Tuarascáil Bhliantúil

2016/17

Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta

"De réir mar atá cuid de na bunscoileanna ag dul in aibíocht tá níos mó daltaí iontu, fáinne óir forbartha más maith leat".

Nollaig 2017

Bhí an chaint go deo ar an Ghaeilge, mar ábhar díospóireachta ar an nuacht le bliain anuas agus diúltú na naondachtóirí Acht na Gaeilge a gheilleadh . Fágann sé nach raibh tionóil nó feidhmeannas ag feidhmiú sa tuaisceart le beagnach bliain san am i láthair. Ina ainneoin sin, tá earnáil na gaelscolaíochta ag dul ar aghaidh agus ag méadú i rith ama. Táimid ag dul i dtreo 6000 dalta a bhíonn ag freastal ar scoileanna lán Gaeilge ar fud an tuaiscirt agus seo an pobal atá ar thús cadhnaíochta san fheachtas ar son reachtaíocht don Ghaeilge agus atá ag iarraidh seirbhísí poiblí bheith ar fáil i nGaeilge. De réir mar atá cuid de na bunscoileanna ag dul in aibíocht tá níos mó daltaí iontu, fáinne óir forbartha más maith leat. Ní ábhar iontais é ar bhealach, nó táimid ag druidim ar chomóradh 20 bliain de Chomhaontú Aoine an Chéasta, a leag dualgas ar rialtas na Breataine an ghaelscolaíocht a spreagadh agus á cur chun cinn.

Bliain chorraitheach a bhí ann san earnáil pholaitíochta gan amhras a d'fhág muid nach raibh aire oideachais i bpost don chuid is mó den bhliain agus, os a choinne sin, cuireadh i bhfeidhm buiséad déine sa tuaisceart de bharr ciorruithe rialtais na RA. Bhí laghdú suntasach ar an bhuiséad caipitil ag an Roinn Oideachais a chuir isteach ar roinnt gaelscoileanna a bhí ag fanacht ar scéimeanna cóiríochta ach nach bhfuair an chóiríocht a raibh siad ag súil léi. Ba mhó a d'fhulaing na gaelscoileanna de bharr seo ar an ábhar gur ar an scéim mionoibreacha caipitil is mó a gearradh an buiséad agus tá céatadán níos airde de ghaelscoileanna i gcóiríocht sealadach a bhíonn ag brath ar an scéim sin. Mar aon leis sin, ba léir gur thit an ghaelscolaíocht síos i liosta tosaíochtaí na RO i mbliana nó bhí na hoifigigh ag cloí le treoir an aire deiridh go dtí deireadh an phróiseas idirbheartaíochta, a chríochnaigh gan chomhaontú idir na páirtithe polaitiúla.

3 Naíscoil nuabhunaithe

Don chéad uair le tamall de bhlianta bunaíodh trí naíscoil i mbliana: Naíscoil Fíobha, Droichead Thuama; Naíscoil Ghreanacháin, an tSuaitreach, Co. Dhoire; agus Naíscoil na Caille i gcathair Ard Mhacha. Ba mhaith linn na coistí bunaithe a thréaslú agus tá ardmholadh tuillte ag Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta a thug cuidiú agus comhairle dóibh. Is le deontas ó Fhoras na Gaeilge a bunaíodh NS na Caille agus NS Fíobha agus le deontas ó InaG a mhaoinigh NS Ghreanacháin. Níl sé fuarast an obair seo a dhéanamh agus an fhreagracht a ghlacadh mar fhostóir agus bheith freagrach as cúram páistí, ach gan na hoibrithe deonacha seo atá sásta a gcuid ama a chaitheamh chomh fial sin ar son na cúise ní bheadh earnáil againn an lá atá inniú ann.

Níl ann ach tús, ar ndóigh agus beidh le feiceáil cad é mar a éiríonn leo amach anseo, ach is léiriú é nach bhfuil an téileamh don ghaelscolaíocht sásaithe go fóill. Ach, tá súil is againn gur seo tús an aistir agus seans ann go bhfeicfimid bunscoil nó dhó ag eascairt ó na forbairtí seo amach anseo.

