



COMHAIRLE
NA GAELSCOLAÍOCHTA

Nuachtlitr Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

Eagrán an tSamhraidh, 2016

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta Newsletter, Summer 2016

Clár

Réamhrá an Phríomhfheidhmeannaigh
Chief Executive's Foreword

Teachtaireacht Chathaoirleach
Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
*Message from the Chairperson of Comhairle
na Gaelscolaíochta*

Cúig bliana de Ghaeloideachas in
Ardcoil Naomh Maolmhaodhóg
*Five Years of Irish-medium Education at
Ardcoil Naomh Maolmhaodhóg, Castlewella*

Agallamh le Príomhoide Ghaelcholáiste
Dhoire, Diarmuid Ua Bhruadair
*An Interview with the Principal of
Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, Diarmuid Ua Bhruadair*

Grúpa Oibre d'fhorbairt na
hiar-bhunscolaíochta i nDoire agus
ar an tSrath Bán
*Working Group for the Development of
Post-primary Irish-medium Education in
Derry and Strabane.*

Oscailt oifigiúil d'fhoirgneamh úr
Bhunscóil Bheann Mhadagáin
*Official Opening of new building for
Bunscóil Bheann Mhadagáin*

Infheistíocht Chaipitiúil Faofa do dhá
Ghaelscoil - *Capital Investment Approval
for two Irish-medium Schools*

Deis Athlonnaithe Bhunscóil an Traonaigh
Potential Relocation of Bunscóil an Traonaigh

Deis Forbartha do Bhunscóil an Iúir
Potential New Site for Bunscóil an Iúir

Cnuasghrúpa Riachtanais Speisialta
do Ghaelscoileanna Bhéal Feirste
*Special Needs Cluster Group for Belfast
Irish-medium schools*

An tÁisaonad
Irish-medium Resource Unit

Foirgneamh úr do Ghaelscoil
Ghleann Darach
*New school building for Gaelscoil
Ghleann Darach*

Bronnadh deontais TACA
TACA funding awarded

Fás na Gaelscolaíochta; Na Staitisticí
*Growth in Irish-medium Education;
The Statistics*

Comhghairdeas le Náiscoil an Chéide
Congratulations to Náiscoil an Chéide

Dia daoibh uilig go léir agus fáilte go Nuachtlitr Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, áit a gcuireann muid nuacht agus eolas ar earnáil na Gaelscolaíochta romhaibhse, ár bpáirtnéirí agus ár gcomhghleacaithe i gcur chun cinn na Gaelscolaíochta.

Area Plan for the Development of Education in the North



Liam Ó Flannagáin ag bronnadh duaise ar dhaltai Ghaelscoil na gCrann

I am delighted to be able to contribute to this latest edition of Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta's newsletter, CnaG na Gaelscolaíochta. I have been in the role of Interim Chief Executive of CnaG since December last year and am happy to be able to restart the newsletter as a means of bringing you up to date with news and latest developments in the sector.

Probably the biggest and strategically most important activity we have been involved in in recent times has been preparing our involvement and contribution to the Area Plan for the development of education in the north. The plan shall identify a strategy going forward for school development, closures, amalgamations and for the range of facilities and support required to provide excellent educational outcomes across the north.

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta has been working at representing the interests of Irish-medium education strategically in terms of growth of new schools in the future and identifying any poor or inadequate facilities that exist in schools at present.

The overall terms of the Area Planning process seek to provide a strategic approach to managing all resources (school buildings, sites, staffing resources etc.) to give the best educational outcomes for children in an environment where the overall numbers of children in the system are contracting. The Irish-medium sector is however completely different; it is a growing sector. As a result of gathering and analysing all the figures around

enrolments and growth on the ground, we can now show, within the context of the Area Planning process exactly how the sector has been growing over the past 10 years. This has allowed us to make evidence based projections over the next seven years to argue the case for appropriate resources for the sector.

Our research demonstrates clearly the rate of growth and subsequent proven demand through continually growing numbers of children entering Irish-medium preschool provision, who then transfer to Bunscóileanna at a rate of growth of over 4% per annum.

