Fujitsu–Schools Business Partnership Programme

What is this?
Since 2011, Fujitsu Ireland and St. Joseph’s School, Rush have partnered together as part of Business in the Community Ireland’s (BITCI) Schools’ Business Partnership Programme. This programme aims to tackle the retention rate in post primary schools and gives young students an insight into the careers and options available in the STEM industry.

Who was involved?
Fujitsu Ireland, St Joseph’s Secondary School Rush, Business in the Community

How was the relationship established?
We have a longstanding relationship with the school, and are now entering our 9th year of the programme. The relationship was established through BITC who put Fujitsu in contact with St. Josephs Secondary School, Rush which is a DEIS School. The school have engaged with a number of initiatives which has improved prospects for students, including the Schools Business Partnership Programme. As a result, the schools outcomes are comparable with the national averages, despite its DEIS intake.

What was done?
Each year, we offer four internships for students who have excelled throughout the programme. They come in for one week in the summer to work on meaningful tasks and projects across our business.

In order to secure the internship, we equip a class of 5th year students with a CV and Interview skills session in the school. These are life skills which will greatly benefit students in the long term.

We then invite them to Fujitsu for a site visit which includes a welcome speech from our CEO Tony O’Malley, a tour of the building and a careers speed networking session with our employees. Following the site visit, students apply for the internship with the CV and cover letter which we helped them to create in the workshop. They are then called to interview, and four candidates are selected for the internships. This year we were delighted to welcome three female students (out of four internship places) onto our summer internship programme.

What was the impact?
The impact on the school has been profound. Through our initiative, we are helping achieve their goals on better inclusion and tackling unemployment. The number of students going on to third level has increased by 44% over the last 8 years. Below is
a statement from Patricia Hayden, principal at St. Joseph's Secondary School who outlines the impact that the programme has had on the school.

“Fujitsu has been at the heart of progress in St Joseph's through its Skills at Work programme since 2011. Fujitsu employees from every department of the company (including the CEO) have worked with our students to help them with job applications, interview skills and presentation skills. The students also get the chance to apply for work experience at Fujitsu.

The Fujitsu- St Joseph's relationship is built on trust, commitment and understanding and although the main focus of the link is on helping students to have real life experiences of the world of work, there is also opportunity for staff and senior management engagement. For example, Fujitsu CEO and marketing executives facilitated the development of our strategic plan at a staff school planning session. That kind of expertise would not normally be available to a school like ours - it made a huge difference to the whole school community and to the success of the school.” - Patricia Hayden, Principal at St. Joseph's Secondary School, Rush

What was your learning from the project?
It builds on our Diversity and Inclusion strategy of improving our gender balance with a focus on Girls in STEM. To achieve this, we have to do more to encourage girls in school to see IT as a career path. As an organisation, we’ve come a long way to build a more gender-balanced organisation, and we have concrete plans to go even further. As an organisation, we have benefitted greatly from our participation in this community centric endeavor. Our strong reputation as a responsible business, is ever growing and we are now considered to be a sustainable leader in the technology industry. The motivation to engage in CSR is of contemporary importance and we as a business, hold the Community Involvement and Development pillar as an integral component of our business strategy. In the challenging marketplace for talent, our strong partnership and all that we have achieved together has been a positive differentiator in attracting talent.

Employee engagement with the Schools Programme provides employees with an outlet to participate in philanthropic and humanitarian actions which in turn, boosts employee morale and fulfils a sense of purpose. All that we have achieved is a testament to our employees who share in our commitment to create a more positive, safer and prosperous society.