Bonneagar - Tionscadail Chaipitil

Is fada InaG ag díriú ar an bhearna i mbonneagar earnáil na gaelscolaíochta le blianta anuas; is fíric é nach bhfuil suíomhanna nó foirgnimh fhóirsteanacha ag níos mó gaelscoileanna ná mar atá ag scoileanna san earnáil Bhéarla. Ní nach ionadh, sa mhéid is go bhfuil an earnáil óg agus gur bunaíodh formhór na scoileanna laistigh de 20 bliain anuas. Mar sin féin, tá dul chun cinn á dhéanamh i rith ama féachaint le tabhairt faoin easpa seo, nó tá 6 ghaelscoil ar an liosta do scéimeanna móra caipitil agus tá InaG mar bhaill ar bhord tionscadail ar 5 cinn dóibh siúd, mar atá:

Gaelscoil na gGcrann, an Ómaigh. Tá an scéim anois ag RIBA Céim 3; tá an obair amuigh ar thairiscint san am i láthair. Tá cead pleanála tugtha agus aistriú an tsuímh a shocrú faoi láthair. Ba chóir go raibh conraitheoir tógála ceaptha go luath sa bhliain úr agus le cuidiú Dé beidh an foirgneamh úr réidh Meitheamh 2019. D'fhógair an taire oideachais John O'Dowd an scéim seo Meitheamh 2014 agus cé nach dtig a rá nach tréimhse fada go leor é, beidh sé críochnaithe roimh cuid mhaith de na scéimeanna eile a bhí fógartha ag an am chéanna nó roimhe sin go fiú.

Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh, an Srath Bán: Tá an scéim anois ag RIBA Céim 2 agus tá an tarratas pleanála faoi mhachnamh faoi láthair. Cuireadh moill ar an scéim seo de bhrí nach dtiocfadh teacht ar shuíomh fóirsteanach; tá an suíomh i seilbh na scoile anois agus an obair dheartha faoi lán seoil. Ba chóir dúinne dul chun cinn suntasach a fheiceáil le linn na bliana seo ag teacht.

Scoil an Droichid, Béal Feirste: Tá an scéim seo ag RIBA Céim 2 agus an tiarratas pleanála faoi mhachnamh san am i láthair. Beidh Scoil an Droichid ag bogadh go dtí suíomh eile ag Ulidia, Baile na Faiche. Tá droch chóiríocht ar fad ag Scoil an Droichid agus cuireann gach lá breise a chaitheann siad san fhoirgneamh ina bhfuil siad ualach trom ar na daltaí is ar an fhoireann teagaisc . Ach d'ainneoin sin, tá oideachas den scoth á sholáthar ann agus borradh ar an scoil i rith ama.

Gaelscoil Aodha Rua, Dún Geanainn: Tá an scéim seo ag RIBA Céim 2. Tá suíomh fóirsteanach aimsithe ag an scoil cé go bhfuil idirbheartaíochtaí ag dul ar aghaidh idir LPS agus an túinéir talaimh faoi láthair. Tá sé iontach deacair ag an scoil freastal a dhéanamh ar an líon daltaí atá ag méadú i rith ama le nach gcuirfear isteach ar inbhuanaitheacht na scoile amach anseo.

Gaelscoil Éanna, Gleann Gormfhlaithe: Tá an scéim seo ag RIBA Céim 1; tá siad i mbun an phróisis le suíomh a aimsiú . Arís, tá sé ag dul a bheith dúshlanach freastal a dhéanamh ar an líon daltaí ar an scoil seo go mbeidh an scéim chaipitil críochnaithe.

Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, Dún Geimhin: Scéim chóiríochta atá i gceist le cóiríocht sealadach faoi leith a chur ar fáil do Ghaelcholáiste Dhoire ar an suíomh in aice le Caisleán Dhún Geimhin. I ndiaidh moill a bhain le cinneadh polaitiúil a chuir bliain ar an tionscadal seo, tá cead pleanála tugtha, conraitheoir ceaptha agus ag déanamh réidh tús a chur leis an obair. Meastar an scéim chóiríochta bheith críochnaithe thart ar an Cháisc 2018. Tá an scéim seo á mhaoiniú as an Chiste Chóiríochta ar an ábhar nár bhain Gaelcholáiste Dhoire stádas caipitil amach go fóill.

An Ciste Cóiríochta

Is ciste £2m atá sa Chiste Chóiríochta atá faoi chúram InaG atá ann le freastal a dhéanamh ar riachtanais chóiríochta na hearnála nach bhfuil stádas caipitil bainte amach acu go fóill. Rinne an Roinn Oideachais aisíocaíocht anuraidh ar an chaiteachas – breis is £1m a bhain le Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, Cromghlinne – atá i ndiaidh an tairseach inbhuanaitheachta a bhaint amach, a lig do InaG tabhairt faoin scéim chóiríochta do Ghaelcholáiste Dhoire atá idir lámha againne anois.

