

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

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**Newsletter
Issue 55 – Christmas 2018**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

With Christmas Holidays fast approaching on Friday 21st December I wish to thank you all for your continuing support since September. It has been an extremely busy first term here at St. Mary's National School. We are especially proud of all our Junior Infant pupils. They have now completed their first term in National School!

A close link between home and school is essential 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. Please remember teaching staff are available by appointment. Arrangements can be made through Anne Quealy our school secretary on 051 878388 between 8.45am and 3pm daily.

Sincere thanks to our Parents Association. They have been very active this term working to support pupils and staff. The Christmas collection for St. Vincent De Paul received great support, thanks to everyone. Tickets for our Christmas Raffle sold well with funds raised going towards Team Teaching Resources and Playground Markings (pending the re-surfacing of our school playground in Summer 2019)

I wish to extend a special word of thanks to parents who volunteer weekly to run our Senior

Library. Moving across to an electronic scanning system for all books has proven to be very successful. I'm please to inform you the barcoding of books in our Junior Library is complete and it will re-open in January 2019. We would greatly appreciate a few more volunteers.....please!

I wish to acknowledge all our school staff. Their commitment and hard work ensures that our pupils are always striving towards their full potential. We continue to evaluate and review our work here at St. Mary's N.S. This term as part of School Improvement Planning we have commenced a review of Special Education Teaching Support as per Department of Education and Skills Circular 13/2017. There will be an update in Term 2.

There has been great excitement in so many classrooms 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. Also, our neighbours at Havenwood were thrilled to have several classes visit to sing Christmas Carols.

Congratulations to our pupils on all their achievements this term. A special mention goes to our Girls and Boys Gaelic Football Team who won the Cumann na mBunscol Port Láirge County Finals in Walsh Park.

If you are travelling over the holidays please drive carefully and allow plenty of time for journeys. *Happy Christmas and Best Wishes to you all in 2019*

Killian O'Reilly
Principal Teacher

What's going on at School...

* Christmas Plays 2018

This year our Christmas plays took place on Thursday 13th December.

Congratulations and well done to all the Infant classes, 1st classes, 4th class



Ms. Whittle and 4th class Mr. Breheny. They all performed wonderfully in their Christmas shows. It was great to see parents, grandparents and friends here to support our pupils! Thanks also to the staff who worked hard in preparation.

*Mr. Breheny's 4th Class Christmas Play

This year Mr. Breheny's 4th class performed a Christmas Play. It was called 'Stable Manners'. It was about the birth of Jesus. We performed it for all the classes in the school and for all the parents. It was so much fun rehearsing most days with Mr. Breheny. Every day we got more confident. I loved performing it in front of the parents.

By: Katie-May O'Neill

*Ms. Whittle's 4th Class Christmas Play

We had a great time in Mrs. Whittle's 4th Class getting ready for our Christmas Play. It was a nativity play but not a traditional one! Parents could not believe it when they saw Ballygunner TV news (with four very professional newscasters), featuring Mr. O'Reilly (ably acted by Ronan) and some familiar faces from the class as news reporters broadcasting the Christmas story from the school hall. We also had an appearance by 3 Wise Women!, 4 Tenor shepherds, Mrs. Innkeeper, a noisy donkey, Mary and Joseph and 9 very capable 4th Class pupils. We learned nine original catchy songs and everyone swayed along to the music. We really enjoyed performing our play on the 13th of December!!

By: Ruby Murphy, Ronan Quinlan and Lauren Williams



Sports

* Boys U-13 Football

Following on from a great win in the Eastern competition, the U-13 Boys travelled to Walsh Park last month to take on old foes Bunscoil Bothar na Naomh (Lismore) in the County Final.

This trophy had only been in the school on one previous occasion - the 2013 cohort broke the mould but the trick hadn't been repeated since.

In a tight game, there were only a couple of points between the teams at half time, but as had been the case in all of the games this year, superior skill finally allowed the boys to pull away from their opponents and the final scoreline of 2-8 to 0-5 was their reward.

Alan Grant had the honour of accepting the trophy on behalf of his teammates and school - football is alive and well in Ballygunner!

*Ladies Football 2018

This year we (Ballygunner N.S) won the eastern and county final in Ladies football. Ms. Tallon and Ms. Murphy trained us very hard. We went out playing Holycross, Gaelscoil Phort lairge and Portlaw. We beat Gaelscoil and Portlaw but Holycross got the better of us.

Ballygunner and Holycross topped the group so that meant we played in an Eastern Final. We knew it was going to be a tough game and we started to doubt ourselves but that didn't get the better of us.

We played 100% and never gave up and when that final whistle went Holycross fell to their knees and Ballygunner were Eastern Champions!!!!!! It was an EPIC Victory

Then we went on to beat Ballymacarbry in the County Final. We knew it would be extremely tough and they were ready to try and beat us. But we wouldn't let them get the better of us. We strode on to the pitch with great determination and confidence. It was a great but tough game. And a great win for the Ballygunner girls!! We were now County Champions!!!!!!

By: Moillí Goff, Emma Berry and Emma Murphy - 6th class Mr. O'Leary ☺☺☺

* **Basketball**

This year's school basketball season kicked off with huge interest across both 5th and 6th. We are currently running an in-school tournament amongst both 5th and 6th class showing great talent and team spirit. Our coaches Ms Slattery and Ms Power look forward to entering teams in the primary schools tournament in the New Year.

