

# St. Ultan's Campus

A Beacon of Hope for Children and Families

*PROSPECTUS*

May 2019

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# 1. Purpose of this document

The purpose of this Prospectus is to tell the story of St Ultan's and how it serves and supports the community of Cherry Orchard.

St Ultan's has grown, through learning and experience, and now lives the concept of integration, and embeds it into practice. This learning has occurred at all levels from the Board through to staff and the community. The Campus is a showcase and living example of the integration model.

This Prospectus shares the story of the evolution of St Ultan's Campus and the way it serves the community of Cherry Orchard. The Profile of Cherry Orchard is set out in Section 2 giving insight into the specific demographic and deprivation characteristics of the area which make the integrated model so vital to the community.

Section 3 describes the unique and valuable features of the Campus. Section 4 describes what the Campus offers in terms of all that matters to families and the true development of the child within his or her community.

In Section 5 the integrated model of care and education is explained including the ways that the model responds sensitively and seamlessly to the needs of children and families in Cherry Orchard. This celebrates the model as an appropriate and holistic early intervention that can prevent the stark and enduring negative impact of disadvantage on the lives of children.

This significant contribution that the Campus makes is described in Section 6 bringing attention to the preventative power of the work and demonstrating how the Campus makes a positive difference to children and families across all the human developmental domains, including education, nutritional, health, well-being, relationships and social.

Finally, Section 7 highlights the policy context and the ways in which St Ultan's Campus aligns with current whole of government approach to policy and the prevailing policy themes of early intervention, integration and collaboration. In essence the Campus is a living example of integration in action.

## 2. Profile of Cherry Orchard

Cherry Orchard which is located adjacent to Ballyfermot had a population of just under 8,000 in 2016 (projected to increase significantly, with current housing developments planned). Over a third of families in Cherry Orchard have pre-adolescents or adolescents which is higher than the average of 20% for Dublin City as a whole.

The lone parent ratio for Cherry Orchard is over 45%, nearly double that for Dublin City. In 2016, over a third of households in Cherry Orchard were living in Local Authority rented accommodation, compared with 12% for Dublin City.

Cherry Orchard suffers from poor educational attainment. Just under a quarter of those living in the area had primary education only (compared with 11% for Dublin City). The proportion of people in Dublin City with third level education was 45%, but in Cherry Orchard, the equivalent figure was just 19%.



The Cherry Orchard Action Plan (2017) stated that the area “continues to experience severe social, economic and physical problems, which require an inter-agency response to address these ingrained issues.”

A closer examination of the data reveals an even starker picture: 74% of the population of Cherry Orchard experience even more significant disadvantage, with over 50% living in Local Authority housing, 30% having attained only primary education and less than 9% having attended third level education.

Cherry Orchard is one of the most economically disadvantaged areas in Ireland. It has an unemployment rate which significantly exceeds the average for Dublin City. One in four of the population of Cherry Orchard aged over 15 years was unemployed in 2016, compared to just over one in ten in Dublin City. In some areas within Cherry Orchard, the male unemployment rate hits almost 30%.

The high level of unemployment in Cherry Orchard is an ongoing problem. Persistent and inter-generational long-term unemployment is a significant issue, and there is a trend for young people to move from education to unemployment without ever experiencing working and earning or participating in training or completing further education.

Children in Cherry Orchard face significant disadvantages: they live in one of the most economically-deprived parts of Dublin where unemployment is wide-spread. They are typically from one-parent households whose parents are unlikely, compared with other areas of the city, to have completed second level education. They live in an area where substance abuse is the norm and where anti-social behaviour and crime are everyday occurrences.

Facilities-wise, Cherry Orchard lacks many basic features of a thriving community, such as a shopping centre or community space. In actuality and metaphorically, the most significant local landmark is a prison.

The children in Cherry Orchard deserve a better start in life. St Ultan's is their beacon of hope in terms of opportunity to participate in education, play and cultural activity and to receive the care and attention that will enable them to reach their full potential.

