

2013 was yet again another very busy year at our school. Many projects were undertaken both internally and externally, however none bigger than our decision to improve the heat retention in the building by installing double glazed windows in the classrooms, cavity filling the walls and replacing the old boiler. We applied for a grant through Waterford County Council and the Sustainable Energy Authority and were successful in being approved for half funding. This set the wheels in motion for a massive fundraising drive to commence, consisting of the Board, the Parents Association and a dedicated team of fundraisers I'm glad to report that the work was undertaken during Mid -Term and is now complete. The school is noticeably warmer as a result. Sincere thanks to one and all and especially Liam Fleming and staff at Waterford Energy Bureau and in the Civic Offices, Dungarvan.

Through funding from the Parents' Association and Waterford County Council we were able to engage with the "Artist in the Classroom" scheme back in Jan/Feb '13. Children received excellent tuition from artist, Rita Scannell who was assisted by the entire staff and members of the Parents Association for a period of 4 weeks. The period culminated in an art exhibition of the Children's work at a launch in the School Hall attended by Co Mayor, Billy Kyne and dignitaries, invited guests, parents and children. It was a great experience for the children and our "Tree of Life" mosaic is framed for all to see in the entrance hall.

In June, we had 19 students depart from us at our 6th class graduation, again a great night was had by one and all when we said goodbye to our class of 2013 and indeed some families for the last time. The circle of life continues with the enrolling of 30 pupils to junior infants in September. We are currently carrying out an enrolment survey for these next few years; please register your interest with the school at your convenience. Congratulations to all those who received exam results during the summer and by all accounts they were very impressive indeed. Tús maith, leath na h-oibre! Tá siúl againn go bhfuair siad tús maith i Scoil Náisiunta Baile Mhac Cairbre.

In addition, we also said goodbye to Mrs Carroll who left us after 8 years on our staff. We wish her well at Kilbrien N.S. We also said farewell to Mr. McGrath who had a very successful year with us and we wish him well for the future. Miss Fenton has left us for a year and we wish her well in her distant travels. Congratulations to Miss Dunlea who takes her place and serves her second full year at our school. We welcome back Miss Moore and Mrs Byrne on the respective births of Ollie and Michael and congratulate visiting teacher Mrs Deirdre Ryan on her recent good news. In June we brought our school community together to wish Christy, our postman well in his retirement. Christy would have been an everyday visitor to our school over a 28 year period and enjoyed a very strong rapport with both staff and student alike. We extend a warm welcome to our new Fear an Phoist – Tommie White. Last but not least, best wishes to our patron Dr William Lee who retired last October after serving as our Bishop since 1993. He was no stranger to our Parish, School or Community.

During 2012 we participated in the Food Dudes Programme. This is a programme developed by the University of Wales, Bangor, to encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables. It is based on positive role models, repeated tastings of fruit and vegetables and rewards. It is ultimately designed to enable children to enjoy eating healthy diets, and to create a healthy eating culture within schools. The children received portions of fruit / vegetables on a daily basis and received small prizes for trying the item. A follow up to this will be carried out soon. We also enjoyed some produce from our garden which was cultivated, planted and harvested with the help of 6th Class pupils under the guidance of Mrs. Carroll.

Delightfully, we acquired our 2nd Green Flag this year, for Energy Conservation. An official launch is planned in the near future and now we aim for our 3rd, the Water Conservation Flag.

Work is underway and thanks to our hard working committee. We held a Spring Clean back in March, when over 45 people gathered to help give the school environs a facelift. Tremendous work was done on the morning, again a concerted effort by the BOM, PA and Staff. This will again be planned for 2014 and all are welcome. We also participate in the Local Clean Up each year and again did so during Easter 2013. Well done to the community on winning Category A of the Tidy Towns in Waterford. We received a mention in the report under litter control.

"It is clear that the School and Montessori play an important part in relation to litter control – so well done children of Ballymacarbry - keep up the good work!"

The Children of Rang 2 received the Sacrament of the Eucharist on Saturday May 19th 2013. There were no candidates for the Nire this year. Next year's service is planned for Sat. 24th May in Fourmilewater and Sun. 25th May in the Nire. We will also have Confirmation in 2014 and the dates are Tuesday 11th March at FMW and Wednesday 13th March in the Nire. On Good Friday last, students and staff from the school walked a "Stations of the Cross" route around the Glasha Loop along with Fr. Desmond and members of the choir. A carol service will be held this Christmas on Thursday 19th December in the Nire church, for pupils from R1-R6. The infant classes will combine to perform in school on Wednesday 18th at 2:15 pm.

In September pupils from our school participated in the Comeragh's Wild Festival when they sang and indeed played instruments at the official launch of the Festival in the Community Centre and performed again on the Sunday morning in front of TG4 cameras on Dinny McGrath's Hill in Knockaun. It was a lovely morning for the performance and it came out very well on TG4 Nuacht the following Sunday. They are no strangers to performing as they also performed at Lawlor's Hotel back in May at the Fleadh Ceoil na nDeise Weekend, when almost 500 pupils came together to revive the local songs of the Deise and indeed subsequently we have adopted "Comaraigh Aoibhinn O" as our School Anthem. Our senior classes also performed excerpts from "Annie" and "The Jungle Book" for our school concert in June. They were ably assisted by members of our Banna Ceoil.

We have commenced a practice of inviting in guest speakers of varying professions to 6th class pupils in an effort to afford them the chance to ask questions and quiz the speaker on what life is like in their chosen career path. This will continue in 2014 and develop the children no end.

