

Club School Liaison Report 2023/24

1. INTRODUCTION

The main focus of the Club School Liaison role is to continue to build on a well-established partnership between Cumann Pheadair Naofa and St. Dallen's Primary School. The school Principal Mrs Una Farrell, GAA Co-ordinator Mr Brendan Rice and Cumann Pheadair Naofa Member Mrs Noreen Kelly, are still very committed to the partnership and the development of a strong Club School Link.

This link between the Club and School was reinforced on the 8th March when on behalf of Warrenpoint GAA, Club Chairman, Paul McKibben, and Football Committee Chairman, Steve Robinson, presented 48 new playing kits to Mrs Farrell. I would like to thank Johnny Rooney the Football Committee Secretary for his contribution in the design and assistance in getting approval from the Board of Governor's for the jerseys.

The presentation was made during the schools 'Blue Day' which was held to mark the special occasion and celebrate the continued partnership between the club and St. Dallen's PS.

The new kit, which was funded by proceeds raised by the club's highly successful football summer camp last year, contains the crest of both club and school. It will be worn with pride by the pupils of St. Dallen's in all future school sporting activities and competitions, including both boys' and girls' Gaelic Football, Hurling and Camogie.

2. COACHING

Thankfully coaching continued to be provided over the academic year of 2023/24 in St Dallen's for football, hurling and camogie.

Hurling/Camogie

Ulster GAA provided a Hurling coach from February to March 2024 and gave coaching to initially P4/7 in the first term and younger classes P1/P5 in the second term.

The hurling section continued to provide excellent support to St. Dallen's throughout the year.

We were very fortunate with the continued support of teacher Elizabeth Wilson who was able to provide camogie/hurling training to the P6/P7 teams with the assistance of Brendan Rice. This meant that the school were able to attend Blitzes and enter the Bunscoil competitions this year.

On the 7th March St Dallen's went on to win their first ever Camogie title when they were crowned Allianz Indoor Camogie Champions after beating St Mary's Kircubbin in a close final in

De La Salle High School. The Ballycran girls beat St Dallan's in the early rounds but the girls saved their best for the last game in the final, winning 2-0.

Proudly wearing their new kit in club colours, St. Dallan's Camogie team went on to represent Down in the Ulster Indoor Championship Final on 23rd March in Magherafelt.

With 7 counties competing, the girls had 6 league games to play with the top two schools making it to the provincial final. The competition was very tough and with one game remaining it was between Derry, Donegal and the St. Dallan's girls for the two final places.

In their final game, they beat Tyrone champions Carrickmore 4-1 which meant St. Dallan's found themselves joint second with their Donegal rivals. A count back on goals was to decide the finalist to play Derry champions Kilrea, but unfortunately St. Dallan's lost out by 1 goal.

Heartbreaking though it was to have been so close to an Ulster Final, the girls should be so proud of their achievement being the first team in St. Dallan's history to win a Down Camogie title and get to an Ulster Camogie Final's Day.

A massive thank you to Elizabeth Wilson for her continued support in bringing the passion for Camogie back to the school.

Football

After school training started back September and was taken by Brendan Rice and Elizabeth Wilson. The boys entered the Bunscoil competitions. After Term 1, it was recognised that the school would still require PE coaching sessions that the Club supported in the 2022/23 school year. The football committee set up an additional coaching programme for the 2023/34 year.

Much appreciation to all the Club coaches that took the time to come into the school throughout the year and a special thanks to Steve Robinson for not only coaching but organising the successful coaching programme from start to finish.

A Down coach was also supplied by the Club to give additional coaching to selected classes.

Ladies Gaelic Football

The girls were being provided the same coaching as the boys in school coaching programme. The P6/P7 team were being coach every Thursday by Brendan Rice and Elizabeth Wilson. This meant that the school were able to attend Blitzes and enter the Bunscoil competitions this year.

GAA For All

'GAA For All' is an amazing bespoke programme designed for children with additional needs who may not be in a position to take part in a typical team game. The focus is to assist participants with ball skills, exercise and most importantly, fun and inclusion in a safe, child-centred and friendly environment.

Declan Carvill (CPN GAA For All Coordinator) reached out looking to promote the programme within the school to existing and potentially new participants. A 'Give it a go' session was organised on 14th April and communication was sent out to all classes through the School website, Google Classrooms and Seesaw apps.

Another promotion letter was distributed in September with the opening of a 4th SPiM (Special Provision in Mainstream class) in the school which consists of 34 children.

3. ANNUAL GAA HEALTH AND WELLBEING DAY

St Dallan's Primary School in partnership with Cumann Pheadair Naofa hosted a highly enjoyable GAA health and wellbeing day in St. Dallan's for primary seven pupils on the 14th June. It started off with a great Hurling session led by Anton the hurling coach.

Next was a very informative Q & A session with 3 All-Ireland winning past pupils: Clara Mulvenna, David Ruddy and Niall Rice. We were also very fortunate to be joined by the Down Senior Football Manager - Conor Lavery! Each of the guests had the enjoyable task of viewing portraits of each of them and selecting a winner!!

The day finished with a mini All-Ireland series, refereed by David and Niall, which concluded with a Kerry v Mayo final. It was a fantastic day.

4. COMMUNICATION

Communication has been central to the development of the Cumann Pheadair Naofa

/ St. Dallan's Club School Link.

The following areas continue to be developed. They are as follows:

- St. Dallan's and Cumann Pheadair Naofa websites linked to each other.
- A link to St. Dallan's website is already on the CPN website.
- St. Dallan's Primary School and Cumann Pheadair Naofa Fact Sheet was

distributed to all P1 pupils at St. Dallan's Induction Day.

- St. Dallan's and Cumann Pheadair Naofa share good news stories through promotion on both school and club website. There is excellent co-operation between St. Dallan's and Cumann Pheadair Naofa in acknowledging success of pupils in Gaelic Games.
- Cumann Pheadair Naofa frequently carry stories in club notes in relation to successes in St. Dallan's Primary School.
- At the request of Cumann Pheadair Naofa, St. Dallan's staff frequently distribute notes to the pupils on club activities.
- St. Dallan's/Cumann Pheadair Naofa GAA noticeboard is frequently updated.

5. ADMINISTRATION OF THE CLUB / SCHOOL LINK WITH ST. DALLAN'S

Principal Una Farrell has put in place an arrangement whereby Cumann Pheadair Naofa Club /School Liaison Officer will meet with GAA Co-ordinator Brendan Rice each term to ascertain how the partnership is progressing and to look at ways of enhancing the Cumann Pheadair Naofa / St. Dallan's Club School Link.

6. CONCLUSION

The 2023/24 year was a tremendous success and I feel that the school/club link has returned to full strength since Covid and will only build over next few years.

I would like to record special thanks to Principal Una Farrell, GAA Co-ordinator Brendan Rice, Noreen Kelly and Elizabeth Wilson for their support and professionalism in delivering GAA activities in St. Dallan's Primary School through this year.

I was honoured to be appointed as the Club School Liaison Officer in September 2023. I would like to thank Bridget Carr for her guidance in the handover of the role and look forward to continuing the strong link between the club and the school.

Eimear Rice

(Club / School Liaison Officer)

2nd December 2024