



DARE TO BELIEVE

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Team Ireland





2024 has been a monumental year for the Dare to Believe Olympic Schools Programme, and the success of Team Ireland in Paris undoubtedly caused a surge of interest and enthusiasm for our Olympic Ambassadors and Olympic programmes in 2024.

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INTRODUCTION

Team Ireland captured the imagination of the entire nation with their most successful Olympics to date during Ireland's centenary year of competing at the Games. Dare to Believe played a proud role of bringing our Olympic role models into the classrooms of Ireland through various programmes and educational experiences in 2024.

Dare to Believe in the Community

Early in the year, we held several **community club activations**, connecting Olympic Ambassadors with young athletes at the grassroots level. In February, Olympic champion Kellie Harrington visited her former school and St. Mary's Boxing Club, inspiring over 80 children with her story and boxing skills, encouraging them to "back themselves." In March, hurdler Sarah Lavin hosted a training session at the University of Limerick track with local athletics clubs, followed by a meet-and-greet as she prepared for Paris 2024. In April, Rugby Sevens captain Lucy Mulhall visited schools and Virginia Rugby Club in Cavan, inspiring students with her journey and leading a Q&A session with the girls' teams, emphasising self-belief and determination.

As part of celebrations marking 100 years since Ireland's debut at the Paris 1924 Olympics, Dare to Believe schoolchildren led Olympians, Team Ireland mascots, and colourful performers through Dublin's streets in the **St. Patrick's Day Parade**, cheered on by onlookers. The Mullingar ETNS students proudly raised the Irish flag along the route.

Road to Paris Olympics Schools Challenge

Over 58k students took part in the Road to Paris Olympic Schools Challenge, our flagship initiative to create hype and excitement for Team Ireland and the Olympic Games in Paris while increasing kids' physical activity levels. Over four weeks, from April 15th to May 10th, schools logged their student's activity that was then converted to a distance on a virtual route to Paris, unlocking challenges, cultural activities and videos of Team Ireland star athletes along the way.

To celebrate the finale of the challenge we hosted an Olympians LIVE! Webinar that brought 11,068 kids together for a Q&A with gymnast World & European Champion (and eventual Olympic Champion) Rhys McClenaghan and a live drawing masterclass by famed Irish artist Kathi Burke.

PEXpo

One of our standout events this year was the 10th annual Dare to Believe PEXpo, held for the first time at the National Indoor Arena on the Sport Ireland Campus in Blanchardstown. With over 180 student projects from 800 participants showcasing innovation in Physical Education & Wellbeing, the event was a celebration of creativity and excellence. Highlights included Dublin student Finn Crinion, who won four awards, including the overall junior prize for his pacing lights project, and a senior award for a fitness programme designed to support prisoners' well-being that was won by St Brigid's Presentation School, Killarney.

Dare to Believe ambassadors added excitement, with athletes like Shane O'Donoghue (hockey) and Ellen Walshe (swimming) sharing their journeys. Spectators enjoyed interactive booths and performances by Irish breakdancer Leon Dwyer. Students also signed the "Dare to Believe" wall, destined for the Team Ireland Olympic Village in Paris.

This year, we engaged **131,636 students in 3,548 schools in 32 counties**, through our various Olympic Values initiatives: school visits, live webinars, challenges and events.



WATCH VIDEO HERE

Supporting Athletes at Paris 2024

Dare to Believe organised a series of heartfelt initiatives to support Team Ireland at the Paris 2024 Olympics, aiming to connect athletes with fans and instill a sense of national pride. Each athlete received customised bedside artwork created by schoolchildren, serving as a warm reminder of home. Posters designed by student artists adorned the hallways of the Olympic Village, bringing a touch of Irish spirit to the athletes' surroundings. Good luck boards, filled with encouraging messages from children, were prominently displayed during kit days and in the village, further boosting morale. To add to the energy of kit collection events, Dare to Believe also distributed vibrant T-shirts featuring messages of support, fostering a spirited and united atmosphere for Team Ireland.

Revamped Core Curriculum

To ensure the most deserving schools were awarded Olympian visits in 2024, we converted our booking process to be an application process. The results were outstanding and we had over 1500 teachers apply for 130 Olympic Ambassador school visits. The winning schools did an incredible job hosting our ambassadors who were blown away by the songs, artwork and enthusiasm of the students. In total we organised a record number of 133 school visits, across primary and secondary schools with 82% of these targeting DEIS schools.

Post-Paris we revamped our Olympic Values Curriculum for primary schools. Each lesson includes presentations, activities and quizzes that empowers teachers to instill values like friendship, excellence, and respect in their classrooms and promote well being and physical activity. This resource, along with the evolving Transition Year Programme, has been warmly received, with all student materials now available in Irish (Primary translations coming in Jan 2025).

