



Phoenix IPS

Cookstown



Celebrating 10 years of Integrated Education in Cookstown.

The future is bright for Phoenix Integrated PS IEF Campaign Chair Baroness Blood joined the party as they launched their celebrations of 10 successful years of Integrated Education in Cookstown this year. Representatives from the main churches also joined the current and Founder Governors of the school to celebrate its success within the local community. Gertie Connolly, first Chairperson of the school, commented on her pride on the development of the school. It was a nostalgic day sharing special memories of the dedication and persistence of parents which led to Phoenix IPS opening but with a very clear focus on the future. The whole school community then came together for birthday cake and a balloon release.

Phoenix IPS rose from small beginnings in 2004 with 12 pupils. In 2014 the school welcomed 180 pupils for the new term. Situated on a prime site on the Fountain Road, Phoenix is looking forward to major expansion this year as they move into their next phase of development. The current Principal, Mrs Watson, has been in post for three years and has overseen the growing enrolment and expansion of the school site. She describes the next phase of development, "We are looking forward to major improvement on site this year with the addition of two new classrooms, office space, a special needs room, additional storage and much needed additional play space for the children."

This marks the next phase of development for the school, and the local community are understandably excited about the improvements. Chairman of the school's Board of Governors, Mr Marriott says, "The next phase of building work will see state of the art facilities at Phoenix IPS. These facilities will not only enhance the overall education of our pupils, but will also be a valuable resource for the local community."



PRESCHOOL PROVISION

In addition to improved facilities the school was successful in gaining approval for a Nursery class as part of their school provision. Mrs Watson explains, "We are delighted that the Education Minister, John O'Dowd, has approved a recent application to develop Nursery provision at Phoenix IPS. This ensures equality of opportunity for parents and facilitates the growth of integrated education in the Cookstown area."

The entire school community eagerly await the opening of the Nursery in September 2015 and those attending will gain confidence in a school setting, enabling a smooth transition into Year 1.

21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

The school continues to provide a high standard of education for pupils; offering a stimulating, varied curriculum in which all children are encouraged to succeed. At Phoenix the staff work hard to not only inspire the pupils, but to engage parents and volunteers in the life and work of the school.

The most important thing for the staff at Phoenix IPS is the children's happiness. Visitors to the school often comment on the relaxed, caring, happy atmosphere that prevails throughout the school. Great importance is also attached to academic achievement. The pupils at Phoenix IPS are confident and motivated. Great importance is placed upon the acquisition of skills and concepts across the year groups.

In order to prepare their pupils for the technological world in which they live, Phoenix IPS place great importance on the teaching and learning of ICT. Every classroom is equipped with an Interactive Whiteboard and pupils have access to iPads and laptops in their own classrooms. Teachers set homework using online forums providing pupils with the opportunity to ask questions and discuss activities with their peers. Resources are made available to any pupil who does not have access to the online activities. At Phoenix we aim for students to become both digitally literate and digitally adept. We look forward to developing pupil creativity and skill in this area with the introduction of Raspberry pi, games/app development and computer coding.

