



St Mary's Junior NS

Rowlagh, Clondalkin, Dublin 22

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT & SCHOOL REPORT ON OUR 2022—2023



A summary of activities and achievements

A Message from the Principal,

Ms. Maura O'Shea

Dear Parents and Guardians, Summer Holidays are here. After another successful year, filled with fun, activities, learning and meaningful teaching, we made it to the summer holidays!!

A big thank you to all the parents and families for your continued support throughout the year.

As you can see from all the activities that have taken place, the staff of St Mary's have done their utmost to ensure the children have sampled plenty of activities over the year.

I would like to thank the teachers, SNA team and all the management and staff at St Mary's JNS for all their work this year.

Finally, a special thanks for every member of the school community in making more happy memories for the children of St Mary's JNS.

To all the children, enjoy your summer, get plenty of fresh air and don't forget to help out at home whenever you can.

Take care, stay safe and be kind,

Le gach dea –ghuí,

Maura O'Shea

Attendance and Punctuality

Every day in school counts!! The average attendance this year is 87.2% which is an improvement from last year.

Hopefully next academic year we can improve on this with parents' help. A sincere thanks to all parents and children who support our efforts to improve attendance and keeping children at home if they are unwell. Don't forget that our children, because of their age, depend on parents to get them to school.



School Website

www.stmarysjunior.ie

This is our school website. The site is very user friendly and filled with useful information and up to date news. Thanks to the staff of St. Mary's JNS for updating the site on a regular basis. Check it out to see what's happening.

Child Protection

Our Child Safeguarding Policy is reviewed each year. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is the Principal, Maura O'Shea. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is the Deputy Principal, Mairéad Byrne. Any concerns are referred to a Tusla Social worker for advice. The school always follows this advice.

School Fees

School Fees for next year are €30. These go towards Pupil Insurance, Photocopying, Homework Folders, Art Materials and Online Apps. This can be paid to Miriam in the Office before we return on the 29th of August.

School Uniform

School Uniform: Navy jumper, trousers/skirt, white shirt. Children can wear navy shorts in the warmer weather. Tracksuits are available from: School Wear House, Unit D7 Ballymount Cross Ind. Est., Ballymount, Dublin 24,
Email: info@schoolwearhouse.ie Tel: 01 4604371.

It's been a busy year – Look at all we have done!!

Maths week

The children had great fun during Maths Week in October. Children did lots of fun activities in school, outdoor learning in the school garden and yard and at more activities at home. Well done everyone.



Seachtain na Gaeilge March 2023

The children are encouraged to use Irish as much as possible especially during Seachtain na Gaeilge. We had Assemblies presented as Gaeilge, artwork filled the hall, there were quizzes and lots of ceol agus craic at our ceili mór!



Student of the week

Ms. Keaveney and Claire Kennedy hold Student of the Week each Friday in the Nurture Room.

Student of the Week recognises children in each class who have made a huge effort to do their best work and to follow the school rules. It has been a great incentive for the children to try their best and celebrate their hard work. The children decorate their certificates and receive a prize.

The winners' photographs are proudly displayed outside Miriam's office for all to see. Well done boys and girls! We are all so proud of you!

Technology Week

We celebrated Technology Week in May. All classes spent time using our class set of iPads. Everyone enjoyed participating in technology stations in the hall, which included maths quizzes on Kahoot!, listening to Gaeilge on the cúla4 app, coding BeeBots, and bringing teddies to life by recording their voices on the ChatterPix Kids app. A big thanks to our parents committee for helping out!



Christmas Concerts

This year it was wonderful to welcome families back to the hall again for Christmas performances. The school was filled with excitement and festive cheer as each class took turns singing and dancing for the audience.



Dance

All classes were lucky to have two excellent dance teachers from House of Swag Dance School teaching the children dance. The children danced every Tuesday for six weeks. All the children really enjoyed it.

Science Week

In term 1, we celebrated Science Week. We had so much fun being super scientists carrying out experiments. We worked scientifically by questioning, observing, predicting, investigating, analysing and recording our data. We loved looking at all of the wonderful entries for our science photograph competition. It was amazing to see the children identify science in their everyday lives!



Nurture Room

In St Mary's JNS we are very lucky to have a Nurture Room for the children to use. It is a place where children can feel safe and secure and is designed to be a bridge between home and school. The children are given the opportunity to participate in a range of activities in a relaxed, structured environment which promotes and supports their social and emotional development. The nurture approach is important in promoting the children's wellbeing in our school.

