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Politics

Ahern visits to unveil McIlveen scholarship

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Wednesday, November 21, 2007

By Deric Henderson

Irish foreign minister Dermot Ahern is due in the heart of Ian Paisley's North Antrim constituency today to endorse a special scholarship set up in memory of a Catholic teenager beaten to death by loyalists.

He will attend St Patrick's College, Ballymena, where Michael McIlveen was a pupil when he was attacked with a baseball bat in the town in May last year.

A number of youths are awaiting trial for his murder.

Pupils from each of eight local Protestant and Catholic schools will be chosen each year to work on special reconciliation projects. The Irish government has contributed nearly £60,000 towards the Michael McIlveen Scholarships which will run for the next five years.

Mr Ahern is also due to visit a youth club in Ballymena and later travel into the Glens of Antrim for the launch in Cushendall of a cross-border project that links groups in Antrim and Donegal.

Michael, who was nicknamed 'Mickybo' died in hospital after he was attacked by a gang in Ballymena on May 7, 2006. At the time, police said it was sectarian.

Later Mr Paisley, the MP for North Antrim and now the First Minister, sympathised with the teenager's grieving family.

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He was late for work, but I had to jump on him

Cooper Brown: He's out there



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Malise Ruthven



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