



## Sperrin Integrated College on Shared and Integrated Education

Many weighty submissions have been made in response to the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education. This submission is not one of those. It is a very brief journey through the life of our school from conception to reality with a few questions thrown in. This is followed by a quotation from one of our former Governors who, as a statistician, highlights the 'false economy' argument put forward through the idea of 'Sharing' rather than 'Integrating'. We have to ask the appropriate questions, if we hope to get the right answers.

### Our journey from 2002 to 2014 and beyond - 51 to 501!

2002 January: School launch. But no site yet.

How many prospective pupils? 40. Not enough.

2002 March: Teacher recruitment.

How many pupils? 42. Not enough

2002 April: 6 Teaching professionals resign current posts to join Sperrin, but Sperrin doesn't exist yet.

How many pupils? 45. Not enough.

2002 May: Around the kitchen table, planning the curriculum.

How many pupils? 46. Not enough

2002 June: Door to door visitation seeking 4 more pupils, in order to secure public funding.

How many pupils? 47. Not enough

2002 June: Do we need private funding?

How many pupils? 48. Not enough

2002 June 25: How many pupils? 51 GO!!

2002 June 30: Minister signs, breathe again.

2002 July: Nothing happening. Traditional routes.

2002 August: Mobiles on site, yes it is actually happening!

2002 September: We are open for educating our 51 wonderful pupils.



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**Quality of education must now come first, integration is ongoing**

2003 June: Permanent site

2003 August: On site

2005 September : New build occupied

Fast forward to 2014

- 501 pupils
- 35 teachers
- 35 ancillary staff
  
- Inspection? Very good
- GCSEs? Of course
- A level outcomes? Excellent
- Graduate alumni? Plenty
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Was it worth it? What do you think?

Educational evolution for social revolution.

Together building one united community

or

Separately building many separate communities?

Integration or just Sharing? You decide

“The positive impact of ‘real’ integrated education (the proactive choice of an increasing number of parents in Northern Ireland) cannot be denied. It is the real choice of people who want to attack societal differences from the start of academic learning, rather than trying to paper over the cracks which can develop from a very early age in a non-integrated environment. Shared education alone, in my opinion, is an economic measure rather than a sociological one. Those who want to make economic savings across the board would do well to realise that ‘true integration’ is the life-line to achieving this”.

Former Governor Sperrin Integrated College

A P Rowan

Principal

Sperrin Integrated College, Magherafelt

On behalf of the school community – October 2014

39 Pound Road . Magherafelt . Co. L'Derry . BT45 6NR

**t** (028) 7963 4177 . **f** (028) 7930 1711 . **e** [info@sperrin.magherafelt.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@sperrin.magherafelt.ni.sch.uk)



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**Sperrin College**