To give an example in real numbers; this year 396 children, across our various IM primary settings, shall leave Rang 7 and in September 2016, 710 pupils are registered to enter Rang 1. This is a growth of 80% over 7 years and it is down to the growing realisation by parents of the benefits of bilingualism and of Irish-medium education for their children.

We shall continue through the Area Planning Process to put the case for the appropriate resources to come from the Government to facilitate this growth and ensure no disadvantage in resources exists for our sector. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta will seek to work as co-operatively as possible with all our partners while at the same time stand against unfair treatment of our Sector whenever this may arise.

Le dea-ghuí,

Liam Ó Flannagáin

Comhdháil Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta 2016

Teachtaireacht an Chathaoirligh - Message from the Chairperson

A short excerpt from the Chairperson of Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta's (CnaG) address to the Irish-medium Conference in March 2016.



*Stephen Peover,
Chairperson Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta*

It is a great honour to be here today to celebrate our achievements this year. It is CnaG's role to assist the Department of Education (DE) in her statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage the growth of Irish-medium education. To that end we are now developing better relationships with our education partners to ensure that aim is fulfilled.

We have drawn up a new Corporate Development Plan to allow us to play a much greater role in the various groups working on Area Planning. We now have representation on the new Education Authority and we will have regular meetings with them, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Department of Education, to ensure the interests of the IM sector are fully taken into account when new policies, strategies or plans are being developed, and I wish to thank all the other

organisations for their co-operation and good will.

On a personal note, and to give some context, I first came across IM education when I went to work for the Department of Education in 1988 when it was only a very small sector that was struggling to develop, in a very unfavourable context to the needs of an IM immersion system.

That struggle is continuous and we have not nearly overcome those difficulties as yet. I would never have believed it if someone had said to me 20 years ago that we would have 86 schools and more than 5000 pupils in the sector. That growth came out of all the hard work of the thousands of people – parents, activists, teachers, governors and the community that gave support to that development over all the years.



Lucht féachana na comhdhála



Ceardlann le linn na comhdhála



Gaelscoil na gCrann i mbun cheoil

Five Years of Irish-medium Education at Ardscoil Naomh Maolmhaodhóg, Castlewellan

Ardscoil Naomh Maolmhaodhóg is celebrating five years of Irish-medium Education (IME) in the Castlewellan school. With enrolments continuing to grow, it is fitting that September 2016 will see the IME Stream in St. Malachy's High School continue to develop and grow with their highest intake to date.

Offering one of the most vibrant scenes for Irish-medium provision, it is no surprise that Post-Primary Irish-medium education is beginning to flourish in Castlewellan. From a hugely successful Irish-language Mother and Toddlers' Group, through to the local Náisceileanna and Bunscoileanna, and on to Ardscoil Naomh Maolmhaodhóg, families in Castlewellan and the wider South Down

community have access to Irish-medium provision from 3 – 18 years of age.

The numbers enrolling in Irish-medium schools are growing across the north and the boom in numbers is not only confined to Castlewellan. Across the north, the total

enrolment of IME post-primary pupils is nearing the 1000 pupil mark – almost double the figure of 10 years ago.

For further information:
3 Dublin Rd, Castlewellan BT31 9AG
Phone: 028 4377 8255



Pictured above: IME Coordinator, Ms Ciara Pickering and some of the IME pupils

Agallamh le Diarmaid Ua Bruadair, Príomhoide Ghaelcholáiste Dhoire

Interview with Diarmaid Ua Bruadair, Principal Gaelcholáiste Dhoire

“Ultimately, at Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, we aim to produce young, capable and confident Gaelgeoirí who are content and rounded individuals...”

Tell us about yourself.

I grew up in the urban Gaeltacht of Bóthar Seoighe, Belfast and I attended Bunscoil Phobal Feirste. I spent 3 years working in Brazil as a development worker and I worked as a social worker before returning to teaching. I spent 14 years teaching history at Coláiste Feirste, becoming a Head of Department and then, Head of Key Stage 4. Since June 2015, I have been Príomhoide (Principal) of Gaelcholáiste Dhoire (GCD).