New Olympic Ambassadors

The addition of 18 new and exciting ambassadors post-Paris expanded our ambassador roster to 41 athletes. The roster now includes 21 women and 20 men across 15 different Olympic & Paralympic sports. The new ambassadors were trained and prepared in time for visits this term and have been a massive hit with the lucky schools they've visited.

Olympians LIVE! with 3 Paris Medallists

In November, over 47,000 students participated in the Olympians Live! Webinars, and got a chance to hear from our Double Olympic boxing Champion Kellie Harrington (and meet her dogs) and also learn from Dr. Philip Doyle, and Dáire Lynch, Paris bronze medallists rowers, who shared their insights on resilience, teamwork, and the transformative power of sport.

Closing Remarks

This year has been a celebration of growth, innovation, and unity. We are deeply grateful to our ambassadors, sponsors, educators, and supporters who have made this journey possible. Together, we've inspired the next generation through the power of sport and education.

Róisín Jones & Róisín McGettigan-Dumas OLY

Dare to Believe Team

Olympic Federation of Ireland



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

A QUICK SNAPSHOT OF OUR MILESTONES IN 2024



131,636

TOTAL KIDS
ENGAGED



3,548

SCHOOLS ENGAGED (VIA SCHOOL
VISITS, WEBINARS & CHALLENGES)



132

OLYMPIC
AMBASADOR
SCHOOL AND CLUB
VISITS



82%

OF SCHOOL
VISITS WERE TO
DEIS SCHOOLS





41

OLYMPIC AND
PARALYMPIC
AMBASSADORS

21

FEMALE

20

MALE

15

SPORTS

18

NEW ATHLETES
SINCE PARIS
2024!

32

COUNTIES IN
IRELAND REACHED
VIA PROGRAMME



59,447

REACHED VIA OUR
2 OLYMPIANS LIVE!
WEBINARS

NEW ONLINE
PRIMARY
OLYMPIC VALUES
CURRICULUM

PROGRAMME **OVERVIEW**

A REMINDER OF WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT

MISSION

Dare to Believe aims to inspire the young people of Ireland to Dare to Believe in themselves through interactive Olympic values curricula and visits from Team Ireland Olympic and Paralympic role models whose lived experiences and stories bring the values to life.

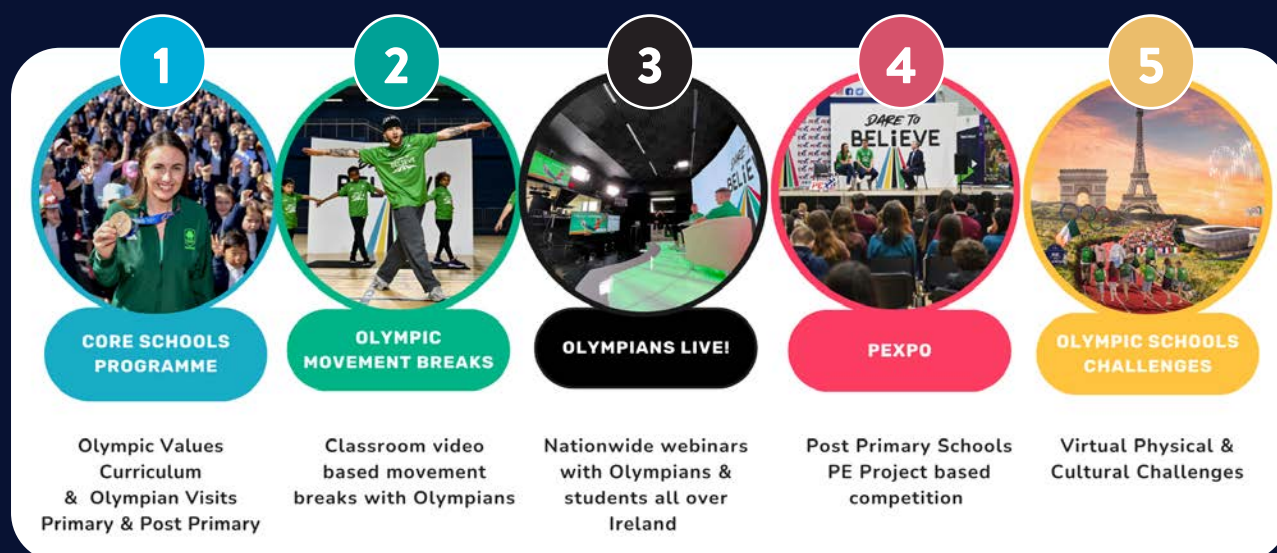
We aim to maximise our Olympians' ability to be positive influencers of health, excellence and resilience in their communities.



DARE TO BELIEVE PROGRAMMES

We are on a mission to bring the Olympics into classrooms and clubs around the world. We do this by creating Olympic Values based educational programmes and maximising Olympians' influence as positive role models in their communities

Listed below are the 5 key focus areas for the Dare to Believe Programme.



KEY BENEFITS

✓ **Brings the Olympics Into Classrooms** - spreads the Olympic spirit through Olympic Values Education and live interaction with Olympians and Paralympians.

