



SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

Project Case Study: Sharing from the Start Update

THEME:

Shared Education

FUNDING (ERDF + Match):

€4,256,007.31

MATCH FUNDERS:

The Department of Education and the Department of Education and Skills, Ireland

LEAD PARTNER:

Early Years

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Fermanagh Trust
National Childhood Network

PROJECT CONTACT:

audreyr@early-years.org

Start Date: 01/07/2016

End Date: 31/03/2022

 www.sharingfromthestart.org

 [@earlyyearsorg](https://twitter.com/earlyyearsorg)

The Sharing from the Start project, which involves early years settings throughout Northern Ireland and the Border Counties, is delivering a programme of Shared Education to children in the early years sector.

Since officially launching, the project has continued to bring positive attitudinal and behavioural change amongst children, parents, teachers and the wider community. Currently there are over 3000 children involved, which is set to increase as the project continues.

Cavan Pre-schools Making Community Connections

In early 2020, two playgroups in Ballyconnell, County Cavan, partnered together to engage children in circular based sessions. Clever Clogs and Krafty Kids experienced 'out of the classroom' visits to develop their learning environment.

Ballyconnell is significantly more diverse and socio-economically disadvantaged compared to the rest of the country.

Sharing From The Start is helping the community address difference, take away stigma and foster relationships among children, parents and staff.



"Sharing From The Start demonstrates that barriers only exist where you put barriers and it's great if you can be seen to remove barriers. Us working in collaboration is very visible in the community because we're out there going to the library, fire station and so on. It's wonderful to see that we can come forward with a project like this to build cross-community acceptance.

Probably the greatest benefit of the project is looking at a generation of children that are being brought up to accept all children, all forms of society and I think maybe we're helping to form a better generation."

Paula Donohoe, Leader at Clever Clogs



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"I think this programme is great! Small children don't care about who a person is or where they are from as long as they can play and have fun together they are happy and I think as parents we should embrace this completely and follow this on throughout our children's lives. I firmly believe that this generation of children have the ability to make a change in Northern Ireland and I feel that it's up to us as parents not to teach them the old prejudices that have held us back so long."

Parent feedback



In December 2019, Newtowncunningham Community Playgroup, Co. Donegal and Rainbox Child & Family Centre, Derry/Londonderry, worked together on the 'Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal', gathering almost 100 shoeboxes of toys and gifts.