

**Re. Órla Murphy, R.I.P., Scoil Barra Teacher Sept. 1986 - Oct. 2017.**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is with a very heavy heart that I write to tell you of the sad and untimely death of our teaching colleague and dear friend **Órla Murphy, R.I.P.**

As many of you already know, Órla received the terrible news in June 2015 that she had a diagnosis of cancer. For over two years, Órla fought that illness with courage and a determination that was quite awesome in terms of her insistence that she would overcome the illness and spend a lot more time with her devoted husband Cathal and her adoring daughter Niamh. With great dignity and a deep resolve, Órla bore the burden of two years of ongoing, intensive treatment aimed at allowing her to fulfil that desire to remain with Cathal and Niamh and in the company of her extended family and friends. However, despite the very best efforts of the medical staff and in spite of Órla's determination to survive this awful illness, her body finally succumbed and she died last night surrounded by her close family in Cork University Hospital.

Órla joined the teaching staff of Scoil Barra in Sept. 1986, one year after the school opened its doors for the first time. Throughout the following 29 years, Órla worked as a mainstream class teacher and as a Resource Teacher, and undertook with great confidence and self-assuredness various posts of responsibility including Special Duties Teacher, Assistant Principal and acting Deputy Principal. Órla was an outstanding class teacher, bringing an energy and an enthusiasm to bear on the teaching/learning process that inspired her pupils and endeared her to their parents. As a Resource Teacher, she took a very personal and professional interest in the needs of her pupils and encouraged them to '*reach for the stars*' to the very best of their ability and potential. In undertaking her various duties as a member of Scoil Barra's In-School Management Team, she always sought to highlight and to promote the well-being of all members of the school community. Órla took huge pride in Scoil Barra, seeking at all times to promote and highlight the school in a most positive light. Her achievements in the area of public relations to the benefit of the school are legendary, as clearly seen to best effect in her promotion of the school's many musical, sporting and extra-curricular exploits and activities or indeed in the compilation and editing of Scoil Barra's renowned 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book '*Scoil Barra – A Coming of Age: A Narrative and Photographic Celebration of the first 25 years*'.

All who knew Órla will testify to her deep love for her native Limerick, and her passion for the Treaty City's sporting endeavours, especially for the cause of the "green and white" on the hurling field.

Órla will be greatly missed by her colleagues and close friends in Scoil Barra, among them the very many pupils, parents and staff members who were blessed to know and appreciate her throughout her three decades of dedicated service to the school and its community. She leaves behind her a legacy of great achievement, progress and success. The rooms and corridors of Scoil Barra will be all the poorer for the absence of her determined and vigorous spirit. The light of energetic positivity that she so frequently sought to encourage and ignite in her many interactions with so many members of the school community may flicker a little at her passing from this world, but we are determined that it shall never be extinguished. For we remember in the wise words of Martin Luther King: '*Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that*'.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Cathal and Niamh at this terribly difficult and distressing time. We wish God's blessing and support upon them and on Órla's mother Teresa, her sister Niamh and her brothers John, Brian and Dermot.

*Anois, tá Órla dílis, díograiseach imithe uainn i dtreo na bhFlaitheas. Solas geal na bhFlaitheas ar a hanam síoraí. I gcomhluadar na Naomh uilig agus a Daidi Seán go raibh sí.*

