted to be fed during the colder months. We created lovely window boxes at the front of the school to attract moths, bees and butterflies. We also planted lots of bulbs, flowers, fruit and vegetables in our school garden.

### Our Day of Action

Thanks to the parents and grandparents who arrived in force at the end of January armed with gardening gloves, shovels and lots of energy and enthusiasm! They planted more than 300 native bare-rooted shrubs and trees along the periphery of the playground and will be happy to know that the plants are thriving and full of new buds so a HUGE thanks to you all.

### Keep Up the Great Work!

As you can see we have been very busy! 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 Easter everyone!

Fionn Smith

### W.I.T New Music Week School's Choral Day

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Class pupils took part in a wonderful Music event in the W.I.T. Auditorium on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March organized by Julie Quinlan. WIT Music Dept. Local historian, Anne Farrell, wrote a Pirate Story with a Waterford theme called "By Hook or By Crook" and composers set pirate poems to music for the children to perform, with local actor Jamie Nagle being the narrator for the story. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Class pupils joined pupils from other schools to sing and perform. They all had a great time and looked fabulous in their pirate head gear which they designed and created themselves. Ahoy me hearties!!

### **Kids corner**

**Q. How did the soggy Easter bunny dry himself?**

**A. With a hare-dryer !**

**Q. Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke?**

**A. It might crack up!!!!**

**Q. What do you get if you pour hot water down a rabbit hole?**

**A. Hot cross bunnies!!**

**Happy Easter Everybody!**