

focusing on

NORTHERN IRELAND

Supporting Schools of All Traditions

The Partnership supports schools of all traditions in Northern Ireland, including controlled (Protestant), maintained (Catholic), integrated, and shared schools. The grants are used to promote literacy, numeracy, and community-building activities. **Last year, the Partnership funded 15 schools in Northern Ireland.** 6 of those grants were used to fund compassion training through Children in Crossfire.

Building Trust Through Community Programs

Community programs act as grassroots peacebuilding efforts, cementing the Good Friday Agreement at the local level. The Partnership is proud to fund causes such as **174 Trust, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund, the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, the Ulster American Folk Park, and the Pushkin Trust.** These organizations do transformative work by bringing communities together and offering social services to marginalized populations.

Making University Accessible to Students of All Backgrounds

Funding remains a major impediment for low income students wishing to attend Northern Irish universities. The Partnership works to combat this by awarding scholarships to low income students, helping them realize their dreams of a university education. **Last year, the Partnership sponsored students at Ulster University and Queen's University as well as students pursuing higher education in youth and community work through Youthlink Northern Ireland.**



Students at Cliftonville Integrated Primary School in Belfast celebrating the opening of their community garden with their teacher, Baroness May Blood, and Partnership Board member Bruce Robinson

Growing Together at Cliftonville Integrated Primary

Located near both the Protestant Shankill Road and the Catholic Ardoyne in Belfast, Cliftonville has seen its share of violence and animosity. Originally a controlled (Protestant) school, Cliftonville parents voted in 2008 to convert to an integrated school. Today, the school celebrates a diverse student body of Protestants, Catholics, and minority groups. Cliftonville staff are committed to instilling an integrated ethos and providing a safe, nourishing environment for all students, regardless of their background. This can be difficult with inadequate government funding and substantial student need: 65% of students come from low income families, and 30% have special needs. Cliftonville also welcomes many newcomers to Northern Ireland, providing English language classes and support services. Local parents are eager to place their children in an integrated environment: enrollment has grown from 150 in 2008 to 350 today, and staff anticipates it will soon exceed 400.

To accommodate its growing and increasingly diverse student body, the Partnership sponsored the creation of an outdoor classroom with an accompanying garden. The garden serves as a friendly venue for parents, students, and teachers to learn how to grow, cook, and plan healthy meals

Please consider a donation in support of the Partnership's work in Ireland, North and South. Donors may select a specific school, village, town, or county as a recipient of their gift.

Growing Together at Cliftonville Integrated

(continued from page 1)

together. It also provides a forum for outdoor learning, fostering creative play and love of nature. In a low income urban environment, a community garden can have a transformative impact, fostering healthy eating, enhancing community relations, and providing a space for safe outdoor play. As Cliftonville Principal Bill Fletcher said:

“This is a project which will not only enhance children’s learning and creative play, but will also promote outdoor activity. The plan is to bring families together at the school to learn about growing and cooking produce and to enjoy the outdoor environment.”

The Partnership is honored to be part of this exciting project. As Partnership Board member Bruce Robinson said:

“The Partnership is very pleased to support such an innovative project, which will benefit the local community as well as pupils and their parents. It places the school even more firmly at the heart of this community.”

The Partnership cannot wait to see what Cliftonville achieves with the help of its new outdoor space!

Want to know more about the Partnership’s work in Northern Ireland?

 irishamericanpartnership

 @irishaporg

 irishamericanpartnership

 irishamericanpartnership

 www.irishap.org



Students at the RDS Primary Science Fair Belfast display their class project on wind power. The Primary Science Fair brings together students of all backgrounds to present class projects and learn from interactive exhibits and scientist demonstrations.

Building a Joint Future at the RDS Primary Science Fair Belfast

For the past five years, the Partnership has sponsored the expansion of the RDS Primary Science Fairs from Dublin to Limerick, and, most recently, to Belfast. First held in 2017, the RDS Primary Science Fair Belfast is an innovative community building measure that brings together students, teachers, and families to view class science projects and learn from professional demonstrations. The students learn a vast array of skills, including teamwork, scientific research, public speaking, communication, and analysis. **The non-competitive event provides a rare opportunity for children and their parents to interact with peers of another faith community under a common objective.** By building trust and good will in a non-threatening environment, the fairs serve as a springboard to a future filled with trust and compassion.

The 2018 fair was held over June 6th and 7th at the Belfast Waterfront. Over 100 schools attended, as did thousands of family and community guests. Students and teachers enjoyed the interactive exhibits, which showcased cutting-edge technology, and learned from demonstrations conducted by professional scientists. The fair was regarded as a great success, and the RDS anticipates further growth in 2019.