Assembly

This year we started whole school Assemblies in the hall each Friday. The theme for Assemblies changes each month and is based around our thematic work in class. It has been a great success and the children have been fantastic at presenting duties, singing and performing in front of their friends. We always have lots of certificates and trophies to hand out to those who are working hard and trying their best in class and on yard.



First Holy Communion

The children in Second Class celebrated their First Holy Communion on the 27th of May. Thank you to all the staff who helped prepare the children. Everyone had a great day surrounded by friends and family.



School Tours

We were delighted that all of our classes went on tours this year. Junior Infants went to Clonfert Pet Farm. Senior Infants went to Newbridge Farm. First Class went to Clonfert Pet Farm and Second Class went to Let's Go in the DCU Sports Campus. All the children and teachers had great fun!!



Sports Day

Well done to all the children (and parents) who took part in this years Sports Day!

The whole day was a great success filled with fun activities in the yard and the hall as well as the all important races - relays, egg and spoon, sack race, sprints and the first ever parents' races which was a huge hit with the kids!

The whole day was topped off with a 99 ice cream for everyone!!



Science Shows

All of our classes were very excited to attend a special science show in our school hall in January. Hannah from Junior Einsteins came in to help us learn all about electricity. We saw loads of experiments including making Barbie's hair stand up with static electricity, making forks of lightening with a Van Der Graaf Generator and using a plasma ball to light a light sabre. We even made an electrical circuit to light a magic glow stick by holding hands in a circle!

Amber Flag



This year we have successfully completed the renewal of our Amber Flag. It has been a busy year planning events, fundraisers and distributing kindness around the school. The Children's Wellbeing Committee have worked extremely hard all year and this would not have been successful without them. We are very proud of what you have all achieved.

Friendship and Anti-Bullying Week

In January, we had our Friendship and Anti-Bullying Week. The children learnt lots about what being a kind and good friend is and what to do if we see bullying in our school. There were lots of activities that everyone enjoyed and we decorated the hall with lots of lovely posters and artwork. We decorated a Notice Board that showed all the boys and girls who were caught being kind during the week and it was FULL by the end of the week. The boys and girls of St.Marys JNS are the kindest and most caring children around!!

Music Generation

Music Generation, a co-funded project between South Dublin County Council and schools took place in Junior Infants and with our Special Classes this year. The children really enjoyed their lessons throughout the year.



Green Schools

We are very proud of achieving our 'Litter and Waste' Green Flag this year. Representatives from our Green Schools committee had a great day out at the Green Schools awards in the Helix.

Well done to everyone in our school community for all of the hard work you put in to our Green Schools programme this year. We appreciate parent support with our successful electrical recycling drive, clothes recycling collection and recycled art competitions.

We are also grateful to the parents committee for their help on our Green School's 'Day of Action'. Everyone's efforts allowed our school to reduce, reuse and recycle our waste and complete all of the necessary steps to earn our Litter & Waste Green Flag.



Active Week

The children had great fun during Active Week! There were different activities in the yard each day. The children even took on the teachers in a giant game of dodgeball!

Active homework included a Spell Your Name workout challenge. The children designed their own obstacle course and some put their engineering skills to practice making courses at home using toys and other household items.

We brought our classroom outdoors, incorporating active literacy skills with an Alphabet Scavenger Hunt. We finished the week with a yard disco where the children showed their impressive dance moves!

The importance of physical activity from an early age contributes hugely to a child's development. It enhances and promotes the development of motor skills, bones and muscles, as well as cognitive and social skills.



Penalty Shootout for Pieta House



As part of our Amber Flag initiative, we held a fundraiser for Pieta House. It was the children against the teachers in a Penalty Shootout. If the children could score over 120 goals then they could win a Movie Afternoon. The children scored 145 goals and raised almost €300 for Pieta House! Thank you all for your amazing contributions, it was so generous and Pieta House greatly appreciated it.

Curious Minds Awards



We are very proud to have been awarded a gold Curious Mind Award for all of our hard work in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths). All classes worked hard to achieve this award and engaged in many creative projects over the year. Teachers also completed 3 workshops during the year on STEM education to enhance the children's learning. Well done to all of our classes for a successful year of STEM in St. Mary's JNS!

Tree Planting in Collinstown Park

First and Second classes enjoyed planting trees in Collinstown Park this term. Thank you to Niall, the park ranger, who met us and helped us plant the trees at the entrance of the park. We look forward to visiting our trees in the future and observing their growth. Make sure to keep an eye out for our trees when you are visiting the park!



Wellbeing Week

We held a Wellbeing Week in March this year. We had a lot of fun doing Buddy Reading, yoga, dance classes, meditation and mindfulness colouring. To top off a fun filled week we had a visit from a very funny magician.

Christmas Cards for Nursing Homes

As part of the Amber Flag initiative, we decided to spread some Christmas cheer this Christmas. The boys and girls worked hard (just like the elves in Santa's Workshop) to make Christmas Cards for local nursing homes. They posted their cards in special postboxes and some members of the Children's Wellbeing Committee presented the boxes to Santa - who delivered them to the Nursing Homes. What wonderful Christmas Spirit shown by all!



Outdoor learning

The children have really enjoyed learning outdoors throughout the year! All classes have been busy planting in our school garden and looking after our trees in the Stepping Stone Forest. The children loved using our Classroom in the Sun to do activities in all curriculum areas.



Grandparents Day

In January we celebrated Grandparents Day by inviting in all the wonderful grandparents of the boys and girls. Each class group went down to the hall, spent time with their grandparents, showed them their artwork and sang a few songs before heading back to class. It was an enjoyable day for all and the children were so excited to have their grandparents come in to see them.

Computers and ICT

We were delighted to be able to get 4 new Interactive Whiteboards for four classes. We bring ICT into the classrooms through this and with other interactive technology including I pads, computers and "BeeBots".

We have a range of software for educational use. Children across the school use I pads as part of learning activities and in class stations. Teachers and parents communicate using the Aladdin Connect App.



Creative schools

We continued with our Creative Schools Journey working with two other schools in the area in a creative cluster. Ms Murray has been working on this with the other schools and it will continue into next year .

Incubator Project

Second class was lucky enough to take part in the incubator project and 3 chicks hatched. The chicks were getting bigger every day and all the children loved visiting the classroom to meet them. The chicks have been named, Rocky, Folen and Beauty by the children in second class. The children have loved learning about the chicks. The chicks have now gone back to Norevalley Park pet farm.



North Clondalkin Library

The Library will be running a “**Summer Stars**” **Reading Programme** this summer. Children can go to the Library and read lots of wonderful books over the summer and claim their free goodie bags once completed. Summer reading is so important!

You might like to know.

Staff meetings take place outside of school times under the Croke Park Agreement.

We have increased the amount of time spent on Literacy and Numeracy activities.

Team Teaching allows teachers work with small groups giving more individual attention.

We meet parents of new infants in June & September.

Learning Support and Special Educational Needs

The school follows ‘The Continuum of Support’ Model. This has three stages.

Stage 1 is where the teacher or parent sees that a child is having some difficulties. They meet to discuss these and put a Classroom Support Plan in place.

At **Stage 2** the concern is referred to a Learning Support Teacher who offers advice and a School Support Plan is developed further.

Stage 3 is where the child is referred to outside professionals for assessment e.g. for speech and language etc. We call this School Support Plus. Parents have a very important role to play and should discuss any concerns with the class teacher, home school teacher or principal.

Reading & Maths Recovery:

Reading Recovery is an intensive programme which runs for about 18 weeks. It provides children with a great opportunity for 1:1 support with reading. If you have concerns about your child’s reading please speak with his/her teacher.

The Maths Recovery programme provides intensive support to individuals, small groups and classes in Maths. If you are concerned about your child’s Maths speak to the class teacher. Teachers engage in ‘team teaching’ which means smaller groups for Maths and English.

Delivering Equality in Schools: (DEIS):

Our school is part of the DEIS Programme. This supports smaller classes, school lunches, after school clubs, tours and trips, summer camps, in-school and after school activities. We try to ensure that all the children benefit as much as possible. This programme also ensures we have extra learning support staff and special posts such as Home School Community Liaison Teacher and Support Teacher.

Standardised Tests and Learner Experiences

Standardised Tests have been completed and results have been reviewed by teachers. The results are also presented to the Board of Management. Summer reports give children's STEN scores in reading and numeracy. Parents can speak with the class teacher about their child's results.

Learner Experiences: Team teaching, station teaching and paired reading have helped to greatly improve the quality of independent writing and reading. All children really enjoy reading and writing and experiencing success. The teachers would like to thank parents for supporting children by listening to their reading, and encouraging reading at home.

Literacy and Numeracy

We have been working with the new Language Curriculum and teachers have attended more training this year. We look forward to welcoming the new Numeracy Curriculum next year.

Children received books from North Clondalkin Library and accessed the wide variety of books in the school library. Children read a wide range of books and wrote in different styles and for different audiences. We focus on our Oral language and vocabulary through our thematic planning and Aistear. Teachers follow the Jolly Phonics Programme for teaching phonics, Oxford Reading Tree for Reading and write in many different genres throughout the year.

Teachers in the infant class use Number Worlds and Ready Set Go Maths for Numeracy. We have an exciting oral language programme through Irish called Bua na Cainte .



Home School Community Liaison HSCL

Sarah Mc Donald was our HSCL teacher this year. Many thanks to Sarah for all her work during the year. Patricia Mc Loughlin will be our new HSCL teacher next year. We would like to wish Ms McLoughlin all the best in her new role as she looks forward to working with all the families in the school.

Here are some of the initiatives and programmes as part of the HSCL scheme this year.

Parents Committee: We were delighted to continue the Parents' Committee this year. The Parents' Committee helped out with different events and activities this year, including our Grandparents day and Making Goody Bags for all the children for the Toy Show to name a few.

Parents helped with reviewing the Anti Bullying Policy and also our Healthy Eating Policy. I would like to thank all the parents for their support in activities this year. If any parents would like to join the Parents' Committee next year, please do!.

Links with North Clondalkin Library:

We continue to work with North Clondalkin Library. Our classes attend the library in Senior Infants, First and Second Class and enjoy listening to stories being read and selecting books to borrow. Aoife from the Library visited the Junior Infants and Special classes this year and read stories to the children. Parents and children can join the library for free and avail of all its wonderful resources. This year the library provided our CLOVER books for the Junior Infants and will provide a set of books for the new incoming Junior Infants for registering for the Library.

We would like to thank the staff of the library for working with us throughout the year. The library run a range of different adult education courses and family friendly events too. Call into the library for more information.

Walking on Mondays: A community walking group met on Monday mornings in Term 1 at the entrance of Collinstown Park for a walk followed a coffee in North Clondalkin Library. Well done to all those who participated. We hope to restart this again in September.

Transitions Across the school.

In October, we welcomed the parents of our current Junior Infants to a coffee morning with Sarah and the Junior infant teachers. This was a great opportunity for parents to visit the school and ask any questions. These meetings allowed us to share information about teaching and learning in Junior Infants and offer advice for supporting your child's learning journey at home.

June is a busy month for transitions. Our current 2nd class students visited the Senior School where they had a tour of the corridors, classrooms, yard and PE hall. Our current 2nd class parents were invited to a transition coffee morning in the Senior School. Many thanks to all of those who attended.

We welcomed our incoming Junior Infants this month too with their parents on a visit to meet their teachers. We have 3 new Junior Infant classes starting in September. They will join us in Junior Infants when school reopens on Tuesday the 29th of August. The children saw their classroom and met their new teacher. They all received a welcome pack and a preparation for school at St. Mary's booklet.

Literacy hour: It was a treat to be able to welcome parents back into the school this year. Parents helped in Senior Infants and Second Classes with Literacy Hour where the children did Literacy Stations working on reading, phonics and writing. We hope to continue this next year. Thank you to all who participated.

Gardening Workshop: Some parents and children took part in our gardening workshop this year. We weeded and planted different flowers, vegetables and fruit. All involved enjoyed our Monday mornings.

Links with Archways/ Blue Skies: Blueskies support the school with different courses and programmes for teachers and parents. Blue Skies provide training for teachers in Incredible Years Programme. This supports positive behaviour and our "Show me 5" rules. They provide transition documents also to support our new junior infants coming into school. Blue Skies is providing a summer course in Restorative Practice to some teachers in our school this summer.

Links with Community Gardaí. We would like to thank the community Gardaí for working with us this year and coming to the school to celebrate and present Ollie in Senior Infants with a medal for being a real life Hero.

Santa Claus: In December, Santa made a special visit to St Mary's JNS to see all the boys and girls. He left a selection box for all the children and enjoyed listening and joining in with singing Christmas Songs.

SCP—School Completion Programme: The Collinstown Park School Completion Programme is a programme that helps students to attend school, focus on completing school, get involved in class and school activities and get the most from their education. Emma Kiernan is the programme coordinator. SCP have funded after school clubs and one to one and group project work in the school this year.

Parents Plus: Well done to all the parents who took part in the Parents Plus programme in September. This course works with parents and supports them in parenting and supporting their children.

Cool Dudes: This was a cooking course for parents and children that ran over 6 weeks. The parents and children from our school enjoyed making healthy, easy recipes together. Well done to all the parents and children who engaged with this course.

CLOVER Project (Children Learn On Very Early Reading). Junior Infants take part in the Clover Literacy Project. The aim is to instill a love of reading in young children. Aoife from North Clondalkin Library joined in the parents' workshop. Each child received a CLOVER pack to bring home with a Literacy focused story book, a Numeracy focused story book and a colouring book and colouring pencils.

We hope you and your families have a lovely summer.

