

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

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**Newsletter
Issue 57 – Summer 2019**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As the 2018/19 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.

I wish to acknowledge our outstanding annual pupil school attendance rates. This school year it stands at 93% 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, for their enthusiasm, cooperation and energy. Most especially those volunteers who gave so much time on a weekly basis to enhancing our school library. Indeed, Wellness Week in May proved a great hit as was Grandparents Day in February!

Our trophy cabinet is again laden with cups and shields from school quizzes, cross country running, track and field, soccer and Gaelic Games. Well done to all those pupils who represented our school and their families so well throughout the year. The highlight has to be our Under 13 Hurling Team winning the Cumann na mBunscol Roinn A County Final after a Replay and Extra Time!!!

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. This year a 6th Class Celebration Mass is scheduled for Thursday 27th at 1.45pm in School Hall.

The Diocesan Catholic School Advisory Team visited our school on Tuesday 26th March. They were very impressed with the enthusiasm, confidence and understanding shown by our pupils and hugely complimentary of *'the happy smiling faces of the children and their eagerness to share with such clarity the importance of growing in love'* 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 **Thursday 29th August** when pupils return to begin the new school year! **Please drive safely on our road.**

Killian O'Reilly
Principal Teacher

School Calendar Year 2019/20

SCHOOL	CLOSES	RE OPENS
School Year 19/20	-	Thur 29th Aug
Halloween Mid term Break	Fri 25th Oct *	Mon 4th Nov
Christmas Holidays	Fri 20th Dec*	Mon 6th Jan
Spring Mid term Break	Fri 14th Feb	Mon 24th Feb
St. Patrick's day Weekend	School Closed Tue 17th Mar	-
Easter Holidays	Fri 3rd Apr *	Mon 20th Apr
May BH Weekend	School Closed Fri 1st May & Mon 4th May	Tue 5th May
June BH Weekend	School Closed Mon 1st June	Tue 2nd June
Summer Holidays	Fri 26th Jun*	-

* Half Day: School closes at 12:00 noon.

What's going on at School...

* Confirmation

Pupils in 6th Class were confirmed by Bishop Alphonsus Cullinane on Friday the 17th of May.

* First Holy Communion

Congratulations to all our 2nd class pupils, who received their First Holy Communion at St. Mary's Church, on Saturday May 11th. The children participated sincerely and prayerfully in the mass, which was celebrated by Fr. John Treacy, assisted by Fr. Liam Power. Music and singing for the ceremony were provided by the pupils themselves, which made it a very special occasion for the children and their families. Well done to all involved.

* 6th Class Graduation Mass

The Graduation Mass for the 6th Class pupils will take place in the school hall, Ballygunner on Thursday 27th June at 1.45pm.

* Sports Day

We had a very enjoyable evening in the Regional Sport Centre on Wednesday 5th June where our teachers, pupils and families attended and took part in a fun filled evening. *Feedback from the pupils was very positive* – 'Apart from doing the spud and spoon race and relay, the sports night had lots of other activities, high jump, penalties, tug of war, long jump, guess how many sweets in the jar and welly toss. Myself and my 2 friends won the welly toss, our prize was a bar of chocolate. I lost my spud under the stand during the spud and spoon race and we came third in the relay. It was a great evening.'

5th Class Pupil

* School 5c Collection

Following the success of the 1c and 2c collection a couple of years ago, it was decided to do a 5c collection this year. From 28th March to April 5th, the coins flooded in with the aim of filling the bottles and winning the grand prize – Lunchtime Pizza from Slice!

At first, some were dubious – "We'll never fill that bottle" they said! But bottles, jars, boxes and bags came in and a whopping €2,571.00 was raised for school funds.

The money was counted, bagged and lodged to the account thanks to the great work of the Parents Association.

