

ST. ULTAN'S

.....
"Education is the pathway out of disadvantage. You can't learn if you are hungry. You can't learn if you are scared or tired. We're working to meet children's educational, social and emotional needs here at

St. Ultan's."

– John Scanlon,
Community Services Mgr. at St. Ultan's Campus
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The Ireland Funds are helping to provide comprehensive care for the children of Cherry Orchard





THE CHERRY ORCHARD COMMUNITY IN DUBLIN IS FILLED WITH HARDWORKING PEOPLE AND PARENTS.

It is also a community that faces many challenges. St. Ultan's lives in the shadow of Wheatfield prison. It is not uncommon for some children to proudly show photos of themselves dressed in first communion garb while standing in front of the prison gates where fathers, uncles and brothers are serving sentences. Drugs, violence, poverty and unemployment affect the homes of many of the young children who attend St. Ultan's. Some parents have been early-leave takers from their own education and have traditionally viewed school with suspicion arising from negative past experiences.

As a result, the school has taken on those challenges head-on. In part by focusing on building relationships with parents and caregivers, St. Ultan's is finding success. With help from The Ireland Funds, St. Ultan's is delivering many unique offerings to its students including integrated prevention and early intervention services in partnership with

parents, families, the community and service providers.

Two distinct teams based around Caregiving and Education work closely together to ensure that children have their needs met. In addition to the core lessons around reading, writing and maths, hot balanced meals are served, healthcare is provided and life-skills are taught as part of the curriculum. Every child receives musical training and arts lessons, mindfulness and meditation skills are imparted to combat stress and cooking and hygiene lessons are also provided. Parents come to the school for regular drop-in mornings to share breakfast and connect with teachers and one another. It has served as a key community-building activity and provides a chance for families to interact informally with the school reinforcing positive relationships.

St. Ultan's offers a single-campus approach serving children and families from infants through to 18 years old, a unique model in Ireland. Transition between primary and secondary school has been identified as a particularly stressful and vulnerable time for children.

With funding from The Ireland Funds, transitional programs that mentor and tutor children through this period have shown great success and impact.

"Investment in navigating transition was needed and we couldn't have run this program, or the afterschool homework program, without the help of The Ireland Funds," explains John Scanlon, Community Services Manager at St. Ultan's. "We've found that if kids can stay and pass the first and second year, they've cleared the biggest hurdles and the momentum is there to keep going towards college. The Ireland Funds are helping these children maximize their future potential."

St. Ultan's celebrates its 10 year anniversary in 2016. In that short time the campus has grown from 56 students to well over 500. But the growth is measured in far more than numbers and graduates. As Sue McLoughlin, a local member of the Cherry Orchard community says, "St. Ultan's has changed the community. It has changed my family. The vision this place has for children is real. It has touched every part of our lives."



**HOT MEALS
THROUGHOUT THE DAY
AND INTO THE EVENING
FOR CHILDREN IN NEED**



**94% SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE**

What makes st. ultan's unique?



**ONSITE HEALTHCARE AND
CLOTHING PROVIDED FOR
CHILDREN IN NEED**



**EVERY CHILD ASSIGNED
A KEY ADVOCATE ALSO
WORKING CLOSELY WITH
PARENTS OR GUARDIANS**



**THE ONLY HOLISTIC
CARE MODEL OF ITS
KIND IN IRELAND**



**FRIDAY BREAKFASTS
FOR PARENTS FROM
THE COMMUNITY**



**INTENSE AFTER-SCHOOL
TUTORIAL PROGRAMS AND
TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS**



**RECREATIONAL SUMMER
OFFERINGS TO CREATE A
YEAR-LONG MOMENTUM
OF LEARNING**