

Happy Children Achieve More
Creating a positive environment
in Glynn, County Antrim



IRISH AMERICAN
PARTNERSHIP

SCoTENS
Innovative cross-border teacher exchange

Focus On Northern Ireland

2022 APPEAL



Onwards with Hope

Onwards and Upwards
strives to break the cycle of
generational unemployment
in East Belfast

Pupils at Central Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus, County Antrim

Happy Children Achieve More



Glynn Primary School students choir

A return to in-person learning and new technology prove Glynn Primary School's mission statement correct: happy children do achieve more.

Glynn Primary School is one of the rural schools in Northern Ireland the Partnership has been proud to support for many years, thanks to James and Ellen Glynn. Set in the heart of Glynn village in county Antrim, this small school opened in 1932 and currently houses 93 local pupils aged 6 to 12.

After almost two years of remote learning due to Covid, the students at Glynn Primary School were very happy to return to in-person learning this past year. The experience of remote learning emphasized the growing importance of technology and connectivity for students today.

With Partnership funding, the primary school purchased new iPads for its community this year. This has helped students further develop their technology

skills and has introduced a new tool for reading and math activities. The iPads have also allowed for positive growth through weekly video learning logs, where students evaluate and reflect on their learning journey.

“We are a small primary school of 93 pupils and in the current economic climate, Covid recovery and cuts to education funding, we are extremely grateful for any assistance with providing resources.”

- Diane Hawthorne, Principal

NOLLAIG NA MBAN Women's Leadership Celebration

Partnership supporters in Boston look forward to welcoming *Derry Girls* creator, writer, and showrunner, Lisa McGee as our 2023 honoree next January.



Lisa McGee at the *Derry Girls* mural in Derry

Onwards & Upwards with Hope

Breaking the cycle of generational unemployment in Belfast



Onwards and Upwards participants receive mentorship from community members Stafford Reynolds and Richard O'Rawe, along with Dr. Francis Costello

The Onwards and Upwards program helps young people in Belfast develop basic skills to enhance employability, while expanding their network and increasing their self-esteem. In Belfast, where rates of generational unemployment are high, this guided focus on the future and securing a job can be life-changing.

The program focuses on securing jobs for young people from loyalist and nationalist communities who have left the school system prematurely. This unique program is designed to put them on a fast track for employment by helping them earn a recognized certification in coding and digital science, with training placements with companies in the

technology sector. The aim is to enable these young people to play a part in Belfast's success in the modern global economy.

Onwards and Upwards participants also receive mentorship from positive community and sporting role models, including Belfast business leaders, and Partnership supporters John and Diddy Cullinane. John and Diddy's support for the program has been vital to its success.

This necessary project comes at a critical time amidst high unemployment rates and increased violence in some communities. Onwards and Upwards provides a tangible path to employment and a brighter future for Belfast's resilient youth.



Partnership supporter John Cullinane speaks to Onwards and Upwards participants via Zoom

“Onwards and Upwards is about more than handing out a digital coding certificate at the end of our 8-week programs... It is about making sure our young folks can press on with confidence on their own two feet and help them develop the tools to do this.”

- Dr. Francis Costello
Co-founder, Onwards and Upwards

Cross Border Teaching and Learning



Participants in SCoTENS' Student Teacher Exchange gather together before beginning their placements

The Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South (SCoTENS), is a network of Irish colleges, councils, and trade unions that together offer a variety of programs aiming to develop a culture of educational collaboration across the island.

We are pleased to support an innovative cross-border project – the annual North-South Teacher Exchange. This exchange sees student teachers from Dublin spend three weeks teaching in Belfast schools, and Belfast student teachers spend three weeks teaching in Dublin. At their placement school, the participants have the opportunity to live and work in a new city, learning from host teachers, observing different teaching methods, and exchanging ideas.

SCoTENS is learning how the project helps to overcome barriers, reduce prejudice, and lead to increasing cooperation between colleges of education and their students. The network has also created a free online collaborative tool for educators, student teachers, and schools, to further expand access to this important program.

The program grew out of the desire to promote peace and reconciliation across the island of Ireland. It has since allowed dozens of students the opportunity to experience life and education in their neighboring jurisdiction, forming lasting friendships, and enabling students to step out of their comfort zone and engage in meaningful dialogues with people of different backgrounds.

“ My understanding of the North has been hugely enhanced...
I will always hold fond memories of this experience.

– 2019 Student Teacher Participant from Dublin

