

Bríd Graham

Splash Swim School



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Working as a primary school teacher for 20 years gave Bríd Graham a valuable insight into building confidence in children. It is something she holds close to her heart as a swimming instructor and Director of Splash Swim School, based in Sligo.

While working and travelling with a family as their private tutor, Bríd noticed the many opportunities that can come out of swimming. After her travels, she returned to education and obtained a Master's degree in Management from Smurfit Business School, UCD.

She then moved to Sligo and, in 2013, started her first swimming class in the Clayton Hotel. Five years later, she had a team of seven instructors, ran 125 classes a week, and opened a second swim school in Mullaghmore, Co Sligo. Her swimmers won 53 Community Games Swim medals in 2018.

The school also increased its offering of Additional Needs lessons and is the chosen Swim provider for Down Syndrome Sligo. It is the only Irish Swim provider to participate in the World's Largest Swim Lesson, a worldwide event that promotes swim lessons as a life-saving skill and drowning prevention method.

Meeting other women who understood the chaos of balancing a business and family life was invaluable to Bríd and she credits ACORNS for keeping her on track with her monthly business goals.

COVID-19 had a detrimental effect on the business but with easing of restrictions and re-opening of leisure centres and swimming pools across the country, Bríd is delighted to be part of some exciting new opportunities while continuing with services that were up and running pre COVID-19.

This month Bríd and her team will be opening Waterford Splash Swim School at the Crystal Leisure Centre and Liffey Valley Splash Swim School at the Clayton Hotel Liffey Valley in October 2021. They will be continuing lessons at Sligo Splash Swim School at the Clayton Hotel Sligo, the Lapps Quay Clayton in Cork City and doubling their lessons at Mullaghmore Splash Swim School at the Pier Head Leisure Centre in Mullaghmore, Co. Sligo.

They are also expanding their service to include Parents and Baby lessons at the Clayton Hotel Sligo and introducing themselves to parents and babies at the stunning Radisson hotel in Rosses Point. They also hope to start parent and baby lessons at the Coral Leisure Centre in Ballinasloe.

Bríd has trained as a Swim Ireland and Irish Water Safety Tutor – which has enabled her to train her own swim teaching staff – and is focused on expanding her technical knowledge of swimming.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.