

2017 will be remembered as the year "Ophelia" stole our roof, but even though this was undoubtedly the low trough, there were many crests.

We said slán to seventeen 6th class pupils, also to Miss Melody and Miss O'Gorman as they both embarked upon career breaks. We congratulate Michelle & Seán on their nuptials. Mr Loom transferred to Kilsheelan, Angela Peters moved on from supervision duties. Miss Fitzgerald, Miss Kennedy and Miss Leamy returned to their base schools. We thank them for their work on you and your child's behalf. To keep the ship on an even keel, we enrolled 20 infants, welcomed back Miss Claire Moore and added staff members Mr O Cuirrín, Miss Mitchell and Patricia Behan who joins Fiona as an SNA.

R.I.P. We remember at Christmas, people who are deceased and not with their families. We think of the Halley Family, Shanballyanne on the death of Martina and, the late Brian Hennessy and Catherine Kearney, both past pupils. – Go ndeana Dia trocaire orthu.

Environment: We were awarded our fourth Green Flag for Travel in spring and have already commenced our Biodiversity Flag. Nicole Lonergan & Dayl Cronin were acquired as special guests for flag raising. Indeed, Nicole is a past pupil and making great strides in the music/entertainment industry worldwide. We liaise with Tidy Towns in their annual application and compliment them on their Silver medal, herby noting the adjudicator's remarks, "You show the importance of engaging with the younger residents, including Ballymacarbry N.S. The school was presented in excellent condition." Thanks to Miss Dunlea, Mrs Connolly and Committee.

Religion: In May 2017 Fr Kelleher and Fr. Desmond administered the Sacrament of the Eucharist. We celebrated Graduation mass in June for our 6th class and marked the start of the school year with a school mass in September. We will welcome Bishop Cullinan to both local churches on May 17th next for confirmation. Nire Holy Communion is scheduled for Sun. 20th May and FMW Sat. 26th. We thank all those involved in sacramental preparation within our school, parishes and wider community. Our biennial Carol Service will take place on Thurs. 21st Dec. at 6:45pm at Ballymacarbry.

Sport: We won the Boys County A Football final in November when beating Ballygunner after extra time. This is a great achievement for a country school having now reached the pinnacle twice in the last 3 years. We also won the Girls 7 a side but were unlucky in our quest for 3 in a row in the 15 a side, beaten narrowly by Lismore. We participated in the Camogie championship and did admirably well for first time out. We congratulate Ailis O'Meara and Claire Walsh who represented us in the primary game. Congratulations to Jamie Barron, Conor Gleeson and Michelle Ryan and colleagues for their notable successes in 2017. Our pupils excel both inside and out of the classroom and at assembly we hear of success in varied sports and activities. We encourage our pupils to be active and they certainly are. We thank all those who help in any way to encourage sport at our school; our staff, including Mrs Byrne, Mr O Cuirrín and Mrs Coffey / Miss O' Gorman, our local clubs our coach, Eoin Wall and the parents. We are traditionally very successful at this level, but it is the competing which is all important, not the winning.

The Arts: The arts are catered for admirably at our school. Numbers in our Banna Ceoil under the direction of Mrs Kelly & Niamh Fenton have soared to over 50 pupils, playing a range of musical instruments. We were delighted with the special recommendation that we received from the Walton's Competition which we entered and received certificates of distinction for. We

also were guests at the recent Nire Christmas Fair. Oidhreacht Fr. Bracken was held in our school in July, where the music and songs of our former priest were played and learned. It was a week of gaeilge, cluichí, craic agus ceoil and was thoroughly enjoyed by one and all. Ar aghaidh leis an gceol. On a related note, well done to our own Jack Condon and all past pupils who enjoyed success at County, Munster or National Fleadh Ceoil. Some may have honed their skills at our school.

Clan Cluana performed Diarmuid Agus Gráinne from Irish History and Mythology. Parent and potter by trade Susan Mangan gave of her time to help our students appreciate the clay strand within visual arts. As is tradition at our school, we would have staged our annual Céilí on St Patrick's Day. This affords our pupils an appreciation of dance and an opportunity to participate and experience all that is culturally great about Ireland and this area.

Storm Ophelia: As we write, the school is undergoing repair. Serious damage was inflicted upon a section of roof. The work began in earnest in mid November when we temporarily relocated some pupils to the Community Centre. Thanks to the Committee for facilitating this and GRB Construction. We hope to relocate back on Jan. 8th.

Activities & Visitors: Activities are vast and varied at school. Some of the more memorable would include; Odd socks for Katie, RTE's 10@10, Christmas Shoebox Appeal, Lions Club Christmas Hamper Appeal, Zumba, Walk 2 School Days, Blue & White Day, Active Week Scouts, Pancake Tuesday, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Engineering week, Field Trips / School tours which ranged from Parson's Green to Collins' Barracks.

To engage in some of these activities, we welcome the help of visitors; Garda Dee, our coaches Eoin & Barry. Muriel Cuddy from Health & Fitness Ireland, Richard O'Keeffe from Pinewood, Dungarvan Fire Service, Kevin Power & Ned Landers from Coillte, Susan Mangan, and our local knitters who helped with Rang 2. I also acknowledge the help of those who seek work experience or teaching practice at our school. While it is impossible to cater for everyone, we do try our best to facilitate past pupils when planning.

Appreciation: I take this opportunity to thank all staff for their work, our teachers, our SNA's. We are blessed to have such an enthusiastic bunch. I thank Thomas and the Board and Jo and the P.A. I want to mention Majella, Breda, Tina, Darren and Rose, who has been the voice and face of the school for 21 years. We acknowledged this contribution in June. A special mention also to our bus drivers and parents who are the primary educators and who help the school in countless ways, not forgetting all who assisted in our temporary relocation. Finally, we wish a happy retirement to Mrs Nix from Touraneena NS and extend best wishes to Mr. Cronin, her replacement.

Enrolment: Those intending to enrol their child /children at our school are urged to do so now by contacting Rose. An Open Day will be scheduled in early June.

Conclusion: As we steadily approach our golden jubilee, we know that we continue to develop well rounded individuals who will progress in life and represent themselves, their family, their community and indeed us in line with the feedback we continue to receive. That's our mission in essence, to cater for the holistic development of the child. In moving from Advent to Christmas, we wish our entire school community a happy, peaceful and holy Christmas 2017. Nollaig beannaithe agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh.