



## A Word from the Chairperson...

Another school term comes to a close and as the school prepares for another festive season we would like to welcome all new children, and their parents, to the school community. We are very pleased to say that the pupil teacher ratio will continue to improve next year. As announced in the Budget, the PTR will be 26:1. This improvement is very good news.

We are again fortunate that the Department of Education and Skills sanctioned the Minor Works grant. This money will be used to fund school repairs and contribute towards IT maintenance and upgrade. St Helen's Junior has also been sanctioned funding for a prefab which will be used as resource teaching rooms and as a much needed library for the children. The Fingal Network Initiative had yet another very successful Golf Classic and donated €3,300 to the Cabhair Centre. A new shed is to be installed and bikes and other occupational therapy equipment will be purchased for the children.

WiFi was installed in the school over the summer and this will be used by all staff in the classrooms and will contribute significantly to the teaching facilities in the school.

The school also welcomes the reinstatement of In-School Management Posts. This is not a full reinstatement of the posts that were lost during the recession but it is a start and will contribute to the management of the school.

On behalf of the Board of Management I would like to thank our Principal, Miriam Dowdall, and all staff in the school for their continued good work. May we take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

*Celine O' Connell*  
Chairperson BOM

## Dates for your Diary

Friday 15th Dec	Santa visits St Helen's Junior School
Friday 22nd Dec	School closes for Christmas Holidays @ 12.00 noon
2018	
Monday 8th Jan	School re-opens @ 8.45a.m.
Tuesday 9th Jan	SCHOOL CLOSED PDST Training for Teachers in Primary Language Curriculum
Tuesday 16th & Wednesday 17th Jan 10am -12noon	Application for enrolment for Junior Infants Sept 2018
Thursday 15th & Friday 16th Feb	School Closed Mid-term Break
Monday 19th March	School Closed Bank Holiday Weekend
Friday 23rd March	School closed 12 noon Easter Holidays
Monday 9th April	School re-opens @ 8.45a.m.
Saturday 26th May	First Holy Communion

**PLEASE NOTE SCHOOL CLOSURE ON 9TH JANUARY 2018.**

**This is an addition to the school calendar to allow for whole school training by the DES.**



# CATCH UP

PARENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER, ST HELEN'S JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL, PORTMARNOCK. December 2017.

## A word from the Principal...

Temperatures are certainly seasonal, reminding us that it's that very special time of year, especially if you're in St Helen's Junior School and a certain bearded gentleman is due to visit here in just a few days (as I write)

73 new junior infants joined us in September. They are all well settled and enjoying their new learning environment. We were also delighted to welcome 4 new pupils into the Cabhair Centre last September. A big Fáilte Romhat to Neo, Cormac, Charlie and Ally. And a very special welcome to the new pupils throughout the school Stella, Maxim, Sophia and Sophie.

The children came up trumps with their generosity again this term. 356 Shoeboxes headed off to Eastern Europe and Africa and €585 was sent from the children to St John's Ward in Crumlin's Children's Hospital - well done boys and girls!

Well in this Newsletter last year I said we hoped to see Sam Maguire here again in 2017. And yes, 3 in a row it is! We had a great day of celebration here when Sam Maguire came to visit. An amazing achievement, not only winning 3 in a row but winning 5 out of the last 7 All Irelands! Up the Dubs!

Speaking of GAA, we would like to say a special thank you to Paddy Gorey, our former GAA coach, who has moved on from St Helen's Junior and Senior Schools. Paddy was wonderful with the children and we were so lucky to have him work with us here in the school for 12 years. We wish him all the best with his new placement in Sutton and Howth. While we miss Paddy, we are delighted to welcome our new coach Dave.



The children are enjoying their GAA sessions with Dave and I'm confident that even though he's a Laois man, we'll have him wearing blue in no time!

It has been a busy term and it is definitely getting busier as the preparation for the Christmas performances continues. The classes are busier than ever rehearsing for their Christmas sing-a-long. Serious hard work is on-going and nerves are beginning to act up

as the day of the big performance lures! And that's only the teachers! Lastly, I would like to say that we are so appreciative of the enormous generosity shown by your contributions to the voluntary donation. Mile, Mile buíochas Finally, may I wish each of you a happy peaceful Christmas! Nollaig Shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaíse daoibh!

*Miriam Dowdall*