Why did you choose Gaelscolaíocht as a career?

As a native Irish-speaker, I have a strong affinity with the language and I did teach Irish in Abbey CBS, Iúr Cinn Trá. However, after working both in Brazil and as a social worker, I sought to marry those wider social interests and education together. I have always been keen to contribute



to new projects and the opportunity to contribute to a burgeoning project like Coláiste Feirste was certainly a big draw towards teaching for me - this same desire that led me to Gaelcholáiste Dhoire.

How did Gaelcholáiste Dhoire come to be?

GCD has its roots in Machaire Rátha (Maghera) more than 20 years ago with the establishment of Irish-medium provision in the area. As the demand grew, parents and the community wanted to spread IME provision in rural County Derry. There was a concerted campaign for several years to establish an IM Post-Primary and initially, they did not succeed. However, with a dual strategy of building the sector from Naiscoil level up and continuing to lobby their case, Gaelcholáiste Dhoire was given ministerial approval in December 2014 and officially

opened its doors on September 1st 2015.

As an emerging school, how does GCD cater for a whole range of subjects?

GCD works closely with schools across all sectors, is a member of the Roe Valley Learning Community and collaborates with other schools. We are committed to offering as varied a range of subjects as possible and, as the school develops, our eyes are firmly set on Key Stage 4. This year will see specialist teachers in science and music recruited to our staff. As we progress, we will continually assess the needs of the school and address them in a strategic and well planned manner.

Where do you see Gaelcholáiste Dhoire in 10 years?

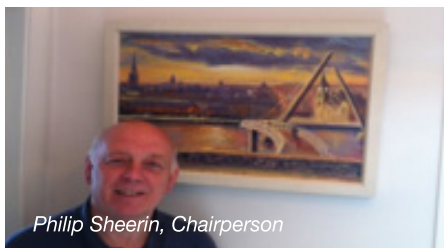
I would like to see a full curriculum on offer up to Year 14. I would like see it developed as part of a network of IM post-primary schools. I would like to see extra-curricular activities continuing to develop, with sports' teams competing locally and nationally and that musical opportunities are highly valued and fostered at the school too. Ultimately, at Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, we aim to produce young, capable and confident Gaelgeoirí who are content and rounded individuals, who make their way in life and who contribute back to society and to progress further the development of the Irish speaking communities.

New Proposal for Irish-medium Pupils in Derry & Strabane

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta has welcomed the news of plans to establish a new standalone Irish-medium (IM) post-primary school for Derry City – to be known as An Bradán Feasa. It is hoped that it will open by September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter. There is clear demand from parents for a standalone IM post-primary school which will cater exclusively for those children who have attended IM primary schools.

The growth in numbers attending the 4 local Gaelscoileanna; 3 in Derry and 1 in Strabane, has demonstrated that the time is now right for this proposed development. Currently there are 44 children in the four P7 classes, a number which will continue to rise each year thereafter, as there are currently 65 children in the combined P1 classes. This increase is mirrored within the preschool sector with more than 100 children registered in local IM preschools. Thus, the long term enrolment trends augur well for the sustainability of the proposed provision.

The former army base at Ebrington in the Waterside District of Derry has been identified as a potential school site. The site was chosen for a number of reasons and chief among them is that it is on the bus route from Strabane. Therefore, children arriving at the Foyle Street Bus Depot could walk across the Peace Bridge to the school.



Philip Sheerin, Chairperson

Too often Irish is viewed as being on the margins of society but the Project Working Group of An Bradán Feasa decided that it was time that the language was brought right into the heart of the community. Philip Sheerin (above), Chairperson of the Project Working Group spoke of their hopes;

“Our vision is of several hundred confident, articulate and well-educated young bilinguals walking across the Peace Bridge and walking around the city centre living their lives in a normal way, talking and having fun in Irish”.

