

# *Introducing the* **Ulster-Scots Flagship School Programme** >>>



**Ulster-Scots Agency**  
Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

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## 1 What is the Ulster-Scots Flagship School programme?

- 1.1** The Ulster-Scots Flagship School [USFS] programme is a cultural and educational programme, devised and managed by the Ulster-Scots Agency in partnership with primary schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- 1.2** The purpose of the programme is to support primary schools in the development of high quality educational and curriculum opportunities for children and young people to learn more about Ulster-Scots traditions and culture. The USFS programme has been designed with a number of broad objectives that will support schools who wish to embed Ulster-Scots education into their delivery of the curriculum and reflect Ulster-Scots in the ethos of their school.

The main objectives of the programme are to:

- (i)** Enhance access to cultural learning by generating opportunities for children to learn about Ulster-Scots culture in the formal and informal school system.
- (ii)** Provide opportunities and support for teachers who wish to develop Ulster-Scots teaching and learning strategies for their schools.
- (iii)** Create a forum for the recognition of good practice in the teaching and learning of Ulster-Scots culture and tradition.
- (iv)** Encourage children to participate and to enjoy learning about Ulster-Scots and recognise how Ulster-Scots has shaped them, their community and society more generally.

## What are the benefits of joining the USFS programme?

- 1.3 Joining the USFS programme is completely free and is open to all primary schools who wish to reflect Ulster-Scots in the curriculum and life of their school.
- 1.4 By registering to participate on the Ulster-Scots Flagship Schools programme, schools commit themselves to an eighteen month programme of work which on completion will lead to the award of Ulster-Scots Flagship Schools status.
- 1.5 Participating schools will be supported at every stage of the process by staff from the Ulster-Scots Agency.



The opportunity for schools to develop their own Ulster-Scots teaching and learning material.

Access to additional school resources for use in your school.

Enhanced curriculum opportunities, during, and after the school day.

Links to other participating schools in the Agency's USFS programme.

Links to Ulster-Scots groups and other organisations.

Recognition and publicity, in particular, the opportunity to showcase the school at Ulster-Scots Agency and other events.

Continuous professional development opportunities for teachers who wish to develop their skills and knowledge base in Ulster-Scots culture.

**When your school can demonstrate eighteen continuous months commitment to Ulster-Scots in school life, you will be eligible to apply for Ulster-Scots Flagship School status and receive the Ulster-Scots Flagship School award.**

## 2 How can schools get involved in the USFS programme?

- 2.1** Initially, schools will express their interest in the scheme through the Agency's website. A facilitation meeting between the Agency and school representatives will follow soon after. The purpose of the meeting is twofold:
- (i)** To fully outline the Flagship Schools programme and to explain the process which the school is embarking upon and complete a simple registration process.
  - (ii)** To jointly identify ways in which Ulster-Scots culture and traditions can be introduced in the delivery of both the formal and informal school curriculum.
- 2.2** Depending on the level of commitment from each school resource support [physical, human or financial] to develop or enhance these programmes will be provided by the Ulster-Scots Agency.
- 2.3** As part of the programme there are a variety of Ulster-Scots themes with associated learning outcomes that must form part of the activities that children must participate in.

## Themes

**Music** Learning about Ulster-Scots traditional music offers children opportunities to explore the historical origin of both the instruments and of the music itself. The Agency can provide support for children to participate in its peripatetic music programme where a range of traditional instruments and tunes fit neatly into areas for learning within the curriculum.

**Dance** Dance encourages physical development as well as opportunities to explore the rich cultural links between Scotland and Ulster. Scottish Country dancing and Highland dance can engage children at both key stage one and two. Support through the peripatetic tutor programme is also available in dance.

**Language and Literature** Opportunities to develop programmes in and about Ulster-Scots language and literature are supported from the Agency's website material as well as a range of workshops provided with partner agencies that may include the University of Ulster and Ulster-Scots language groups.

**History and Geography** Perhaps the most easily assimilated area for use in Ulster-Scots project work in the primary school, that can include projects about the Plantation of Ulster and the impact of the Ulster-Scots in the USA. This theme is supported through the use of living history workshops provided by the Agency.

**Arts and Science** The contribution of Ulster-Scots to the arts and science through the years is impressive and projects about innovators such as Harry Ferguson, John Boyd Dunlop and Thomas Andrews can combine neatly with subject areas of learning in the World Around Us.