✓ **Empowers Olympians** - Ambassadors become effective role models and give back to their communities and sports.

✓ **Connects With Community** - We put world class ambassadors in front of children all over Ireland to help inspire and motivate the next generation to engage with Olympic sports.

✓ **Building the Olympic Brand** - Our school programmes engage hundreds of schools every year and this helps the Olympics stay front of mind throughout the Olympic cycle. We also value our athletes by supporting them as ambassadors, giving them training and paying for their time.

✓ **New research** from the SHE Research Center reports that 60% of boys and 48% of girls said sports stars were the most likely to inspire them to play sports

“The Dare to Believe programme offers numerous benefits for both teachers and students. For teachers, it provides inspiration and motivation, offering opportunities to engage students with real-world success stories from Olympians. It supports professional development by enhancing teachers’ understanding of integrating physical activity into the curriculum, enriching their teaching practices. For students, the programme inspires and encourages them to set high goals, both academically and physically, by sharing the stories of Olympians and their journeys of perseverance. It promotes physical literacy, improves overall health, and instills a lifelong commitment to well-being. Ultimately, the Dare to Believe programme fosters a positive attitude toward health and physical fitness, impacting students’ well-being both during their school years and beyond.”

Marie Hogan, Clonoulty NS



OLYMPIC AMBASSADORS

OLYMPIC AMBASSADORS

Our ambassadors have been trained to deliver their story to classrooms, imparting insights on their sporting journey and sharing tips on how to deal with challenges, demonstrating examples of their resilience.

We have had a host of 18 new ambassadors sign up to the programme after the Paris Olympics. Our roster now stands at 41 athletes which is gender balanced and also has the introduction of a few different sports to the line up.

In October we held an onboarding session for these athletes to bring them up to speed. Each athlete has also had a 1 on 1 session with us prior to going out to the community to make sure their story is refined and their slides and collateral are up to the appropriate standard.

Our full list of ambassadors can be found [here](#).

“It’s such a well-run programme that I am really proud to be a part of, and really just promotes physical activity in general in schools and allow young people to see what is possible. It shares a message that sacrifice and hard work are important in the process to having a healthy life and healthy body.”

Rhys McClenaghan, Olympic Champion & Dare to Believe Ambassador



“I want to give kids what I have had in my sporting career, and I want to let them know that believing is achieving. That anything is possible once they believe. Through the Dare to Believe programme, as ambassadors, we can show them the power of believing in their dreams, and that if they dare to believe they can achieve something positive in their lives, be it an actor, a singer or a sports star.”

Kellie Harrington, Olympic Champion & Dare to Believe Ambassador



“It’s genuinely one of the most fulfilling things I do with my time, and brings me a lot of fun, joy and also motivation to hear how much these kids really look up to us as Olympians”

Thomas Barr

“One of the best parts of being an Olympic athlete is being an ambassador for this programme. I’ve learned that the Olympic is so much more than sport. The Olympic values are something that children can engage with in their every day lives to guide them on their path to success in whatever that may be.”