The Committee has a strong educational element to its make-up:

Chairperson Philip Sheerin; a former Education Manager for Irish medium with CCEA, **Martin Walsh;** a retired Senior Primary Advisor (WELB), **Oisín Mac Eo;** Principal of Gaelscoil na Daróige, **Fiachra Ó Donghaile;** Bunscoil Teacher & Parent of pupils at Gaelscoil na Daróige, **Eamonn Harkin;** Accountant & Parent of pupils at Gaelscoil Éadain Mhór, **Dr Margaret McGavigan;** Lecturer in Bio-medicine, **Alanna Wilson-Ferry;** Parent of pupils at Bunscoil Cholmille. **Tommy Canning;** Parent of pupil at Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh.

Oscailt Oifigiúil d'Fhoirgneamh Úr Bhunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin

Official Opening of Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin's New School Building in North Belfast

After 21 years of providing North Belfast with quality Irish-medium education, Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin finally moved into a purpose-built school in December 2015. The official opening took place in February 2016, and was a cause for great celebration with pupils, past pupils, parents and staff in attendance.

Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin is a new five class base school on the grounds of the former Cliftonville Cricket Grounds. Already, demand for places in the new school is such that the school is seeking additional classroom accommodation to address this demand. As well as the new school, a new floodlit 3G GAA pitch has been created as well as upgraded changing rooms funded by the Belfast City Council for use by the school and local GAA clubs.

Speaking at the official opening, Príomhoide Máire Uí Éigeartaigh, acknowledging the role and input of others, past and present, reflected:

'We are delighted today to welcome our school community to the official opening of this new school building. We pay tribute to those who, over 21 years ago, were brave enough to take the first steps into

Irish-medium primary education in North Belfast. We hope to build on that vision in all our future endeavours.'

Also speaking at the official opening, former Minister of Education, John O'Dowd said:

'What a difference your new state-of-the-art facilities will make to a vibrant and growing school. Together with the modern sports facilities, funded by the Belfast City Council, your learning environment has been greatly enhanced. Today marks a new chapter in the history of your school. I have no doubt that Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin will continue to grow from strength to strength. I wish everyone connected with the school best wishes for the future.'

The new school also shares a site with Naiscoil Bheann Mhadagáin, North Belfast's first and only full-time statutory Irish-medium nursery, which was opened in 2014.

**For further information:
Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin
156 Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6LP
Tel: 028 9074 7184**

info@bunscoilbheannmhadagain.belfast.ni.sch.uk
<http://bunscoil.schooljotter2.com/scoil-school>



Bunscoil in 2016



Bunscoil in 1995

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta welcomes Department of Education's decision to approve 2 New Builds for Irish-medium Schools.

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG), welcomed the Department of Education's decision in March 2016 to award Capital Investment funding to two Irish-medium schools, Gaelscoil Aodha Rua, in Dungannon and Gaelscoil Éanna, in Glengormley, Newtonabbey.

Principal of Gaelscoil Aodha Rua, Móna Uí Dhochartaigh stated;

"The announcement of Capital Investment in our new build project marks the beginning of an exciting stage in the development of

Gaelscoil Aodha Rua and of Irish-medium education in our local area. This investment will completely change the landscape of our school and will offer our pupils the opportunity to learn and to grow in a spacious, modern, custom-built permanent brick building."

Maighréad Ní Chonghaile, Principal of Gaelscoil Éanna stated:

"Our pupils and their families are totally deserving of the potential that this news brings. We are delighted to be awarded a new state of the art facility which will have a

very positive impact on standards of learning and teaching and on school life in general'.

Liam Ó Flannagáin of CnaG added:

"This decision is welcomed and it addresses the urgent capital investment needed in these two flourishing Irish-medium schools. CnaG appreciates the tight financial constraints within which the Department is operating and commends the decision'.