In addition to the curriculum based work at Ballymacarbry Central the children also receive many arts and sporting, science and nature opportunities. Sportswise, we cater for football, hurling, soccer, rugby, spikeball, swimming, active week participation, athletics and much more, in some cases with the help of local personnel; Tom Guiry, Liam Lawlor, David Ryan and Paul Ryan, local Soccer Club, Colaiste Cathal Naofa and WCC Sports Partnership. In the arts field we cater for dramatics, visual art, music, including instruments singing, dancing, choral singing, school concerts and again much more. We receive yearly recognition for excellence in science and maths and also engage in many nature projects and competitions hereby providing an all-round education to our future generation.

We congratulate Jake Maunsell who represented Ireland recently at Motocross in the UK. Abby Wall competed in the National Finals of the Community Games for swimming. Seamus O'Gorman enjoyed National success at Fleadh Ceoil na hEireann in Derry achieving 3rd place in the U-12 Fiddle while Bríd McMagh also achieved 3rd in the Slow Airs. Our athletes, the Graces and the Nugents enjoy regular success on the track and to all our other sporting enthusiasts who compete regularly in their chosen field, I say well done. We are also very proud of our past pupil, Nicole Lonergan who spent 6 months dancing and playing music with the Raglan Road Irish Dancing Troupe in Disneyland, Florida.

Our Boys football team had a great start to their league, beating Cappoquin and Lismore on the way to the "A" semi-final. We then faced Abbeyside and were very unlucky to be beaten by a point in extra time. In the 7-a-side competition we again had a great start, beating Knockanore and Ballyduff and facing Lismore in the final. Heartbreakingly, we were again beaten by a single point. The boys showed great skill and determination throughout the football league.

Our Girls Football team also had a great league campaign, beating Cappoquin and Lismore in the first two rounds and overcoming St. Mary's of Dungarvan in the Semi Final. We faced Lismore again in the final on a cold Saturday morning but we were missing one of our most influential players, so the result didn't go our way.

In an effort to reduce costs we engaged in local School Tours last May / June. Our infants went to Clonea Strand on a glorious day, 1st/2nd to Lough Mordha, Rathgormack and Carrick Castle, 3rd/4th ventured to the Nire Lakes and our 5th/6th went to Dáil Eireann, (where we met with Deputies Mattie McGrath and Paudie Coffey and Senator Mark Daly) the Zoo and took in a spot of shopping on the return journey. By all accounts both staff and pupils alike enjoyed their day of fun. We also had nature walks for all groups in May taking in Curraheenavoher, Ballybrien Steeple and Touraphuca Wood.

On Friday 11th October we welcomed members of the victorious Deise U18 hurlers to our school along with family members and club officials. In attendance were Conor Gleeson and Dermot Ryan. This was a great achievement for the County, Fourmilewater Club the Gleeson / Ryan families and indeed our own school as both Conor and Dermot are past pupils. In addition to their club, they would have helped us in our school leagues and honed their skills along the way. We wish them well in their careers and sporting endeavours, safe in the knowledge that they will shortly have All Ireland medals adorning their mantelpieces.

As the adage goes, "it takes a community to raise a child" and on behalf of the Parents of the children who are placed in our care and the staff of Ballymacarbry Central, I thank you all, for all you do for our pupils whether it be through the school itself or through the plethora of clubs, societies and organisations which are now based in this wonderful locality and can avail of our excellent Community Centre facilities.

As we near the Season of Goodwill, we are safe in the knowledge that we have made many other children's Christmas by compiling 107 Shoeboxes of gifts, in association with our Parents' Association, our pupils and their parents.

On a sad note, our deepest sympathies to the families of the late Gillian Moore, Deerpark, Ballymacarbry and the late Fergus Condon, Clashavougha, Newcastle on the untimely deaths of both Gillian and Fergus. Both were past pupils of our school. Ni imithe uainn atá siad, ach imithe romhainn. - They have not gone away from us, but gone before us.

A great Irish poet, WB Yeats once wrote that "education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire", so as we keep this fire burning at Ballymacarbry Central, all that



*Bryan Bolger,
Shanballyanne &
Portmagee, on his
Holy Communion Day
in Portmagee.*

remains for me, is wish you all a happy and holy Christmas and a wonderful start to 2014.

I take this opportunity to thank all the staff at Ballymacarbry NS for all their hard work and dedication towards our school and the children of this area and all those associated with its smooth running; those that visit us either in a paid or unpaid capacity. To Mrs Kelly, Miss Dunlea, Miss Moore, Miss O'Gorman, Mrs. Coffey, Miss Melody, Mrs Byrne, Mrs C. Ryan, Mrs D. Ryan, Mrs Long, Miss Fenton, Mrs. O' Grady, Mary our supervisor and Rose our Secretary – to those who travelled for work experience or performed teaching practice - Go raibh mile maith agaibh. To our Speech & Language - Drama instructor, Aileen Hogan, we congratulate her on her recent award nomination for "Women in Business" through Dungarvan Chamber of Commerce. Special thanks to the Members of the Board of Management under the guidance of Thomas Crotty, the Parents' Association under the direction of Eleanor Muhlwald and parents at large. Thanks to our Parish Priests, Fr. Desmond & Fr. Kelleher and to our sacristans, Eileen and Nora for their help and Martha for her assistance with the Monthly Family Mass. To the children, I hope you receive a special visitor over the Festive Season and are eager to return on Tuesday 7th January at 9:20am. – Ní neart go cur le chéile. Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir. Slán agus Beannacht!

Mícheál S. Ó'Riain – Príomh oide.



*Fr. Desmond PP presenting the School with a picture of Pope Francis following his trip to Rome.
Seen here along with the Principal and confirmation candidates from both the Nire & Fourmilewater.*



*Holy Communion Class of 2013 with Fr. G. Desmond P.P.,
school principal M.J. O'Ryan & teacher Michelle O'Gorman.*