



**SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION
AND LIBRARY BOARD**

Chief Executive: Mr Gregory P Butler B Ed M Ed MPA

Your Ref: PMcC/JW/1969

5 March 2015

Mr P McCallion
Clerk
Committee for Education
Room 375, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Dear Peter

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

I refer to your letter of 13 February 2015 which has been referred to me by the Chief Executive.

Please find attached the information you have requested. I apologise for the slight delay in making this response.

Yours sincerely

N D McBride
Chief Administrative Officer

Enc

South Eastern Education & Library Board

Mapping the Journey to Shared Education

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an outline of the South Eastern Education and Library Board's involvement in Shared Education. The paper maps the journey of both schools and the Board's Youth Service's involvement in community relations and includes an outline of previous experience in the delivery of Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) work, Schools Community Relations and the delivery of projects through the International Fund for Ireland.

2.0 CRED Policy

- 2.1 The aim of the CRED policy is to contribute to the improvement of relations between communities by educating children and young people to:

- Develop self-respect and respect for others;
- Promote equality;
- Eliminate discrimination by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities; and
- Enable the building of relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions.

- 2.2 CRED seeks to embed this work firmly within educational settings by providing a strong skills base for educators, as well as the teaching resources required, in order to make this a more sustainable and accepted practice across the education sector.

- 2.3 Schools and Youth Organisations have been supported to develop programmes to help young people to build relationships with young people from different backgrounds and traditions.

3.0 Key Elements of the Policy

- Ensure that learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all, without discrimination;
- Educate children and young people to live and participate in a changing world, so that they value and respect difference and engage positively with it, taking account of the ongoing intercommunity divisions arising from conflict and increasing diversity within our society; and
- Equip children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference.

4.0 The Role of Teachers and Youth Workers

4.1 The Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education, the NI Curriculum and the Curriculum Framework for Youth Work all provide opportunities within formal and informal education to enable children and young people from all communities and backgrounds to better work together. Across all Key Stages there are opportunities for children and young people to develop the capacity and skills necessary for building better community relations and taking their place in a diverse society.

4.2 The policy supports the delivery of the above curricula by providing:

- Educators with the knowledge, skills and experience to deliver the relevant CRED areas of learning components;
- Opportunities to learn from good practice; and opportunities for children and young people to put learning into practice.

5.0 Outcomes

5.1 The outcomes of the policy are to develop children and young people who:

- Understood and respect the rights, equality and diversity (including linguistic diversity) of each section 75 groups; and
- Developed the skills, attitudes and behaviours that enabled them to value and respect difference and engage positively with it.

5.2 While the requirement is to address all section 75 groups, the policy is implemented in a way that is age appropriate and suitability flexible to focus on particular issues relevant to the needs of the learners and the communities within which the school or youth group was located. In particular, it is important that issues relevant to children and young people which are considered as difficult or controversial are given the due regard that they require.

5.3 It is through the work of teachers, youth workers and other staff that help to address the issues within Community Relations, Equality and Diversity.

6.0 Future

6.1 The CRED practice in the SEELB facilitates schools and youth organisations to support young people to develop self-respect and respect for others from different backgrounds. Relationships are developed across the formal and informal sectors. There is scope for more work in this area including opportunities for schools and youth organisations to work collaboratively to prepare young people better for the diverse world of life and work.

6.2 Shared Education will provide more opportunities for children to learn together in regular and sustained ways, in order to improve educational and reconciliation outcomes.

7.0 'Learning to Live Together' 2011-2013 (IFI Funded Initiative)

