



It's been a busy year on so many fronts. Fermanagh House has been busier in 2011 than ever and we want to thank all the groups from across County Fermanagh for their support and beyond throughout the year. The Fermanagh Trust has also been able to support more organisations in the past year than at any time over the last 16 years through our mentoring and support work. Other initiatives including our Shared Education programme, our website [www.fermanagh.info](http://www.fermanagh.info) and funding advice have also seen higher levels of engagement. 2012 promises to be a challenging year for everyone. Happy Christmas everyone and we look forward to working with you in next year.

*Lauri McCusker, Director*



### THE FERMANAGH TRUST WELCOMES THE INCLUSION OF SHARED EDUCATION IN THE PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

In the wake of the Education Minister, John O'Dowd's statement at the Shared Education Learning Forum Conference in September, that he would look "very favourably" at shared proposals from schools - including on a cross-sectoral basis and the First Minister's statement that "Shared Education is the way forward for Northern Ireland" The Fermanagh Trust has today welcomed the inclusion of Shared Education in the Draft Programme for Government. The Programme for Government provides for the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Group, which will explore and bring forward recommendations on Shared Education; and as a priority area "To ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in Shared Education Programmes and increase substantially the number of schools sharing facilities". For two years now Fermanagh has benefited from the only county-wide Shared Education Programme, which is managed and administered by The Fermanagh Trust and supported by The International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies. Each week, over 3200 pupils meet in shared, curriculum-based classes with pupils from another sector. All post-primary schools and the majority of primary schools participate and the educational, societal and community benefits have been widely recognised. Over the last number of months The Fermanagh Trust has been meeting with local MLAs, members of the Education Committee and Executive Ministers to achieve governmental seal of approval for Shared Education through the Programme for Government. The Programme for Government sets out the strategic context for both the budget and the investment strategy and means that Shared Education is now a priority for the Department of Education. For schools across Northern Ireland and particularly in rural areas, Shared Education on a cross-sectoral basis offers them the opportunity to explore options such as shared classes, shared teachers, shared administrators, shared Boards of Governors and Shared faith schools. It is understood that the main sectors are attracted to Shared Education at all levels and through the ongoing audit process they are exploring where shared solutions might work. Lauri McCusker, Director of The Fermanagh Trust, welcomed the news saying: "The Fermanagh Trust has been meeting a wide range of sectors, organisations and individuals over the last number of months in relation to the Programme for Government. We are delighted that Shared Education is now included as an Executive and Departmental priority. Protecting our various ethos and identities has been a hallmark of the Shared Education Programme - as has sustaining schools in local communities. "In the past number of weeks we have written to all members of Boards of Governors in Fermanagh - at both primary and post primary levels - advising them of the significant opportunities that now exist to protect and sustain educational provision in local communities, through sectors and schools exploring greater sharing and collaboration with their nearest neighbouring school from another sector.



### SPORTING STARS BENEFIT FROM GREG TURLEY BURSARIES



Three of County Fermanagh's most promising young sports stars have been awarded Greg Turley Bursaries. The Fermanagh Trust presented the Awards to William Graham, Lloyd Seaman and Holly Nixon at a special ceremony in Fermanagh House on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> November. The Greg Turley Awards were set up after the death of the popular and inspirational St. Michael's College teacher who died suddenly in 1999. Holly Nixon, who is well known for winning Silver at the World Junior Rowing Championships in August, has been funded supported. Holly, a pupil at Devenish College is a member of Portora Boat Club and trains eight times per week to remain competitive. In 2008, Holly was selected to row for Ireland at Junior Level (Under 18) and has remained part of Rowing Ireland's Development Squad since then. William Graham, also a pupil at Devenish College, is a member of the Lakeland Special Olympic Squad and in 2010 won an all-Ireland Gold Medal in the Wheelchair slalom in Limerick. William is also a member of the Irish Football Association's Powered Wheel Chair Squad - the only Powered Wheel Chair Team in Northern Ireland - which won the All-Ireland Shield in June this year. Lloyd Seaman is studying for his A-Levels at Devenish College and is also a member of Portora Boat Club. He has represented Ireland in Home Internationals in 2010 and in the European Championships in 2011. Lloyd hopes to represent Ireland in the Junior World Championships in 2012 and to qualify for the Irish/Great Britain U23 rowing squad in 2013 - 2015. Sean Carlin a member of the Greg Turley Awards Scheme Advisory Group said: "Greg Turley was a special unique individual who contributed so much to the lives of others; so much so, that this Fund was established as a way of perpetuating his memory, and of continuing his work of helping others in a practical way. We hope these awards will help these local sporting stars achieve their future ambitions". The Fund is administered and managed by The Fermanagh Trust - Fermanagh's Community Foundation. For more information on how to apply for a Greg Turley Award, please visit [www.fermanaghtrust.org](http://www.fermanaghtrust.org)