### 3 Working towards Flagship School status

**Drama** The Agency has successfully supported schools in the creative arts, not least those associated with drama. Since 2006, Agency productions have included the 'Fair Faa Ye' tour and the more recent 'Pat and Plain' drama that was recently awarded a UK wide cultural drama award. Agency support to generate drama activity is delivered through skilled facilitators who can support the on-going work in your school.

**Citizenship** Developing an understanding about the World Around Us is a theme that includes citizenship. Workshop support for citizenship projects are also available from the Agency.

All the above areas should be supported with clearly identified learning outcomes that should also include aspects of cross curricular skills.

**3.1** Once you have successfully registered, you can begin the process of working toward where you can apply for Ulster-Scots Flagship Schools status. This will require co-ordinated action throughout the school community, including as a minimum, the steps outlined below:

- (i) Establish a role for a nominated teacher, with the Principal's support, as co-ordinator of the school's Ulster-Scots programme. The teacher will work with the Principal, other staff and, where necessary the Board of Governors in establishing Ulster-Scots educational targets and activity for the school year. These targets should also be identified in the school's development plan.
- (ii) With the support of the principal and other colleagues, the co-ordinator will create, implement, monitor, evaluate and review an **Action Plan** to develop Ulster-Scots activity in the school. This should be recorded and approved by Senior Management in the school. Agency support will be available as a part of this process. Identifying a Mission Statement for Ulster-Scots in your school will be an important part of the Action Plan.
- (iii) Identify links for this activity to your school's curriculum. This is a vital part of the schools programme.
- (iv) Project activity - The school should be able to demonstrate completion of project work on at least four of the USFS curriculum areas.



## 4 Applying for Flagship School Status

- 3.2** Each participating school will be provided with a Teachers Pack that will guide the school towards successfully securing Ulster-Scots Flagship Schools status.
- 3.3** Participating schools will be required to meet briefly with an Agency representative once every six months in order to discuss progress towards the fulfilment of the award criteria.



Before applying for Ulster-Scots Flagship School status, your school should be able to positively answer the following questions:

### Action Plan

- 1 Has the co-ordinator completed a detailed Action Plan?  
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- 2 Does the plan contain timescales?  
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- 3 Does the plan indicate who is responsible for the programme?  
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- 4 Has the Ulster- Scots activity been monitored, evaluated and evidenced?  
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- 5 Have four cross curricular skills been identified and used in the project?  
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### Linking to the Curriculum

- 6 Has Ulster-Scots learning been introduced in at least four curriculum areas over an eighteen month period?  
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- 7 Has Ulster-Scots been incorporated into curriculum planning?  
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## 5 How is your application for Flagship Schools status assessed?

### Involving the Whole School and Wider Community

8 Does the school have a prominent, designated notice board, detailing Ulster-Scots schools activities?

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9 Does the school retain an Ulster-Scots area on its website?

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10 Does the co-ordinator regularly communicate Ulster-Scots activities to the whole school and wider community (eg, via assemblies, newsletters and websites)?

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11 Has the school shared good practice with an emphasis on quality with other schools who wish to join the USFS Schools programme?

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### Project Work

12 Has the school addressed four of the Ulster-Scots areas consistently over the last eighteen months?

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5.1 When you are ready, you will have to complete an application form for Flagship Schools status, which will ask you to explain what your school has done, citing appropriate examples and evidence.

When this is received, an assessment of the documentation will be carried out by Agency staff, who will also carry out a visit to the school. The award can be made almost immediately after satisfactory completion of this process.



## 6 How long does your status as a Flagship School last?

- 6.1** Ulster-Scots Flagship School status will be valid for 24 months from the time of the initial award. As this programme is intended to engender long-term commitment to Ulster-Scots, schools will be required to submit a fresh application in order to maintain their flagship status after that time.

In order to secure subsequent awards of Flagship status, the school will be required to demonstrate innovation and development in their delivery of Ulster-Scots in school. Repeating activities from the previous period will not on its own be sufficient to secure renewal.

At the time of assessment, Agency staff will work with the school to identify suitable areas for progression which could be included in future plans.



## 7 Ulster-Scots Flagship Quality Award

- 7.1** Schools that successfully retain their Ulster-Scots Flagship School status will receive an Ulster-Scots Flagship Quality Award.





For further information, please contact:



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