



Dear Parents/Guardians,

The end of another term is upon us and at this special time of year, we would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas.

It's been a fun-filled term which shall culminate with our fabulous Christmas Carol Service. We raised €2,005 from the Craft Fair which will go towards the running cost of the school.

In particular huge thanks must go to:

- ✚ Patricia Murphy, who worked tirelessly for weeks with the children. She has given many of them a skill for life in the art of crocheting. She is so creative and gave so much of her time and energy to all the preparation for our Craft Fair.
- ✚ Anne Carlyle, who taught the children in 5th/6th Class how to sew. She taught them tacking and running stitch and helped them to make cushions which were then sold in our Craft Fair. She was so enthusiastic and supportive of the children on their learning journey.
- ✚ Mrs. Eileen Redmond and her 'knitter knatters' friends. They donated dozens of wonderful knitted items.
- ✚ Leanna Redmond for her never-ending enthusiasm for the Craft Fair. She worked tirelessly to make sure everything was perfect.
- ✚ Gail Kavanagh, Samantha Dooley, Brigid Cummins, Mag Redmond, Sinéad Norris, Kathryn McDonald, Denise O'Connor and Charlie Gordon for all their work and support both on the day of the Craft Fair and in the run up to it.

Sincere thanks also to our fantastic teachers and SNAs for the amazing work they have done with the children in preparation for the both the fair and carol service.

The children worked so hard to learn their songs and prepare for their stage performance. I am sure you will see that they will perform well and are an absolute joy to watch. Well done to each of the children for a job very well done ☺ Thank you to Ms. Lawlor for all her work in preparing the children for the Carol Service.

Finally, last but most certainly not least, huge thanks to all of you who come to support these events. We could not do it without you.

ENROLMENT 2018 - We are now taking enrolments for Junior Infants - September 2018. If you or someone you know has a child to enrol for this coming school year, please contact the office for an enrolment form. This form can be downloaded from our website also.

Grandparents Mass - shall be held on Thursday 25th January in Ballymurn Church at 11.30am. Refreshments shall be held in the school following the Mass. All grandparents/parents are welcome to attend and we look forward to seeing you on the day.

Congratulations to Emma Fanning and Amy O'Toole who delighted us all with their rendition of 'Our Snowman' by Harriet Whipple at our recent whole school assembly. They were a treat to listen to and we look forward to more of their work in the New Year.

Wishing you all a lovely break and best wishes for the New Year. We look forward to seeing you all again on **Monday 8th January, 2017 at 9.20am.**

Le gach dea ghuí,

Maria Brophy
Principal

Dates / Upcoming Events:

- ✚ School closes at 12.30pm on Friday 22nd December for all pupils
- ✚ Carol Service - Thursday 21st December at 7pm in Ballymurn Parish Church
- ✚ School re-opens on **Monday 8th January, 2018** at 9.20am for all children
- ✚ Grandparents Mass - 25th January at 11.30am
- ✚ Ballymurn Fun Run - Sunday 28th January
- ✚ MIST test - Senior Infants 7th February, 2018
- ✚ Mid-Term Break 15th - 16th February, 2018 inclusive - school closed on these days
- ✚ School closes at 12.30pm on Thursday 22nd February, 2018 - staff meeting
- ✚ Confirmation - Friday 2nd March, 2018 at 2pm.
- ✚ St. Patrick's Weekend 19th March, 2018 - school closed
- ✚ First Holy Communion - Saturday 28th April, 2018 at 11am.

Report from Ms. Lawlor's Junior/Senior Infants:

The children have had a busy few weeks and they're now so excited as we spend the final countdown to Christmas at school. During November our play theme was centred on pets and the veterinary surgery. The children really enjoyed the role-play area which was transformed into a vet surgery. They took turns at being receptionist, vet, veterinary nurse or customer with a sick pet.

The real highlight was when we had some interesting classroom visitors. There was a hamster, a tiny turtle, a lizard and a Dutch rabbit. The children learned so much from asking questions about the pets. Thanks again to Dave from Petmaster who took the time to bring in these animals.

In PE the children have been learning some new dances. During the past 3 weeks in December our play topic has been about Arctic animals and Santa's workshop. The role-play area has been very active with elves wrapping, designing, writing and dispatching toys.

They have also been posting their cards in the post box and sorting them out during playtime, just like a real sorting office! As 2017 comes to an end I'd like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and the very best of wishes for 2018!

Report from Ms. Redmond's 1st/2nd Class

This month we worked really hard and a lot of our work was based on the theme 'Christmas'. We looked at the history of the 'Late Late Toy Show' and looked at many clips of the show from years ago and discussed the changes which have occurred.

We are busy practising carols for the Christmas Carol Service; 1st and 2nd Class are fantastic at singing and I know they will do us proud tonight. We studied advertising and looked specifically at Christmas advertisements; the pupils discussed each advert and then worked in groups to create their own Christmas advert.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with 1st and 2nd class; they were a pleasure to teach. I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Report from Ms. Pitt's 3rd/4th Class

This has been yet another busy month. We were very busy making crafts for the craft fair. The children put a huge effort into creating their crafts and were very excited for them to be sold at the fair.

We made fairy doors, elf clothes lines, Christmas tree decorations, Santa decorations, Christmas cards and Christmas shell decorations. They showed great creativity with their artwork.