Seo an méid airgid caite sa tábla ar an Chiste Chóiríochta san iomlán go dtí Meán Fómhair na bliana seo. Bhí an chuid ba mhó den chaiteachas i mbliana a bhain le hobair sláinte agus sábháilteachta le Scoil an Droichid agus Gaelscoil na Daróige agus tuilleadh cóiríochta do Ghaelscoil na gCrann agus do Ghaelscoil Léim an Mhadaidh. Chomh maith leis sin, caitheadh £60,000 ar tháillí deartha do dhornán scoileanna.

Caiteachas 2017

Scoil	Méid dearbhaithe go MF 17/
BS an Traonaigh	£181
GS Ghleann Darach	£36412.45
Scoil an Droichid	£73,863.96
GS Léim an Mhadaidh	£256,716.19
GS Eoghain	£44,130.52
GS an tSeanchaí	£22,681.85
GS Aodha Rua	£57,396.84
BS na mBeann	£21,793
GS na Daróige	£97,489.20
GS na Speiríní	£20,543.80
GS an Lonnáin	£3,880.80
GColáiste Dhoire	£13,575
GS na gCrann	£178,983.40
Total	**£827,648.01**

Deontais Lánroghnacha

De bhrí go bhfuil na hacmhainní gann, caithfidh InaG bheith spárálach ar na deontais a cheadaigh an bord. Ta InaG ann le forbairt na gaelscolaíochta a éascú, táimid ann le pordheontas a chur ar fáil le go mbeadh seans ag na hiarratasóírí maoiniú reáchtúil a aimsiú.

Shocraigh InaG deontas de £25,000 a cheadú i mbliana ar mhaithe leis na tionscadail nua naíscolaíochta. Bhronn InaG na deontais thíos i mbliana:

- Naíscoil Ghreannacháin £5000 ar mhaithe le hobair athchóirithe
- Naíscoil Fíobha £3000 ar mhaithe le hobair athchóirithe
- Bunscoil na Tamhnaí Móire £5000 – sciar deiridh de dheontas £30,000 le gaelscoil a bhunú.
- Coláiste Feirste £2000 deontas Mhic Thiarnáin – oidhreacht bhliantúil
- Sparánacht Aisling £1000 – oidhreacht bhliantúil d'iar dhalta Choláiste Feirste
- Gaelcholáiste Dhoire £7850 le costais bhreise a chlúdú a bhain leis an suiomh nua
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta £3500 ar mhaithe le himeachtaí margaíochta
- Cuibhreannas Cúraim Linbh Uachtar Chluanaí £5000 – obair athchóirithe

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Áras na bhFál

Tá forbairt Áras na bhFál mar thosaíocht ag InaG don bhliain seo ag teacht. Chuir an ghéarchéim pholaitíochta agus eile moill ar an tionscadal. Ag an phointe seo, táimid ar tí an conradh tógála a chur amach ar thairiscint ag súil is go mbeidh conraitheoir ceaptha i dtús na bliana seo chugainn. Ní amháin gur céim chun tosaigh do InaG a bheas sa tionscadal seo ach céim chun tosaigh a chuirfidh le stádas na gaelscolaíocht sa tuaisceart agus a bheas mar fhorbairt fhisiciúil eile don Cheathrú Ghaeltachta a bheas ag teacht ar shála an chríochnú an fhoirgnimh nua ag Coláiste Feirste, agus na haiseanna eile, na páirceanna imeartha agus an halla spóirt. Is léiriú eile a bheas ann gurb í an Ghaeilge an tinneall atá ag tiomaint athghiniúint an cheantair seo in iarthar Bhéal Feirste.

Buíochas

Mar fhocal scoir, ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabhail leis na comhaltaí boird agus leis an bheirt bhall foirne as an obair a rinne siad i gcaitheamh na bliana. Tugaimid aghaidh ar an bhliain úr ag teacht lán dóchais go mbeidh crot níos fearr ar an earnáil agus go mbeidh níos mó daltaí ag gabhail d'oideachas lán Ghaeilge fiú mura bhfuil acht ann a thugann stádas oifigiúil don teanga a mhair 2000 bliain gan é! .

