



YOUTH BRIDGE 2019

27 February 2019

Introduction

This paper provides an overview of the various elements in the NIBU Youth Bridge Project.

Primary Schools

Pupils involved are 10/11 year olds in their final year before moving into post primary education.

Eden Primary school

This school has a single P7 class of 32 pupils. They are taught during class time in 2 groups of 16 each.

Their dedicated NIBU volunteer tutors are Norma Irwin and Pat Braden. The year teacher, Alistair Purdy, is included in the classes. He sees the benefits of what his children are learning and wants to acquire sufficient knowledge to be involved in future years.

Greenisland Primary School

There are 2 P7 classes at this school totalling 64 pupils. Again they are sub divided into 4 groups of 16 and are taught in class time on Wednesday and Thursday. The NIBU team is Anne Hassen, Roberta Madill, Jamie Johnston, John Flynn, Ronnie Cromie, Margaret Bleakley, Kate Cassidy and Diane Greenwood.

Teaching in these schools started in January and has reached the stage where pupils are being taught to use bidding boxes and develop their card playing skills. The children and their teachers are extremely enthusiastic and teachers encourage them to practice playing bridge at other times of the week. The Vice Principal at Greenisland advised us that she had observed improvements in interpersonal skills and mental arithmetic of the children during the first 2 months.

St Marys Primary School

This school starts learning bridge this month. There are 2 P7 classes of 32 pupils each. We have changed the timing format and the school has allocated an afternoon of class time for teaching the 4 groups of 16 each. This allows us to reduce travelling time and the number of volunteer tutors is only 4 in total. Dan Mulholland, Hilary Adair, Rene Rodrigues and Isabel Cowan are involved at this school. The Vice Principal is also assisting as she is already learning to play bridge.

Strandtown Primary School.

The format at this school involves 18 pupils playing at an after school club. Teaching started in January and improvements have already been noted in the children's ability. Tutors are Suzi Jeffries, Ken Hammond, Liz Thomas and Marie Edwards.

We are in discussion with other Primary and Post Primary schools for the incoming year. We try to work on a cell basis with Primary School pupils working into Post Primary providing the latter with a regular source of children with a basic knowledge of playing bridge

Post Primary Schools

The 3 active Schools are Carrick Grammar, Bangor Grammar and Belfast Royal Academy (BRA). The teachers involved, John, Andrew and Stuart, are playing a programme of regular, inter-school leagues and matches, in which all three schools take part. The schools are playing in the All Ireland Schools competition on the weekend of 1-3 March 2019. Parents contribute to the cost of the weekend and NIBU have also donated £500.



These are pupils from Carrick Grammar School who are playing at the weekend.

Inter Schools Programme

School Bridge Competitions 2018/19	
Ulster Schools League 1 (Bangor) – Wed 12 th Sept – 2.15 -5.15	
Ulster Schools pairs (BRA) – Wed 17 th Oct - 2.15pm – 5.15pm	
Irish Schools pairs (Malahide) – TBC	
Ulster Schools League 2 (CGS) – Wed (TBC) Nov – 2.15 -5.15	
Ulster Schools teams (BRA) – Wed 30 th Jan - 2.15pm – 5.15pm	
Ulster Schools League 3 (CGS) – Wed (TBC) Feb – 2.15 -5.15	
Irish Schools teams (Galway) – Fri 1 st - Sun 3 rd March	

NIBU tutors help in the schools and Norman Lacey teaches 2 lunchtimes each week in Carrick.

Some of the Primary School Pupils currently learning to play will be moving to these Grammar Schools. This will promote interest in Bridge in the schools and having children with prior knowledge will provide a sound platform to improve the level of skill in the schools.

Pupils from BRA played in the recent Peggy Bayer Competition and the Junior Camrose team are past pupils from BRA and Carrick GS.

No Fear Bridge

Free membership of NFB has been arranged for teachers who teach school children. Norma has looked at the site and deems it provides suitable material at this level of teaching. John Reid (CGS) has used it and is liaising with the other teachers as he feels it will provide very worthwhile support.

Junior Internationals

Diane, Sandie and Pat are all working with the PB and JC teams, and liaising with CBAI. These ladies put in a lot of time and effort. Diane is involved with some online coaching for these teams. Work is also proceeding between NIBU and CBAI for coaching using BBO. Details of coaching planned would be of interest and possibly help from some other Senior/Expert players to assist her may help these young people. Some feedback highlights that more practice would enhance communication at the table for the players. It is difficult for Diane to ensure that players will turn up at scheduled practice and this point may need to be addressed.

Information on how to use BBO with groups could be used with students in other sectors.

Bridge Clubs in University and Teacher Training Colleges

Gavin Irvine from the NI JC team is teaching a group of PHD students in Queens University. NIBU are in discussion with the QUB Students Union to set up a proper Bridge Club. NIBU tutors have been identified and they also offered bridge equipment.

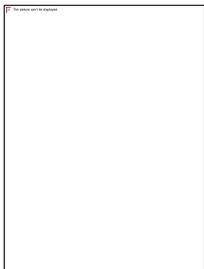
We have a meeting in Monday 4 March with St Mary's Teacher Training College. We aim to set up a bridge club which will give future teachers knowledge of bridge which adds to their skills and means they can help with bridge when they start teaching.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Bridge is one of the skills in D of E Scheme. Information on Bridge has been sent to Joanna Clarke (EANI Youth Development Officer). She has passed it on to the director of Operations for D of E and arranged for it to be displayed on their Facebook page. This may provide an entry for Bridge with schools who are active in the D of E Scheme. CGS teach bridge to their DoE students.

Teaching Equipment

We aim to teach bridge in a realistic environment where young people familiarise themselves with what they would see in a club environment.



This shows how equipment is used.

Teaching Equipment per 16 student group

Equipment	Qty	Cost £	Total £
Stacking Boards ¼ set 8 boards	1	16	16
Playing cards	10	1	10
Large Playing Cards	1	5	5
Set of Bidding Boxes (4)	4	24	96
Card Holders	16	1	16
Poly Wallets	16	1	16
Misc Items	1	10	10
			169

Table cloths are not included due to cost but we are looking at less expensive options. Bridge clubs have kindly donated surplus Stacking boards and Bidding boxes. We also make wooden card holders. We have now used all equipment which has been donated and in future we will need to buy these items. Some of our tutors have purchased items to help them teach their pupils. They also print handouts and we give them paper and an allowance towards ink cost.

We have 11 groups of 16 PS children learning bridge. We know this system works. We aim double the number of groups by September 2019 and involve more post primary schools.

Norma Irwin

Norman Lacey

E: youthbridge.ni@mail.com