* **Deck the Halls with Flags and Bunting...**

For only the Second Time in the Club's History, The Ballygunner Senior Hurling team visited their Alma Mater as the Munster Hurling Champions on a truly memorable day in November.

The Munster Hurling Kingpins were treated to the Mother and Father of all welcomes on the 19th November with flags, banners, poems, songs and music liberally sprinkled throughout the School as the boys and girls of St Mary's rolled out the Red Carpet to welcome home the giant slayers.

The roof of the hall was almost lifted off when Captains Stephen O'Keeffe and Shane O'Sullivan led the heroes into the Hall as they proudly held aloft the O'Neill Cup. Team Manager Fergal Hartley took the opportunity to thank all the children for their support of the team throughout 2018 and for all their efforts in decorating the School to welcome the Team.

Ballygunner now march on to a February showdown with Ballyhale Shamrocks of Kilkenny as the dream for a St Patrick's Date with Immortality lives on.

Colin Breheny

* **Marita Conlon-McKenna**

On the 14/11/18 Marita Conlon-McKenna came to our school to visit. We must have been the luckiest school in Ireland. It was wonderful to be able to see her and ask her questions. It was just amazing to meet such a wonderful author. She told us all about her books and some children even got their own books signed.

By: Scarlett Kate Flynn

* **Team Hope Christmas Shoe Box Appeal**

Thank you to all who so generously contributed to the Team Hope 2018 Shoe Box Appeal. Our school community enjoyed preparing the Christmas boxes together. It's wonderful to support such a well deserved cause.

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir.

Parents Association

* **Save this Date!**

Our fantastic Quiz Night will be held on Friday 8th March (at Oskars). This is always a great night and Quiz Night 2019 looks set to be awesome! Please put the date in your new diaries and organise your team!



* **Thank You**

Thank you to all those who kindly sponsored prizes for the Parents Association raffle. We are indebted to the generosity of those companies that always contribute to our fundraising efforts. Please remember to support those companies that support our school.

Many thanks to everyone who donated towards the St. Vincent de Paul and Men's Hostel Appeal. Thanks to all the helpers that packed all the goodies for collection.

* **New Committee Members always welcome**

It was lovely to see so many new faces at our November Parents Association meeting - we would love to see some more new faces! Please come along to the school staff room on Wednesday 16th January 7.30 for 8pm start. We run quick and informative meetings - All are welcome.

On behalf of the Parents Association, we would like to wish you a Merry and Safe Christmas and a fun-filled New Year.

Angela Jackman Chairperson.

* **Garden**

The Garden Team are resting and getting ready for a very busy New Year. We have a few projects planned which we are looking forward to implement in the gardens during the Spring and Summer ahead. All volunteers are most welcome if anyone would like to volunteer please give your details to Anne in the office and the gardening team will be in touch.



* **Library**

The Senior library system is working well and we look forward to the Junior library opening after Christmas. If anyone has any unwanted books we would gratefully accept the donation. Volunteers are always welcome.

* Car Park

A gentle reminder to all those using the car parks, both at the school and also at Havenwood Nursing Home, which we are lucky to have the use of at our morning drop off and both afternoon collection times. Please always show respect to other people and also to the properties.

* Reflection

We are thinking about and praying for all people, especially children, who are sick at Christmas time and wishing them improved health in 2019.

Dates For Your Diary

Fri 21 Dec	School closes from 12:00 for Christmas Holidays
Mon 7 Jan	School re-opens
Fri 15/Mon 25 Feb	Spring Mid-Term Break



Kids Corner

Q: What do you sing at a snowman's birthday party?

A: *Freeze a Jolly good fellow!!*

Q: What do you call a snowman with a six pack?

A: *An Abdominal Snowman !!!*

Q: What did the salt say to the pepper?

A: *Season's Greetings !!*

Q: On which side do turkeys have the most feathers?

A: *The outside!*

Q: What did one snowman say to the other snowman?

A: *Can you smell carrots?!*

Q: How do you find Will Smith in the snow?

A: *Look for the Fresh Prints*

Q: What athlete is warmest in winter?

A: *The Long Jumper!*

Q: Who gives presents to sharks?

A: *Santa Jaws!*

Contributed by Ms. Barrett's 3rd Class

Q: What did Mrs. Claus say to Santa when she looked up at the sky?

A: *Looks like Rain Dear!*

Contributed by Ms. Dollard's 5th Class

Q: A group of people got on a boat, yet there was not one single person on-board. Why?

A: *They were all married*

Contributed by Ms. Dollard's 5th Class

Q: Why do mummies like Christmas so much?

A: *Because of all the wrapping!*

Contributed by Ms. Dollard's 5th Class

Name the Christmas Carol.... a,b or c!

"Hang a shining star upon the highest bough"

- Away in a Manger
- Have yourself a Merry little Christmas
- Frosty the Snowman

"Laughing all the way"

- Silent Night
- Deck the Halls
- Jingle Bells

"He's making a list and checking it twice"

- The First Noel
- Joy to the World
- Santa Claus is coming to town

"'Tis the season to be jolly"

- Jingle Bells
- O Holy Night
- Deck the Halls

"Won't you guide my sleigh tonight?"

- Frosty the snowman
- Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer
- We wish you a Merry Christmas