Pilib Mistéil

Cathaoirleach InaG

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Annual Report

2016/17

Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta

The Trust Fund for Irish Medium Education

Pilib Mistéil, Chair Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta

"As many of the schools that were set up in recent years reach maturity they are operating at close to capacity, and they are in a virtuous circle with an ever greater demand for additional places.".

December 2017

The Irish language has been in the headlines in the local media for the past year or so, with the focus being on the refusal of Unionist politicians to concede an Irish language Act. There has been a stand-off over this and other issues which has left the north without an Assembly or a functioning Executive for coming on to a year. In between times the Irish medium education sector continues to grow and develop. The sector will soon reach 6000 pupils who attend schools delivering education through the medium of Irish and these are the main stakeholders who are to the fore in the campaign for Irish language rights, legal recognition and the demand for public services to be available in Irish. As many of the schools that were set up in recent years reach maturity they are operating at close to capacity, and they are in a virtuous circle with an ever greater demand for additional places. It should not come as any surprise in that we are drawing near to the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, which placed a duty on the British Government to 'promote and facilitate' the development of Irish medium education, the first official recognition of the state for services in Irish.

The political turmoil has meant there has been no education minister in position for almost a year and, in addition, cuts from the UK austerity budget have had a severe impact on the overall education sector. There was a significant cut in the minor capital works budget allocation for 2016/17 which impacted disproportionately on IME schools who are in temporary accommodation and were depending on the minor works scheme to deliver additional accommodation or essential repairs to maintain the classrooms they are in. In addition, it was clear that IME issues were not treated with the same urgency by the DE as officials were instructed to follow the direction of the former Minister during the political stand-off.

3 Newly Established Naíscoileanna/Playgroups

For the first time in years three new naíscoileanna were set up this year: Naíscoil Fíobha, Toomebridge; Naíscoil Ghreanacháin, Swatragh, Co. Derry; and Naíscoil na Caille in Armagh City. InaG wishes to congratulate the founding committees on the tremendous work and we commend the development officers from Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta for helping them to get off the ground. Foras na Gaeilge has provided the start up funding for Naíscoil na Caille and part -funding along with InaG for Naíscoil Fíobha and Naíscoil Ghreanacháin. Setting up a non profit enterprise is a very challenging task, with responsibility for employing people and for the care of children. However, without the unpaid commitment of volunteer activists who freely give their time and labour for the cause of the language there would be no Irish medium education sector today.

This is only the beginning,of course, and only time will tell how each of the schemes progress in the future, but it is a sign that there is still an unsatisfied demand for Irish medium education in the north. We do hope that the journey each of the naíscoileanna has embarked on will result in the establishment of a new bunscoil or two sometime in the future

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Infrastructure - Major Capital Projects

InaG has been beating the drum for a long time about the deficit in capital development in the IME sector; it is a fact that the IME sector lags behind the mainstream in terms of suitable sites for long term development and permanent buildings or accommodation that is fit for purpose. Such a gap is understandable given the relative youth of the sector in that most of our schools were set up within the past 20 years. Nevertheless, there have been ongoing efforts to address the infrastructural needs of the sector and there are now six IME primary schools on the list for major capital schemes. InaG is represented on the project boards of five of those schemes.

Gaelscoil na gGcrann, Omagh. The capital scheme is now at RIBA design stage 3; the tender process for the construction contract is currently ongoing. Planning approval has been granted and the site purchase is close to completion. The successful contractor should be appointed early in the new year and, God willing, the new school building will be ready by June 2019. Former minister for education John O'Dowd announced the scheme June 2014 and although five years is a long enough period this scheme will be completed before other schemes that were announced at the same time or even before this one.

Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh, Strabane. This capital scheme is at RIBA design stage 2 and the planning application currently under consideration. The scheme was delayed until they were able to procure a suitable site; the trustees are now in possession of the site and design work is progressing well. We should see substantial progress being made in the coming year.

Scoil an Droichid, Belfast. This capital scheme is currently at RIBA design stage 2. Scoil an Droichid will be moving to the site of the former Ulidia school in Ballynafaigh. The accommodation in the school is in a poor condition and every day the pupils and staff have to endure is an additional burden. However, despite all this, the quality of teaching is excellent and demand for places exceeds capacity in the school.

Gaelscoil Aodha Rua,Dungannon: This scheme is currently at RIBA design stage 2. They have identified a suitable site and are in negotiations to purchase the site at this point in time. The school management is struggling with the limited existing temporary accommodation to cater for the increased demand for places in the school so that it does not compromise the long term viability of Gaelscoil Aodha Rua.

Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley. This capital scheme is currently at RIBA design stage 1; the focus at the minute is on a site search. Again the school is finding it very challenging to accommodate the increasing numbers seeking to enrol before the new build is ready.

Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, Dungiven. This is an accommodation scheme to provide specialist classrooms for GC Dhoire on its current site beside Dungiven Castle. The project was seriously delayed by a political decision which was unnecessary and added an additional year to the delivery of the project. Planning approval has been granted, a contractor has been appointed and will soon be on site to start the work. It is expected that the scheme will be completed around Easter 2018. The scheme is being funded from InaG's Accommodation Fund because Gaelcholáiste Dhoire has not yet met the capital grant threshold.

The Accommodation Fund:

The Accommodation Fund is a £2m fund administered by InaG to address the deficit in the IME sector in terms of accommodation and unsuitable sites for schools that have not yet met the threshold for capital funding. The Department of Education repaid the costs expended on Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach in Crumlin last year, from the accommodation scheme which cost in excess of £1m. The school subsequently met the criteria for viability and the repayment of those resources has allowed InaG to fund the current accommodation scheme for Gaelcholáiste Dhoire.

The table indicates the amount of money expended to September 2017. This year most of the expenditure has been on work related to health and safety issues in Scoil an Droichid and in Gaelscoil na Daróige, in Derry City, as well as for additional accommodation for Gaelscoil na gCrann and Gaelscoil Léim an Mhadaidh. In addition, InaG committed £60,000 in design fees for various schools to progress schemes.

Expenditure 2017

School	Amount InaG vouched to date 30/9/17
BS an Traonaigh	£181
GS Ghleann Darach	£36412.45
Scoil an Droichid	£73,863.96
GS Léim an Mhadaidh	£256,716.19
GS Eoghain	£44,130.52
GS an tSeanchaí	£22,681.85
GS Aodha Rua	£57,396.84
BS na mBeann	£21,793
GS na Daróige	£97,489.20
GS na Speiríní	£20,543.80
GS an Lonnáin	£3,880.80
GColáiste Dhoire	£13,575
GS na gCrann	£178,983.40
Total	**£827,648.01**

Discretionary Grants

Because the Trust's resources are scant , InaG has to be frugal with the grants the board awards. InaG exists to facilitate the development of Irish medium education and to that end we make seeding grants that allow the groups to meet the criteria to access statutory funding for the naíscoil or bunscoil.

The board approved grant funding of £25,000 this year to support two of the new pre-school playgroups. In addition to that, the list below shows other grants made by InaG in the last year:

- Naíscoil Ghreannacháin £5000 for reconfiguration of room
- Naíscoil Fíobha £3000 for reconfiguration of room
- Bunscoil na Tamhnaí Móire £5000 – last tranche of £30,000 grant to establish an IME school
- Coláiste Feirste £2000 Eoin McKiernan Legacy – annual grant
- Sparánacht Aisling £1000 – Yearly scholarship for past pupil of Coláiste Feirste
- Gaelcholáiste Dhoire £7850 to cover additional costs arising from the new site
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta £3500 to put together marketing material for IME
- Cuibhreannas Cúraim Linbh Uachtar Chluanaí £5000 – for reconfiguration of playroom.

Áras na bhFál

InaG's priority for the coming year is to complete the construction of Áras na bhFál building at the junction of Falls Rd and Broadway in the Gaeltacht Quarter in Belfast. The political crisis in the north has caused delays in getting the construction phase started. At this point in time, we are close to putting the contract out to tender and hope to have a successful contractor appointed early next year. This project will not only be good for InaG , but it will enhance the status of Irish medium education in the north, it will be a landmark development for the Irish language and it will be another building block of the Gaeltacht Quarter. Coming on the heels of the completion of the Coláiste Feirste extension, the new sports hall and playing pitches, that have transformed the Beechmount site. This is further evidence that the Irish language is the catalyst in the regeneration of this part of west Belfast. .

Thanks

To conclude, I wish to thank the trustees and the two members of staff for all of the work they have done over the past year. We face the coming year with hope that it will see further improvement in the IME sector and a continued increase in the number of pupils benefitting from a quality education delivered in Irish, even if we still don't have official recognition for the language that has endured for 2000 years without it.

Pilib Mistéil

Cathaoirleach InaG

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