He continued, *'We should not forget however that the need is significantly greater than available resources and that there remain many other schools in significant need of capital investment. The Irish-medium sector has grown rapidly over the past few years and is continuing to grow year-on-year. One of the consequences of this growth is that many Irish-medium schools have a very high proportion of temporary classrooms, cramped sites and school buildings compared to the English-medium sectors. Proportionately speaking the IM sector is in much greater need than the established sectors with many schools falling well below the Department of Education's Handbook standard and as a consequence, much more investment will be needed over the coming years if Irish-medium schools are to be brought to a par with the other sectors in terms of having high-quality, permanent buildings.'*



Múinteoirí agus daltaí Gaelscoil Aodha Rua

Potential relocation of Bunscoil an Iúir to new school site

Conor Stiobhard, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta pictured with Brian McKinley, (Chairperson Bunscoil an Iúir), Maria Nic Fhearchair (Principal Bunscoil an Iúir) Gerry O'Reilly & Anthony Havern (Thomas Davis CLG).



An exciting new partnership between Bunscoil an Iúir and Thomas Davis GAA has recently revealed their intention to explore the possibility of Bunscoil an Iúir relocating to the grounds of Thomas Davis GAA, Doran's Hill, Corinshegoe.

Bunscoil an Iúir, which is presently located in a Business Enterprise Park, on Kilmorey Street, Newry has witnessed an increase in their enrolment to 87 and its feeder Nursery-school, Naíscoil an Iúir continues to attract families to place their children in its trust.

The Principal of Bunscoil an Iúir, Maria Nic Fhearchair stated:

'From the early years, Bunscoil an Iúir has been situated in the Gasworks site and had been very suitable but as we continue to grow, we find that the site limits our expansion. This is an exciting prospect and the Board of Governors have put in a huge effort to see it come to fruition. We are still in the early stages and are working towards our goal of having purpose-built accommodation for the children of the greater South Armagh/South Down/Newry areas.'

Bunscoil an Traonaigh to relocate

Bunscoil an Traonaigh was established in September 2004 and is currently the only Irish-medium Primary School in Co. Fermanagh. The bunscoil, and Naíscoil an Traonaigh, (Irish-medium preschool) are presently located at Drumbrughas North, Lisnaskea.

The bunscoil provides a high standard of education through the medium of Irish, in a safe, happy and child-centred environment.

Bunscoil an Traonaigh offers a range of extra-curricular activities throughout the year including: homework-clubs, dance-classes, reading-clubs, sports, Irish-learners' classes for adults and also, a summer scheme for pupils of the school which runs for a week in August.

The PTA is very active and organises various events and community activities, including a Community Fun Day every September and has recently had a polytunnel erected on site for use by the pupils, which is proving very popular with all children in the school.

The Drumbrughas North site was always considered as a temporary measure as it was an 'out of town' location, a fact recognised by the Board of Governors (BoG). Consequently, the BoG has been

Anthony Havern (Chairperson of Thomas Davis GAA) expressed his satisfaction with Bunscoil an Iúir potentially relocating to the club's lands,

'Thomas Davis GAA are delighted to be involved in assisting with the development and expansion of the Irish language and culture and we view Irish-medium education as the key to this development which is why we welcome the opportunity to assist and support in the development of Bunscoil an Iúir.'

Conor Stiobhard, Advisory Officer with Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) working with those involved in realising the potential of this relocation added:

'The plan to relocate Bunscoil an Iúir to the grounds of Thomas Davis GAA whilst exciting is, nevertheless, at an early stage. The Board of Governors of the School and the Management Committee of Thomas Davis GAA have been liaising with the Department of Education through CnaG to facilitate this process. In the context of Area Planning, this project has the potential to transform the provision of Irish-medium education in the Newry/South Armagh region.'

keen to identify a more permanent site for the Bunscoil and when the Lisnaskea High School site became available, the BoG submitted an expression of interest to the Department of Education to relocate Bunscoil & Naíscoil an Traonaigh onto the vacant site. It is ideally located given its centrality and furthermore, its ample space would allow for further expansion.

