

POETRY IRELAND

WRITERS  
*in* SCHOOLS

“The experience of being taught by a published author is one that will stick with me for the rest of my life.”

YOUNG PARTICIPANT



# Introduction

Writers in Schools is one of the longest running national arts-in-education programmes in Ireland. Since its establishment in 1977, it has sparked more than 500,000 creative encounters between children and writers in the classroom.

Writers in Schools facilitates and part-funds single visits by writers and storytellers to primary, secondary and special schools in every county in Ireland, north and south. The programme also reaches marginalised young people outside of the education system.

The writers engaged in the scheme are of the highest calibre and include many well-known published writers like Oisín McGann, Marita Conlan-McKenna, Dermot Bolger, Colm Keegan and Tony Curtis, to name but a few.

Through its partner programme, Writers in Residence, Writers in Schools provides opportunities for students to work with experienced writers over an extended period of time.

Writers in Schools is delivered by Poetry Ireland and funded by The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon and Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

**“The Writers in Schools scheme provides children with an invaluable live experience of literature in their own classrooms. Every child in every school in the country should have such an experience at least once a year throughout their education. This is an invaluable and unforgettable experience.”**

**SIOBHÁN PARKINSON**

Writer & Laureate na nÓg from 2010–12





## Why does it matter?

Children are at the heart of what we do, and Writers in Schools plays an important role in improving literacy, encouraging reading and developing the self-confidence and resilience of children through a sense of achievement and success.

The experience of working with a writer is both enjoyable and memorable, and the creative energy triggered by such encounters can lead to an appreciation of the emotional and intellectual power of language that can last a lifetime.

Residencies facilitated through the scheme can introduce innovative ways to raise awareness around social issues, tolerance and sectarianism. Some of these residencies are delivered in partnership with development agencies like Concern, Trócaire and Irish Aid's WorldWise Global Schools.

“Poetry Ireland has been partnering with our school for over 12 years. In that time our students have developed sophisticated oral literacy skills, teachers have been professionally upskilled, and academic scores have improved in English and Citizenship Education. Our students have become more confident, articulate citizens.”

**MÁIRE O’HIGGINS,**  
Assistant Principal and Partnerships Coordinator  
Larkin Community College CDETB



## A high-quality experience

Writers in Schools offers a broad range of language artists to choose from, both in English and Irish: poets, novelists, children's writers, dramatists, storytellers and screenwriters.

All artists joining the scheme must meet artistic criteria and undergo a thorough training and mentoring programme, guaranteeing a unique high quality experience for every school.

Our writers and storytellers are some of the best-loved and well-known authors in the country.

**“The scheme empowers in a vital, unique and creative way every student lucky enough to experience it. It allows students a glimpse into and a practical understanding of the rich world of the creative imagination. For many, and I’ve seen this first hand, it is a life-changing event.”**

**NIALL MACMONAGLE** Poetry editor, critic & teacher



## Looking after our writers: today and for tomorrow

Writers in Schools believes in the importance of looking after our current generation of writers, while nurturing the writers of tomorrow.

Each year Writers in Schools creates employment opportunities for at least 65 writers, and the programme also provides the best rate of pay for language artists working in schools in the country.



# Why support?

Writers in Schools can currently only accommodate one in every two requests for single school visits. We simply do not have enough funding to meet the high demand from schools.

We need to fill this funding gap to ensure that as many children as possible benefit from the Writers in Schools experience.

To find out more about the important role your support can play, contact:

Anna Bonner,  
Writers in Schools Development Officer  
+353 1 678 9022  
[writersinschools@poetryireland.ie](mailto:writersinschools@poetryireland.ie)  
[www.poetryireland.ie/education](http://www.poetryireland.ie/education)



## WRITERS IN SCHOOLS....

Has given more than

**500,000**

children the chance to work closely with writers in the classroom

Reaches around

**23,000**

children and young people north and south annually

Works with more than

**150 schools every year**

Creates employment for more than

**65 writers annually**

Can only facilitate

**1 in every 2**

requests for single school visits, as it simply does not have enough funding to meet demand

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a grey school sweater over a red collared shirt, is raising her right hand and looking upwards with an open mouth, as if participating in a lesson. The background is blurred, showing other children in a classroom setting. A semi-transparent teal overlay covers the right side of the image, containing white text.

“ It was  
the best day  
of my life ”

YOUNG PARTICIPANT

RTS  
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