*William Graham (front centre), Lloyd Seaman (back left) & Holly Nixon (back right) receive their Certificates & Bursaries from members of the Greg Turley Awards Scheme.*

## SHARED EDUCATION CHOIR LIGHTS UP LISBELLAW



Children from Lisbellaw Primary School and their partners in Shared Education – Tattygar Primary School – helped light up Lisbellaw on Friday 2nd December, providing the music as the Christmas tree lights were switched on in the village. The two schools have been partners for two years and are entering Year Three of their Shared Education programme to the obvious delight of both Principals. The joint choir has been just one outcome of the successful Shared Education Programme between the two schools. Ingrid Logan, Principal of Lisbellaw Primary School said: "The children from Lisbellaw PS and Tattygar PS have been working together on Shared Educa-

tion for two years. This is our third year in partnership and our joint choir for the Christmas celebrations in Lisbellaw is a tribute to the hard work and commitment of the children, classroom assistants and teachers involved. We would like to thank all our parents, the local communities and the Governors of our schools for their support for Shared Education. The benefits to the pupils and the schools have been immense, with the children mixing and making friends in a natural way. Shared Education shows there is hope for our children's future where they will see others as friends and neighbours, despite their different religions, cultures and backgrounds". John Prunty, Principal of Tattygar Primary School said: "The children of Tattygar P.S Lisbellaw are thoroughly enjoying their shared education experiences with the children of Lisbellaw Controlled Primary School. Building on the previous 2 year's experiences with our P.5's, 6's and 7's we decided to expand our partnership to include Primary 1's and 2's. This has been a wonderful success. The children from P.1 in Lisbellaw come up to our school for a musical programme and the children also play us together on the outdoor play provision available in the school. "Since beginning the Shared Education Programme between the two schools, pupils and staff have realised many benefits, new friendships both pupil and staff, learning new things in a fun and relaxed environment, an acceptance of each other as people, regardless of cultural or religious differences. Long may it continue!"

## ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE HEARS FROM FERMANAGH



On Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, representatives from The Fermanagh Trust travelled to Parliament Buildings to give evidence to the Education Committee on the issue of Shared Education. The Director of The Fermanagh Trust, Lauri McCusker, was part of the three person panel that was asked to detail their experiences of and understanding of Shared Education. With Shared Education featuring prominently in the Programme for Government, and with Fermanagh having the only county-wide Shared Education programme, the Education Committee was interested in hearing about the experience in Fermanagh. The Chairperson of the Education Committee, Mervyn Storey, MLA, (North Antrim) asked about the Shared Education Programme in Fermanagh and what the Committee could do to facilitate further discussion around Shared Education? In response, Lauri McCusker paid tribute to the schools, principals, teachers, parent, pupils and governors that participate in the Programme saying: "The imagination, leadership and innovation from schools working in partnership has shown how within a structure such as Shared Education people can fly and all this has come from within the school communities. The Shared Education programme is a bottom up approach and for that to take hold right across Fermanagh has taught me a valuable lesson in how you empower people." In terms of what the Education Committee needs to do, Mr. McCusker continued: "The Education Committee needs to provide leadership in terms of how you support that development. If you, at this level, are promoting shared education across the political spectrum you are sending out a very strong political message." David McNarry, MLA, (Strangford) asked - from the Fermanagh experience - how Shared Education could support schools identified as under threat from the Viability Audit and how Shared Education could help protect minority communities. Lauri McCusker replied: "What sharing offers is the opportunity to enhance the educational expertise by working in partnership with expertise on a wider footing. The Audit should not look at schools in an isolated world without looking at opportunities for sharing and collaboration and the area based planning process needs to look at this also." "The reason The Fermanagh Trust got involved in education in 2008/2008 – and we are not an education body - is that we had the maintained sector and the Education Board looking at one sector as if the other sector doesn't exist. That's the danger for minority communities, particularly along the border – for those schools that are small there may be question marks over the ability to provide that wide ranging educational experience. The strength about Shared Education is the majority and minority communities' partner with one another as equal players where each other's identity is protected". Local MLA, Phil Flanagan, asked what the Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education should include. Lauri McCusker replied: "I would hope that the people on the Group have the ability to do what the schools have done and that is to think outside the box. There shouldn't be the same old faces and this team needs to be able to feed into the viability audit and area planning processes. This must also be a time limited process and must include people with legislative and financial minds".