Principal of Bunscoil an Traonaigh, Sorcha Ní Mhurchú, elaborated;

'We were delighted to receive a letter from the Department advising us of their decision to split the former Lisnaskea High School site to allow us the use of part of it, as it will enable and facilitate the growth and expansion of the school.'

Likewise, the Chairperson of the BoG, Mrs Claire Collins stated;

'Establishing a new school in any town or county is a huge undertaking, involving a lot of hard work by many. There have been many obstacles along the way but with the dedication and commitment of us all we have now removed another huge obstacle by acquiring access to a permanent site in a prime location which will meet the needs of our school for many years to come.'



New School building for Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach

A new school building for Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach in Crumlin, Co. Antrim was officially opened in January 2016. It was a very happy and proud occasion for the school, pupils, parents, staff and for the whole community.

For further information:
15f Glenavy Road, Crumlin,
Co. Antrim Tel: 028 9442 3977
Email: info@itgd.ie
www.gleanndarach.com



Comhghairdeas le Naíscoil an Chéide

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta welcomes the arrival of Naíscoil an Chéide into the Irish-medium education sector. The naíscoil opened its doors to the children and families of Keady and the surrounding areas on the 28 January 2016. It is the intention and desire of the Naíscoil Committee to establish a gaelscoil (Irish-medium primary school) in the near future.

Pictured are some of those involved in bringing Irish-medium education to the local community.

For further information:
The Pavillion, Armagh Road,
Keady, Co. Armagh, BT60 3TW
Tel: 078 7603 1107

Grúpa nuabhunaithe le tabhairt faoi chúrsaí sainriachtanais. *New Irish-medium Special Needs Cluster Group formed.*



With the growth of Irish-medium education and the on-going increase in the number of schools, Irish-medium schools in the greater Belfast area have come together to form Cnuasgrúpa Sainriachtanais Oideachais (SRO) Bhéal Feirste, a Belfast based Irish-medium (IM) Special Education Needs (SEN) Cluster Group. Facilitated by Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, the group was formed earlier this year to focus on the special needs

circumstances of children in Irish-medium school settings - needs that have not been adequately met by support services available to English-speaking schools.

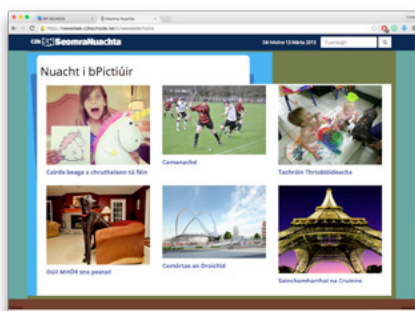
A number of issues have arisen that illustrate the distinct needs of the sector. For instance, in the case of a special needs intervention where a child may be required to receive additional help during school time for two days per week: this intervention currently happens

in an English only environment with no consideration of the child's linguistic development needs. This withdrawal from the appropriate language environment undoubtedly impacts negatively on the child's educational development. Similarly, difficulties are encountered in the area of assessment where assessments are carried out exclusively in English with no adequate reference to the child's bilingual ability/ Irish Language ability, a situation that inevitably renders these assessments inaccurate. The IM Special Education Needs Cluster Group is now working to ensure that appropriate SEN services are available for bilingual children to achieve accurate educational assessments and appropriate support services where required.

The group has met twice and has a further meeting planned prior to the summer break to plan for the coming year. It is expected that the formation of regional groups will follow in the near future.

For further information:
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
on 028 9032 1475

An tÁisaonad ag tacú lenár scoileanna



An Seomra Nuachta

An tÁisaonad works in collaboration with Irish-medium schools and with staff in St. Mary's University College and other institutions, to combine an approach of both experience and research to the application of resourcing schools. An tÁisaonad has produced pioneering Irish-medium resources such as reading schemes for

beginning readers in Irish, applying a high frequency word approach combined with phonics learning, and an emphasis on building on various reading strategies to encourage independence in reading.

Among other resources is a complete maths programme for primary schools as well as a wide range of reading material for different age-groups, different abilities and different types of reader. An tÁisaonad also caters for a range of genres in literacy including fiction, non-fiction, drama and various topics of interest for young readers.