### 3. What is St Ultan's

St Ultan's is an integrated Campus providing a full suite of services and supports for children and families on one site in Cherry Orchard. The services and supports include nursery, childcare, early education, primary education, social care and therapies and youth facilities all in one Campus. The Campus is unique in that it is one location and creates a safe and seamless experience for children and families as they transition through the stages of early childhood care, education, care and support.

The Campus is where the whole child (and his/her family context) is valued and where they can experience support and care in subtle and yet empowering ways.

The Campus supports children from as young as 3 months to 18 years and beyond, and we also provide supports to their parents, guardians and grandparents.

The emphasis is on education as a route out of disadvantage and yet in a shared setting — St Ultan's is unique in that it is more than just a school and a care setting. It is a Campus and both a tangible and intangible presence in the community.



The governance of St Ultan's is notable in that it has journeyed through significant learning and development over the last 12 years. Although St Ultan's has two boards, one for the primary school and one for the care side, they share a common chairperson, and they hold a joint meeting every quarter. St. Ultan's also has a service and administrative function which supports both legal entities. The following are commendable features of St Ultan's governance structures and processes:

- Strong Boards (with range of skills and experience and commitment to the Model)
- Collaborative and communicative campus management structure
- Three Campus Managers working together with complementary skill sets
- Hard working and enthusiastic staff who have bought into the St Ultan's approach
- Openness to evaluations and model enhancement
- Open to reflective practice and learning as an organisation
- Good linkages with local, regional and national stakeholders
- Long-term funding arrangements with government bodies are underpinned by Service Level Agreements

# 4. What St Ultan's offers

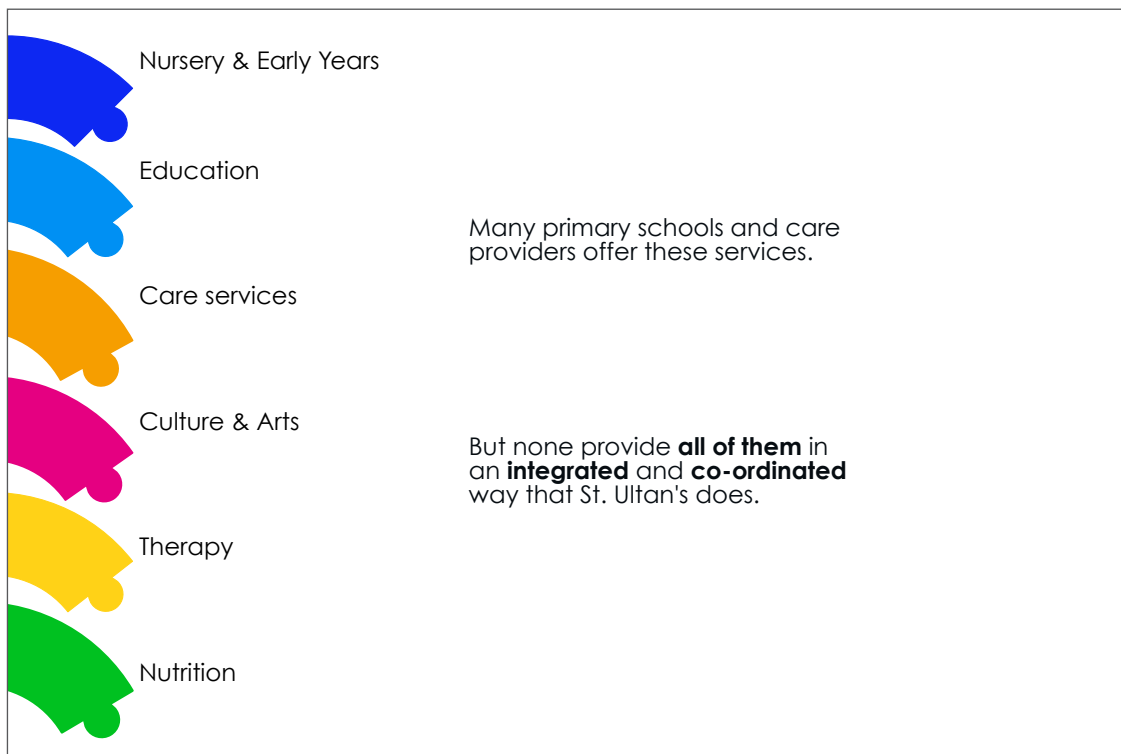
## 4.1 Introduction

St Ultan's offers all things that matter to families and the true development of the child, within his/her family and the greater community.

