

2015 again proved a very busy, yet productive year at our school. As we edge towards our golden jubilee, we are still developing as a school, to the extent that we have just completed phase three of the school's development.

Slán & Fáilte. In addition to seeing off 23 to secondary schools, we also said goodbye to Mary Mulcahy, who had been with us since 2005 as supervisor / cleaner. Slán also to Mr Molan, who returned to Ballyporeen. In June we acknowledged their contributions to our school and wish them well for the future. In the Board changeover, we said slán to Orla O' Ryan and Chrissie Horkan thanking them for their input. Good luck also to Garda Stephen Phelan.

We welcome our new patron Bishop Cullinan to the Diocese; Bernie Meehan and Eleanor Muhlwald to the Board, Angela Peters and Majella Hogan as supervisors, Bean Ní Lonergháin, Miss Leamy and Mr. Hewitt on a shared capacity, Garda Mansfield and 24 new junior infants.

New Build. The highlight of the year was arguably Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov., when we moved into our new extension. We applied for additional space in Nov. 2013. The Department granted a classroom, resource room / staff toilet in June 2014. Kenneth Hennessy Architect was appointed as was Mícheál Maher Builder and work commenced in June. The extension was officially opened on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> Nov. by Chairman Thomas Crotty with Bishop Cullinan, who blessed the work. Thanks to all who made this possible; The Board, especially Thomas and Brendan who accompanied me to site meetings throughout the summer, to all the sub contractors, Eamon Costigan & family who granted us temporary access. The end product is a credit to all and a high quality of workmanship is evident in every facet, blending into the exiting premises seamlessly.

W.S.E. We had a team of inspectors onsite in September to facilitate a Whole School Evaluation. The last such review was in 2004. No stone was left unturned in assessing the school under the headings, Management, Leadership & Learning. The report is just published and is extremely positive. The team reinforced good practice and made recommendations. Two statistics worth dwelling on from their findings would be that; A. 96% of pupils felt that Ballymacarbry NS was a good school. B. 96% of parents either strongly agreed or agreed with the question – "Overall, I am happy with the school." Thanks to all those involved.

Sacraments. In May, 17 candidates from our school received the Sacrament of the Eucharist from Fr. Desmond at FMW and a further 5 from Fr. Kelleher in the Nire. (See photographs elsewhere.) As regards 2016 - Nire on Sun 15<sup>th</sup> and FMW on Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Confirmation for the Parish of Newcastle / FMW is scheduled for Wed 18<sup>th</sup> May in Newcastle at 10:30 am and Touraneena / Nire will take place that same afternoon at 2:00pm in Touraneena.

Sport. Sport is very much catered for at our school and we work in conjunction with local clubs especially Nire, FMW and Ladies Football Clubs. We would also cater for running, swimming and a flavour of others during Active Week / Sports Day.

Our girls claimed the County "A" final in November when we beat Ballygunner in Abbeyside. Along the way we had victories over Lismore, Cappoquin and Ballygunner. It was 2005 since we last held the title and it is a tremendous achievement to be the kingpins at both primary and adult level. Thanks to Miss O' Gorman for her efforts.

The boys fell one step short in the hurling when narrowly defeated by Ballygunner last May. It was a tremendous achievement being in two "A" finals in the one academic year, coming agonisingly close to the double. Thanks to Mr. Molan, Mrs Byrne & Eoin Wall.

Aaron Ryan, Kelly Anne Hogan, Seán Boyce and Seán Walsh all represented us at Primary Game level. Aaron played on Munster

Final Day in Thurles and Sean Walsh played in Croke Park for Kerry on All Ireland Final Day, scoring a goal for the Kingdom.

As part of Active Week, we had nature walks, a visit to Coillshigaun, Tricks & Sticks by Dawn Grace, Mayfield Birds of Prey called to exhibit its magnificent collection, we had Inflatable's day, Sports Day and finished off on Sport's Day Friday with an ice cream courtesy of the PA. We also swept the board at the Clonmel Athletics Club meet in the Dr. Pat O' Callaghan Complex.

The Arts: Music, Drama and the Arts are well catered for at BNS. We have Aileen Hogan visit weekly. Clan Cluana staged "Oisín in Tír na nÓg" in February. Mrs Byrne & 6<sup>th</sup> Class staged "Cinderella" on Graduation night. In March, we received Irish dance lessons from The Kathy McGrath School of Dance in conjunction with the PA. This was extremely beneficial and fitted in nicely with Seachtain na Gaeilge / Lá 'Le Pádraig. We participated in the Comeragh's Wild project again this year, in liaison with Waterford City & County Council. Rang 2/3 took part in the Amhrán na nDéise project in Dungarvan in May. This is an annual project to ensure that the great songs of our county will survive. A number of our children took part in concert with Cór Fear na nDéise to launch the Fleadh Cheoil.

Some pupils enjoyed success at Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan and went on to compete at Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann; Cian Smith 1<sup>st</sup> place in U12 pipes, Ellen O' Gorman 1<sup>st</sup> place U-12 Fiddle Slow Airs, Emma Wyse 2<sup>nd</sup> Place U-12 Set Dance. Congratulations to past pupils who also enjoyed national success, of which there were many. Following on from this, Cian who is in 5<sup>th</sup> class, went on to play for Ryan Tubridy on The Late Late Show. It was a proud occasion for Cian, his family, his school and locality. Our Banna Ceoil is going from strength to strength, now boasting 32 members helping out at school / community events, even entertaining our inspectors and Bishop recently. Go raibh maith agat to Mrs Kelly and band. – Gan dabht ar bith, tá ár gceol tradisiúnta bríomhar beo sa cheanntar.