An tÁisaonad's latest projects include more reading materials that are suitable for children in Irish-medium settings, maths games that build both on oral mathematical skills as well as linguistic skills and language games to help with the immersion process and the acquisition of oral language skills.

As well as producing physical books and resources for the Irish Medium Sector, An tÁisaonad also administers an online news service for Gaelscoileanna – An Seomra Nuachta. It is delivered through the C2k computer network for schools. The site is updated with a new news story daily and there is also a 'News in Pictures' section and a 'News in Video' section as well

as Fact Files, competitions, games and a topical vote each week. All published stories can subsequently be viewed through the News Archive.

An Seomra Nuachta is an excellent resource, offering Irish-medium pupils a highly stimulating, topical, multi-media platform on which they can familiarise themselves with modern contextualised Irish terminology which they otherwise wouldn't encounter as often in a classroom setting.

Children can also contribute to the site via the comments section under each story or through the School Reporter section. School Reporter allows students to author their own article and to source appropriate images, thus developing their literacy and computer literacy skills. It also fosters peer reviewing and collaboration in so far as pupils can like and comment on each other's articles.

An Seomra Nuachta is available in school and also at home, allowing pupils to log in using their C2k username and password.

For further information:
Email: eolas@aisaonad.org
Telephone: +44 28 90 24 38 64
www.stmarys-belfast.ac.uk/aisaonad/

TACA ag cuidiú le Naíscóileanna

TACA supporting Naíscóileanna

TACA is a registered charity which was established in Belfast 16 years ago, to raise funds to promote the Irish Language and to support emerging Irish-medium schools.

TACA presented 6 Irish-medium nursery schools with a cheque for £5,000 each; £30,000 in total, in Cultúrlann Mac Adam / Ó Fiaich, Belfast, on Tuesday 15 May, 2016.

TACA, which means support, joined forces with Mary's Gift (www.marysgift.org) and Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta to establish this fund. Mary's Gift is an American based organisation which provides funding for Irish-medium schools in the north of Ireland and Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta is the Trust Fund for Irish-medium education in the north of Ireland.

The recipients of TACA's generosity were:

Naíscóil na Móna, Béal Feirste

Naíscóil Chill Locha, Cill Locha, Co. An Dúin

Naíscóil na mBeann, Cill Chaoil, Co. An Dúin



Naíscóil an Traonaigh, Lios na Sceithe, Fear Manach

Naíscóil na Banna, Port an Dúnáin, Co. Ard Mhacha

Naí-ionad Ard Eoin, Béal Feirste.

TACA believes that everyone should be given the opportunity to support the growth of the Trust Fund for Irish-Medium Education.

No matter how small a donation, when it is added to the donation of many others, it has real impact.

For further information:

Páid Ó Cianáin, Bainisteoir TACA, 216 Bóthar na BhFál, Béal Feirste, BT12 6FB

Tel: 028 9032 3237

Email: eolas@taca.ie www.taca.ie

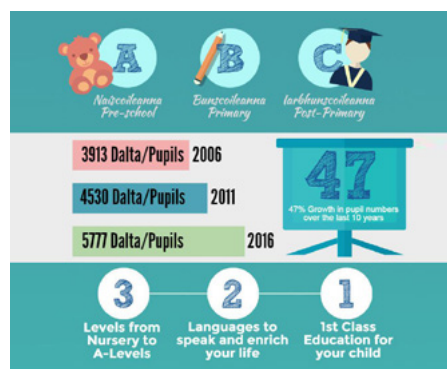
An Ghaelscolaíocht fós ag dul ó neart go neart ar fud an tuaiscirt

Irish-medium Education (IME) continues to thrive across the north

Figures received by Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta from the Education Authority provide clear evidence of the continued and sustained growth within the IME sector. This growth reflects not only the successes of pupils within the sector, but also the ever-growing number of parents opting for a bilingual education, with all its added benefits, for their children.

