

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

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**Newsletter
Issue 41 - Summer 2015.**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As this school year comes to an end it is an opportune time to reflect on our year's work here at St. Mary's National School. It has been a progressive year with many notable achievements across our school community.

2014/15 was a memorable school year as we celebrated the staging of an exceptional school show 'Once Upon an Ogre', raised our 5th Green Flag for Biodiversity, worked towards our 1st Active School Flag, enjoyed further expansion of our school sensory garden and benefitted from the successful implementation of our school book rental scheme.

Our trophy cabinet is again laden with cups and shields from school quizzes, cross country running, track and field and Gaelic Games. Well done to all those pupils who represented our school and their families so well throughout the year.

We continue to identify areas for development and in 2014/15 our School Improvement Plan focused on Numeracy Year 1 and Literacy Year 2. Details of the extensive work completed by pupils and staff will be available soon via our school website www.ballygunner.ie

I wish to acknowledge our outstanding annual pupil school attendance rates. This school year it stands at 96% and sends a clear message to all the priority that primary school education receives across our community.

I wish to thank our Board of Management for their support and guidance, all our school staff for their hard work and commitment to our pupils and all of you our parents/guardians for the interest you have in your child's education. Also, I wish to extend sincere thanks to our dedicated Parents Association most especially those volunteers who gave so much time on a weekly basis to enhancing our school library. Míle Buíochas! I wish our departing 6th class pupils the very best as they move to Secondary School. They are a talented group of pupils who are a credit to their teachers and families. Indeed, I wish to compliment all our pupils on their many achievements this year. A special mention goes to those classes who received the School Excellence Award in association with W.I.T. and Waterford Teacher's Centre, our green school committee and Sam Walsh in 6th class who designed our soon to be constructed school sign!

The Diocesan Catholic School Advisory Team visited our school on Wednesday 3rd June and was very impressed with the enthusiasm, confidence and understanding shown by our pupils. In September 2015 we look forward to the launch and implementation of 'Grow in Love' the new Catholic Primary Religious Education Curriculum in junior and senior infant classes.

Finally, I wish all associated with St. Mary's National School a restful and enjoyable Summer holiday. Here's hoping we will all return refreshed on **Monday 31st August** when pupils return to begin the new school year!

Killian O'Reilly
Principal Teacher

Ballygunner Parents Association:

We urgently need some new members for our Parents Association in September. 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 continue to be low then it will 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. All help would be greatly appreciated.

School Library

A huge thank you for the stunning artwork painted by Olex Stotsky in the Junior library. We appreciate the hard work and time it must have taken and it transforms the room. The children are enjoying it greatly.

Fundraising Day

Many Thanks to all for your contributions towards our fundraising day on Friday last. We raised a total of €1,511.23 in aid of the Nepal Earthquake Appeal (The Umbrella Foundation) and Down Syndrome Ireland.

GAA NEWS

Camogie



Commiserations to our Senior Girls' Camogie team who lost the Roinn A County final to Lismore in Dungarvan on Tuesday 16th June. Despite a battling performance on a sun-drenched Fraher Field, a series of incredulous refereeing decisions ultimately led to a single point loss for our brave young Warriors.

The girls involved can take some consolation in the fact that they were still crowned Indoor, Mini 7s and Eastern Champions for 2015 and

won 16 out of 18 competitive fixtures in all competitions since January.

The school would like to pay a special tribute to our sixth class players – Captain Caoimhe Forrest, Sophia Kapralchuk, Sarah Kavanagh, Clodagh Curham and Sarah Maher who all led by example throughout year in training and in competitions. Ye will be greatly missed.

Hurling

Our 4th and 5th class hurlers won the U11 hurling blitz, completing the double in hurling & football for the year. The team beat Mount Sion, St. Stephen & St. Declans in the finals to lift the "Waterford Savings Bank" Cup. Thanks to all parents who provided great support on the day.

Athletics

2015 had been another great year for athletics in Ballygunner. Well done to all boys and girls who took part in the Waterford Primary Schools event in April.



Following this great day at the RSC, many girls and boys qualified to compete in Dungarvan at the County Primary school event.

Well done to the U11 girls Orna O Reilly, Eimear Walsh, Lauren Sheils and Katie Nolke winning their relay at both the Waterford city and county event. Orna came 3rd in the 600m and Katie just missed out on a medal with a great run in the long race and also finished 1st in the 80m sprint.

The U10 girls team of Luda Mooney, Laura Flynn and Amina Shvarikova (sub for Kelsie Obanya) and Caoimhe Houlihan had a clear victory. Laura also finished 1st in 80m sprint.

