

# SCHOOLS' PLATFORM



## Shaping the future at Ballysally PS

**A MAJOR initiative presented during the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland visited Coleraine recently.**

A special launch event for 'Primary Futures' was held at Ballysally Primary School on Thursday, March 21 as children got to meet an amazing range of people from the world of business, sport and the arts.

In preparation, the children had been drawing pictures of what they aspire to be when they grow up and these were unveiled at the event. The exercise had already been undertaken in 20 countries ranging from Australia to Zambia before visiting Ballysally.

A range of volunteers from across Northern Ireland travelled especially to the school to see what the children had drawn and also to talk about their own careers. Those taking part included: Jenny Bristow (TV chef /Food Ambassador), a male Nurse, a female Fire Fighter; an Ice-Cream Maker, a female civil engineer, a Surfer, and female engineers from Northern Ireland Electricity Networks, as well as the Coleraine Football Manager Rodney McAree, who brought along the Irish Cup.

The volunteers talked to children, parents and teachers, answering questions about their job and career route. The aim was to broaden children's horizons, raise their

aspirations and challenge the social and gender stereotypes children often have about people and their jobs. The event aims to kick off a national conversation about what more can be done across Northern Ireland to inspire children.

Special guests from England also travelled over for the event - Paul Whiteman, General Secretary of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) which represents 98% of school leaders, Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE, international academic and careers expert who grew up in the 1970s in Coleraine and Nick Chambers, CEO of the charity Education and Employers.

Geoff Dunn MBE, Principal commented, "As a school we continually are seeking to be innovative, creative and inspiring to the children and families in our care.

"The future is very much unknown. research states that 60% of jobs for new our Primary 1 children have not even been thought of! I believe wholeheartedly that children need the necessary skills to be equipped and to be ready for the jobs of the future.

"However, I also believe that children need to be exposed to the world of work, as new technology gathers pace. To this end, the Primary Futures initiative and concept has greatly enabled us to connect education and the world of work. We know that the seeds of hope have been planted today," he said.



Local business owners take questions from pupils, who were trying to guess their job, through a series of YES/NO answers to questions, in Ballysally Primary School recently, during the Primary Futures event. WK13-017CR



Ballysally Primary School pupils ask questions recently during the Primary Futures event. WK13-019CR



Students who had questions for the panel in Ballysally Primary School recently for the Primary Futures event. WK13-022CR



Principal Geoff Dunne chats with Deirdre Hughes in Ballysally Primary School recently for the Primary Futures event. WK13-018CR



Local Chef Jenny Bristow in Ballysally Primary School recently for the Primary Futures event. WK13-021CR



Ballysally Primary School recently for the Primary Futures event. WK13-023CR



Coleraine FC Manager, Rodney McAree pictured at Ballysally Primary School recently for the Primary Futures event. WK13-024CR