There are over 700 children expected to enter Primary 1 in September 2016 - the highest number ever within the IME sector. Last year, 647 children began their primary education through Irish and the trend continues with Primary 1 enrolments up from 447 children in 2011 - a growth of 57% in IME primary schools alone!

The boom in numbers is not only confined to Irish-medium primary schools; the total enrolment of IME post-primary pupils is nearing the 1000 mark - nearly double the figure of 10 years ago. September 2016 will see



Fás na Gaelscolaíochta

both Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, Dungiven and the Irish-medium stream in St. Malachy's High School, Castlewellan continue to develop and grow with their highest intakes to date. Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, which opened in September 2015 as the north's second free-standing IME post-primary school, after Belfast's Coláiste Feirste, is set for an intake of over 30 new pupils which is a glowing endorsement of the ground-breaking

work that has been undertaken over the past year at the South Derry college.

Speaking on behalf of Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, acting CEO Liam Ó Flannagáin stated that; 'Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta is delighted to witness continued sustainable growth in Irish-medium Education. As we look forward, it is a source of great comfort to the sector that an increasing number of families are enjoying the many benefits of bilingualism and the Irish language.'

The growth in the Irish-medium Education sector is clear for all to see with a 45% increase in enrolments over a five-year period. September 2016 will see over 5800 children educated daily through the medium of Irish and those numbers will continue to rise with nearly 90 IME providers across Nursery, Primary and Secondary levels.

Irish-medium Education Grows in Co. Antrim



Pictured above Representatives from: Bunscoil na Tamhnaí Móire, CnaG, InaG, CCMS, Foras na Gaeilge and Declan Kearney (MLA).

History was made in the County Antrim parish of Tannaghmore on Friday 10th June 2016 with the launch of a new Irish-medium Primary School, Bunscoil na Tamhnaí Móire to open in September 2016.

Representatives from the Board of Governors of the school, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta (The Trust Fund for Irish-medium Education) and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools were present to witness the event and to

speak to parents about the process of change and to highlight the advantages of bilingual education.

The Irish-medium nursery school (Naíscoil na Tamhnaí Móire) opened two years ago in September 2014 in the grounds of Tannaghmore Primary School. Since then, Naíscoil na Tamhnaí Móire has gone from strength to strength and this year it has reached its maximum capacity, illustrating the confidence that local parents have in the Irish-medium Education (IME) system

and furthermore, the need for Irish-medium provision at primary level. Commenting on the future of Bunscoil na Tamhnaí Móire, Stephen Peover, Chairperson of Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (pictured second from left) explained,

'To give a child a second language at an early age is to give them a gift which they will have for the rest of their lives; they may also avail of the many personal benefits which bilingualism can bring, such as enhanced self-esteem and creativity and the ability to learn further languages easier. These advantages, coupled with the fact that more employment opportunities are now available to candidates with both languages account for the ever increasing demand for the provision of Irish-medium schools.'

The demand for this IME primary school illustrates the confidence of the community in the Irish-medium education system, a confidence which is mirrored throughout the north. This new bunscoil will serve the communities of Randalstown, Antrim town and Ballymena.

Eolas do mhúinteoirí ar Shuíomh Idirlín Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta.

Ta áiseanna úsáideacha do mhúinteoirí sna gaelscoileanna le feiceáil ar shuíomh idirlín Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, ina measc;

Soláthar Cothaithe – ag tabhairt faoi fhadhbanna Ceangail i measc Páistí Óga. Féach an cur i láthair ó Comhdháil na bliana seo ag: www.comhairle.org/gaeilge/2016/05/solathar-cothaithe-ag-tabhairt-faoi-fhadhbanna-ceangail-i-measc-paisti-oga/#sthash.ZbxJXYNM.dpuf

An Leanúnachas ón bhunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil - cur i láthair ó Chomhdháil na bliana seo - féach an cur i láthair ag: www.comhairle.org/gaeilge/2016/05/an-leanunachas-on-bhunscoil-go-dti-an-iar-bhunscoil/#sthash.aKJZVaXI.dpuf

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