Aifric Keogh





Aidan Walsh
BOXING



Kellie Harrington
BOXING



Sarah Lavin
ATHLETICS



Thomas Barr
ATHLETICS



Aifric Keogh
ROWING



Rhys McClenaghan
GYMNASTICS



Marcus Lawler
ATHLETICS



Brendan Boyce
ATHLETICS



Michelle Finn
ATHLETICS



Oliver Dingley
DIVING



Shirley McCay
HOCKEY



Shane O'Donoghue
HOCKEY



Grainne Walsh
BOXING



Greta Streimikyte
PARA-ATHLETICS



Louise Shanahan
ATHLETICS



Philip Doyle
ROWING



Thomas Maloney Westgaard
CROSS COUNTRY SKIING



Ellen Walshe
SWIMMING



Monika Dukarska
ROWING



Phil Healy
ATHLETICS



Orla Comerford
PARA-ATHLETICS



Rachel Timothy
PARA-CYCLING TRACK



Ciara Mageean
ATHLETICS



Leon Dywer
BREAK DANCING



Dean Clancy
BOXING



Lucy Mulhall
RUGBY 7'S



Ross Corrigan
ROWING



Eric Favours
ATHLETICS



Noel Hendrick
CANOE SLALOM



Natalie Long
ROWING



Tiarnan O'Donnell
PARA-ROWING



Lily Cooke
LUGE



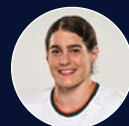
Sophia Noble
BADMINTON



Tim Cross
HOCKEY



Sophie Becker
ATHLETICS



Nicola Tuhill
ATHLETICS



Amee-Leigh Murphy Crowe
RUGBY 7'S



Darragh Greene
SWIMMING



Daire Lynch
ROWING



Byran Mullen
RUGBY 7'S



Katie O'Brien
PARA ROWING

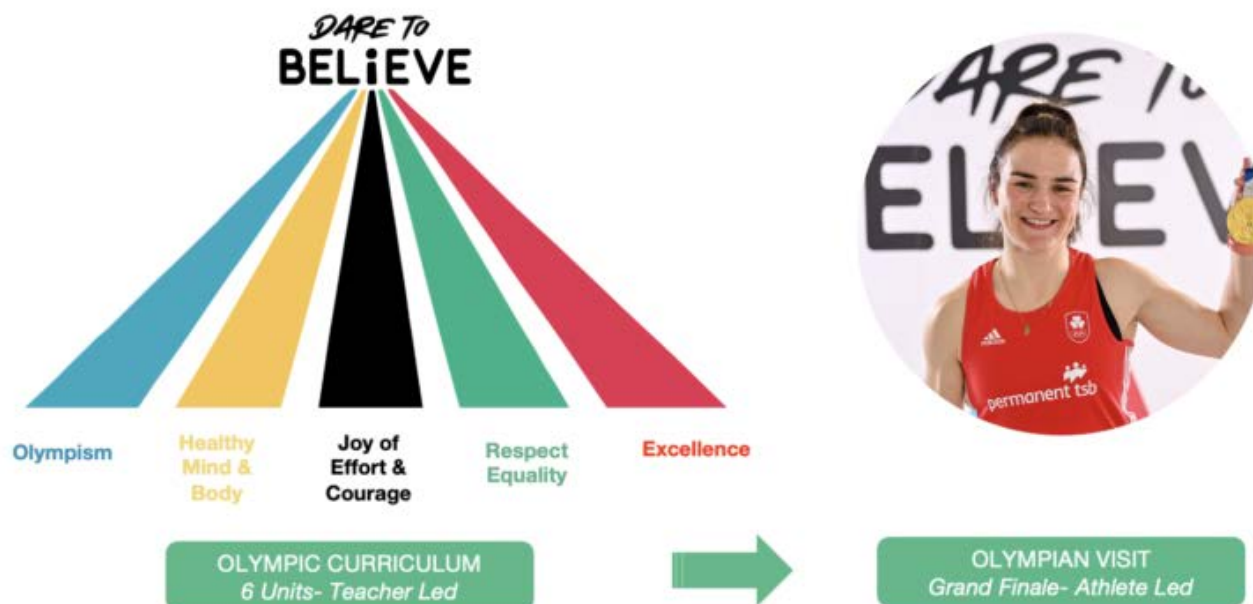


Ronan Byrne
ROWING



Mark Roche
RUGBY 7'S

CORE PROGRAMME AND *ACTIVITIES*



CORE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME


The Dare to Believe Olympic Schools Core Programme is still the cornerstone of our offering and aims to inspire and increase youth participation in sports, by maximising our Olympic athletes roles as ambassadors. This programme ran throughout the year and included 133 Olympic ambassador visits to both primary and secondary schools around the country. Over 92% of the visits were done in-person and over 82% were in DEIS schools (schools with educational disadvantages).

In preparation for the Olympic Ambassador visit there is dynamic interdisciplinary Olympic Values core curricula available for both primary schools children (aged approx 10-12 years) and post-primary students (aged approx 15-16 years old) to work through. The ambassadors then visit schools to give inspirational assemblies and presentations where they share their own individual Olympic journey stories of dedication, resilience and determination and engage the students in sports specific and Olympic themed games.



NEW PRIMARY CURRICULUM


In the Autumn of 2024 we revamped our primary curriculum and made it completely online and available to all schools (not just the ones lucky enough to win an Olympian visit). The new curriculum includes 6 lessons on Olympic values with presentations, activities, quizzes and movement breaks. Irish primary curriculum strands and units have been identified for each lesson and all lessons were co-created with teachers.



DARE TO BELIEVE

OLYMPIC VALUES PROGRAM

The Dare to Believe Olympic Values curriculum is freely accessible and flexible, use it in order or select specific lessons. Activities are designed for junior and senior primary students. Print this page for your convenience.



SHOW & TELL
Upload images of student playing the game to our Dare to Believe Gallery.

Ring One – Olympism

The Ancient Games



Presentation

- ☐ [Make an Olympic Victory Wreath](#)
- ☐ [Make An Olympic Comic Strip](#)

Activities



Quiz



Movement Break

50-60 mins
[History & English](#)
[PE & Visual Arts](#)

Linkages

The Modern Games



Presentation

- ☐ [Make the Olympic Rings](#)
- ☐ [Invent your own Olympic Sport](#)

Activities



Quiz



Movement Break

50-60 mins
[History & English](#)
[PE & Visual Arts](#)

Linkages

Ring Two: Excellence

Irish Olympians



Presentation

- ☐ [Irish stars colouring sheets](#)
- ☐ [Olympic Dreams & Goals](#)
- ☐ [Make an Irish Olympian or Paralympian trump card](#)

Activities



Quiz



Movement Break

50-60 mins
[History & English](#)
[PE & Visual Arts](#)

