

SPEEDWELL TRUST



bringing children together

Worldwide Friends of Speedwell



Issue 13

Summer 2010

Strategy Launch at Stormont

On Monday 26 April Speedwell Trust members and friends of Speedwell Trust travelled to Stormont to launch their Strategic Plan for 2010-13. The event, which was held in the Long Gallery, was co sponsored



by local MLA's Mr Billy Armstrong and Mr Tommy Gallagher. In his opening remarks The Trust Manager, Mr Eamon McClean, stated that Speedwell was delighted to be able to bring their message of co-operation, respect and mutual understanding to policy makers in the Strategy Launch at Parliament Buildings, Stormont. He outlined the journey Speedwell had made from its beginnings in 1991 and gave an overview of the work which is

currently being delivered. He said that schools were the gateway to the wider community and was confident that children would carry the message of tolerance and respect coming from the project back to the home and wider family.

Mr Neil Downing the Chairman of the Speedwell Board of Trustees emphasised the importance of bringing this launch to Stormont so that "those who draw up policies and legislation, those who are responsible of improving the lives of all the citizens of Northern Ireland, are aware of the work which Speedwell does.

The highlight for many, however, was the excellent performance from the cross community choir of St Patrick's PS and Dungannon PS, coordinated by Ms Andrea Erskine and Mrs Patricia Devlin, who performed two songs. Many of those who attended the event commented



that this performance epitomised the ethos of co-operation, integration and harmony that Speedwell promotes. The event concluded with Mr Tommy Gallagher launching the Strategy and congratulating Speedwell on its achievements thus far and wished them every success in the years to come.



Speedwell Annual Schools' Day

Thirty-five Principals and teachers attended Speedwell's Annual Schools' Day on Friday 21 May 2010 at Speedwell's Centre in Parkanaur Forest, near Castlecaulfield. This conference was the first to be held at Parkanaur since the Minister of Education announced a 70 % cut in funding for community relations work in schools and the youth sector. Speedwell's Trust Manager, Eamon McClean said that



while the cuts were a huge blow to the sector, Speedwell would endeavour to provide a facility which schools could use and programmes which addressed issues like diversity, racism and sectarianism. Teachers attending the event were very angry at the cuts which were announced on 28 April. One teacher said "having been involved in community relations work in schools for the past twenty years it is sad to see the



programme end in this way. Schools have worked hard to forge links and promote positive relationships". Chris McCarney , Peace III project manager with the South West Council Cluster also spoke at the conference. He said that Speedwell was one of the projects in this area who were delivering programmes which dealt with racism and sectarianism, the main criteria in the SEUPB Peace programme. He stated that as a result of Speedwell projects children would have a

greater awareness and understanding of different cultures and traditions. The conference concluded with the Speedwell founder Mrs Jean Kelly giving a talk about her book 'Charlie Crow Sorts It!' Jean said that the book, which is set in Parkanaur Forest Park and targeted at primary and second level children, "not only deals with environmental education but also is an excellent resource for personal development and mutual understanding with the underlying theme of 'Let's find a way to help each other and live in harmony – even if there are problems.'"

Respecting Diversity Project



Speedwell has received funding from the Southern Peace III Cluster (Armagh, Craigavon, Banbridge and Newry and Mourne councils) and SEUPB to deliver a cross-community respecting diversity project to 7 primary schools partnerships. This programme involved children aged between 4-8 years old, teachers, parents with whole school communities as beneficiaries. Speedwell delivered a range of programmes aimed at giving

children the opportunity to explore different traditions and to appreciate and respect difference and cultural diversity.

Children at Speedwell this term



Teambuilding at Parkanaur

On 20 February 2010 Speedwell in collaboration with CRIS (Community Relations in Schools) facilitated a team building day with members of the Cookstown in Harmony Choir. This choir is a cross community, multi cultural youth initiative that aims to bring young people in the Cookstown area together through music, good relations and personal development. Children



from the choir were brought together in an environment and setting that promoted cohesion, sharing and integration and participated in ice breaker activities, team building games and an orienteering activity in the forest park. Eventhough it was extremely cold outside all involved had a very eventful and enjoyable day.



Peace III Cross Border Programme

Speedwell with assistance from the South West Peace III Cluster and SEUPB delivered a cross-border, cross-community sporting diversity project to 12 primary schools in North Monaghan and South Tyrone. The schools participated in this new and innovative project which allows children and their teachers to explore cultural identity in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties through sport. Sport, like many other facets of life in Northern Ireland, is largely segregated along religious lines. This aim of this project was to give children the opportunity to learn about



each other's sporting traditions, understand and respect their differences and recognise and value what they hold in common. It also encouraged them to see sports played by members of an opposing tradition as a positive influence rather than something which is distant and viewed with suspicion and allowed them to become familiar with sports and a sporting culture which is not normally celebrated within their community. The sports which are explored in

this project were rugby, gaelic football, hockey, hurling, camogie and soccer.

The schools that are taking part are St Mary's PS, Aughnacloy PS and Knockconan NS; St Joseph's PS, Caledon, Churchill PS and St Mary's NS, Glaslough; Lisferty PS and Deravoy NS; St Jarlath's PS and Clontibret NS; St Mary's PS, Cabragh and Model NS, Monaghan.

Donations to Speedwell

To continue to develop Speedwell's vital work we have to largely rely on the generosity of individuals in Ireland and also from around the world. Anyone wishing to make a donation can do it online by logging on to our website - www.speedwell-trust.com or you can send a cheque to the address below.



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