Quiz Night. The school held a quiz night in February to thank pupils / families for their part in fundraising. Over 40 families travelled to the Centre to partake in an audio visual quiz arranged by Mr O' Ryan. Fundraisers were presented with tokens of appreciation and spot prizes were awarded. Mrs Byrne and family were overall winners on the night.

Turasanna Scoile. In addition to trips to GAA fields, churches, running tracks and swimming pool, the senior side of the school would have visited Cahir & Cashel as part of their history curriculum. The senior classes visited the museum. Rang 3&4 participated in a tour of Pinewood facilitated by parent / employee, Richard O' Keeffe. A number of local nature walks were catered for during Active Week and our school trips were arranged for Clonea, Lough Modhra, Cork and Dublin. To mark their last day of primary school, Rang 6 trekked to the Nire Lakes and a fabulous day was had by pupils and teachers alike.

Cuairteoirí. We had many visitors throughout the year, the highlight being the lady footballers who collected All Ireland medals. On this winning team we had 8 past pupils. Both Ballymacarbry Senior & Junior teams also called to celebrate their respective achievements. On the coaching side we were delighted to welcome Eoin Wall to help out our boys and girls and also Barry Dunne. Another highlight being county hurler, Jamie Barron called with the Hurling League Cup to present medals.

Sgt. Kennedy & Pte. Flynn called to our school in November to deliver a specially commissioned tri-colour and 1916 proclamation in advance of centenary celebrations. Aoife Kennedy (niece) accepted the flag, Mikey Maunsell, the proclamation and Jack Phelan recited paragraph 4. The pupils sang our Anthems - A Chomaraigh Aoibhinn Ó and Amhrán na bhFiann.

We held our Open Day in early June. Grandparents' Day

in February, when a collection of grandparents visited the school to regale stories of times past and answer questions posed by the youth of today. We even managed to facilitate a video link to Germany courtesy of the Muhlwalds. Mary Hickey entertained the infants at Hallowe'en and Fiona Dillon gave tips to R3/R4 on cooking with eggs. We hosted a number of local past pupils for transition year work experience and also facilitated pupils in completing teaching practice. In addition to developing pupils, we also have a role in developing teachers to ensure continuity.

**Community Links.** We have a strong sense of place in our community and the school is no different. In addition to relationships with GAA clubs, we would also have sound relations with the Pastoral Council, Tidy Towns, the Over 55 Club, the Soccer Clubs, the Scouts / Beavers, The Walking Festival Committee, the Community Centre and others.

Incidentally the following was taken from the Tidy Towns Report this summer - "The National School contained some really attractive visual developments such as the historical mural and themed garden. The imaginative garden furniture made from trees and the winding pathway illustrating some interesting sean-fhocal was very absorbing." Ms Dunlea collected our third Green Flag during the year and along with pupils, staff and help from WC&CC we are already panning our Travel Flag.

**P.A.** We enjoy a great rapport with PA; such as help with the shoebox appeal which amassed 120 boxes for less fortunate children, organising Santa to visit in late December, organising Irish dancing classes, part financing for I-pads and an Annual Church Gate Collection. Other areas of collaboration would include a Uniform Exchange, a Cake sale, Active Week / Sports Day and a Transition Talk for parents. The PA presented gifts to our leavers in June. We thank them for their assistance. We acknowledge the work of outgoing chair Angela Peters and wish her successor Jo Phelan well in her tenure.

**Talks.** Throughout the calendar year we scheduled a number of talks. Rang 3-6 would have received talks on Cyber Bullying and Relationship and Sexuality Education. We would also have provided a Transition to Secondary School Course. A recent talk was also organised by the Fire Safety Office. Staff participated in a First Aid Refresher Course and Stay Safe Training. The PA staged a talk on supporting the Mental Health of the Child and Garda Mansfield spoke to us on Road Safety / Internet Security.

**Buiochas.** Many people lend a shoulder in the running of a school as it takes a community to raise a child. Hopefully it is evident, how we help our community and how we benefit from it. From the Board, through the PA, the extended staff to those who help out in a paid or unpaid capacity, we appreciate your help. Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh si.

I would like to place a particular emphasis on the role of the staff here, not merely assisting academically in the lives of the children but also in an extra curricular way. This didn't go unnoticed in the recent WSE. A special thanks to school Secretary, Rose who is the face & voice of our school and Eleanor Muhlwald who helped out. Also to Tina Condon, our cleaner.

We regularly receive donations to our school the most noticeable this year being a "Buddy Bench" donated by Kevin Sheehan, Glenanore Carpenter. The idea of this being that children who have no friend to play with at a particular time would sit here until another child comes along and offer the chance to play. Go raibh maith agat a Caoimhín.

To end on a congratulatory note, congratulation to staff member Miss O' Gorman who recently got engaged to Seán McGrath, Kilmacow and we wish them well in their future together. Furthermore to Seán Boyce, who earned a full scholarship to Coláiste Cheitinn, Chluain Meala. – Maith thú a Sheáin! Compliments of the season to one and all agus go mbeimid beo ag an am seo arís.

– Mícheál S. Ó Riain Príomhoide.



*Three Green Flags*



*Official Opening*



*Fleadh Cheoil Winners*