Linkages

Ring Three: Respect

Paralympics



Presentation

- ☐ [Design a Paralympic or Olympic torch](#)
- ☐ [Match the impairments](#)

Activities



Quiz



Movement Break

50-60 mins
[History & English](#)
[PE & Visual Arts](#)

Linkages

Ring Four: Friendship

Art In Sport



Presentation

- ☐ [Olympic Designs- Olympic poster, a stadium, a medal, a logo, a mascot, an uniform](#)
- ☐ [Write an inspirational song, rap or poem for Team Ireland](#)

Activities



Olympic Dingbats



Movement Break

50-60 mins
[History, English, PE, Visual Arts & SPHE](#)

Linkages

Ring Five: Healthy, Mind, Body & Society

Sport in Society



Presentation

- ☐ [Make a poster of the benefits of sport](#)
- ☐ [Write a letter to the Minister of Education to ask for more PE](#)

Activities



Olympic Wordles



Movement Break

50-60 mins
[History & English](#)
[PE & Visual Arts](#)

Linkages

Please share your feedback on the programme!



OLYMPIC AMBASSADOR VISITS

Dare to Believe Olympic ambassador schools visits reached fever pitch during 2024. We changed the visit booking process to include an application for schools to tell us why they deserved a visit. The response was overwhelmingly positive and many schools went above and beyond to show us how much they wanted a visit by sending videos of songs, scripts and dances they made up for Team Ireland. [EXAMPLE](#). Then when Ireland had so much success at the Paris Games, the demand for visits soared. We had over 1500 applications for 130 spots! We aim to increase the number of visits in 2025.

As a result of this new process our ambassadors were blown away by the reception they received at schools, many held assemblies and guards of honors and put on performances for our ambassadors.



“The lessons were well thought out and it is the type of programme that makes teachers want to use as the resources are very good and prepared for them. The children really enjoyed the movement breaks and the art lessons linked with them all. It really inspired them to get moving and try new sports. Many have told me since doing the programme that they have joined local clubs. I liked how inclusive the lessons and movement breaks are. The entire school was so excited about our visit with Noel Hendrick.... Listening to his story the children told me that they felt inspired. His assembly and movement break that he delivered was excellent. The children have learned so much about the Olympics and what each ring stands for. Children have developed healthier habits, bringing in healthier food options for lunch and really engaging in PE lessons. They have learned how to set goals and standards for themselves. I would love to use this programme again.”

Orla O Toole, St. Mary's NS Saggart

OLYMPIC SCHOOLS CHALLENGE

Schools nationwide were invited to join the Irish Olympic team on an interactive journey to the Olympic Games in Paris from mid-April to mid-May.

The Dare to Believe 'Road to Paris' was a free 4-week challenge that encouraged schools to get more active, while learning fun and engaging facts about the Olympics, French culture, and Team Ireland.

Over the four weeks schools logged their activities which in turn converted to distances on a virtual map of Ireland and across the sea to Paris. The journey included five stops where videos and classroom challenges were unlocked, revealing messages and insights from 5 of Ireland's top athletes: Olympic Champion boxer Kellie Harrington, Olympic medallist in rowing Aifric Keogh, World Champion gymnast Rhys McClenaghan, Irish hurdles record holder Sarah Lavin and Irish Rugby 7's captain Harry McNulty.

Over
55k
students took part
in the Road to Paris
Olympic Schools
Challenge



WATCH HIGHLIGHT REEL

In addition to the online interactive portal, teachers received an exclusive custom illustrated Team Ireland Olympic Challenge map of Ireland that was illustrated by Irish artist Fatti Burke. The illustrated map included over 24 Paris bound athletes from 12 different sports and a physical print was sent out to all teachers taking part in the challenge.

Special thanks to the French Embassy in Ireland for their support with the maps and also for helping us develop the activities for the Paris stop that included a mini French lesson, models of iconic Parisian architecture and other fun French themed activities. Thanks to being awarded a grant from An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta / COGG (The Council for Gaeltacht and Gaelscoileanna Education), we were able to translate the Road to Paris activities into Gaeilge.



ROAD TO PARIS OLYMPIC SCHOOLS CHALLENGE INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:



[READ FULL RECAP HERE](#)

OLYMPIANS LIVE! NATIONWIDE WEBINARS



OLYMPIANS LIVE! REACHED OVER 50K STUDENTS IN 2024

We create Olympians LIVE! nationwide webinars so that as many students as possible get access to our Olympic Ambassador role models in a fun student-centric age appropriate and engaging manner. All schools and students are invited and welcome to register and attend these free live-streamed events. When possible we offer both primary and secondary editions so as to tailor the content for the appropriate audiences.

OLYMPIANS LIVE! INSPIRES OVER 47K STUDENTS WITH KELLIE HARRINGTON, PHILIP DOYLE, AND DÁIRE LYNCH

On Friday, November 15th, over 47k students registered to tune into Olympians LIVE! with double Olympic Champion Kellie Harrington, and Olympic Bronze Medalists Philip Doyle and Dáire Lynch!