The winning class (Mr Kirwan's 6th class) were the proud recipients of a delivery of delicious pizza from Slice in Ballinakill. Ms. Tallon's Junior Infants were a very close runner up with Ms. Fitzpatrick's (Senior Infants) and Mr. O' Neill's (Junior Infants) in 3rd and 4th place.

A massive thank you to everyone - the collection was a huge success!

As the bank only accepts full bags of coins, the balance of random 10c, 20c and a host of foreign coins was donated to charity.

What was done with this money, you might ask?

'Wellness Week' for our school.

* Wellness Week

This was our first year arranging a Wellness Week in the school and it was a great success. The children and teachers all enjoyed it hugely. Each day, the children wore

tracksuits to school and instead of homework had a fun activity to complete.

In school, their usual schedule was mixed up with walks and additional exercise. Every class had a fun session with an external coach. Trish Murphy (WAMA), Cathy Purcell (Rhythm n Shakes) Harley Barnes, Enda Tweedy (Exhale) and Pat Grant (WAMA) all came to the school and gave the children a taste of dance, drumming, workout and yoga workshops. Positive messages were posted around the school as inspiration and reminders to be thankful. There was a great buzz of excitement throughout the school for the week and we would like to thank all involved for their wonderful contribution.

Feedback from the pupils was very positive –

'A few weeks ago in our school we had wellness week. It was a full week dedicated to our mental health. During the week we did plenty of interesting and relaxing activities. There were posters up all over the school which I found inspiring. Those posters made me feel good and gave me lots of good advice, such as 'Be kind, be honest, be happy,' or 'Mistakes are proof that you are trying'. In my class we all got to go around the school and choose our three favourite posters.

On the Thursday, we met a player from the Ballygunner team, Harley Barnes, who came in to do some physical activities with us. On Friday we did yoga. It was very relaxing and it was good for balance and some core muscles- though to be honest I couldn't do half the things she could do!

5th Class Pupil

* The Greatest Gunner!

The Greatest Gunner is the school talent show. Students auditioned in the hope of being in the top ten finalists. The finalists will perform in front of an audience and judges. There will also be a chorus who are doing two dances. The first is called 'This is the Greatest Show' and the second is called 'From now on', both dances are choreographed by Conor. He encourages everyone.

There are a great variety of acts such as, singing, dance groups, soloists and even rubik's cube magic. The top ten acts are very talented and have put a lot of effort into their act. There will be three judges, Trish from Beat, Derek McGrath and Vikki Graham. They will pick a winner. A special thank you goes to Ms. Tallon, Ms. Frewen, Brenda and Conor for their time and effort directing this extraordinary show. Good luck to all the acts.

5th Class Pupil

* Library

The pupils continue to enjoy their visits to our senior and junior libraries. A reminder inviting our 6th class pupils to donate a book of their choice and put their name on the inside.

If you find any school library books at home before school closes or during the summer holidays, please return them to the school in September. Remember all donations of books to our school libraries are welcome at any time!



Sports

* GAA

-Hurling News

Boys Hurling for this year.

The boys hurling teams have won numerous competitions this year. In February the fourth class boys won the indoor five a side competition. Conor Sherlock was the captain.

In March the under 12 boys won the Eastern 7 a side under 12 competition. Ewan Tynan was the captain. In April the same team beat Lismore to win the County Final. As the winning captain Ewan Tynan will represent the school at half time in the All Ireland semi-final in Croke Park.

In May the under 13 team beat St Declan's in the Eastern Final to win the Billy Howlett Cup for the sixth year in a row. David Leavey was the captain and he won his third winners medal. This is the first time a player has won three medals in a row. The county final was an epic game against Lismore in Dungarvan. The first game was a draw after extra time. 3-11 each. The replay also went to extra time and we won it in the last five minutes from a David Cullen goal.

Overall we have had a tremendous year in hurling and football.

-Camogie News - Celebrations

Congratulations to our Senior Camogie Team who won the Roinn A County Title on June 12th last against Garranbane NS in Fraher Field, Dungarvan.