St Ultan's offers the full suite of services and supports on one campus which means that the needs of children and families are met in a seamless, proactive and inclusive way. It is a simple model of integrated education and care which allows for early identification of children at risk. The St Ultan's model enables early intervention and prevention of further disadvantage. It also minimises the chance of children missing out on vital supports, services and interventions. The power to break the cycle of unemployment, crime and addiction is significant.

Within the Campus there is a team of teachers, special needs assistants, early years and care practitioners and community service staff who work closely with each other and with other health and social care professionals to provide seamless education, care and support for children and families in Cherry Orchard.

### Services provided by St. Ultan's



The early years and care service identify and prioritise the children and young people most in need, and work with the children and other professionals where relevant, supporting them on their educational and life journey, helping them to create the best opportunities for themselves and their families.

## **4.2 St Ultan's Strategic Plan 2019-2022**

### **Aim 1: The Child**

To provide an integrated pre-school, Primary School and Care service for children of Cherry Orchard that will meet their emotional, physical and spiritual needs within their families and community.

### **Aim 2: Parent & Community Partnership**

To maintain and build working partnership with parents, care-givers and families, the community and other community, voluntary and statutory service providers in the local area.

### **Aim 3: Model of Practice**

To pioneer and develop an Integrated Model of Care and Education in order to influence the Irish and European Education and Social Services.

### **Aim 4: Organisation Governance Capacity & Sustainability**

To build and sustain the resources and capacity of St. Ultan's, as a learning and reflective organisation to achieve its Mission

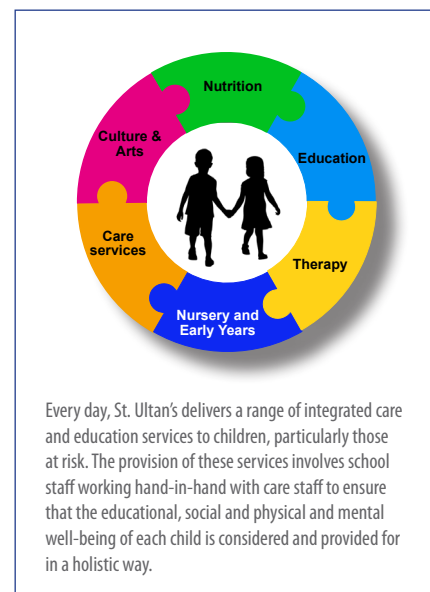


## 5. The St Ultan's Model of Integrated Care and Education (ICE)

The St Ultan's Model is integrated and seamless and is designed to anticipate and attend to the needs of children and families in a way that is simple, inclusive and responsive. The following features ensure that St Ultan's is a model of good practice to address disadvantage early on in a child's life.

The Integrated Care and Education Model (ICE) is a way of being, it is an approach to supporting the whole child and family. The following distinctive features characterise the St. Ultan's approach:

- **Integrated:** this means that the early childhood education and care is offered alongside primary education, family supports and therapeutic services. The two Boards of Management share responsibilities for governance across the entire Campus. There is strong and purposeful co-operation between Early Education practitioners and Primary School teachers, creating a smoother and more school-ready transition for children from early years to primary school.
- **Open:** this means that the Campus is open spatially and energetically to the entire community, using the premises in a way that the Programme for Government urges.
- **Holistic:** this means that the whole child and family is considered and provided for within the model of service. The needs of the individual child are identified, assessed and responded to; these include their physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, educational, social and economic development. The child is the microcosm of the greater Cherry Orchard community and beyond.
- **Developmental:** this means that attention is on the development of the whole child and his/her family and the wider community.
- **Wrap around:** this means that the child and his/her family experience wrap around care across all domains and on one safe site.
- **Personalised:** this means that the development of each child is anticipated and receives attention through a personalised ICE Plan.
- **Safe:** this means that the Campus space is safe and welcoming to all children and families, it is caring and stable for those who may experience difficulties coming into a school or care environment.
- **Therapeutic:** this means that St. Ultan's provides therapeutic supports to all children including those experiencing ASD, e.g. speech and language therapy, play therapy and counselling. Therapies are also offered to parents and guardians.
- **Nourishing:** this means that children receive at least one nutritious meal each day on Campus



prepared and delivered from our kitchen, efficiently and safely.

- **Family oriented:** this means that there is provision of supports to parents/guardians and family members, including life-long learning and sign-posting to other relevant services within the community.
- **Preventative:** this means that all our work on Campus is immediate and responsive to the needs of children and families. It is St. Ultan's early intervention which has the power to break the cycle of disadvantage and to prevent further generational disadvantage that is likely to occur in the absence of its services and supports. An investment now in St. Ultan's will help to reduce the long-term cost of chronic and enduring unemployment, addiction, anti-social behaviour and juvenile and adult crime.
- **Community focused:** this means that all members of the community are welcome on Campus and it provides local employment opportunities and a sense of belonging and support for local people.

## 6. Difference made by St Ultan's

What difference does the St Ultan's Campus make to the lives of children and families in Cherry Orchard?

The presence of the Campus in Cherry Orchard is a symbol of hope and positive activity within the community. St Ultan's makes a positive difference across the full range of human development domains. Its preventative power is enormous and not easily measurable with the metrics currently available and in vogue.

Educational	Developmental through experience and early intervention	Health and well-being
Nutritional	Sense of Belonging	Positive experience of support and encouragement to families
Economic	Arts, cultural, musical and creative exposure and experience	Healing and sign-posting to counselling and therapies
Social	Engaged and involved citizens	Social and other cultural integration

The Campus experience of children, young people and their families makes a positive difference in their lives in the following ways:

- People feel valued and listened to at all stages of the lifecycle, from infant child through to grandparent.
- Enhanced opportunity to experience education in a positive developmental way, including second change for parents, grandparents and guardians
- Increased educational attainment (see 2016 figures for the area in Cherry Orchard Action Plan 2017)
- Improved nutrition
- Enhanced sense of belonging and feeling supported and valued on Campus and within the Community
- Improved school attendance
- Increased school readiness
- Easier transition from early years to primary school, and from primary to post-primary
- Improved relationships within families
- Improved outcomes for children and young people across educational, social, health, psychological, emotional and economic domains
- Improved employment locally

- Improved school completion rates to leaving certificate (where do pupils go, e.g. St Dominic's, St John's de la Salle, Kylemore College, Caritas College, etc.).
- Improved progression to third level, apprenticeship, further education, training and employment.
- Participation in continuous lifelong learning for all members of the community using the Campus as the location and/or starting point.

**Learning** — The St Ultan's experience has informed the Limerick regeneration model that is presently being developed and can provide similar benefits to other disadvantaged areas and to other organisations that wish to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach. It can also be a model for a new updated action plan for educational inclusion, set out in the programme for government.

### Values

The following core values underpin the work at St Ultan's:

- Adopting a whole-child perspective;
- The care, protection and education of children are of primary concern;
- Importance of multi-disciplinary care and education;
- Respectful and mutually supportive relationships between staff;
- Engaging in partnership with others;
- Continued initiative and professional development;
- Openness and diversity.

# 7. Policy context

## 7.1 Key Government policy priorities

St Ultan’s respond to and serve a wide range of Government policy priorities reflecting the nature of the integrated model and response to the reality of the needs of children and families in Cherry Orchard. St Ultan’s Campus fits with the whole of Government approach whereby departments and agencies work together with a view of achieving the best outcomes for children and families.

