

Education Matters in Bushmills – Charter and Rap launched

Children and young people from Bushmills showcased their talents in music, singing, horticulture, hair styling and beauty therapy, social entrepreneurship, history, martial arts and dance at the launch of the Bushmills Education Charter on Saturday 14 June 2014. The event was organised by the Seeds 21 Group, an Education Partnership in Bushmills. The event was supported by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland as part of the Bushmills Education Project.

Opening the event Leanne Abernethy from the Bushmills Residents & Environmental Forum (BREF), a lead partner in the Seeds 21 Group and initiator of the Bushmills Education Project praised the commitment of all those involved "The Charter shows that we all need to work together to ensure all our children and young people reach their full potential".

The Bushmills Education Charter has been developed over the past year children and young people across the local schools, churches, youth groups, community groups and wider neighbourhood. It sets out what children and young people say would help them to make the most of their education. Local young people have produced their own version of the Charter in a Rap with musical backing from Beyond the Skin. Called "Listen" this musical rap version can be downloaded at <http://www.youtube.com/user/BeyondSkinMedia>

Sarah Travers, from UTV, hosted the morning and praised the wonderful talents on display and support from local schools and organisations. A special award was presented to Sam and Anne McLaughlin, winner of the 2014 Young Person Friendly Trader. This award was introduced by Liz McIlveen, Acting Vice Principal at Dunluce School, under the title "It takes a community to raise and educate a child."

Anna Grindle, CYPSP Participation Officer praised the young people for their work in the production of the charter and the innovative way they have expressed their feelings through the Rap. Anna and Beyond Skin and the young people then gave a live rendition of the rap for the audience.

Mervyn Storey, Chair of the Education Committee attended the event and said “This Charter and the Young People’s Rap contains the key elements we need to be considering as we strive to improve educational outcomes. We all need to work together, schools, parents, local organisations and communities and most of all we need to do what these young people say in the rap version of the Charter – Listen”

Closing the event, Fiona Jinks, from Dalriada Rural Sure Start set out key ambitions of the Bushmills Education Project over the next year and congratulated everyone on the journey so far.

The work in Bushmills has produced a range of background materials, research and articles. These will be available at www.cypsp.org

BREF is a leading community group in Bushmills focusing on improving the quality of life and bringing the community together.

The CYPSP is a multi-agency partnership, led by the Health and Social Care Board that includes the leadership of key statutory agencies and community and voluntary organisations that have a responsibility for improving the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

For more information about BREF visit them on Facebook. For more information on the CYPSP visit www.cypsp.org

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