- 7.1 The SEELB 'Learning to Live Together' programme was established to support pupils to benefit from shared educational experiences. Youth Workers applied their skills of informal social education within school settings to help realise and build the vision of a shared future. This helped to promote understanding between pupils and staff in paired post primary schools from the divided and diverse communities of Northern Ireland. It also helped to facilitate integration between the participating schools and the communities within which they were located. The project established strong strategic alliances between formal and informal education and delivery was enhanced through the sharing of skills and expertise between youth workers and teachers.
- 7.2 The 'Learning to Live Together' project has been operational since June 2011 and supports Cross Community contact between young people in the SEELB area. The 'Learning to Live Together' programme was a three year project facilitated by the SEELB and was funded through the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) which seeks to break down barriers from Northern Ireland's historic conflict by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn and work together.
- 7.3 It brought together young people aged 11 to 16 from both sides of the community with the aim of encouraging contact, dialogue, promoting reconciliation and community relations. The project was awarded £672,000 by IFI to build bridges between schools and communities demonstrating the funding commitment to the promotion of Peace and Reconciliation. The fund also committed to help young people to benefit from shared educational experiences.
- 7.4 Through a combination of classroom sessions and workshops, culminating in residential experiences, young people have taken part in a variety of programme areas which allowed them to explore their understanding of prejudice, discrimination, and sectarianism and increase their awareness of diversity. Participants were also able to complete Open College Network (OCN) accredited awards.
- 7.5 The project has built strong partnerships between schools and the SEELB's Youth Service. Youth Workers have worked in harmony with link Teachers to support and facilitate projects that provided opportunities for young people from different community backgrounds to come together to discuss and compare differences and celebrate diversity. Participants on the 'Learning to Live Together' Project have enjoyed a wealth of different experiences which will help them to make their contribution to building a better future for Northern Ireland.
- 7.6 Staff from Schools and the Youth Service worked together to help pupils develop a greater understanding of their identity within the context of Northern Ireland. Teachers and Youth Workers have completed training to help them to plan for sustainability after the end of the funding period in December 2013.

8.0 'Learning to Live Together' School Partnership Participants

- Assumption Grammar and Regent House Grammar
- St Mary's High School and Knockbreda High School
- St Malachy's High School and Laurelhill Community College
- St Colm's High School and Fort Hill Integrated College
- Movilla High School and St Columbanus College
- St Colmcille's High School and Nendrum College
- St Colmcille's High School and Priory Integrated College (20011-2012)

9.0 The 'Learning Together' Programme

9.1 The 'Learning Together' Programme created a collaborative working partnership between individual schools and the Youth Service. The programme LINKED identified primary and post-primary schools by offering a range of elements, across Key Stages 2-4, which contributed to raising achievement, closing the gap and supporting pupils to re-engage with education. A core component of the programme was to create stronger links between communities and schools.

10.0 Key Stage 2/Key Stage 3

10.1 The Key Stage 2 and 3 aspects of the programme offered interventions which focused on transitions and helped to address key issues that impede pupils taking the best advantage of learning opportunities available. An assessment of need was undertaken in each individual post-primary school, on an annual basis, to determine the most effective blend of intervention required to enhance the educational opportunities for select groups of young people. This enabled the development of a bespoke response to the context of an individual school's environment. Regular interventions included transition work with feeder primary schools, summer schemes, buddying/mentoring programmes and individual or small group work programmes aimed at specific issues identified as required by the partnership of teaching staff and ELB personnel.

10.2 Outcomes for pupils included:

- An increased ability in coping with perceived challenges and difficulties;
- Development of confidence and self-esteem;
- Respect for others;
- Building positive relationships;
- Taking responsibility for themselves;
- Developing team-work, problem-solving and communication skills.

11.0 Key Stage 4

- 11.1 The Key Stage 4 aspect of the programme had a focus on the delivery of outcomes for young people through an accredited course. The OCN Certificate in Personal Success and Well-Being was accredited by OCNNI and has the equivalence of a Grade B pass at GCSE level.
- 11.2 The OCN Programme consisted of a menu of Level 2 modules from which 10 were selected, to be completed over a two year period. When candidates successfully complete the 10 modules they will be awarded an OCN Certificate in Personal Success.
- 11.3 The normal model of delivery allowed for the majority of the modules to be delivered by the Youth Worker/Link Teacher in the school environment. However, in-built flexibility also allowed for the delivery of up to 2 modules to be delivered by Youth Service in a community or residential setting.
- 11.4 The menu of OCN level 2 programmes was as follows:
- Drugs and Substance Abuse;
 - Understanding Risk;
 - Teamwork Skills;
 - Valuing Equality and Diversity;
 - Personal Identity and Self Esteem;
 - Beliefs and Values;
 - Understanding Relationships;
 - Understanding Rights and Responsibilities in Society;
 - Developing Confidence and Self Esteem;
 - Enrichment Activities.