The 5-03 to 0-01 victory completed a wonderful quadruple of U13 County Titles for Ballygunner - not since some extraordinary refereeing decisions went against us in the County Final of 2015 were the team beaten in competitive action.

This year's victory was particularly satisfying for the School as it was one of the most complete team performances ever given in a Camogie Final.

Nineteen girls toggled out for the Final, with each and every one of them strong enough to start and all of them playing a big role in this County Win.

Captain Emma Berry gave a wonderfully magnanimous victory speech afterwards from the Fraher Field Stand. She is one of thirteen 6th Class girls who have given fine service to Camogie in the School over the last few years, alongside Moilli Goff, Emma Murphy, Millie Hoban Sloan, Ava Peelo Whelan, Rachel Flynn, Grace Schultz, Caoimhe Walsh, Ali Ferguson, Aoife Ryan, Sarah Abullo, Lilly Kavanagh and Holly O'Sullivan.

The School finishes the year as Indoor, Mini 7s Eastern and U13 County Camogie Champions for 2019.

Our B Team had another very successful year. Captained by Ella Cummins, the team marched all the way to an Eastern Final where they eventually succumbed to a stronger Our Lady of Mercy team.

Given the scale of interest in Camogie in the School, the second team allows us the opportunity to work with, and train, twice as many girls as we normally could.

Ms Nicola Kennedy was the brains behind starting Ballygunner's second team three years ago. We look forward to maintaining both teams for many years to come.

* Girls Soccer Team

This year, St. Mary's saw the creation of the first ever girls

soccer team in our school. The girls in sixth class decided to take part in the Willy Moran Tournament. This is the first year the girls have ever taken part in a soccer competition. The girls' team also played a friendly against Passage east National School leading up to the tournament, and won! Thanks to Ms Murphy and Ms Tallon for taking up their lunchtimes to train us. We are entering two teams and hope to have a successful day for both

* Athletics

On 30th May, the Waterford Primary School County Finals were held in Dungarvan.

Following our double win of the cups for both boys and girls at the Waterford City event, our school had 32 boys and girls competing on the day.

Individual medals were won in the sprint race by Grace Schultz and Elaina Coady and in the long race by Erin Butler.

Medal winning relay teams were:

U10 Girls: Cora Miller, Aoife Power, Molly Byrne and Elaina Coady – 2nd place

U11 Girls: Ellen Rowe, Sarah Flynn, Cassandra Abullo and Robyn Butler – 3rd place

These teams were just pipped at the post to finish 4th:

U9 Girls: Laura Smith, Sorcha Gallagher, Aiveen O Donoghue, Erin Butler

U11 Boys: Jack Power, Ronan Quinlan, Aidan O Dwyer, Harry Kavanagh.

Well done to all athletes who competed in both the city and county athletics competition.

* First Class Tour

First Class had a wonderful time on their School Tour to Lismore. They started off the day doing a nature walk where they did a bug hunt, learned all about the history of the forest and then dramatized it. They had lunch in the Millennium Park and got to eat their treats. They all made beautiful puppets in the Heritage Centre and got to bring them home. They played in the playground and also got to go to the gift shop which was a big hit! A great day was had by all.

* Fifth Class Tour

On 12th June 5th Class travelled to the Watershed in Kilkenny on their school tour, we enjoyed 'Last Man Standing' on a bouncy castle and then we went swimming, followed by 'Sponge on a Stick', we played a football shooting game and 'Wrecking Ball'. After lunch we enjoyed an obstacle course and an outdoor water slide followed by 'Wipeout' and 'Hot Seat', we were home at 4:30, it was an amazing day!

