

After the devastating tsunami in Sri Lanka in 2004 a businessman from Arklow, Brian Brennan, visited the country to see the effects of the disaster for himself. He was so upset by what he saw that on his return to Arklow he set up a charity fund to help build training centres and orphanages to offer some hope to the children whose families were devastated in the disaster. The people of Arklow have raised over €1 million since then for this very worthwhile cause. This money has been used to build the Arklow Boys Orphanage, the Arklow Girls Orphanage and the Arklow Training College. St Mary's College Transition Year class has been involved from the beginning. Each year, on the first school day of the year for this group, the entire class, together with teachers, cycle to a local beach where they take a well earned rest before returning to school. This is a sponsored cycle and the girls have always collected in excess of €2000 on each cycle. This event has become one of the highlights of the year for the girls because it offers them the opportunity to enjoy a day of fun cycling with their fellow students but also they realise that their efforts help to improve the lives of so many other children who do not have the same opportunities that they enjoy. The students from Sri Lanka keep in contact with our school and send photographs and details of how the funds raised by the girls has been spent.