Government policy priorities
A Programme for Partnership Government (May 2016)
Children First — National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
Better Outcomes Brighter Futures (DCYA)
First 5 — A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019–2028 (DCYA)
Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)
NEPS Well-being Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2020
National Strategy on Children and Young People’s participation in Decision making 2016-2020
Education and Training Board Act 2013
Strategy for Growth 2014-2020
Justice and Youth/crime prevention Probation Service Strategy
Commitments to cross-departmental and inter-agency collaboration
City of Dublin Youth Services Board
Cherry Orchard Area Action Plan (2017)

## 7.2 Future possibilities and potential

At St Ultan’s we are confident in our way of working. We have learned through experience and believe that we have a tried and tested model. We know that we are evolving and positioning ourselves as a leading example in the practice of integrated spaces, supports and services. We are continually learning, and we are open to continuous improvement and change.

We are:

- Actively influencing and fully aligned with government policy priorities, and we are a real-life example of a whole-of-government approach to the development of children and the provision of integrated supports to children at risk
- Open to academic scrutiny and to developing a relationship with an academic body to review, reflect and share our learning
- Open to partnering with local and regional support structures (e.g. CYPSC, Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership, etc)
- Open to strengthening our board membership
- Strengthening links to ABC Programme and the Children and Young People's Services Committee
- Open to tracking pupils
- Open to continuously improving and refining our integrated model
- Receptive to increased opening of the Campus, during the evenings and at weekends and during school holidays for social, creative, artistic, cultural and citizenship events.
- Open to alternative funding sources and arrangements including CSR, philanthropy, public-private partnerships, etc.

### 7.3 Current funding sources – gratitude

We have been acknowledged and funded by various voluntary agencies such as the Lauritzson Foundation, The Ireland Funds, Community Foundation of Ireland and high-profile philanthropic donors. We are grateful to all our supporters and we appreciate their acknowledgement of the uniqueness of St Ultan's. It is with their support and the support of public organisations such as the DCYA, DES and DCC, that the Campus is able to provide the level of support that it does for the children, families and the Community of Cherry Orchard.

Thank you.

## **A1** References

*A Beacon of Hope*, St Ultan's Campus, Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10. November 2016.

*A Programme for a Partnership Government*, May 2016.

*Creating a Brighter Future — The Social and Economic Regeneration of Dublin North East Inner City*. Kieran Mulvey. February 2017.

*Making Cherry Orchard Better — Area Action Plan*. Dublin City Council. Ballyfermot Chapelizod Area Partnership. September 2017.

*National Evaluation of the Area Based Childhood Programme 2013-17: Summary Report*. The Atlantic Philanthropies and Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

*St Ultan's Campus Strategic Plan 2019-2022*.

*Transition from Preschool to Primary School*. Dr Mary O' Kane. NCCA Research Report No. 19.

*Well Being Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-23*. Department of Education and Skills. 2018.

## A2 St. Ultan's time-line

Date	Progress
1990	Project started in response to group of children with serious care needs in St. Vincent's Day Nursery in Ballyfermot
1996	Project moves to rented house in Cherry Orchard
1998	Cherry Orchard School Development Group campaigns for new primary school with associated services
2006	St. Ultan's Campus, purpose-built building with four units on one campus, opens First intake of pupils
2007	Early Years opened
2008	Music Programme begins
2009	Community Service Programme starts in St. Ultan's
2011	Hot Meals provided for every child Restorative Practice introduced
2012	First cohort begins 6th Class
2014	Orchard Classes for children with ASD opens
2015	Ashoka – Change maker schools Whole School Evaluation
2016	Breakfast Club established
2017	Parents Breakfasts established TUD (Tallaght Campus) — Masters Programme
2018	ECCE years 1 & 2 introduced The Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) commences
2019	Service Level Agreements in place with major funding organisations Provision of supports to past pupils now sitting their Leaving Cert