* Congratulations

National schools in Waterford were asked to participate in an art competition prior to the cardiac support march held in Waterford on 18th May. Included in the class winners was Zoe Raethorne. Saoirse Mullaney won the overall prize for her artwork which posed the question "How is McDonald's Open 24/7 and Cardiac Care is not?" Hand on heart intend to use Saoirse's slogan at a future Hand On Heart street event. Both Saoirse & Zoe are in Ms. Dollard's 5th Class. Saoirse was presented with book tokens by Matt Shanahan. Well done girls!

New Teachers

The New Teachers for September are as follows:

2019/20 Class Teacher	2018/19	
Jr. Infants:	Ms. Tallon	-
	Ms. Slattery	-
	Ms. Ogle	-
Sr. Infants:	Ms. Looney/ Ms. Hennessy	Ms. Tallon
	Ms. Morris	Ms. Slattery
	Ms. Kennedy	Mr. O'Neill
1st Class:	Ms. Dennehy	Ms. Upton
	Ms. McCarthy	Ms. Looney
	To be confirmed	Ms. Morris/ Ms. Hennessy
2nd Class:	Ms. Walsh	Ms. Keating
	Ms. Murphy	Ms. McCarthy
	Mr. O'Neill	Ms. Dennehy
3rd Class:	Ms. Barrett	Ms. Murphy
	Ms. Kearney	Ms. Ogle
	Mr. O'Sullivan	Ms. Walsh
4th Class:	Mr. Breheny	Ms. Glynn
	Mr. Kehoe	Ms. Barrett
	Ms. Keating	Mr. O'Sullivan
5th class	Ms. Power	Ms. Whittle
	Ms. Dollard	Mr. Breheny
	Ms. Whittle	Mr. Kehoe
6th class	Mr. Kirwan	Ms. Power
	Mr. O'Leary	Ms. Kearney
	Ms. Rellis	Ms. Dollard
	To be confirmed	
Jr. Autism Unit:	Ms. Piper	Ms. Piper
Sr. Autism Unit:	Ms. Cantwell	Ms. Cantwell

Parents Association Activities

* Annual 6th class Disco

The 6th Class Disco took place on Fri 14th June in the School hall. The Parents Association organized this as a BIG THANK YOU to our 6th Class pupils in recognition of their help and support of our Junior Infants through the Buddy System for 2018/2019.

* 6th Class Students

We would like to wish all of our 6th class pupils well as they start Secondary School this September.

* Lost and Found

Many jumpers, jackets, tracksuit tops etc have turned up in the Lost and Found Box! However, most can't be returned to their owners, as there are no names on them. For the coming school year, please make sure to write **FULL NAME** or **RE WRITE** it if it's faded on all

items. The school will clear the box out as soon as school is over. Items in good condition will go to charity the rest will go to the clothes bank.

What a fantastic year – and now the sad part! I am in my final week at St Mary's Ballygunner as my daughter is off to St Angela's in September – I have had such a fantastic team of ladies working with me this year, in fact they have carried me through this process with such energy and enthusiasm the year has flown! I would like to thank each and every one of the Committee members for their help and input this year. They are now in a difficult situation – we have several committee members who are at the end of their time too, so I would ask you to please join your Parents Association and support this fantastic school. Whether you can help an hour a month or an hour a day or just now and again.... make contact with your Parents Association – leave your contact number with Anne in the Office and we will be in touch! Support the PA meetings they are a great way to find out what is happening in your school.

Angela Jackman
Parents Association – Chairperson

Kids Corner

Why did the teachers jump into the swimming pool?
....They wanted to test the water!

Why are mountains the funniest place to holiday?
....They are hill-arious.

What is the difference between a piano and a fish?
....You can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish.

Why did the detectives show up at the beach?
....Something fishy was going on.

Where do sheep go on holiday?
....To the Baaaa-hamas.

What do ghosts like to eat in the summer?
....I Scream.

What summer destination makes your pet bird sing?
....The Canary Islands.

What kind of tree fits in your hand?
....A palm tree!

What did the pig say on the really hot day?
....I'm bacon.