The three superstar athletes joined our host, Emer O'Neill, in-studio to share their inspiring stories, answer students' burning questions, and demonstrate Olympic Movement breaks.



PRIMARY SCHOOL WEBINAR

Kellie Harrington kicked off the event, surprising everyone with her dogs, Nig and Gus. She spoke about her boxing journey, answered questions from Central Model Infant School, and let her dogs pick their favorite Olympic Gold Medal. She explained her Paris Gold medal even contains pieces of the Eiffel Tower.

Two students crowned Kellie with an olive laurel wreath to honor her Olympic success and community work.

Next, Paris bronze medalist rowers Philip Doyle and Dáire Lynch shared their journey into rowing and answered questions about nerves, tough races, and favorite superheroes—Superman for Philip and Batman for Dáire.

All three returned to the stage but the rowers were dressed in superhero costumes for a fun segment. Kellie led a boxing-themed movement break, followed by rowing exercises from Philip and Dáire, leaving students energized before returning to class.

SECONDARY/POST-PRIMARY WEBINAR

The secondary webinar kicked off with Champ Kellie speaking about how much she credits boxing with saving her life, how it has given her so much; her community, structure in her life and her career. She also spoke about nutrition and her favourite sport psychology tool; box breathing! Kellie was joined on stage by Philp (Dáire headed back to college for an exam!) Philip answered questions from students and talked about how the work he did in other sports growing up was easily transferred to rowing when he found it in university. Before wrapping up, Philip took on a fun core challenge while coach Kellie looked on. Thanks to all the students from schools around the country that came live on air to ask their questions.

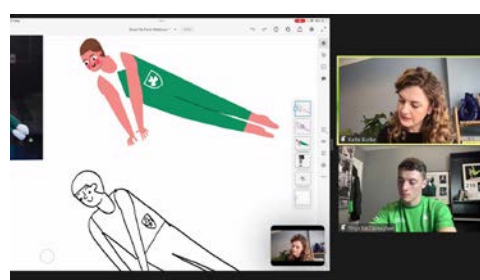


ART, GYMNASTICS, AND INSPIRATION: OLYMPIANS LIVE! WITH RHYS MCCLENAGHAN & KATHI BURKE

On May 17th, over 357 teachers and 11k primary students joined us for an exciting Olympians LIVE! webinar, celebrating the Road to Paris Olympic Schools Challenge finale. Olympic Gymnast Rhys McClenaghan and award-winning artist Kathi Burke answered questions from students across all 4 provinces.

Rhys shared insights from his recent European win, discussing his pursuit of perfection and leading a relaxation exercise. Kathi echoed his thoughts on perfection and guided the nation in drawing Rhys doing his pommel horse event. Rhys followed along with Kathi's tutorial, and you can see how he did in the replay!

Thanks to the 4 schools selected for their outstanding engagement and energy.



WATCH REPLAY HERE



PEXPO



WATCH VIDEO HERE

The 10th edition of the PEXpo, was a massive success and Dare to Believe & PTSB were title sponsors for the second year running. Over 180 Physical Education & Wellbeing themed student-projects from approximately 800 students from all over the country were on display. The event was held at the National Indoor Arena and the National Sports Campus in Abbotstown on May 2nd for the first time and it proved to be the perfect setting to showcase the excellence on display.

Dublin schoolboy Finn Crinion, a student at Coláiste Eoin in Booterstown, took a record four awards as well as winning the overall junior award. Crinion's project called 'Solásglas – Ar nós na solas!' which looked at the use of pacing lights in athletics, finished tops in the Technology and Media category, also winning and special Sport for Business prize and the Dare to Believe award.

Best overall award in the senior category went to Aoife O'Keefe, Molly Collins, Faithleann Sommers from St Brigid's Presentation School, Killarney for a project called 'Sport Behind Bars' which looked at the impact of a regular exercise programme on prisoners in Limerick jail.

In addition to the projects over 13 sport federations showed up with interactive sporting booths to engage students, teachers and spectators to challenge themselves and have fun. Dare to Believe Olympic ambassadors Shane O'Donoghue (hockey) and Ellen Walshe (swimming) were in attendance and spoke on stage sharing their inspirational Olympic journey stories while breakdancer Leon Dwyer and freestyle footballer Sam Madden wowed the crowds with their incredible skills. Students had the opportunity to sign the "Dare to Believe" wall that will go into the Team Ireland Olympic Athlete Village in Paris and for fun they could take photos with the Olympic Champion Kellie Harrington cut-out.

Later in the year the Dare to Believe PEXpo became an official GAISCE challenge partner. Students doing the PEXpo can now earn a GAISCE bronze award, an award that is formally recognised by the President of Ireland.



