

# Partnership in Action - Orchard County Primary School St Patricks Primary School

## Schools involved

St Patrick's PS [Annaghmore]  
Orchard County PS



St Patrick's Primary School, Annaghmore, situated in Coalisland and Orchard County Primary School situated just over 6 miles away have been working together since 2017 as a Shared Education Partnership.

## What activities have you organised/ taken part in?

Orchard County Primary School and St Patrick's Primary School, Annaghmore have been working together through Shared Education Since 2017. Our collaboration has included a wide range of activities, which covered themes such as WAU and STEM, and more recently, digital literacy and outdoor learning.

This year, we launched a joint survey called "*Our Shared Education Adventure 2025–26*", inviting pupils from Year 2 to Year 5 to share their ideas. Teachers then facilitated small group discussions to explore these ideas further. Pupils expressed interest in creative art projects, outdoor numeracy, and opportunities to build friendships through games and partner work.

Plans for the year include wellbeing activities and a collaborative art piece that will serve as a lasting legacy of our partnership.

## How have these Shared Education activities benefitted the educators and pupils?

The impact of Shared Education has been significant. Pupils have not only come together across communities but have also taken an active role in shaping their experiences. Their involvement has led to more meaningful, inclusive, and fun activities with our partnership that reflect their interests and needs.

As educators, we have benefited from the insights pupils provide, allowing them to design programmes that are more engaging and relevant. Pupil enthusiasm plays a key role in fostering positivity around the initiative. It has helped build trust with parents when children express genuine excitement and ownership of the programme.

## **What have been the challenges?**

One of the main hurdles has been addressing parental concerns about Shared Education. However, these have been eased by the visible joy and engagement of the pupils involved.

Another challenge lies in ensuring that activities remain inclusive and meaningful for all children. This requires ongoing adaptation of planned activities and responsiveness, especially as pupil voice continues to shape the direction of the programme.

## **Let's hear from the Children and Young People**

“That was the most fun ever!”

“I've made a new best friend!”

“I learned something super cool!”

## **How has your partnership engaged with your local community and what has been the impact?**

Our partnership continues to explore meaningful ways to connect with and positively impact our local communities. Because our schools are geographically distant, we don't naturally meet in shared local spaces, which makes intentional community engagement especially important. In previous years, we've successfully brought families together by using the local parish hall for joint sessions. Parents were invited to talk about their careers and take part in Q&A activities, which created valuable learning experiences and strengthened relationships between families and pupils.

This year, we're building on that momentum by hosting celebration events in both schools at the end of our projects. Families will have the chance to explore each other's schools, enjoy a cup of tea together, and see firsthand what pupils have accomplished.

## **Top tips for others**

One of the strongest messages from this experience is that involving pupil voice isn't optional—it's essential. Listening to children helps ensure that Shared Education is relevant, engaging, and inclusive. Surveys and small group discussions are effective ways to gather pupil input, and their ideas often lead to creative and practical solutions.

Pupils shaping the project help spread the Shared Education message throughout the school. This year, they're even planning to present their work to the Board of Governors—a great example of how pupil voice can influence at every level.

### **Project details**

Type of Project

Primary

Academic Year

2025-26