We have also been very busy practising carols for the carol service and practising 'Silent Night' on the tin whistle. In English we have been focusing on poetry writing this month. The children have written some great poems about the theme of Christmas and we also learnt a lovely poem 'Dear Santa' by Kenn Nesbitt.

In Geography we started learning about the different provinces and counties of Ireland and we began to learn a poem to remember the counties of Ireland. We did some map work in which involved labelling the counties, rivers and towns in Ireland. We will be doing some further work on this in the New Year.

Report from Mr. Murphy's 4th/5th Class

The Christmas spirit was out in force over December in our room. We looked at the history of Christmas, from where it originated from and to how it is celebrated today. We also looked at some of the world's greatest revolutions where the Americans and French inspired a small nation to try again at independence. We learned about the ghoulish guillotine and the reign of terror to the shot heard around the world and the declaration of independence.

In Geography we looked at the United States of America and both its physical and social landmarks. We looked at how they went from a divided 13 colonies to one of the super powers of today.

In Science we put on our thinking caps and looked out into space. We learned about the planets and debated whether there was life further into the darkness. We looked at how rockets took off and how astronauts brushed their teeth in space.

In Art, we worked on numerous Christmas pieces of art. We drew Santa and Rudolph and used patterns and shapes to create a warm image of a coffee cup on a table.

In Maths we went shopping and began to look at money and completed a Santa Claus Maths Dash around the school. The children worked in teams as they ran around completing maths questions.

In PE, we finished off the year with some more festive dance routines and completed the 12 days of Fit-mas in the classroom too.

In English we read 'A Christmas Carol' as a group and created our own detestable character like Scrooge. We watched the Snowman and created our own Snowman for our stories. We have been working on stories created for the Junior School, but have yet to complete them with all the extra work we have been doing.

Skills Competition:

Keira Carroll and Sean Bishop represented the school on the 1st of December in the Wexford GAA Skills Competition in Buffers Alley. They were competing against the best 3rd and 4th Class students in Wexford and performed amazingly well. They were unsuccessful in winning any prizes however, the experience was priceless.

Report from Mrs. Brophy's 5th/6th Class

We have had a very busy month in the senior class. We finished our first novel 'The Silver Sword' and completed lots of activities around the story. The children thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. We shall commence our next novel in the New Year. In writing we revised 'recount', 'description' and 'information report' genres and compiled two 'books' using samples of each genre.

In Geography we learnt about maps and mapping along with Rainforests and Biodiversity. We learnt about the differences between 'climate' and 'weather' and what 'ecosystems', 'species' and 'habitats' are. Did you know that Rainforests only take up 6% of land on our planet but are home to 50% of all plant and animal species on Earth?

PE - we concluded our dance programme with the children knowing four dances. They are 'Walls of Limerick', 'La Vinca', 'French Peasant Dance' and 'Staicín Eorna'. We are looking forward to commencing Gymnastics in January.

Art - we finalised our work for the Craft Fair. Congratulation to all the children in 5th/6th Class for their efforts in making cushions, cup cozies, bookworms, minion and emoji jars, not to mention a teddy bear 😊 We have learnt a life-long skill.

Religion - we have been busy working on our 'Confirmation Workbook' and learning about The Commandments and Beatitudes. We shall be commencing our 'You Shall be My Witnesses' programme in January.

Parents Association News

The school management would like to thank all members of the Parents Committee for their hard work and support for all events organised during the school year. In particular we are extremely grateful to all our parents/guardians for ensuring that, despite government cutbacks, we are still able to support the teachers in providing a top-class education for all the pupils at Ballymurn NS.

Remember all parents in the school are members of the Parents Association and we are grateful and appreciate your continued support.

Again a very big thank you from all of us in the Parents Association and we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Spirituality and Personal Development

A Message from Fr. Finn

Christmas Season

God the creator of the whole world entered into human history a little over two thousand years ago with the birth of Jesus Christ among us. No armies that have ever marched, no parliament that has ever sat and no political rulers that have ever ruled have changed the course of human history as this one person Jesus Christ.

Christmas, the celebration of Christ born in time, brings something special into each yearly event. This is a great season for children, families, for married and single people. It is as if the birth of the Saviour has left an imprint on this season that is mystical, life giving and enriching relationships.

Let us spend this Christmas nourishing the relationships which sometimes, through the year, we take for granted.

Christmas becomes very hectic and very busy for most households and most families. These are all very good things which we involve ourselves in. But it does create stress, anxiety and sometimes fragmented relationships. What we need to do is realise Jesus is the centre. Let us find time and space for sitting down, the lighting of a candle or gaze at a picture of Jesus. This will make a difference in the quality of our celebrations and our relationships.

As we all look forward to the Christmas holidays, please be mindful that Christmas may be a difficult time of year for many people. Please look out for your loved ones or anyone you feel may be suffering or lonely this Christmas. If you are finding Christmas difficult, please reach out and talk to somebody. Don't suffer in silence.

Important Contact Numbers:

1. AWARE - 1800 80 48 48
2. Samaritans - 116 123

Happy Christmas to everybody and every blessing for the New Year.

SUPERVISION - Your Child's Safety on School Premises

Monday to Friday ----- 9.20am to 3.00pm

Infants (Junior & Senior) ----- 9.20am to 2.00pm

Outside of these times there is **no supervision** for children on the school premises.