DARE TO BELIEVE IN THE *COMMUNITY*

COMMUNITY CLUB VISITS

We held a number of community club activations this year where our Olympic Ambassadors went out to clubs in the community to meet the young and upcoming athletes at a grass root level.

In February, **Olympic champion Kellie Harrington** visited her former primary school and St. Mary's Boxing Club as part of a Dare to Believe community events. Taking a break from training for Paris 2024, the Olympic gold medalist inspired over 80 children, encouraging them to "back themselves" and believe anything is possible. Harrington shared her story, demonstrated boxing skills, and emphasized the club's role in helping her achieve her dreams.



In March we held a community club event at the University of Limerick track where **Olympic Hurdler Sarah Lavin** trains. We had members of the Limerick Athletics Club, Dooneen Athletics Club and Emerald Athletics Club join us for a light training session with Sarah and also a chance to meet and greet her and ask her questions and get autographs before Sarah headed off to the Paris Olympics.

Lastly, in April **Olympic Rugby Sevens captain Lucy Mulhall** visited schools and Virginia Rugby Football Club in Cavan. Students were thrilled to hear Mulhall's story of determination and dreams, while she encouraged them to pursue their goals. Supported by title sponsor PTSB, the event highlighted the importance of sport and self-belief in local communities. Lucy had a session with the girls teams and then had a Q&A session with them afterwards in the clubhouse.



SUPPORTING ATHLETES AT PARIS 2024

To connect athletes with fans and foster a sense of pride, Dare to Believe organized several initiatives for Team Ireland at the Paris Olympics:

- **Customised Artwork:** Each athlete received bedside art created by schoolchildren to remind them of home.
- **Olympic Village Artwork:** Posters from student artists brought Irish spirit to the village hallways.



- **Good Luck Boards:** Kids signed boards wishing Team Ireland success, displayed at kit days and in the village.



- **Dare to Believe T-Shirts:** Vibrant shirts with messages of encouragement added energy to kit collection events.



ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Dare to Believe schoolchildren got to lead Olympians, Team Ireland mascots, colourful performers representing Olympic sports through the streets of Dublin to the cheers of onlookers in the St Patrick's Day Parade as part of a series of events marking 100 years since Ireland first participated at the Olympic Games of Paris 1924. The schoolchildren from Mullingar ETNS did a phenomenal job raising the Irish flag along the parade route on the day. Additionally on the other side of the country, the theme of the Galway City parade was "Olympics 2024, Dare to Believe."

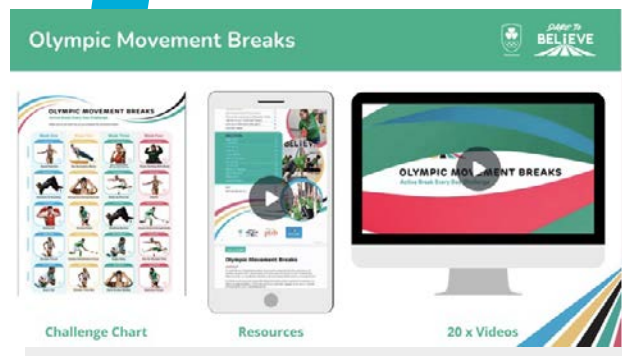


OLYMPIC MOVEMENT BREAKS

CONTEXT

In November 2023, we launched Olympic Movement Breaks in partnership with Active School Flag and support from Minister Thomas Byrne TD. This 4-week challenge reached 124,000 children across Ireland during the 4 week campaign, the numbers continued to rise throughout 2024. The programme features short videos led by Olympians and athletes, showcasing fun exercises in sports like athletics, boxing, rugby, swimming, breakdancing, and para powerlifting. These activities promote classroom movement, requiring no special equipment and lasting 3-5 minutes.

The initiative encourages schools to participate in the “Active Break Every Day” challenge, emphasising the benefits of regular movement for children’s learning. Teachers tracked progress with a challenge chart, and students learned about the athletes, Olympic history, and values through additional resources and quizzes. Thanks to a grant from COGG, we also translated the materials into Irish in 2024.

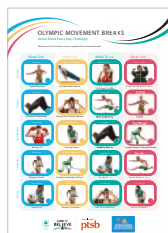


Dare to Believe's OLYMPIC MOVEMENT BREAKS

WHAT TEACHERS GET:

- Free access to all resources
- 20 athlete-led movement break videos
- Adaptations to allow for inclusion
- 4-week challenge chart
- Athlete biographies, interactive quizzes etc.