U 10 boys Dara Kavanagh, Conor Kelly, Robbie Duffy and Eoin Cuddihy won silver medals on the day. U 9 boys David Leavey, Dylan Coady, Niall Curham and Nathan

Mackey are now all county champions winning gold in the relay. U9 girls Grace Sheils, Ali Ferguson, Erin Mullaney and Amina just missed out on a medal.

U8 girls Zoe Raethorne, Caoimhe Duggan (Sub for Aoife McGilloway) Lilly Kavanagh and Sarah Abullo also just missed out on medals. Sarah finished 3rd in a very fast 80m sprint.

Thanks to parents/teachers who helped out at both the city and county event – Fidelma, Phyllis, Edwin, Kate, Ray and Mr O Neill. The assistance is always appreciated.

Ms Hayes

St Mary's yet again show their talent in athletics. Boys and girls recently competed at St Augustine's College in Dungarvan in the Waterford County championships.

Despite the very high standards seen on the day, St Mary's brought home a large collection of medals.

Sprints medals were won by Tom Gallagher, Lauren Sheils, Kelsie Obanya and Laura Flynn. The Under 9 girls relay team Laoise Forrest, Kelsie Obanya, Laura Flynn and Niamh Brenner won their race in style. Mary Olarewaju, Katie Nolke, Orna O Reilly and Lauren Sheils won a well deserved silver medal in the Under 10 girls relay.

The Over 12 boys sailed through the finish line in 1st place. They have remained unbeaten for several years at city and county level in the relay. Tom Gallagher and Gavin Corbett have been consistent members of this team all the way up through primary school.

We regret that we have to say goodbye to these boys this year along with a fine group of 6th class athletes. Both boys and girls have brought so much to our school athletics in their time at St Mary's. They played a huge part in securing the silverware for Best School for the past 6 years.

We'd like to wish them the best of luck with their move to secondary school. We hope they continue to partake and be successful in sporting performances.

Leave No Trace

The three 3rd Classes recently took part in "Leave No Trace" Awareness Workshops with Eoin MacMahon



which were held in the school grounds to promote awareness of enjoying the outdoors responsibly – a very interesting and informative morning for all.

Our Biodiversity Green Flag

Congrats and thanks to everyone for helping us win our fifth Green Flag – to all the pupils, parents and staff who continue to support the Green Schools Project and especially to all the committee members, especially the pupil reps, who are so enthusiastic and hardworking. Pranav Immani and Jason Hawan collected the flag at an Awards Ceremony in Kilkenny recently. We then had a lovely flag raising ceremony in school and are so proud to be part of this Green Project which involves 11 million children in 50 countries worldwide – what an achievement!

Conservation Hero Award

Congratulations to Lauren Cullen in Ms. Dollard's 4th Class who won the Conservation Hero Award from The Reptile Village, Gowran, Co. Kilkenny in April. Her winning poster on conservation won her a fabulous prize which was to be a zookeeper for the day at The Reptile Village. Lauren had a great day and looked every part the enthusiastic zookeeper!!

Keep Up the Great Work!

As you can see we have been very busy! Well done to everyone and best of luck to the 6th Class Committee members who are leaving us. Happy Summer everyone and enjoy the holidays!

Fionn Smith

Garden News

Summer has finally arrived and most crops are only now beginning to grow. Well done to all classes that have been involved in the school garden this year. You have achieved a great deal in spite of poor weather conditions and an extremely busy work schedule in school. The new Senior Garden has taken shape. There are eleven well-tended raised beds with many vegetables, flowers and even blueberries growing. The Junior Garden is also flourishing and almost everything planted there this year was grown from seed by the classes. It is wonderful for the children to get first-hand experience at growing fruit, vegetables, flowers and herbs.

Crops are generally 4-6 weeks behind due to the very cold spring and early summer, even our trusty strawberries are not yet ripe. The children are learning that we must be patient!! Some lucky classes have harvested and eaten potatoes this week. The delicious aroma of wedges made us all hungry.

It has been a pleasure to see so many staff getting involved with the garden again this year, as well as many for whom this was their first time gardening!! Your work, interest and support throughout the year are very much appreciated.

A special "Thank You" to all the children who are helping out with watering and weeding this year! You are helping to keep the gardens in good shape. Well Done.

We hope that when we return in September there will be more crops to harvest. Have a great summer!!

Maura Upton

Book sale

There will be a book sale in school in October. Information will be provided in September regarding dropping off and collection of books.

Kids corner

Q. What's the difference between a guitar and a fish?

A. You can't tuna fish!

Q. Why did the computer go to the doctor?

A. Because it had a virus!

Q. What bow can't be tied?

A. A rainbow!!

**HAVE A GREAT SUMMER
EVERYBODY!**