## SCHOOLS LAUNCH ANTI-BULLYING CALENDAR AS PART OF SHARED EDUCATION INITIATIVE



335 children from across the divide today launched an anti-bullying calendar for 2012 as part of the Shared Education Programme in Fermanagh. P4 and P7 pupils at Holy Trinity Primary School, Enniskillen, Lisbellaw Primary School, Jones Memorial Primary School, Enniskillen and Enniskillen Integrated Primary School have been partners in the Shared Education programme for two years. As part of their curriculum-based activities in Year Three of the Programme, they collaborated to design and produce colourful and imaginative calendars for 2012 – each with an anti-bullying message. The four schools are all within a five mile radius of each other and reflect some of the various sectors including Catholic Maintained, Controlled and Integrated. Their Shared Education Partnership identified bullying as a theme on which the children could engage and work together. Through the Programme the children met one another, got to know one another, learned about their similarities and differences, while developing respect and tolerance for each other. Wider community involvement has also been a key aspect of the Programme and Partnership and the calendar launch was attended by parents, pupils, Governors, other school principals from across Fermanagh and members of the local community. The four principals – Fintan Murphy from Holy Trinity PS, Adele Kerr from Enniskillen Integrated PS, Ingrid Logan from Lisbellaw PS and Sandra Isherwood from Jones Memorial PS - issued a joint message saying: "The children from the four schools have been working together on Shared Education for two years. This is our third year in partnership and our joint calendar is a tribute to the hard work and commitment of the children, classroom assistants and teachers involved. We would like to thank all our parents, the local communities and the Governors of our schools for their support for Shared Education. The benefits to the pupils and the schools have been immense, with the children mixing and making friends in a natural way. Shared Education shows there is hope for our children's future where they will see others as friends and neighbours, despite their different religions, cultures and backgrounds".

Arlene Foster, MLA, whose children participate in another Shared Education Partnership in Fermanagh between Brookeborough PS and St. Eugene's PS, The Knocks, attended the event and she said: "This is another way of bringing young people from across the divide together and the Shared Education Programme in Fermanagh is going from strength to strength".

Julian Fowler, BBC District Journalist spoke at the launch saying: "I want to congratulate everyone for the work they put into producing these calendars. They show what can be achieved by working together". Lauri McCusker, Director of the Fermanagh Trust, which administers and manages the programme, welcomed the publication of the calendar saying: "These calendars by P4 and P7 pupils reflect not just their efforts this term, but the commitment of the whole school community in each school to Shared Education. Shared Education is relevant for all sectors and in urban as well as rural areas. No matter how large or small the school, collaboration brings social, educational and economic benefits to that school and to the wider community. Through sharing and learning from one another we actually find we have more in common than what separates us. Focusing on the theme of anti-bullying is especially relevant because bullying can affect children of all religions, classes and backgrounds. The Fermanagh Trust would like to pay tribute to the Principals, school staff, children and all involved in making Shared Education the success that it is".



## SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS FROM KAZAKHSTAN VISIT THE FERMANAGH TRUST



Five doctoral students from the Civil Service Academy in Astana, Kazakhstan - all senior civil servants – visited Fermanagh on Monday, 05 December 2011 to hear from The Fermanagh Trust about its work as a third sector organisation. Kazakhstan spans part of Central Asia and Eastern Europe and is the ninth largest country in the world. Due to a partnership between the University of Ulster and the Civil Service Academy and the University of Ulster and the Fermanagh Trust through Shared Education, the Trust was then invited to host the delegation.

In a two hour seminar the visitors heard about the work of the third sector in Northern Ireland and The Fermanagh Trust's role in delivering a range of public and private services including Shared Education and the management of a variety of Trust funds including the Fisher Foundation and the Joan Trimble Awards Scheme.

Another key area of work the students were interested in hearing about was current research being conducted by The Fermanagh Trust. One new area of activity is how communities can maximise community partnerships with wind energy developers.

Professor Colin Knox from the University of Ulster, who coordinated the visit said: "This was very relevant because the third sector is underdeveloped in Kazakhstan. Two examples in particular were very useful – the involvement of The Fermanagh Trust in researching the community partnership opportunities from wind energy developments and the Shared Education Programme".

Lauri McCusker, Director of The Fermanagh Trust said: "It's good to be able to hear from experiences in other parts of Europe and for us to share our work providing mentoring to projects, providing opportunities for networking and collaboration, delivering funding guidance and expertise and online resources, for example Grantfinder, as well as programme delivery and advocacy work".

## USEFUL LINKS



### UPDATES

Keep up to date with the action in Fermanagh House by following us on Twitter and Facebook. We update these on a regular basis so keep your finger on the pulse by adding us and following our 'Tweets' and updates.

### GRANTS

The funding section, which gives regular updates on relevant potential sources of funding for community and voluntary sector groups in Fermanagh is a very useful tool to our local groups.



### INFO

Fermanagh's Community web portal continues to develop and grow, with new groups registering on a regular basis. Thanks to this, and some improvements, the site continues to attract a great deal of interest, particularly each groups own web page. If your group wishes to join this increasing community, you can register free on [www.fermanagh.info](http://www.fermanagh.info).



## MERRY CHRISTMAS



**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL THE STAFF IN FERMANAGH HOUSE, WE HOPE YOU ALL GET WHAT YOU WISHED FOR AND HOPE TO SEE YOU IN THE NEW YEAR .....WITH MAYBE A FEW BELT LOOPS UNDER STRESS FROM ALL THE CHRISTMAS CHEER. HAPPY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!**



## GREAT CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAY



As part of their annual **Great Christmas Giveaway**, Fermanagh House have this year again donated thousands of pounds worth of toys to three local charities. The toys were handed over to St. Vincent De Paul, the Salvation Army and Fermanagh Women's Aid at a special ceremony in Fermanagh House on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> December. The gifts will be passed out by the charities to the many families in Fermanagh who are most in need this Christmas and, who without these gifts, wouldn't be able to enjoy the festive season that so many of us take for granted. Speaking after the event, Lauri McCusker, Director of The Fermanagh Trust said: "As a social enterprise those who are most in need in our communities are at the forefront of our minds this Christmas season. For many it will be a very economically difficult and challenging time. We hope that these gifts, which will be distributed by these three well known and respected charities, will help the families that benefit enjoy a happy Christmas".



### Fermanagh House Opening Times:

Monday ~ Friday:  
8.30am ~ 10.00pm  
5.30pm~10.00pm  
(Subject to Bookings)

Saturday: 9.00am ~ 6pm  
(Subject to Bookings)

### **In- (Fermanagh) House** **Fundraising**



Wear it Pink Day for Cancer Research was a HUGE success raising £222.56, the staff throughout the building made such an effort, here are the Fermanagh Trust Staff on the day.



### **Fermanagh House** **Open Day**



The Fermanagh House Open Day took place on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December and proved a huge success after being advertised in the local papers. The offer of a mince pie and a cup of tea is always received well at this time of year and we know how to drum up interest.

The visitors on the day could avail of a guided tour of the building to showcase our Conference and meeting room facilities combined with the competitive prices we are confident the day will have invested interest from groups needing a central, quiet, well-equipped meeting space as well as giving people an opportunity to see around a building which they probably bypass daily.

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