Challenge Chart



Resources



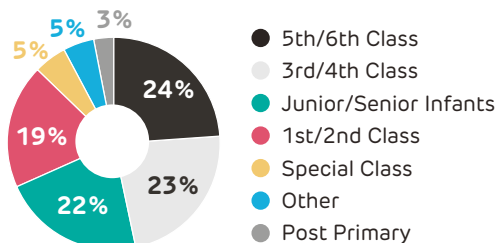
20 Videos



123,014*
CHILDREN REACHED

4,170*
TEACHERS ENGAGED

Whole School Engagement

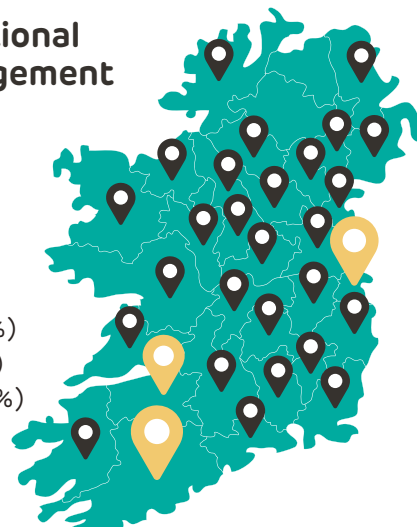


Reports are showing whole-school engagement with classes across all primary school age groups using the resources.

National Engagement

30
counties reached

Top 3
Dublin (21%)
Cork (13%)
Limerick (6%)



The Olympic movement breaks in the classroom enhanced focus and boosted overall student well-being. They helped reduce restlessness, increased energy levels and promoted better engagement with learning tasks.

Michelle Cahalane, Mount Anville Primary School, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin

Every morning the children excitedly checked to see who was up next and it was an incentive to get our work done so we could get to our movement break! They were easy to fit into our daily routine and we will definitely continue to timetable movement breaks into our day.

Annie Colquhoun, Christchurch National School, Co. Waterford

* numbers captured during the first 4 weeks of the challenge.



“Children loved it and were delighted when an athlete was repeated. They love the familiar. They loved hearing the athletes’ schools being called out and that the athletes shared their accents. The Olympic quiz was a real hit.”

“Our parents absolutely loved these videos. They were really enjoyable and it was amazing to see the variety of sports/ movement breaks available. Our teachers commented on the importance of the reference to wellbeing in each video.”



DARE TO BELIEVE *IN THE NEWS*

Listed below are just some of the many instances that the Dare to Believe Programme has been referenced in the news and media.



Special thanks to RTE's news2day for featuring Dare to Believe on 4 occasions in 2024. RTE's news2day is Ireland's national broadcast news programme for children that airs daily. Many schools play the show throughout the school day. We were delighted to be featured on four occasions throughout the year.

- [Olympic hurdler Thomas Barr enjoyed visit to a school that took part in the Olympic Movement Breaks in January](#)
- [Olympic Champion Rhys McClenaghan kicked off the Road to Paris Olympic School Challenge in April](#)
- [Paralympian Orla Comerford return to her own school in Saggart with her Bronze medal from Paris 2024](#)
- [Dare to Believe Olympians & Paralympians visited Children's Hospital in Dublin to spread Christmas Cheer](#)



PRINT AND ONLINE MEDIA

Dare to Believe visits and activities were well documented in traditional print media and online throughout the year.



AWARDS & APPEARANCES

In May 2024, Dare to Believe was asked to give a talk on the role of Olympians and how they can bring Olympic Values to life at the International Olympic Academy in Olympia Greece. We put the over 100 National Olympic Academies through a movement break! [READ MORE](#)



In June 2024 Dare to Believe was announced as the winner of the Best Sports Sponsorship at the 2024 Irish Sport Industry Awards due to the Olympic Federation of Ireland's sponsorship from PTSB. [READ MORE](#)



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Listed below are the 6 UN Sustainable Development Goals that the Dare to Believe Programme achieves.



Promotion of health & wellbeing is at the core of every Dare to Believe offering - storytelling, curricula, role models, challenges.



Our initiatives include adaptations for children with disabilities, include children from disadvantaged backgrounds and features Paralympic athletes. 80% of our school visits are to DEIS schools.



Our educational programmes include multiple learning modalities and helps achieve Irish educational standards.



All of our initiatives promote the Olympic value of respect and many include the Paralympic value of equality.



Our current roster of 41 Olympic ambassadors includes 20 males and 21 females.



We have aligned with the Department of Education's Active School Flag, the Minister of Sport and Physical Education, the teacher led PEXpo, GAISCE, French Embassy and COGG.

DARE TO BELIEVE PARTNERSHIPS

Funding for the Olympic Federation of Ireland's Dare to Believe programmes in 2024 came from the IOC Solidarity fund and sponsorship from PTSB. Thanks to the French Embassy for their support of the Road to Paris Olympic School Challenge and core programme. Also, special thanks to the COGG for their grant to translate out resources to Irish.

Other partners we were delighted to work with in 2024 included the PEXpo, Active Schools Flag and Gaisce.



An Chomhairle um Oideachas
Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta



DARE TO BELIEVE

PROGRAMME SINCE 2019



58

AMBASSADORS



486

SCHOOL VISITS



401,829

STUDENTS REACHED



5,930

SCHOOLS ENGAGED



75,98

TEACHERS



32

COUNTIES



Team Ireland

