## PRESS RELEASE

## 20th May 2014

**New Link between SAP Ireland and St Farnan’s, Prosperous to Prepare Students for Working World**

**The Schools’ Business Partnership is delighted to announce that SAP Ireland is today establishing a new link with St Farnan’s in Prosperous to provide students with work life skills and insights.**

**SAP Ireland** is today making a commitment to assist **St Farnan’s** senior cycle students with school completion by providing a firsthand insight into the world of work. As part of the newly established link, students will take part in the Skills @ Work programme, where volunteer employees work with students on CV writing and interview skills and give them an insight in to the array of jobs available to students through ‘A Day in the Life” session. This link has been facilitated by the Schools’ Business Partnership (SBP) and is an initiative of Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI).

*“We are delighted to be establishing this new link with SAP Ireland. The Skills @ Work programme proposed by the Schools’ Business Partnership will help our students to identify the connection between education and the future opportunities that may be available. Establishing a rapport with employees from a local business will give great career exposure and open the students’ eyes to what exactly is involved in various jobs or careers on a day to day basis. It will allow them to explore what may be of interest to them and give them a target to aim towards in terms of their education.”* said **Eddie Collins, Principal, St Farnan’s, Prosperous.**

***“SAP Ireland*** *is delighted to be partnering with* ***St Farnan’s*** *to support the students in their final years. Our employees have been eager to volunteer for the programme as they see it as a tangible way to give back something to the local community and local school. We are also encouraging employees to get involved as it is a means they can improve certain work skills such as communication, team building and leadership.* **Liam Ryan, CEO, SAP Ireland.**

 *“In BITC Ireland we are delighted to welcome* ***SAP Ireland*** *to the growing number of companies participating in our programmes and recognise their commitment to the local community. Links between local businesses and schools can have far reaching benefits for both sides of the link and we look forward to assisting* ***SAP Ireland*** *and* ***St Farnan’s*** *to develop and grow this partnership over the coming years.”* ***Clodagh Gorman, SBP Regional Coordinator, Kildare, Laois, Offaly, Carlow, Kilkenny, BITCI}***

The Skills @ Work programme at **St Farnan’s** will begin in September this year. During the year employees of **SAP Ireland** will talk to the students about the real-life skills required in the workplace, such as CV writing and interview preparation. They will run ‘A Day in the Life’ session, to assist the students in recognising the value of completing the leaving certificate and help them explore possible career paths. The students will also be brought on a site visit to **SAP Ireland** and witness the many career opportunities that exist.

Funded under the National Development Plan, The Schools’ Business Partnership (SBP) aimed to match 200 post primary schools in Ireland with a local business by the end of 2014.

**Ends.**

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**Editor’s Notes**

* Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI)*,* founded in 2000, is a unique movement of companies committed to Corporate Responsibility practices. Our purpose is to inspire, challenge and support business in continually improving its positive impact on society in the community, environment, marketplace and workplace.
* Established in 2001, Schools’ Business Partnership (SBP) is a flagship programme managed by Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI). It is conducted in association with Marks & Spencer and supported by Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. and Bord Gáis.

**SBP Programmes offered include:**

(a) The**Student Mentoring Programme** encourages students who are at risk of leaving school early to continue with their studies with the advice of a mentor at a local business. They participate for the final 2 years of school and meet their mentor every 3 weeks at the mentor’s workplace.

 (b) The **Skills @ Work** programme invites employees from local businesses to present, up skill and talk to students about real-life skills required in the workplace, such as interview preparation and CV writing. Students attend site visits and receive first hand insights into the many careers available to them.

 (c) The **Management Excellence for Principals** programme sponsored by Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. facilitates skills sharing between business and school leaders. Over 600 Principals have participated, which represents over two-thirds of all post primary principals in Ireland. Companies whose senior executives deliver these seminars to small groups of principals include: Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Johnson & Johnson, Vistakon, Centocor, Donegal Creameries, KPMG, Coillte, National Irish Bank, Diageo, An Post, Anglo Irish Bank, Vhi, élan, One Direct, CRH, Allergan, RTE, Pramerica, Alza, ESB, Intel, The Kerryman, Musgraves, IMI, State Street Global Financial Services, Britvic, Letterkenny Institute of Technology, PEI and IBM.

(e) The **Management Excellence for Teachers** programme is taking place in 30 schools in Ireland this year. Business leaders provide workshop/seminars to whole teaching staffs on topics identified by the teachers such as: teamwork, communication skills, flexibility skills; PR; time management skills; ICT and education; etc.

(f) **Time to Read programme for primary schools.** This is our latest new programme where business volunteers provide reading support to children in 2nd class over a 24 week basis. 15 companies are delivering Time to Read to 15 different DEIS schools having had a successful pilot phase in 2010/11. The pilot & post pilot phases were generously funded by Bord Gáis.