12.0 Methodology

- 12.1 The various elements of the 'Learning Together' Programme were delivered as discrete Curriculum Programmes timetabled to meet the needs of the targeted group of pupils. There was also an opportunity to build the various elements of the programme into existing Curriculum subject areas and timetable for example:
- Religious Education (RE) incorporated OCN Level II Unit on Beliefs and Values;
 - Learning for Life and Work (LLW) incorporated OCN Level II Unit in Understanding Rights and Responsibilities in Society.
- 12.2 At the planning stage of the programme the school Leadership Teams and Youth Service Managers worked together to ensure that the programme was delivered to ensure the best outcomes for pupils and to facilitate timetabling within School, best utilising resources. This helped to ensure a Shared Educational approach between the School and the Youth Service.

12.3 With this in mind, it was important that the 'Learning Together' Programme would be included within the School Development Plan and reviewed through existing Senior Leadership Teams and by the Heads of Departments.

12.4 The programme was key to the delivery of the policy 'Every School a Good School', and in particular to focus on:

- Tackling inequality and disadvantage;
- Enabling every young person to fulfil their potential;
- Connecting the school to the local community;
- Empowering young people;
- Driving and supporting School Councils; and
- Increasing parental involvement in Curriculum delivery.

13.0 Conclusion

13.1 In a recent CRED inspection (September 2014 – December 2014), the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) commented as follows:

"children and young people demonstrate high levels of self-respect and respect for others; and when given the opportunity through sustained contact, they develop meaningful relationships with others from different backgrounds;"

"schools and youth organisations embed CRED practice through whole-school/organisation improvement"

13.2 The ETI suggested:

"The case for Shared Education has now been well established. This may be summarised as:

- *The education case – improving access for pupils to a wider choice of subjects encompassing the full range of the curriculum; increasing access to specialist teaching and to modern facilities; and facilitating the sharing of ideas and good practice between education providers.*
- *The social case – improving societal well-being by promoting a culture of mutual understanding and inter-relationship through significant, purposeful and regular engagement and interaction in learning between pupils from different community backgrounds and between schools and their communities.*
- *The economic case – making more effective and efficient use of limited resources to improve value for money."*

13.3 The Shared Education project will provide opportunities for children and young people from different communities to learn together. Shared Education partnerships will deliver social change by delivering educational and reconciliation outcomes for pupils.

- 13.4 The Signature project will also make more effective and efficient use of limited resources to improve value for money.
- 13.5 Within the pilot phase of the Shared Education Signature Project, 4 of the schools who were involved the IFI funded 'Learning to Live Together' Programme have submitted applications for funding. These include:
- St Colm's High School (Twinbrook) and Fort Hill Integrated College (Lisburn)
 - St Mary's High School (Downpatrick) and Nendrum College (Comber)
- 13.6 A number of other schools have indicated their intention to apply in Cohort 2. These include:
- St Malachys High School (Castlewellan) and Laurelhill Community College (Lisburn)
 - Movilla High School (Newtownards) and St Columbanus' College, (Bangor)
 - St Colmcille's High School (Crossgar) and Priory Integrated College (Holywood)

N.B. Please note that prior to the CRED programme the Schools Community Programme provided funding for schools to develop single identity work and cross community work. For your information a list of the school involved in this initiative for the 2010 can be viewed at **Appendix A**. This list also incorporates the school who received funding from CRED.

- 13.7 The SEELB is at the early stages of exploring the possibilities of a number potential "Shared Education Campuses" with a number of post-primary schools from the Controlled, Catholic Maintained and Grant Maintained Integrated sectors. This work will be taken forward by the South Eastern Region of the Education Authority after 1 April 2015.

LEAD SCHOOL/GROUP	PARTNER SCHOOL/GROUP
Assumption Grammar School	Regent House Grammar School
St Mark's Primary School	Ballymacash Primary School
Glencraig Integrated Primary School	Hazelwood Integrated Primary School
Downshire Primary School	N/A
Nendrum College	St Colmcille's High School
St Joseph's Primary School, Carnacaville	Newcastle Primary School
Good Shepherd Nursery School	Stanhope Nursery School
Kircubbin Integrated Primary School	N/A
Ballymacrickett Primary School	Ballinderry Primary School
Dundonald Primary School	Christ the Redeemer Primary School
Millisle Primary School	Killard House Special School
Bloomfield Primary School	St Nicholas' Primary School
Beechlawn Special School	N/A
St Anne's Primary School	Ballyvester Primary School
Academy Primary School, Saintfield	St Mary's Primary School, Saintfield
St Macartan's Primary School	Cumran Primary School
Moira Primary School	Rowandale Integrated Primary School
Lagan College	Grosvenor & OLSP
Derryboy Primary School	St Caolan's Primary School